



A

Appendix

Recommended
Language Access
Requirements

Appendix A: Language Access Methodology and Requirements

The best-available data for determining language needs is U.S. Census 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) Table B16001 “Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over.” This table reports population data for 39 languages; however, the table has been discontinued at the census tract level for future census counts. The discontinuation of this data source will cause some isolated languages to be grouped together and classified as broad language categories without identifying specific languages. In some cases, this grouping will ultimately underreport isolated languages and create challenges to identifying translation needs. Although other data sources are available, they are not at the census tract-level which is necessary to determine language isolation at the Study Area-level. To avoid losing this important data, Measure A will continue to use the 2015 ACS data to identify isolated languages. It is assumed that no major demographic changes will occur within the first five years of Measure A implementation, given that demographic shifts occur more gradually over time. RPOSD will reassess appropriate data sources and methodology after the 2020 Census data.

Steps taken to calculate linguistic isolation:

- 1) Sum the attributes of census tracts’ centroids that fall within study area boundaries.
- 2) For each of the 39 languages, calculate the percentage of residents that speak English “less than very well” against the Study Area’s population.¹
- 3) Using the ranges defined in Table 1, assign languages to the appropriate Tier. Each Tier identifies appropriate levels of translation and interpretation services based on the percentage of linguistically isolated populations speaking a given language within a given Study Area.

Table 1

TIER 1	15% OR MORE of the population is linguistically isolated for any given language	Workshops and any in-person meetings must provide consecutive or simultaneous interpretation services. In addition, all written materials must be translated including, outreach materials, signage, agendas, and all other printed meeting materials.
TIER 2	5-14.99% of the population is linguistically isolated for any given language	Key written materials must be translated, including all printed meeting materials and at least one form of outreach. Workshops and any in-person meetings must provide consecutive or simultaneous interpretation services only if a specific request is received.
TIER 3	1-4.99% of the population is linguistically isolated for any given language	It is recommended (but not required) that outreach materials and printed meeting materials be translated.

Please refer to Table 2 to identify isolated languages by Study Area.

¹Total residents that speak English “less than very well” for language X in a study area divided by the Study Area’s total population.

