



Councilmember  
**ROBERTO URANGA**  
Long Beach, Seventh District

**Memorandum**  
**City of Long Beach**

**R-35**



**Date:** April 14, 2020

**To:** Mayor and Members of the City Council

**From:** Councilmember Roberto Uranga, Seventh District  
Vice Mayor Dee Andrews, Sixth District  
Councilmember Jeannine Pearce, Second District  
Councilmember Rex Richardson, Ninth District

**Subject:** Language Access and City Services

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Request the City Manager to establish information lines in multiple languages and also website landing pages in the three most commonly spoken languages (Spanish, Khmer, Tagalog), as described in the City's Language Access Policy (LAP). Direct the City Manager to provide adequate staffing, resources and translation services to ensure that our monolingual residents are apprised of the most up-to-date information regarding the COVID-19 global pandemic, public health updates and City services. Also, direct the City Manager to report back on the feasibility and costs associated with permanently moving our translation services in-house to provide a faster response and update to our residents.

**BACKGROUND:**

On August 13, 2013, the City of Long Beach adopted a Language Access Policy (LAP). The language access policy establishes standards and procedures for providing equal access to City services and programs to all residents, regardless of their proficiency in English. Many Long Beach residents want to be involved in City government and seek access to City services and documents, but their limited proficiency of English acts as a barrier. In Long Beach, it is estimated that 45.5% of residents speak a language other than English at home. As one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the nation, we have an obligation to ensure that all residents are informed, regardless of language barriers.

On March 4, 2020, the City of Long Beach declared a local health and City emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since this time, the City has established numerous safety mandates and provided daily updates from the City Manager and Department of Health and Human Services. Since much of this news is changing in real time, information is being distributed solely in English, with translation in the coming days. We must ensure that this information is also available in real time in the languages established and adopted by the Language Access Policy in 2013. Establishing dedicated phone lines in Spanish, Khmer and Tagalog and website landing pages in each of these languages is an appropriate first step to ensure that all residents are informed during this global pandemic and in the future.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Due to the urgency of this request, no fiscal impact statement was available.