



United States  
**Consumer Product Safety Commission**

# Language Access Plan

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*This report was prepared by the CPSC staff. It has not been reviewed or approved by, and may not represent the views of, the Commission.*

# Table of Contents

<b>I. Background</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>II. CPSC Language Access Policy and Implementation</b> .....	<b>4</b>
A. Purpose and Authority .....	4
B. Goal and Policy Statement .....	4
C. Plan Development and Implementation .....	4
<b>III. INTERACTIONS WITH INDIVIDUALS WITH LEP</b> .....	<b>5</b>
A. Identification and Tracking of CPSC’s Interactions with Individuals with LEP.....	5
B. CPSC Enforcement Activities .....	6
C. Informing and Educating Consumers.....	6
D. Informing and Educating Industry .....	7
E. Recipient Guidance .....	8
<b>IV. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>V. DEFINITIONS</b> .....	<b>9</b>

# I. Background

The United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC or the Agency) is an independent agency of the United States government. It was created in 1972 through the Consumer Product Safety Act. CPSC works to save lives and keep families safe by reducing the unreasonable risk of injuries and deaths associated with consumer products and fulfilling its vision to be the recognized global leader in consumer product safety. CPSC does this by: issuing and enforcing mandatory standards or banning consumer products if no feasible standard would adequately protect the public; obtaining the recall of products and arranging for a repair, replacement, or refund for recalled products; researching potential product hazards; developing voluntary standards with standards organizations, manufacturers, and businesses; informing and educating consumers directly and through traditional, online, and social media, and by working with foreign, state, and local governments and private organizations; and educating manufacturers worldwide about its regulations, supply chain integrity, and development of safe products.

Communicating with the public is central to CPSC’s mission of ensuring that consumers are safe from unreasonable risk of injuries and deaths associated with consumer products. Since CPSC’s inception, consumers nationwide have engaged with the Agency by reporting unsafe consumer products, commenting in writing and through oral testimony on the Agency’s priorities and proposed rules, petitioning for agency action, and participating in incident investigations. This engagement informs the work of the Agency.

This engagement would be incomplete if it did not include individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP). Almost 70 million people in the U.S., or about 22 percent of the population over the age of five, speak a language other than English at home.<sup>1</sup> More than five million people in the U.S. have limited proficiency in English.<sup>2</sup> Individuals are generally considered to have limited English proficiency if they speak a language other than English at home and speak English less than “very well.”<sup>3</sup> Spanish is the most common non-English language spoken at home with approximately 42 million speakers; Spanish speakers also constitute the largest share of the LEP population.

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<sup>1</sup> [Census Bureau Tables](#)

<sup>2</sup> [S1602: LIMITED ENGLISH ... - Census Bureau Table](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) About Language Use \(census.gov\)](#)

## II. CPSC Language Access Policy and Implementation

### A. Purpose and Authority

This plan describes CPSC’s strategy for ensuring meaningful access by individuals with LEP to CPSC-administered programs, activities, and safety initiatives in accordance with Executive Order 13166 (EO 13166), Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, issued August 11, 2000. EO 13166 provides that “[e]ach Federal agency shall examine the services it provides and develop and implement a system by which LEP persons can meaningfully access those services.” Because EO 13166 applies to independent agencies, CPSC is required to examine the services it provides, identify any need for services to individuals with LEP, and develop and implement a system to provide those services, so individuals with LEP can have meaningful access to them.

CPSC achieves the goals set forth in the executive order through this Language Access Plan and the processes it describes.

### B. Goal and Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Agency to provide individuals with LEP with meaningful access to CPSC-administered programs, activities, and safety initiatives for which they may be individually eligible to participate.

### C. Plan Development and Implementation

All CPSC staff are responsible for taking reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to individuals with LEP. Existing staff who interface with the public will be provided training on policies and procedures on how to process and accommodate an LEP request. CPSC will also notify new staff who will interface with the public about CPSC’s LEP process during orientation. The Agency’s Consumer Ombudsman will be CPSC’s point of contact and serve as our language access coordinator (LAC). The LAC will develop timelines for training current and new staff and will work with Human Resources to administer the training. The LAC will also propose updates to this plan based on data received from the divisions, and feedback from individuals with LEP.

This plan will be posted on the Agency’s website, as well as the Department of Justice’s language access website, LEP.gov. Members of the public with questions or comments about language assistance may contact [LanguageAccess@cpsc.gov](mailto:LanguageAccess@cpsc.gov).

