

Language Assistance Plan for HIBBING AREA TRANSIT

Effective:

Originally Passed by the Hibbing City Council, 12/1/10

Reviewed by Transit Advisory Committee, 9/23/14

Purpose

The purpose of this Language Assistance Plan (hereinafter "plan") is to meet Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) requirements to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. As a subrecipient of FTA funds, this transit system is pledged to take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to its transit services for persons who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. The FTA refers to these persons as Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons.

The completion of this plan for persons with Limited English Proficiency conforms to the requirements of the FTA Circular 4702.1B Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients.

The U.S. DOT's FTA Office of Civil Rights' publication "Implementing the Department of Transportation's Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients' Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient Persons – A Handbook for Public Transportation Providers," dated April 13, 2007, was used in the preparation of this plan.

The plan for Hibbing Area Transit contains:

- A. A needs assessment based on the four-factor analysis
- B. Language assistance measures
- C. A staff training plan
- D. Methods for notifying LEP persons about available language assistance
- E. Methods for monitoring, evaluating and updating the plan

A. LEP Needs Assessment – the Four-Factor Analysis

Factor 1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in our service area who may be served or are likely to encounter a transit program, activity, or service.

We assessed the following information (as checked) about LEP persons to determine the number or proportion of LEP persons who might use or want to use our transit services:

[X] 2010 US Census data/American Community Survey data

- Survey results: Describe: _____
- Local school district data
- Locally Coordinated Human Services Plan
- Other Human Services data
- Area/Metropolitan Planning Organizations/Regional Development Commission data

[X] Information from local organizations (religious, legal, social service, etc.) about LEP persons in our service area

[X] Reports from drivers, dispatchers and others about contact with LEP persons

- Other information: Describe: _____

According to data provided by Mn/DOT from the 2010 American Community Survey 2007-2011 Five-Year estimate:

- 1) The total number of LEP persons in our county is 2,160, in our city (service area): 122
- 2) The total eligible population in our county is 189,098 , in our city (service area): 16,153
- 3) The proportion of LEP persons to the total population in our county or city (service area) is 1%

The local social services dept. has told us that there are a few Asian, a few Hispanic, and a few Somali individuals living in the community. The department will notify us if we can provide any assistance to make the Hibbing Area Transit more accessible to them.

Factor 2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with our transit programs, activities, or services.

The drivers report that there are a few Spanish-speaking people who use the bus. The drivers report minor, occasional difficulty in understanding some passengers.

The conclusions drawn from examining this information about LEP persons seeking transit services are: We must be ever-watchful for anyone who may be experiencing difficulty in accessing transit services so that we may refer them to resources which will improve their transit experience.

Factor 3 . The nature and importance of programs, activities, or services provided to the LEP population.

Our transit system considers transit to be an important and essential service for many people living in our service area. Hibbing Area Transit provides over 50,000 rides annually for shopping, medical appointments, employment, library, college classes, etc.

Factor 4. The resources available to our transit system and the overall cost to provide language assistance.

Our current budget for marketing to or communicating with LEP persons in their language about transit services that are available to them is part of our overall marketing/advertising budget of \$7,400. This may include funding for staff training, translation services, brochures, flyers, posters, newspaper ads, radio ads, website, etc.

Hibbing has an "English As a Second Language" program which may be contacted through the school district.

B. Language Assistance Measures

Based on the four-factor analysis in Part A above, which should reflect your past experience and efforts to reach LEP persons, describe the efforts your transit system will take in 2014 to provide meaningful access to LEP persons who are eligible for your transit services.

There are several language assistance measures that are available to Hibbing Area Transit. These include: Check off any items below that are relevant and provide a short narrative to explain your future efforts.

Translation of key documents in the following language(s): Spanish

Arranging for availability of oral translators

Communication with LEP persons' groups about transit services

Posting notices in appropriate languages informing LEP persons of available services

This has been done at City Hall, the library, on the Website, and at the Social Services Office

C. Other: Describe: We have contacted the Social Services Dept. (Jane). We have asked to be notified if there are any individuals who are having difficulty accessing city services due to language barriers—so that we can provide any needed assistance. We include "language barriers" as a topic on the agendas of our Transit Advisory Committee meetings to keep these needs on our radar.

D. Staff Training

To ensure effective implementation of this plan, the transit system will schedule training at orientations for new staff and for all relevant employees on a regular basis to review:

- the transit system's Language Assistance Plan
- demographic data about local LEP population
- printed LEP persons' materials
- how to handle verbal requests for transit service in a foreign language
- responsibility to notify transit manager about any LEP persons' unmet needs.

E. Notice to LEP Persons about Available Language Assistance

Our transit system plans to notify LEP persons in their own language about the language assistance available to them without cost by using the following methods:

In Spanish:

signs on buses or at bus stops

brochures – translation if requested

posters

sending information to local organizations who work with LEP persons

telephone messages

local ads (newspaper , radio, TV)

[x]website notices

- information tables at local events, grocery stores, pharmacies, and churches
- Other: Describe: _____

F. Annual Monitoring, Evaluating and Updating Plan

The transit system will review this plan during its annual review with its Mn/DOT transit project manager by:

- assessing its effectiveness (e.g., comparing numbers of LEP persons served by year, number of requests for language assistance received during the year),
- assessing the sufficiency of staff training and budget for language assistance,
- reviewing current sources for assistance to ensure continuing availability, and
- reviewing any complaints from LEP persons or about their needs that were received during the past year.

This plan will be reviewed by our transit system annually. Revisions of this plan will be approved by the transit advisory committee and dated.

G. Dissemination of Plan

This Language Assistance Plan is available on our website at www.hibbing.mn.us.

This plan is also available at no cost in English upon request by telephone, fax, and mail or in person.

If requested to be provided in another language and it is feasible to have it translated, information will be provided at no cost to the requester.

H. Contact Information

Questions or comments about this plan may be submitted to:

Mary Ann Kepler
Internal Auditor
401 E 21 St
Hibbing, MN 55746

Phone: 218-403-1836
Fax: 218-312-1562
makepler@ci.hibbing.mn.us