

# **Seminole County Sheriff's Office Limited English Proficiency Plan 2022**



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# Table of Contents

<b>I. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
A. Plan Summary:	3
B. Definitions:	4
<b>II. MEANINGFUL ACCESS: FOUR FACTOR ANALYSIS</b>	<b>5</b>
A. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served by Seminole County Sheriff's Office.	5
B. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with Seminole County Sheriff's Office services.	6
C. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or services provided by the Seminole County Sheriff's Office to the LEP population.	6
D. The resources available and cost to the recipient.	7
<b>III. LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE</b>	<b>7</b>
A. Oral Language Assistance:	7
B. Translations of Materials:	8
C. Marketing and Outreach:	9
<b>IV. NOTIFYING LEP PERSONS</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>V. LEP TRAINING FOR AGENCY EMPLOYEES</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>VI. PLAN MONITORING</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>VII. PLAN DISSEMINATION</b>	<b>10</b>
A. Internal Dissemination:	10
B. External Dissemination:	10
<b>VIII. NOTICE OF RIGHTS</b>	<b>10</b>

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## **I. Introduction**

It is the policy of the Seminole County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiencies (LEP) not be discriminated against nor denied meaningful access to, and participation in, the programs and services provided by the Agency. In order to ensure meaningful access and participation for LEP persons, All SCSO staff shall notify such persons that language services are available to them at no cost and shall take reasonable steps to see that language services are provided according to the provisions of the Seminole County Sheriff's Office LEP Plan and Policies as described below.

The LEP Plan and Policies that follow comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance, and in compliance with the Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency" requiring Federal agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to those with limited English proficiency (LEP), and develop and implement a system to provide those services so LEP persons can have meaningful access to them. It is expected that agency plans will provide for such meaningful access consistent with, and without unduly burdening, the fundamental mission of the agency. The Executive Order also requires that the Federal agencies work to ensure that recipients of Federal financial assistance provide meaningful access to their LEP applicants and beneficiaries.

### **A. Plan Summary:**

The Seminole County Sheriff's Office has developed this Limited English Proficiency Plan to help identify reasonable steps for providing language assistance to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons who wish to access services provided by the SCSO. As defined in Executive Order 13166, LEP persons are those who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English.

This plan outlines how the SCSO will identify a person who may need language assistance, the ways in which assistance may be provided, staff training that will be conducted, and how to notify LEP persons that assistance is available.

In order to prepare this plan, the Seminole County Sheriff's Office used the four-factor LEP analysis, which considers the following factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served by the Seminole County Sheriff's Office.
2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with Seminole County Sheriff's Office services.
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or services provided by the Seminole County Sheriff's Office to the LEP population.
4. The resources available and cost to the recipient.

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A summary of the results of the four-factor analysis is outlined in the plan below.

## **B. Definitions:**

### **Limited English Proficient (LEP) Individuals:**

Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. LEP individuals may be competent in English for certain types of communication (e.g., speaking or understanding), but still be LEP for other purposes (e.g., reading or writing).

### **Primary Language:**

An individual's primary language is the language in which the individual most effectively communicates.

### **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.

### **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 written material that contains information that is critical for accessing the agency's programs or activities, or is required by law.

### **Meaningful Access:**

Language assistance that results in accurate, timely, and effective communication at no cost to the LEP individual. For LEP individuals, meaningful access denotes access that is not significantly restricted, delayed, or inferior compared to programs or services provided to English proficient individuals.

### **Four-Factor Assessment:**

This is an assessment tool used by the Recipient of federal funding to determine the extent of its obligation to provide LEP services. These four factors are: (1) The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program or grantee; (2) the frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with the program; (3) the nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided the program to people's lives; and (4) the resources available to the grantee/recipient and costs.

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## II. Meaningful Access: Four Factor Analysis

### A. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served by Seminole County Sheriff's Office.

The Seminole County Sheriff's Office has assessed and will continue to assess the language needs of the population that it serves. To identify the language and number of LEP persons the SCSO may encounter, the following data will be reviewed:

- US Census Bureau Data/Year 2020
- Community Agency Data

The first step toward understanding the profile of the individuals that could participate in the SCSO process is a review of the US Census Data.

#### US Census Bureau Data:

##### **Demographics of the Seminole County Area:**

According to the 2020 US Census Data, the total population of Seminole County is 470,856. In Population by Race/Ethnicity, from 2010 to 2020, "*Two or More*" had the highest population growth showing an upward growth of 468%. "*Other*" had the second highest population increase of 100.7%. The population growth from 2010 to 2020 also showed a 63.2% growth in the race category of "*Asian*." In the Ethnicity category of "*Hispanic or Latino*" Seminole County showed a population growth from 72,457 to 106,539 persons from 2010 to 2020, which represents a 47% increase and 22.6% of the total population.

