



LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY POLICY STATEMENT

Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is responsible for ensuring that equal access to services, programs, and activities is provided to persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). LEP persons are defined as individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. This policy pertains to the language needs of FSIS' LEP customers. It does not apply to FSIS employees who, in order to perform their duties, must be fluent in the English language.

FSIS will take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access and an equal opportunity to participate in its services, activities, programs, and other benefits. FSIS utilizes a four-factor analysis in determining the steps that are needed to communicate effectively with LEP persons. Using the four-factor analysis, the Agency considers:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program or recipient;
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 program/recipient and costs.

The responsibility to reduce language barriers encompasses the Agency's obligation to both translate vital documents and provide oral interpretation of critical information. FSIS will provide written translation services for vital documents used in order to carry out its meat, poultry and processed egg products inspection programs. Vital documents are defined as written material that contains information that is critical for accessing a program or activity or that is required by law, such as consent forms, applications, and notices of rights. FSIS will also provide oral interpretation services to convey information necessary to carry out its inspection programs.

FSIS will utilize various resources to translate and interpret critical information. These resources include employees who are fluent in a particular language, other Federal agencies, or contractual providers of language services. The Agency will provide these services at no cost to the customer, in an accurate and timely manner.

To ensure that the FSIS workforce fully understands the Agency's LEP policy, the Agency has developed a LEP plan. In addition, training is available and other guidance is available at: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/informational/aboutfsis/civil-rights>.

It is important that FSIS employees are aware of the program discrimination complaint process available to customers. Customers or prospective customers who believe that they have been subjected to discrimination can initiate a program discrimination complaint by completing the [United States Department of Agriculture's \(USDA\) Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#). They may also file a program discrimination complaint by writing a letter to the USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (OASCR), at the following address:

U.S. Department of Agriculture, OASCR
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-9410

For additional information about what to include in a Program Discrimination Complaint, see *How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint*, on the USDA's website at: <https://www.ascr.usda.gov/filing-program-discrimination-complaint-usda-customer>. For information on the discrimination complaint process, contact OASCR, Information Research Service, on (202) 260-1026 or 1 (866) 632-9992 (toll free) or send an email to OASCR at: CR-INFO@ascr.usda.gov. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities, may contact OASCR through the Federal Relay Service on 1 (800) 877-8339 or 1 (800) 845-6136 (Spanish).

If you have a question or need assistance, please contact the FSIS Civil Rights Staff at 1 (800) 269-6912 or by email at: AskCRD@fsis.usda.gov. You can find additional information about the FSIS EEO and Civil Rights Program at: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/informational/aboutfsis/civil-rights>.



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