



BUFFALO POLICE DEPARTMENT

TRAINING BULLETIN

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COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

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Language Line Over-the-Phone Interpretation Service

Purpose

The purpose of this training bulletin is to familiarize officers with the Language Line Over-the-Phone Interpretation Service. Language Line Direct Response is a service provided through Erie County 911 that enables interpreters to speak to limited English speaking (LEP) callers in their preferred languages, and quickly learn why they are calling.

Interpreters will listen to your limited English speaking caller, analyze the message and accurately convey its original meaning to you. Language Line Services interpreters are trained to remain calm and focused through any situation.

This service operates 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

- 1.) Direct 911 calls are handled within the dispatch center
- 2.) Officers face to face with a limited English speaker
 - Officers may access the service by calling 911 and request the Language Line Services. Once connected, request the language your client speaks through the interactive voice response (IVR) system.
 - If you do not know which language to request, simply say, "Help" and you will be automatically transferred to a live representative trained to help in language identification.
 - If you know the correct language, say the name of the language and proceed as usual.

- You will be connected to an interpreter who will provide his/her name and ID number. Summarize what you wish to accomplish and give any special instructions. Use the phone, passing the handset or a speakerphone.

❖ **What should I do when the interpreter joins the conversation?**

Summarize what you wish to accomplish and give any special instructions to the interpreter.

Don't assume that the interpreter or limited English speaker knows more about your organization or its procedures than what you tell them.

Take the lead in the conversation by giving the interpreter specific questions to relay.

Group your thoughts or questions to help the conversation flow naturally and quickly.

For example, ask for an address and phone number as one question.

❖ **What should I do to facilitate the interpretation?**

Remember, to communicate directly with the limited English speaker, avoid slang, jargon, acronyms or technical terms that may not interpret well into other languages and cultures.

As you would in any conversation, you may have to clarify points the limited English speaker doesn't readily understand.

If you need to clarify a point, ask the interpreter right away.

All of our interpreters are trained to ask for clarification if you use a term they do not know.

Information about language interpretation

❖ **What is language interpretation?**

Interpretation is the oral transmittal of a message from one language into another language. Language Line Services provides accurate and complete first-person interpretation regardless of country of origin or level of education of the speaker.

Professionally trained and tested Language Line Services interpreters do not interpret word-for-word, but meaning-for-meaning.

This is why you might notice that non-English conversations can seem to take longer. Many English concepts that are communicated in one or two words can take several phrases to accurately describe in another language, and vice versa.

Our interpreters analyze the original message and select words that most accurately convey the true meaning of what is said.

Officers need to be aware that while a family member or friend may be willing to translate for a complainant, this may not be the correct procedure.

The person volunteering to translate may be the potential suspect that the complainant is reporting and the translation may be false or inaccurate.

Officers shall not use a family member to translate in any domestic incident.