



# Hiawathaland Transit

Language Assistance Plan



## **Language Assistance Plan**

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## Language Assistance Plan

### Purpose

The purpose of this Language Assistance Plan (LAP) is to meet Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) requirements to comply with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq., provides that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that receives Federal Assistance. In *Lau v. Nichols*, the Supreme Court interpreted Title VI regulations disseminated by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to hold that Title VI prohibits conduct that has a disproportionate effect on Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons because such conduct constitutes national original discrimination (414 U.S. 563) (1974).

Executive Order 13166 "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," reprinted at 65 FR 50121, August 16, 2000 requires federal agencies to examine the services it provides and develop and implement a system in which LEP persons can meaningful access said services. Federal agencies were further instructed to develop and publish guidelines for their respective recipients to assist them with their obligations to LEP persons under Title VI. The United States Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) complied and published their guidelines on December 14, 2005.

The U.S. DOT's document states that Title VI and its implementing regulations require that DOT recipients take meaningful steps to ensure LEP persons access to benefits, services, information as well as other important portions of their programs. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) referenced the U.S. DOT's document in Circular 4702.1A, titled "Title VI and Title VI-Dependent Guidelines for FTA Recipients." This document was published on April 13, 2007. Within their circular, FTA requires that recipients and subrecipients to take steps to ensure meaningful access to benefits, services, and information for LEP persons as well as suggest that recipients, as well as subrecipients, develop a language assistance plan consistent with their circular and the U.S. DOT guidance plan developed in 2005.

The completion of this plan for persons with Limited English Proficiency conforms to the requirements of the FTA Circular 4702.1B and the U.S. DOT LEP Guidance Plan.

The Plan for Hiawathaland Transit contains:

- \* Identification LEP individuals who need language assistance based on the four-factor analysis
- \* Provide Language assistance measures
- \* Provide and conduct staff training
- \* Methods for notifying LEP persons about available language assistance
- \*Methods for monitoring, evaluating, and updating the plan

### LEP Needs Assessment - The Four Factor Analysis

*Factor 1: The number or proportion of LEP persons in our service area who may be served or are likely to encounter a transit program, activity, or service.*



The purpose of Factor 1 is to determine the number and percentage of LEP persons served or potential to be served within the Hiawathaland Transit service area. Hiawathaland Transit has used the following methods to gather data in regard to our LEP populations. These include, but are not limited to:

- \* 2010 US Census Data/American Community Survey Data
- \* 2011 Three River's Community Action - Southeast Minnesota Community Needs Assessment
- \* Local school district data
- \* Information from local organizations about LEP persons in our service area
- \* Reports from drivers, dispatchers, and others about contract with LEP persons

Three Rivers Hiawathaland Transit															
Limited English Proficient Persons by County															
County	Estimate; Total:	total LEP	% LEP	Estimate; Total: - African languages:	Estimate; Total: - African languages: - Speak English less than "very well"	Estimate; Total: - German:	Estimate; Total: - German: - Speak English less than "very well"	Estimate; Total: - Japanese:	Estimate; Total: - Japanese: - Speak English less than "very well"	Estimate; Total: - Other Slavic languages:	Estimate; Total: - Other Slavic languages: - Speak English less than "very well"	Estimate; Total: - Spanish or Spanish Creole:	Estimate; Total: - Spanish or Spanish Creole: - Speak English less than "very well"	Estimate; Total: - Vietnamese:	Estimate; Total: - Vietnamese: - Speak English less than "very well"
Goodhue	43237	586	1.3553	19	19	177	5	73	55	5	5	1298	427	25	4
Rice	59620	2399	4.0238	947	267	218	56	90	37	370	56	4260	1722	209	65
Wabasha	20442	128	0.6262	0	0	70	6	0	0	0	0	594	58	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>123299</b>	<b>3113</b>		<b>966</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>6152</b>	<b>2207</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>69</b>

For purposes of data analysis of this plan, Three Rivers Hiawathaland Transit is concerned with individuals that speak English "less than very well." According to the data provided in the 2010 American Community Survey 2007-2011 Five-Year estimate and Three River's Community Action, INC's Southeast Minnesota Community Needs Assessment, the following information was found:

The total population of Goodhue, Wabasha, and Rice Counties is 123,299. The total number of LEP persons in our service area is 3,113. This constitutes an average of 2.52% of the individuals that are LEP in the Hiawathaland Transit service area. Rice County houses the majority of LEP persons, which is just over 4% of their population. African and Spanish languages combined constitute the majority of LEP persons in Rice County (.44 and 2.8% respectively) that speak English less very well. Goodhue and Wabasha Counties see smaller percentages of LEP persons, 1.35% and .62% respectfully. The majority of those that speak English "less than very well" in these counties are Spanish speaking.

*Factor 2: The frequency in which LEP persons come into contact with our transit program, activities, or services.*



According to the DOT Guidance, "recipients should access, as accurately as possible, the frequency with which they have or should have contact with LEP individuals from different language groups seeking assistance, as the more frequent the contact, the more likely enhanced language services will be needed. The steps that are reasonable for a recipient that serves an LEP person on a one-time basis will be very different than those expected from a recipient that serves LEP persons daily."

