

I. BACKGROUND

The limited English Proficiency Plan addresses Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color or national origin. In 1974, the U. S. Supreme Court affirmed that the failure to ensure a meaningful opportunity for national origin minorities, with limited-English proficiency, to participate in a federally funded program violates Title VI (Federal Aid Recipient Programs & Activities) regulations. Additionally, requirements are outlined in Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Service for Persons with Limited English Proficiency signed on August 11, 2000. Its purpose is to ensure accessibility to programs and services to eligible persons who have limited proficiency in the English language.

Who is a Limited English Proficient Person?

Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient, or “LEP.” The U.S. Census Bureau does not define limited English proficiency or non-limited English proficient populations. The Census’ American Community Survey (ACCS) data is based on categories of English-speaking ability: very well, and less than very well.

Determining the Need of Limited English Proficiency

As a recipient of federal funds, Blueprint 2000 must take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to the information and services it provides. As noted in the **Federal Register, Volume 70; Number 239 on Wednesday, December 14, 2005**, there are four factors to consider when determining “reasonable steps.” This is known as “**the four-factor analysis**” and is outlined below:

- **Factor 1: The number of proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by Blueprint 2000 programs, services or activities.**
- **Factor 2: The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with these programs, services or activities.**
- **Factor 3: The nature and importance or the program, service, or activity to people’s lives.**
- **Factor 4: The resources available and the overall cost to the Blueprint 2000.**

The Department of Transportation (DOT) policy guidance gives recipients of federal funds substantial flexibility in determining what language assistance is appropriate based on a local assessment of the four factors listed above. Below is a self-assessment of need in relation to the four-factors.

II. LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY SELF ASSESSMENT FOR BLUEPRINT 2000

Blueprint 2000 has assessed its programs and services using the following four (4) factor analysis.

Factor 1: the number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by Blueprint 2000 programs, services or activities.

Blueprint 2000 conducts several advisory committee meetings, public meetings, public hearings and community meetings throughout the year. All meetings held by Blueprint 2000 are open to the public. However, a significant source of contact with local citizens is the Blueprint2000 website. Therefore, the encounters with LEP individuals would be at public meetings, outreach events in the community, and on the Blueprint 2000 webpage.

Data from Census Table B16001: Language Spoken at Home By Ability to Speak English for the Populations 5 Years and Over, from the U.S. Census Bureau 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, was gathered. It should be noted that for planning purposes, people that speak English “less than very well” are included in the analysis and only the top four language groups are examined.

The table below is derived from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2009-2013 American Community Survey. It shows the number and percent of LEP persons 5 years and over, in total and by language in Leon County (Blueprint 2000 projects all lie within Leon County). Note: An LEP Person is defined as a one who speaks English “less than very well”.

Table 1: The Top Four Languages Spoken at Home in Leon County by LEP Persons (US Census Bureau’s 2009-2013 American Community Survey)										
Population 5 years and older	Number of LEP Persons	Percentage of LEP Persons	LEP Persons who speak Spanish		LEP Persons who speak French Creole		LEP Persons who speak Portuguese		LEP Persons who speak French (including Patois, Cajun)	
Total	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
263,489	25,396	9.64%	2,386	.91%	739	.28%	662	0.25%	330	0.13%

Table 1 shows that of the LEP persons within the Leon County area, .91% speak Spanish at home, making this the most significant language group as a percentage of the population. The second most common language of the area’s LEP population is French Creole, which makes up .28% followed by Chinese at .25% and French (including Patois, Cajun) at .13%.

Results from Factor 1 Analysis:

Although the percentage of LEP persons in Leon County is not significant enough to trigger a responsibility to provide services in languages other than English, Blueprint 2000 is committed to the principles of Title VI and will provide, with reasonable notice, interpreter and translation services when needed, upon request. Local interpreters for Spanish language will be provided within a reasonable time period through partnership with the Florida State University Department of Modern Languages & Linguistics. Language interpretation may also be accessed for all other languages through a telephone interpretation service such as the *Language Line* and *Florida Relay 7-1-1*

Factor 2: The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with these programs, services or activities.

