

## **Limited English Proficiency**

Region 6 Peoplerides, as a partially federally funded agency, takes reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons. While designed to be a flexible and fact-dependent standard, the starting point is an individualized assessment that balances the following four factors:

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 individuals come in contact with the program;
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program to people's lives; and
4. The resources available to the grantee/recipient or agency, and costs. The goal of English Proficiency Accommodations by Region 6 Peoplerides is to find a balance that ensures meaningful access by LEP persons to critical services while not imposing undue burdens on the organization.

Planning already undertaken has been important in ensuring meaningful access to LEP individuals seeking Region 6 Peoplerides services and information. Guidelines suggest that vital written materials routinely provided in English also are provided in regularly encountered languages other than English. Vital documents need only be translated when a significant number or percentage of the population eligible to be served, or likely to be directly affected by the program/activity, needs services or information in a language other than English to communicate effectively.

Meaningful access to a program requires an awareness of the program's existence, particularly when considering outreach or other documents designed to raise awareness of rights or services. Region 6 Peoplerides recognizes that it would be impossible, from a practical and cost-based perspective, to translate every piece of outreach material into every language. Title VI does not require this of recipients of federal financial assistance, and EO 13166 does not require it of federal agencies. Nevertheless, because in some circumstances lack of awareness of the existence of a particular program may effectively deny LEP individuals' meaningful access, it is important for Region 6 Peoplerides to continually survey/assess the needs of eligible service populations in order to determine whether certain critical outreach materials should be translated into other languages. Region 6 Peoplerides has taken action to address the needs of non-English speaking residents in the 4-county region.

Region 6 Peoplerides historically has worked with local bilingual Spanish speaking individuals from the local Unity Point Hospital as well as St. Mary's Catholic Church here in Marshalltown. With the advancement of technology, Region 6 Peoplerides office and drivers utilize Google Translate when dealing directly with LEP individuals. Region 6 Peoplerides has a contract with Language Link to provide 24-hour translation services for multiple languages. Although Region 6 Peoplerides has never had a need to utilize Language Link's document translation services, Region 6 Peoplerides is aware that this service is available.

*Persons Who Speak English Less Than “Very Well”*

County	Estimated # of Persons 5 years and over who speak English less than “Very Well”	Percentage of Population
Hardin County	796	4.8%
Tama County	2,113.	12.5%
Marshall County	9,244	26.0%
Poweshiek County	720	3.9%
Region 6 People rides Area	12,873	14.5%

2020 Census Data

As shown in the chart above, there is a considerable number of persons over the age of 5 in the region that speak English less than “very well”. Census data reveals that the largest group of non-English speaking residents in the region speak Spanish.

Not only does access need to extend to non-English speaking residents, but it should also extend to those who speak English but who cannot read and understand what is read; thus, there may be a need to include outreach to low-literate populations as well.