

## Glossary of Terms

**LEP:** Limited English Proficiency. An LEP individual is someone who has a limited ability to speak, read, write, or understand English at a level that permits the person to interact effectively with health care providers or social service agencies.

**Interpretation:** Spoken language is converted into another language by an interpreter who speaks both languages, conveys that message faithfully, accurately, and objectively in another language, while taking the cultural and social context into account.

**Consecutive Interpretation”** The interpreter waits until the speaker has finished speaking before rendering it in the other language.

**Simultaneous Interpretation:** The Interpretation of the speaker’s message into another language while the speaker continues to speak.

**Translation:** Written material from one language is converted into another language in written form.

**Medical/Health Care Interpreting:** Interpretation that takes place in health care setting, such as between health care providers (doctors, nurses, lab technicians, staff) and patients. The interpreter must be aware of confidentiality and HIPAA issues, understand medical terminology, and how to work in the health care setting.

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964:** Title VI prohibits any program or activity that receives federal funding, either directly or indirectly, from discriminating because of race, color or national origin.<sup>1</sup> The Supreme Court and federal agencies have determined that LEP individuals are protected by Title VI. Recipients of federal funds must ensure that LEP individuals have **meaningful access** to their programs and services.

**“Certification”:** A process by which a governmental or professional organization confirms that an individual is qualified to be an interpreter. Currently, no national certification standards exist for medical/health care interpretation or translation.

**“Ad hoc” Interpreter:** An untrained person who is called upon to interpret, such as a family member, friend, bilingual staff member who is pulled away from other duties to interpret, or a self-declared bilingual individual who volunteers to interpret. Ad hoc interpreters may not have the specialized terminology required for interpretation, such as a medical background which helps to clarify the LEP patient needs.

**Trained Interpreter:** A professional with formal training who has developed the knowledge and skills for competent interpreting, and is fluent in English and a second language. A trained interpreter is bound by a professional code of ethics, culturally competent, capable of delivering accurate and timely messages in two languages and knowledgeable of specialized terminology.

**Methods of Providing Interpreting:** Interpretation may be provided through various methods, including hiring bilingual staff and staff interpreters,

- contracting for interpreters,
- using telephonic/ video conferencing interpretation services

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<sup>1</sup> 42 U.S.C. §2000d

- using community volunteers.

**Cultural and Linguistic Competence:** The ability of health care providers to understand and respond effectively to the cultural and linguistic needs of the patient.