The four-factor analysis identified Spanish as the most significant language spoken by the LEP population in the Blueprint 2000 service area. The size of the overall LEP population in this region is relatively small. Blueprint 2000 has not received any requests for translation or interpretation of its program, services or activities into Spanish or any other language by LEP individuals or groups.

Results from Factor 2 Analysis: Based on the low LEP population, it is unlikely Blueprint 2000 staff will come into contact with LEP populations.

Factor 3: The nature and importance of the program, service, or activity to people’s lives.

Blueprint 2000 believes that transportation is of critical importance to the public as access to health care, emergency services, employment and other essentials would be difficult or impossible without a reliable transportation system. To that end, Blueprint 2000 defines its information pertaining to transportation improvement projects as essential, along with the documents that advise the public of how to access its non-discrimination and public involvement policies.

Results from Factor 3 Analysis: Based on the services provided by Blueprint 2000, transportation project information deemed the most important. Adequate procedures are in place to ensure service to LEP individuals.

Factor 4: The resources available and the overall cost to Leon County.

Although there is a very low percentage of LEP individuals in Leon County, that is, persons who speak English “less than very well” the Blueprint 2000 will strive to offer the following measures:

1. The Blueprint staff will take reasonable steps to provide the opportunity for meaningful access to LEP clients who have difficulty communicating English.
2. The following resources will be available to accommodate LEP persons:
 - Local interpreters for Spanish language will be provided within a reasonable time period through partnership with the Florida State University Department of Modern Languages & Linguistics.
 - Language interpretation may also be accessed for all other languages through a telephone interpretation service such as the *Language Line* and *Florida Relay 7-1-1*.

Results from Factor 4 Analysis: Despite the low percentage of LEP individuals Blueprint 2000 is committed to provide for reasonable accommodations.

Summary:

The analyses of these factors suggest LEP services are not required at this time. However, Blueprint 2000 is committed to

- Provide notification of the availability of LEP assistance on the Blueprint 2000 web site and in public meeting notices
- Translate essential documents pertaining to transportation projects into Spanish upon request

Shelonda Meeks
Title VI Coordinator
2727 Apalachee Parkway
Suite 200
Tallahassee, FL 32301
Shelonda.Meeks@blueprint2000.org
850-219-1060 (p)
850-219-1098 (f)
7-1-1 (TDD & Voice), via Florida Relay Service

Public Involvement

In order to plan for efficient, safe, equitable and reliable transportation systems, Blueprint 2000 must have the input of the public. Significant resources are dedicated to gather public input and Blueprint 2000 actively encourages the participation of the entire community. Persons wishing to request presentations or services by Blueprint 2000 or submit suggestions for improvement of Blueprint 2000's public involvement may contact:

Shelonda Meeks
Title VI Coordinator
2727 Apalachee Parkway
Suite 200
Tallahassee, FL 32301
Shelonda.Meeks@blueprint2000.org
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Data Collection:

The Federal Highway Administration regulations require federal-aid recipients to collect racial, ethnic and other demographic data on beneficiaries of or those affected by transportation programs, services and activities. Blueprint 2000 accomplishes this through the use of census data, the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department and other methods. Should Blueprint 2000 find it necessary to request identification of certain racial, ethnic or other data from those who participate in its public involvement events, self-identification will always be voluntary and anonymous. Additionally, Blueprint 2000 will not release or otherwise use this data in any manner inconsistent with federal regulations.

Assurances:

Every three years, or commensurate with a change in Blueprint 2000 management, Blueprint 2000 must certify to FHWA and FDOT that its programs, services and activities are being conducted in a non-discriminatory manner. These certifications are assurances and, as such, document Blueprint 2000's commitment to non-discrimination and equitable service to the community and serve as a legally enforceable agreement by which Blueprint 2000 may be held liable for breach. The FDOT will supply the

most current Assurance forms, which will be posted to the Blueprint 2000 website (www.Blueprint2000.org) upon completion.