As of 2020, 14.2% of Seminole residents were foreign born. Those of Hispanic or Latino origin comprise the largest population of foreign born residents at 25,973 Seminole County residents or 50.7% of foreign-born residents. Of those members of the foreign-born population of Seminole County, 61.8 % reported being naturalized U.S. citizens with 38.2 reporting they are not a U.S. citizen.

Additionally, as of 2020 76.8% of all residents of Seminole County reported speaking only English at home, with 23.2% of the population reporting that the primary language spoken at home was one other than English. Of those residents reporting that a language other than English is spoken in the home, 15.9% reported speaking Spanish, with Other Indo-European languages making up 3.9% and Asian and Pacific Islander languages accounting for 2.6, leaving only .8% speaking other languages.

The SCSO will continue to monitor the release of census data as it becomes available to adjust the implementation of this LEP plan as needed and/or required.

See Table I below for the United States Census Bureau July 1, 2021, Population Estimates - Seminole County:

**TABLE I:**

<b>Total Population</b>	<b><u>Race</u></b>	<b><u>Number</u></b>	<b><u>Percent</u></b>
		470,856	100.0
	<u>One Race:</u>		
	White (alone)	289,597	85.3
	Black or African American (alone)	53,509	11.4
	American Indian and Alaska Native (alone)	1,623	0.4
	Asian (alone)	25,615	5.4
	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (alone)	322	0.1
	<u>Two or More Races</u>		
	Hispanic or Latino	106,539	22.6
	Not Hispanic or Latino	364,317	77.4

**B. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with Seminole County Sheriff’s Office services.**

The Seminole County Sheriff’s Office will use various methods to identify and determine the number of LEP persons with whom they have contact.

To determine the frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with SCSO programs, all SCSO employees who come in contact with a LEP person will capture every contact whether in person or via telephone when documenting the contact on the appropriate SCSO Form utilized for the relevant contact.

Past LEP person encounters have been analyzed to determine whether individuals who have been involved in incidents to which the SCSO has responded have reported utilizing a language other than English as their primary language. Of 121,217 individuals encountered and documented for the calendar years of 2020 and 2021, only 9,460 (7.8%) reported utilizing a language other than English as their primary language.

Current LEP person encounters will continue to be analyzed to determine the language services requested and the agency’s ability to provide. The data collected will be utilized to determine the effectiveness of SCSO’s current services offered to LEP persons.

**C. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or services provided by the Seminole County Sheriff’s Office to the LEP population.**

The SCSO provides crisis intervention, short-term counseling and referrals, criminal justice information, court support and emergency assistance for limited shelter, food and basic physical needs to crime victims. It is also the responsibility of the agency to notify known, contactable

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victims of the pending release, including community work release of sentenced prisoners incarcerated in Seminole County jails. For many people, being a victim of, or witness to a crime may be their first experience with the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

It is the policy and practice of the agency to ensure that no one shall be discriminated against nor denied meaningful access to, and participation in, the programs and services provided by the SCSO. The agency will continue to provide appropriate services to the LEP persons to ensure that they have full and complete understanding of the services, rights and benefits that they are entitled to.

#### **D. The resources available and cost to the recipient.**

The SCSO with all available resources shall notify LEP persons that language services are available to them at no cost and shall take reasonable steps to see that language services are provided according to the provisions of the Seminole County Sheriff's Office LEP Plan and Policies.

The SCSO will continue to use available resources to provide appropriate language assistance to the LEP persons. Qualified Interpreters, bilingual staff, Language Line Services and referrals to community liaisons proficient in the language of LEP persons will be utilized to effectively serve the LEP community.

The SCSO will continue to use available resources to print and distribute vital documents in different languages as need arises to ensure meaningful access for the LEP persons. The agency currently translates documents into Spanish as needed. The SCSO will consider additional languages upon request or as deemed necessary for effective outreach.

The SCSO Human Resources Department will maintain a current list of all bilingual employees. SCSO personnel in the field in need of interpretation services will attempt to identify an available on-duty bilingual employee who will assist with the call for service or self-initiated call. If no on-duty bilingual officer is immediately known to the officer, the officer will contact the Human Resources Department who will review the SCSO interpreter list to identify a qualified interpreter, or the officer can contact Seminole County dispatch to utilize Language Line services.

### **III. Language Assistance**

A person who does not speak English as their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English may be a Limited English Proficient person and may be entitled to language assistance with respect to Seminole County Sheriff's Office services. Language assistance can include interpretation, which means oral or spoken transfer of a message from one language into another language and/or translation, which means the written transfer of a message from one language into another language.

The following are the services the Agency provide to LEP persons:

#### **A. Oral Language Assistance:**

The Agency will provide oral language assistance, including Oral Interpretation Services by Qualified Interpreters, Bilingual staff, Telephone service lines interpreters via the Language Line Services and referrals to community liaisons proficient in the language of LEP persons. These services will be offered free of charge whether in person or via telephone. At the point of first

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contact with an LEP person, the SCSO employee will determine whether the person has a limited English proficiency by determining his or her primary language and implement the appropriate language assistance service.

