



## LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

### **I. Introduction**

The Leech Lake Financial Services (LLFS) is committed to improving the accessibility of its programs and services to eligible non-English speakers and limited English proficient (LEP) persons. LLFS has prepared this Language Access Plan (LAP) to reduce barriers and ensure meaningful access to services, programs and activities on the part of LEP persons.

LLFS will periodically review and update this LAP in order to ensure continued responsiveness to community needs, consistency with LLFS's mission to "provide affordable capital, financial education and economic development for the Leech Lake Reservation community" and in compliance with federal law.

### **II. Purpose**

The purpose of this LAP is to ensure meaningful access to services, programs and activities on the part of persons who have limited English proficiency.

LLFS is committed to this Language Access Plan as the appropriate response to meeting the needs of LEP individuals and families who participate in services, programs or activities of LLFS.

A LEP person is someone who is not able to speak, read, write or understand the English language at a level that allows him/her to interact effectively with LLFS services, programs, or activities. Any person who self-identifies as an LEP person will be given the benefit of the language protocols described in this LAP.

LLFS notes that this Language Access Plan is intended as guidance and does not create individual rights or entitlements or establish LLFS duties or process beyond what is required under applicable law.

LLFS has evaluated its language services to meet program and client needs, has prepared a plan of action and will continue to revise services as needed.

### **III. Language Access Plan**

Approach: This Language Access Plan represents LLFS's administrative blueprint to provide meaningful access to LLFS services, programs and activities on the part of LEP individuals. It outlines the tasks LLFS will undertake to meet this objective. LLFS's Language Access Plan will be implemented subject to the availability of resources.

LLFS will evaluate the totality of circumstances and language access needs, including the four factors mentioned below, to determine the tasks LLFS will undertake to meet the objective of providing meaningful access to LLFS services, programs and activities to LEP constituents and clients. Factors such as volume or proportion of persons with LEP served, the frequency with which persons with LEP come in contact with our programs, the nature of the programs, the activities, events, documentation, information we provide, the language resources we currently have available and the costs involved in acquiring/contracting any additional, appropriate language resources will all be considered.

**(1) LLFS Language Access Coordination:**

LLFS will coordinate language access planning and responses to language access needs throughout out the organization. The Office of the Executive Director will oversee implementation, effectiveness and direct staff as necessary.

**(2) LLFS Language Access Needs Assessment:**

**Steps taken and to be taken by LLFS.** Federal guidance provides that LAPs should be premised on the following factors:

1. The number and proportion of non-English speakers and LEP persons served by the agency in its services, programs and activities;
2. The frequency with which non-English speakers and LEP individuals come in contact with the service, program or activity;
3. The nature and importance of the service, program or activity provided by the LLFS;
4. The fiscal resources available to LLFS and/or costs incurred by the LLFS.

The programs offered by LLFS are primarily offered to low-income households. What constitutes “low-income” is defined differently for different programs. Where LLFS has individual program data relating to the languages spoken by applicants and participants with LEP, that data will be used.

**Language Makeup of Program Participants and Applicants.** LLFS programs experience a very low rate of ESL / LEP participants. LLFS programs do serve individuals with impaired hearing, sight or low literacy competency. Assistive services are offered these individuals, as well.

**Points of Contact with Program Participants.** LLFS’s main office is located at 113 Spruce Avenue NE, Cass Lake, Minnesota 56633, its main telephone number is 218.339.3940. LLFS email is [info@llfinancial.org](mailto:info@llfinancial.org) The general LLFS website is available <https://www.llfinancial.org/>

**(3) Language Resources Assessment:**

**Existing Staff.** Existing staff have experience and/or will be trained to identify individuals who appear to need language support or assistance. While we do not have multi-lingual staff currently, we have also experienced no need in the past ten years for interpretation

services. Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (LLBO) is a small reservation community located in the State of Minnesota. Our services and programs are directed to a geographic area which includes the Leech Lake Reservation and twenty-five (25) miles outside of the designated Reservation borders. We primarily serve the Native American community, LLBO band members and others residing within our geographic target market. Other than hearing and site impairments which we assist with, there is has been no call for LEP services within the last 10 years.

**Financial Resources.** If LEP services are required, financial resources will be available to support interpretation services and/or other support to ensure that all applicants have equal access to services.

**(4) Language Service Protocols:**

For the LLFS main offices:

Reception staff and others are aware of available resources and how to support persons who appear at LLFS offices needing language assistance.

For the LLFS website:

The LLFS website content may be read using online tools readily available. LLFS staff and others are aware of available resources and how to support persons requesting assistance.

**(5) Oral Interpretation Services**

LLFS will work with telephone interpreter lines and community-based organizations to ensure that oral interpretation services are available if needed. If such measures prove insufficient, LLFS may hire bilingual staff or formally contract with individual interpreters or interpretation agencies.

**(6) Vital Document Translation**

LLFS reviews forms, letters and documents used in administration of its programs, and identifies those documents considered vital. LLFS staff will translate vital documents as needed, or work with interpreters to read and explain the content of vital documents to LEP applicants.

**(6) Staff Training**

All staff are supported and trained to offer guidance for LEP as required.

**(8) Notice to Public**

The LLFS Language Access Plan is available from Intake personnel and posted on the <https://www.llfinancial.org/contact> page to notify the public that language assistance

services are available, as needed, to meaningfully access LLFS services, programs and activities.

**(9) Agency Monitoring**

On an on-going basis, LLFS will monitor the effectiveness of its LAP and evaluate areas for improvement of its policies, procedures, protocols and training.

**(10) Complaints.**

Complaints about this Language Access Plan or services provided to clients in accordance with this LAP may be filed with LLFS's Office of the Executive Director.

## **Language Access Complaint Procedure**

You may file a complaint with the Office of the Executive Director if you believe you have not received the services set out in this Plan. You must file a written complaint within 6 months of the alleged denial. To file a complaint with Leech Lake Financial Services, submit the written complaint to:

Robert Aitken III  
Leech Lake Financial Services, Inc  
113 Spruce Ave NE  
PO Box 848  
Cass Lake, MN 56633

Phone: 218.339.3940  
Fax: 218.339.3944  
Email: [info@llfinancial.org](mailto:info@llfinancial.org)