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Office of the Attorney General
Washington, D. C. 20530

November 21, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF FEDERAL AGENCIES, HEADS OF CIVIL RIGHTS
OFFICES, AND GENERAL COUNSELS

FROM: THE ATTORNEY GENERAL 
SUBJECT: STRENGTHENING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S
COMMITMENT TO LANGUAGE ACCESS

All people in this country, regardless of the language they speak, deserve meaningful access to programs and activities that are conducted or supported by federal agencies. Executive Order 13166, *Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency* (Aug. 16, 2000), affirms the federal government's commitment to improve the accessibility of these services and to help ensure full participation by individuals with limited English proficiency. It has been more than a decade since the Justice Department encouraged our partner agencies to help strengthen the federal government's commitment to its language access obligations under Executive Order 13166.¹ Although federal agencies have made significant progress since then, there remains a clear need to further enhance access to multilingual information.

To that end, pursuant to the Justice Department's coordination authority under Executive Orders 12250 and 13166, I am asking the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, with assistance as appropriate from the Justice Department's recently appointed Language Access Coordinator within the Office for Access to Justice, to work with other federal agencies to share best practices and exchange information about language access initiatives and efforts. In particular, the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights will work collaboratively with agencies to help determine: (i) whether agencies can further update their language access policies and plans; (ii) whether agencies are effectively reaching individuals with limited English proficiency when disseminating information about federal resources, programs, and services; (iii) whether agencies have considered updates or modifications to guidance to federal financial assistance recipients regarding their obligations to provide meaningful language access under the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations; and (iv) whether agencies can adapt their digital communications to welcome individuals with limited English proficiency. The Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights will also request that each agency provide an updated language access plan within 180 days of this memorandum.

¹ See Memorandum from the Attorney General, *Federal Government's Renewed Commitment to Language Access Obligations Under Executive Order 13166* (Feb. 17, 2011).

Subject: Strengthening the Federal Government's Commitment to
Language Access

The Justice Department is committed to addressing linguistic barriers in governmental services that deny individuals a full opportunity to participate in economic, social, and civic life. We look forward to working with you to further strengthen and improve meaningful language access.

If you have any questions, please contact Laureen Laglagaron in the Federal Coordination and Compliance Section of the Civil Rights Division, at laureen.laglagaron@usdoj.gov.