

**State of Montana  
Disaster & Emergency Services Division**

**Limited English Proficiency**

This document was prepared by the  
Department of Military Affairs (DMA)  
Montana Disaster & Emergency Services Division (MT DES)



*“Montana Disaster and Emergency Services  
is the lead agency coordinating comprehensive emergency management.  
Our vision is to create a disaster resilient Montana.”*

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## ***Record of Change***

Date	Description of Change	Initials
	Initial Draft	

## ***Record of Distribution***

Upon approval, the MT DES Division provided an electronic copy to the following contacts. To provide comments and suggestions for future revisions, call 406-324-4777.

Date	Receiving Partner Agency/Organization

## SECTION I: PURPOSE, SCOPE, and BACKGROUND

### Purpose:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides that no person in the United States shall on the grounds of race, color, or national origin be discriminated against under any program or activity receiving Federal Financial Assistance. The Federal Aid Highway Act of 1973 (23 U.S.C 324) added “sex” as a protected status. The Title VI Program also refers, where appropriate, to related Nondiscrimination authorities. The State of Montana forbids discrimination in many areas through its Constitution, codes and rules.

Executive Order 13166 implements Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by requiring meaningful access to all federally financially assisted programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency (LEP)

Limited English proficiency is defined as “individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English.” LEP individuals are entitled by EO 13166 to language assistance with respect to a particular type of service, benefit or encounter.

Montana Disaster and Emergency Services (MT DES) is a State governmental entity. This plan provides guidance to MT DES on compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related Nondiscrimination authorities. MT DES assures that no person shall, as provided by Federal and State civil rights authorities, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity. MT DES further ensures every effort will be made to ensure non-discrimination in all programs and activities, whether these programs and activities are federally funded or not.

### Scope:

This plan is limited to MT DES in providing reasonable steps to ensure that limited English proficient persons have meaningful access to the programs, services, and information MT DES provides.

### Background:

Montana covers approximately 147,056 square miles with an estimated 1,062,305 residents. The average population density of just over 7 persons per square mile. There are 56 counties, 624 incorporated cities and towns, and 7 Federally recognized sovereign Indian Nations within the boundaries of the state. Montana’s economy is predominantly agricultural and tourism based with entrances to two national parks as well as other outdoor recreation. During peak tourist season, Montana’s population can double in size. In the 2010 census, the most populated counties by persons per square mile (ppsm) were:

- Yellowstone - 56.2 ppsm (County Population estimate: 160,137)
- Butte-Silver Bow 47.6 ppsm (County Population estimate: 34,284)
- Missoula 42.1 ppsm (County Population estimate: 118,791)
- Cascade 30.1 ppsm (County Population estimate: 81,643)
- Gallatin 34.4 ppsm (County Population estimate: 111,876)
- Lake 19.3 ppsm (County Population estimate: 30,250)
- Lewis & Clark 18.3 ppsm (County Population estimate: 68,700)

- Flathead 17.9 ppsm (County Population estimate: 102,106)
- Ravalli 16.8 ppsm (County population estimate: 43,172)

## SECTION II: CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

### Identification of LEP persons

The total number of LEP individuals in Montana is estimated at 8,275 per U.S. Census 2011-2015 American Community Survey Data: Total persons 5 years and over who speak a language other than English at home and Speak English less than “Very Well”. This is less than 1% of the overall population. The areas with the highest number of estimated LEP persons are:

- Yellowstone County Total LEP: 1,667 1.0% of total county population
- Missoula County Total LEP: 1,349 1.1% of total county population
- Gallatin County Total LEP: 933 0.8% of total county population
- Flathead County Total LEP: 484 0.4% of total county population
- Cascade County Total LEP: 354 0.4% of total county population

The highest numbers of persons of non-English languages spoken at home according to the 2010 census are:

- Spanish: Yellowstone, Gallatin, Missoula
- Indo-European: Missoula, Gallatin, Yellowstone
- Asian-Pacific: Yellowstone, Missoula, Gallatin
- Other: Yellowstone, Lake, Butte-Silver Bow

MT DES have not had encounters with non-English speaking personnel in conducting daily operations. However, during disasters and emergencies there is a possibility of having non-English speaking individuals seeking assistance through the local governmental agencies.

### Language assistance measures

The following options are available to MT DES:

- Multi-language flashcards that MT DES could use to identify an individual’s language, then access to an interpreter. “I Speak” cards can be used to identify and communicate the language in which an LEP person needs assistance. The cards, which are produced by the U.S. Department of Justice, can be downloaded from <http://lep.gov/ISpeakCards2004.pdf> for free. Costs may arise when suitable interpreter services are to be retained.
- Using family members to interpret for LEP individuals, depending on the circumstance and immediate need for assistance.
- Contracts for Montana Deaf/Hard of Hearing Services (MDHHS). This statewide network, based in Great Falls, can be reached at (406) 771-9053.
- State of Montana Contract No. 03508, Telephone Based Interpreter Services. The purpose of these non-exclusive contracts is to provide agencies with an expedited means of obtaining telephone-based interpreter services. The contracts provide 365 days per year, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, telephone based interpreter services on an “as needed” basis for Limited English

Proficiency clients needing immediate interpreter assistance. These contracts do not include in-person interpreting, sign language interpreting or document translation services.

**Staff Training**

MT DES staff will be made aware of the LEP plan and policies including how to access language assistance services if needed.

**SECTION III: PLAN MAINTENANCE**

The MT DES Plan Development and Review Group will review this document annually to ensure it is current and accurate.

Minor corrections, edits, updates or adjustments that do not impact the procedures or responsibilities do not need vetting by the review group. Changes will be tracked in the record of change log.