

Language Assistance Plan for the City of Morris Transit

**Effective:
February 1, 2014**

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 the City of Morris 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:

- US Census Bureau/2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
- Survey results: Describe: _____
- Local school district data
- Locally Coordinated Human Services Plan
- Other Human Services data
- Area/Metropolitan Planning Organizations/Regional Development Commission data
- Information from local organizations (religious, legal, social service, etc.) about LEP persons in our service area
- Reports from drivers, dispatchers and others about contact with LEP persons
- Other information: Describe: _____

According to data provided from the US Census Bureau/2009-2013 American Community Survey Five-Year estimates:

- 1) The total number of LEP persons in our service area is 76.
- 2) The total eligible population in our service area is 5045.
- 3) The proportion of LEP persons to the total eligible service population is 1.5%.

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

We have many residents whose first language is not English that successfully use our Transit service. Many LEP persons use the Transit on daily basis. The two primary LEP groups have a large support system in our community that assists them with how to utilize this service that is available to them.

One larger group of LEP persons that use our system is the International Students that attend the University of Minnesota – Morris. UMM uses the Morris Transit service extensively during its orientation in the Fall to assist the students in becoming familiar with the community and with the Transit service. Our Transit Coordinator works with UMM on the scheduling and is available for any questions that the students might have about the Transit system. As students attending classes they do of course understand English and can speak it too – but sometimes not well.

The other large LEP persons group in our community is Spanish speaking. They tend to be a bit more intimidated by the language barrier, but our Transit Coordinator, through a women's support group of this LEP community and a contact person that works with a major employer of the LEP persons, has worked with them and our drivers on what to ask and say when you call for a ride. They actually had a workshop one day where both the drivers and the LEP persons were able to role play and practice the phone calls. This was beneficial to both groups, but particularly was helpful in breaking the ice for those LEP persons who wanted to use the Transit but were a bit intimidated to start with.

We have also had our flyer with service hours and rates translated into both Spanish and Chinese and have those posted and available.

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. Many LEP persons use our transit service to travel to school, shopping, doctor appointments, library, entertainment 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 \$0(zero). This may include funding for staff training, translation services, brochures, flyers, posters, newspaper ads, radio ads, website, etc.

B. Language Assistance Measures

There are several language assistance measures that are available to the City of Morris Transit. These include:

- Translation of key documents in the following language(s): _____
- 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
- Other: Describe:

--We will continue to work with all LEP persons and groups to keep the lines of communication open.

--We will continue to work with the local Chamber of Commerce, Community Education, school, churches & UMM on any education or communication they think might be beneficial in assisting LEP persons to use our services.

--We will continue to keep our translated informational flyers up to date and available in languages we might feel would be helpful to larger LEP groups

C. 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 an annual 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

D. 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:

- signs on buses or at bus stops
- brochures
- posters
- sending information to local organizations that work with LEP persons
- telephone messages
- local ads (newspaper , radio, TV)
- website notices
- information tables at local events, grocery stores, pharmacies, and churches
- Other: Describe: _____

E. 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 manager and dated.

F. Dissemination of Plan

This Language Assistance Plan is available on our website at <http://ci.morris.mn.us/transit.php> .

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.

G. Contact Information

Questions or comments about this plan may be submitted to:

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 Title Transit Coordinator
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