1. **Face to Face:**

**Qualified Interpreter:**

The agency when necessary will provide a qualified interpreter to assist with providing services to the LEP person. The agency will provide this service free of charge.

**Bilingual Staff:**

A list of Seminole County Sheriff's Office staff who fluently speak, read, write and/or understand languages other than English, and who are willing and able to act as interpreters has been identified. The SCSO employees who may encounter LEP persons are aware that this list is available in Human Resources to assist them with providing appropriate services to LEP persons. Additionally, SCSO is able to identify employees who are capable to assist with translations into multiple languages.

2. **Telephone Encounters:**

To ensure meaningful access and participation for LEP persons, the SCSO employees will dial into the Language Line Services to set-up conference calls between the LEP person and trained interpreter. The SCSO employee will identify themselves, request the appropriate language needed, brief and summarize to the interpreter what they wish to accomplish, give any special instructions, and begin the conference call. The SCSO employee with assistance from the trained interpreter will assist the LEP person with his or her needs. This service is always provided free of charge.

**B. Translations of Materials:**

Language Assistance will be provided for LEP person through language translations and/or oral interpretations of some key materials, upon request or as deemed necessary for effective outreach. Currently, the SCSO provide the following translations:

**Victim and Witness Rights Guide:**

The Victim and Witness Guide are provided in English and Spanish. When dealing with a LEP person, the SCSO employee will provide the Victim and Witness to ensure the LEP person obtains full understanding of the services provided by the agency, and of their rights and benefits.

**Forms**

SCSO provides critical Affidavits and Forms, to include informational brochures and pamphlets, in both English and Spanish. When dealing with a LEP person, the SCSO employee will provide available translated affidavits and forms to ensure the LEP person obtains full understanding of the services provided by the agency, and of their rights and

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benefits.

### **C. Marketing and Outreach:**

Marketing and Outreach information disseminated via the external SCSO website ([www.Seminolsheriff.com](http://www.Seminolsheriff.com)) allows the public viewers via a drop-down menu to translate and view the website's content in 109 different languages. This website and translation option provide the LEP person and/or groups with access to detailed information about the agency and Seminole County.

## **IV. Notifying LEP Persons**

It is important to notify LEP persons of services available free of charge in a language that would be understood. The agency will continue to provide booklets and materials in translated languages to alleviate any language barriers that may interfere with LEP person receiving effective service from the agency. The agency will also continue to assist LEP persons by utilizing Bilingual Staff, Qualified Interpreters, and Language Line Services.

## **V. LEP Training for Agency Employees**

In order to establish meaningful access to information and services for all affected persons, SCSO employees are required to comply with SCSO General Order 58, *Communicating With Hearing Impaired Individuals & Limited English Proficient (LEP) Individuals*. In accordance with this Policy, all employees will continue to receive appropriate training on addressing the needs of LEP persons. The training will include:

- Information on the Title VI Policy and LEP responsibilities.
- Executive Order 13166
- LEP Plan Compliance
- Types of Language Services
- Vital Translated Documents
- How to handle a potential Title VI/LEP complaint.

## **VI. Plan Monitoring**

The Agency shall monitor implementation of the LEP Plan and Policies on an ongoing basis, revising policies and procedures as needed and required. The Agency shall also review the overall effectiveness of its LEP Plan and Policy. This review shall consider information from the following sources and criteria as well as other appropriate factors:

- Changes in demographics including new language groups and changes in the proportion of existing language groups.
- Frequency of encounters with LEP persons.
- Determine whether language assistance programs have been effective and sufficient to meet the needs of LEP persons.
- Availability of new resources including technology.
- Determine whether the Seminole County Sheriff's Office fully complies with the goals of this LEP Plan.
- Determine whether complaints have been received concerning the agency meeting the

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needs of LEP persons.

## **VII. Plan Dissemination**

### **A. Internal Dissemination:**

- A copy of the LEP Plan will be posted on the agency's internal website for all employees to view.
- Employees will be provided a copy of the LEP Plan via internal training and record management software.
- Employees will be required to acknowledge their receipt and understanding of the LEP Plan.

### **B. External Dissemination:**

- A copy of the LEP Plan will be posted on the agency's external website for the public to view.
- Public may obtain a copy of the plan upon request.

## **VIII. Notice of Rights**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits recipients of federal financial assistance from discriminating against or otherwise excluding individuals on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any of their activities. Section 601 of Title VI, 42 U.S.C. §2000d, provides: No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Consistent with Federal law and Florida Statutes it is the policy of the Seminole County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiencies (LEP) not be discriminated against nor denied meaningful access to, and participation in, the programs and services provided by the Agency.