

**Purpose.**

The Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (SWWDB) is committed to providing equal opportunity in all programs and services to ensure full compliance with all civil rights laws, including Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which requires non-discrimination on the basis of national origin. Equal opportunity includes physical and program access for persons with disabilities and program access for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Program and physical access for persons with disabilities is covered in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, Section 504 and Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), 29 CFR Part 38 (38.9 Discrimination prohibited based on national origin, including limited English proficiency).

Policy.

SWWDB shall not discriminate on the basis of national origin, including limited English proficiency. An individual must not be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or other federally or state-funded program based on national origin.

National origin discrimination includes treating individual beneficiaries, participants, or applicants for any aid, benefit, service, or training adversely because they (or their families or ancestors) are from a particular country or part of the world, because of ethnicity or accent (including physical, linguistic, and cultural characteristics closely associated with a national origin group), or because the recipient perceives the individual to be of a certain national origin, even if they are not.

To this end, it is the policy of the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (SWWDB) to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to each Limited English proficient (LEP) individual served or encountered so that LEP individuals are effectively informed about and/or able to participate in the program or activity.

As reasonable, SWWDB shall work toward ensuring communication and service delivery systems convey, in the appropriate languages, how an individual may effectively learn about, participate in, and/or access any aid, benefit, service, or training that SWWDB provides. When developing new methods or procedures relating to the delivery of information or assistance, SWWDB will take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP individuals are able to learn about, participate in and/or access any SWWDB-provided aid, benefit, service or training.

SWWDB shall provide free-of-charge, accurate language assistance services in a timely manner. Assistance will be considered timely when it provided at a place and time that ensures equal access and that avoids delay or denial of any service or benefit.

SWWDB shall provide adequate notice to LEP individuals of the availability of language assistance (interpretation and translation) and that such assistance is free of charge.



SWWDB shall not require an LEP individual to provide his/her own interpreter.

SWWDB shall translate vital information that is relayed in written materials into languages spoken by a significant number or portion of the population eligible to be served or likely to be encountered. These translations shall be available in hard copy, upon request, or electronically such as through SWWDB's website, www.jobcenter.org. For languages not spoken by a significant number or portion of the population eligible to be served, or likely to be encountered, SWWDB will take reasonable steps to meet the language need of the LEP individuals who are interested in learning more about the programs, services and benefit provided by the organization. This information can be stated orally if not translated.

SWWDB shall include a "Babel notice," indicating in appropriate languages that language assistance is available, in all communications of vital information, such as hard copy letters or decisions or those communications posted on web sites.

SWWDB shall, once made aware of the preferred language of an LEP individual, convey vital information in that language.

SWWDB shall take reasonable steps to provide language assistance to provide access to the services and benefits available through the programs administered by the organization.

SWWDB expects all employees, clients, program participants, vendors, associates, and agencies receiving services and/or funding from SWWDB to adhere to this policy and take deliberate steps to provide assistance in the most effective and relevant manner possible so that LEP individuals experience a supportive and barrier-free interaction.

SWWDB has established procedure E-111-1, Providing Language Assistance, to ensure LEP individuals receive assistance that is relevant and positive. This procedure additionally captures the process through which the organization will comply with this policy.

SWWDB will take necessary corrective action to remedy any instances where it is determined that discrimination or retaliation has occurred. Employees discriminating against other staff or clients will be subject to discipline under appropriate SWWDB policies. Clients discriminating against another client will be subject to discipline under the applicable participant code of conduct. Any employee or client retaliating against anyone raising concerns about any type of harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge or expulsion from SWWDB sponsored activities.

Reports of alleged acts of discrimination, complaints of harassment, or inquiries concerning any equal opportunity policies may be filed directly with the SWWDB EO Officer, Rock County Job Center, 1900 Center Ave., Janesville. Complaints must be filed within 300 days of the date that the action causing the complaint occurred.



LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE

E-111

Retaliation against persons raising concerns about any type of harassment is prohibited and anyone suspected of retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge or expulsion from SWWDB sponsored activities.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) shall ensure that procedures and systems are established and maintained to provide meaningful and timely services to LEP customers. The Equal Opportunity Officer and the Workforce Operations Manager, under the direction of and in consultation with the CEO, shall be operationally responsible for the documentation, accountability and compliance efforts relating to this policy.

References: Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 29 CFR Part 38 (§38.9)
 DOL Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 42 W.S.C. §2000(d)
 SWWDB Procedure E.111 – Providing Language Assistance

Policy Adopted: March 20, 2017
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