

Language Assistance Plan (LAP)

1. Introduction

Sequoyah Fund’s Language Assistance Plan (LAP) is designed to ensure meaningful access to our programs and services for individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). We are committed to complying with the Department of Justice (DOJ) guidance on LEP services and the U.S. Treasury Language Access Guidance.

2. Needs Assessment

Based on current demographics and our 26-year history of service, LEP needs in our service area appear minimal. The primary language spoken is English by approximately 96% of the population as demonstrated in the table below. However, we recognize that demographics can shift, and we are committed to conducting periodic needs assessments (every 2-3 years) to stay updated on any potential changes. This may include reviewing new demographic data or conducting outreach to local community organizations serving LEP populations. We acknowledge the presence and resurgence of the Cherokee language in our service area, though it is not currently the primary language for our population.

County	Primary Language(s)	% Speaking Language Other Than English at Home
Haywood	English	3.7%
Jackson	English	4.2%
Macon	English	4.0%
Swain	English	3.6%
Graham	English	3.8%
Clay	English	3.3%
Cherokee	English	3.5%

3. LEP Services

- **Interpretation:** Qualified interpreters will be available upon request for in-person meetings and conferences. We will explore the feasibility of providing telephone interpretation services to further enhance accessibility.
- **Translation:** While there haven't been requests for translated documents, we will translate vital documents (applications, notices) into any language identified as a potential need during future needs assessments.
- **Training:** Necessary accommodations to provide proper services to LEP individuals include staff training that encompasses:
 - The LAP.
 - Who to contact for language assistance.
 - Identifying language needs of LEP persons.

- Location of documents available in other languages.
- How to effectively communicate with LEP individuals.
- Tracking the use of language assistance services.
- Bilingual staff will be periodically assessed and trained in correct interpreting and translation techniques, specialized terminology, ethics, and other topics, as necessary.

4. Communication

We are committed to informing LEP individuals of their right to access language assistance services. We will develop and implement strategies such as:

- Including a brief statement on our website and brochures mentioning the availability of language assistance upon request.
- Multilingual signage may be considered if future needs assessments identify a specific language group.
- Written language policy, that is available to the public.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

We will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our LAP on an annual basis. This will include:

- Tracking any requests for LEP services and the language assistance provided.
- Reviewing and updating the LAP as needed based on the periodic needs assessments to ensure its continued effectiveness.

6. Resources

We will allocate resources to implement this LAP effectively. Resource allocation will be based on identified LEP needs through our periodic assessments.

7. Contact Information

We have designated a Language Access Coordinator to oversee the implementation of this LAP. Contact information for the Language Access Coordinator will be readily available to LEP individuals (e.g., website, brochures).

Commitment to LEP Services

Sequoyah Fund is committed to providing equal access to our programs and services for all individuals, regardless of their English proficiency. This LAP demonstrates our proactive approach to serving LEP individuals and ensures we can adapt to meet their needs if they evolve in the future.