# III. INTERACTIONS WITH INDIVIDUALS WITH LEP

## A. Identification and Tracking of CPSC's Interactions with Individuals with LEP

1. **Profile of Individuals with LEP:** The individuals with LEP that CPSC encounters most often are consumers and persons associated with a business that retails, distributes, imports, private labels, or manufactures consumer products.
2. **Tracking Interactions:** Each Agency component should track all instances in which it has provided translation and/or interpretation services and in what language the services were provided and forward this information to the LAC. The LAC will track the program's utilization across the Agency.
3. **Point of First Contact - Identification of Individuals with LEP:** At the first point of contact with an individual with LEP, staff will make an initial assessment of the need for language assistance services. Each office will determine the most effective way to communicate with an individual based on their primary language. In most instances, the first contact is likely to be by telephone or e-mail.
  - a. **Telephone or in-person.** To identify the individual's primary language by telephone or in-person contact, staff may rely on self-identification by the individual with LEP. During telephone or in-person contact, if relatives, friends, acquaintances, neighbors, or children are present with the individual, staff may rely on these individuals, or other methods, to conduct a first inquiry as to the primary language of the individual with LEP. CPSC also offers professional foreign language interpretation services by licensed, qualified interpreters that provide on-demand, consecutive interpretations over the telephone for hundreds of foreign languages, for mission-related conversations. The Agency has accounts with several different vendors across the country, so that a service should be available during core business hours in any time zone. The Agency has previously circulated to all employees detailed instructions on how to access these services, which are also posted on the Agency's SharePoint website.
  - b. **Email.** To identify the individual's primary language by e-mail, staff may rely on self-identification by the individual with LEP. Otherwise, staff may use bilingual staff members or other methods.

Staff should document the contact, and this information should be reported to the LAC.

## B. CPSC Enforcement Activities

1. **Overview:** During the course of enforcement activities, staff utilize human translators to translate written materials such as non-English vital documents and telephone call recordings, and when providing information to the public on matters that may affect consumers with LEP. When conducting interviews and consulting with consumer witnesses, whistleblowers, and employees of regulated entities with LEP, staff utilize bilingual field employees, or, if a bilingual field employee is not available or is not fluent in a specific language, they may use the agency's telephonic translation services.
2. **Example:** In the field, CPSC conducts on-site inspections of retailers, distributors, importers, and manufacturers of consumer products. In the event CPSC encounters an individual with LEP, the field employee utilizes the agency's translation services and/or language skills of field staff. The Notice of Inspection document that Agency employees present to identify themselves upon entering a firm can be provided in Spanish or Chinese, as well as English.

## C. Informing and Educating Consumers

1. **Overview:** One of CPSC's core statutory responsibilities is providing consumers with current information on consumer product hazards. The Agency offers information and tools to educate consumers on the dangers associated with a wide range of consumer products, from children's toys to all-terrain vehicles and furniture. Subject to funding availability, the Agency utilizes numerous contractors to translate recall notices and other consumer product safety materials such as press releases, safety education materials, and social media content into Spanish. CPSC utilizes bilingual employees with language skills in their job descriptions as well as outside contractors to assist with translating or interpreting contacts (e.g., telephone calls, e-mails, etc.) made by consumers with LEP. If a bilingual employee is not available or is not fluent in a specific language, they may use the agency's telephonic translation services.
2. **Examples:**
  - a. **SaferProducts.gov.** SaferProducts.gov is a website where the public can file and read complaints about thousands of types of consumer products. Currently, Saferproducts.gov has both English and Spanish forms that individuals can download, fill out, and submit by email or postal mail.
  - b. **Printable educational materials.** CPSC offers on its website printable safety education brochures, posters, and other materials covering a variety of safety topics such as pool safety, carbon monoxide, and all-terrain vehicles. The Agency has translated many of its safety education brochures into Spanish and Chinese. See [Safety Education | CPSC.gov](#).

- c. **Website.** The Agency offers safety information on certain key topics in Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, French, Korean, and Vietnamese. Subject to funding availability, Agency staff is working toward supporting more content in different languages and creating a section on CPSC's main homepage to navigate to this content, including Spanish-language recalls. See [Safety Education | CPSC.gov](#) and [CPSC.gov](#).
- d. **SeguridadConsumidor.gov.** The Agency disseminates Spanish-language consumer safety information to the general public via [CPSC en español - Seguridad del consumidor | CPSC.gov](#). This Spanish language landing page for CPSC describes what the Agency does and takes the user to information centers; safety posters; safety guides; news; recalls, and videos (available on [CPSC's YouTube Channel in Spanish](#)). The Agency also distributes safety messaging and recalls in Spanish through social media efforts on platforms such as [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).
- e. **Consumer Hotline.** CPSC's toll-free hotline, 800-638-2772, has Spanish-speaking representatives who are able to answer questions on recalls or take reports on product safety issues.

## D. Informing and Educating Industry

- 1. **Overview:** Another core responsibility of the Agency is to provide consumer product manufacturers and importers with current information about its regulations. CPSC utilizes human translators to accurately translate information provided on its website and offers telephonic translation services when interacting with representatives of industry with LEP.
- 2. **Examples:**
  - a. **The Regulatory Robot.** A tool that helps businesses understand the regulations that apply to its products. For individuals with LEP and the international community, the Regulatory Robot is offered in Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Indonesian, Khmer, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese, as well as English. The Agency offers this information directly through its website, <https://business.cpsc.gov/robot>.
  - b. **Printed educational materials.** Many of the Agency's industry outreach materials are available in other languages. For example, the Desktop Business Reference Guide, a document that summarizes the regulations and requirements that apply to various products, is available in six languages. Additionally, the Handbook for Manufacturing Safer Products, a document that identifies the elements of a comprehensive system approach to manufacturing safe products, is available in five languages.

The full list of translated documents can be found at:  
<https://www.cpsc.gov/Business--Manufacturing/International/Summary-of-Documents-in-Foreign-Languages>.

- c. **Translated websites.** The CPSC Office of International Programs maintains the Agency's foreign language content for stakeholders in jurisdictions that export consumer products to the U.S. market. The Agency currently maintains the following foreign language web content: Chinese language subsite, [中国地区 | CPSC.gov](#); Spanish language subsite, [El trabajo de la CPSC en el Hemisferio Occidental | CPSC.gov](#); Vietnamese language subsite, [Những điều lệ của Hoa Kỳ | CPSC.gov](#); CPSC Recalls page in Simplified Chinese, [Recalls | CPSC.gov](#); CPSC Recalls page in Traditional Chinese, [Recalls | CPSC.gov](#); China Product Hazard Monthly Summary Bulletin in [English](#) & [Simplified Chinese](#) and English & [Traditional Chinese](#) bilingual versions; Office of International Programs Video & Podcast Series in [English](#), [Chinese](#), and [Vietnamese](#); [Multimedia in Chinese](#) (videos in Chinese that give safety tips for consumer product suppliers); and Regulations, Mandatory Standards and Bans in [Chinese](#), [Indonesian](#), [Korean](#), [Spanish](#) and [Vietnamese](#).

## E. Recipient Guidance

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits recipients of federal financial assistance from discriminating based on national origin by, among other things, failing to provide meaningful access to individuals with LEP. EO 13166 requires federal agencies that provide federal financial assistance to develop guidance to clarify those obligations for recipients of such assistance (recipient guidance). CPSC currently incorporates language advising grant recipients of these requirements into every notice of reward.

The Agency will develop and provide recipient guidance regarding the LEP Guidance. The guidance will take into account the types of services provided by the recipients and the individuals served by the recipients.

## IV. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

This Language Access Plan articulates CPSC's commitment to providing persons with LEP meaningful access to its programs, services, and safety messages. It is not subject to the notice and comment rulemaking requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act. See 5 U.S.C. 553(b). Because no notice of proposed rulemaking is required, the Regulatory Flexibility Act does not require an initial or final regulatory flexibility analysis. See 5 U.S.C. 603(a), 604(a). CPSC has determined that this Language Access Plan does not impose any new or revise any existing recordkeeping, reporting, or disclosure requirements on covered entities or members of



the public that would be collections of information requiring Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval under the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. 3501–3521.

## V. DEFINITIONS

- **Interpretation.** The act of listening to a communication in one language (source language) and orally converting it to another language (target language) while retaining the same meaning.
- **Language Assistance Services.** Oral and written language services used to provide individuals with LEP meaningful access to, and an equal opportunity to participate fully in, the services, activities, and other programs administered by CPSC.
- **Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals.** Individuals residing in a U.S. territory who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. Individuals with LEP may be competent in English for certain types of communication (e.g., speaking or understanding), but still be LEP for other types of communication (e.g., reading or writing).
- **Meaningful access.** Language assistance that results in accurate, timely, and effective communication to the individual with LEP. For individuals with LEP, meaningful access denotes reasonable efforts to provide language assistance services to ensure that individuals with LEP have substantially equal access to CPSC programs as those whose primary language is English.
- **Primary language.** An individual’s primary language is the language in which an individual most effectively communicates.
- **Recipient.** An entity (e.g., grantee) that receives financial assistance from CPSC.
- **Staff who interface with the public.** Relevant employees of the Office of Compliance and Field Operations, the Office of Import Surveillance, the Office of Hazard Identification and Reduction, the Office of Communications, the Small Business Ombudsman, and the Consumer Ombudsman.
- **Translation.** The replacement of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent written text in another language (target language).
- **Vital document.** Paper or electronic material that is critical for access to the Agency’s services or contains information about procedures or processes required by law. Classification of a document as “vital” depends upon the importance of the program, information, encounter, or service involved, and the consequence to the individual with LEP if the information in question is not provided accurately or in a timely manner.