Interpreter Requests: Neither, Hiawathaland Transit Customer Service Specialists nor Hiawathaland Transit Drivers, collect information from riders as to their level of English proficiency. Based on requests within the communication center, the two main languages that we do receive requests for interpreting include Spanish and Somali. Currently, Three Rivers Hiawathaland does have Spanish speaking staff within the dispatching/customer service center and several of our outreach offices. We also have two Somali speaking staff in our outreach offices that can do interpreting as needed. On average, we receive approximately 20 requests monthly for Spanish speaking services and once monthly for Somali.

Translation Requests: All of Hiawathaland Transit forms and brochures are available in English and Spanish. They are available in our customer service center, in transit buses, on our website, and can be mailed upon request. We have had no requests for translation of forms or brochures into Somali/other African Languages.

*Factor 3: The nature and importance of programs, activities, or services provided to the LEP population.*

Our transit system considers transit to be an important and essential service for many people living in our service area. Many LEP persons use our transit system for the following reasons:

- \* to get to/from work
- \* to/from Adult Basic English (ABE) or English as Second Language (ESL) classes
- \* social services
- \* medical appointments
- \* shopping
- \* school
- \* recreation at local community center

In 2013, Hiawathaland transit spent a considerable amount of time networking with local community leaders of LEP persons as well as organizations that serve LEP persons. The two main LEP populations that we have worked with primarily are the Somali population and the Hispanic/Latino populations. Both indicate that the service is vital to individuals within our communities. Three Rivers Hiawathaland Transit does track its outreach activities with LEP populations. These included not only LEP persons but those that provide services to LEP persons.

*Factor 4: The resources available to Hiawathaland Transit and the overall cost to provide language Assistance.*

Hiawathaland Transit has spent a significant number of resources on language services. In 2013, we estimate that we have spent over \$55,000 on language assistance activities. These activities include, but are not limited to:



- \*interpretation services within the customer service center
- \*translation of Hiawathaland Transit brochures and forms
- \*interpretation at Hiawathaland Transit marketing and/or public participation events
- \*interpretation at transit rider trainings

### **Language Assistance Measures**

Hiawathaland Transit supports the goals to provide meaningful access to its services by LEP persons. We currently offer the following language assistance services, including but not limited to:

- \*direct access to Spanish and Somali speaking interpreters via the Transit Customer Service Center or one of the Three Rivers Outreach offices
- \*interpretation services at outreach meetings, special events, and public hearings
- \*Spanish translation of materials such as rider forms and brochures
- \*Spanish translation of Title VI materials
- \*Spanish translation of complaint materials and complaint forms

We currently do not offer written translation of materials in Somali/African languages. We have been advised in our area that many do not read or would not be able to use resources written in their native language. If we did have requests for items to be provided, we would provide oral interpretation on an as needed basis.

### **Staff Training**

Hiawathaland Transit has an extensive training orientation program that covers Title VI, definitions of LEP and LAP, language assistance interpretation and translation availability, and basic cultural diversity sensitivity training. This training also includes information regarding the LAP plan, additional demographics regarding individuals that reside in our service area, and how to handle requests and/or complaints regarding an LEP person's needs. This training is included within the department's orientation for all new customer service specialists, drivers, managers, trainers, and mechanics. In addition, this training is also conducted as a refresher for all staff annually at a department meeting.

### **Notice to LEP Persons about Available Language Assistance**

Hiawathaland Transit provides notification of language assistance to LEP person via the following methods. These include, but are not limited to:

- \*notice posted in transit vehicles
- \*notice posted via the agency website
- \*notice posted in public transit buildings and outreach offices
- \*transit brochures/written transit resources



### **Annual Language Assistance Plan Monitoring, Evaluating, and Updating**

Hiawathaland Transit will provide continuous monitoring of LEP persons' services and implement any revisions as necessarily. In addition, we work with various agencies within our service area to track the nature and number of LEP persons. Some of the specific items to be monitored include, but are not limited to:

- \*How many LEP persons did the transit system come into contact?
- \*How were their needs met? Were there any that were not met?
- \*What is the current LEP population in that area? Has the population increased/decreased?
- \*Is there still a need for language assistance in a specific area? Is there a need in an area that there was not previously?
- \*Did Hiawathaland Transit receive any complaints in regard to LEP persons?

### **Dissemination of Language Assistance Plan**

Hiawathaland Transit has their plan available on their website: [www.threeriverscap.org/transportation](http://www.threeriverscap.org/transportation).

Any person may obtain copies of the Hiawathaland Transit LAP upon request. These requests may be made by calling into the dispatch center toll free at 1-866-623-7505 or by mail.

Any questions or comments regarding this plan can be directed to:

Amy Repinski, Director of Transportation  
Three Rivers Hiawathaland Transit  
55049 241st Ave  
Plainview, MN 55964



RESOLUTION IMPLEMENTING THE LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN FOR THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY ACTION - HIAWATHALAND TRANSIT

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2014-02

WHEREAS, Three Rivers Community Action, INC., receives federal and state funds to operate the Hiawathaland Public Transit System;

WHEREAS, Three Rivers Community Action, INC., recognizes that the United States Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) published guidance that states that "Title VI and its implementing regulations require that recipients take responsible steps to provide meaningful access to benefits, services, information and other important portions of their programs and activities to individuals that are Limited English Proficient (LEP)";

WHEREAS, Three Rivers Community Action, INC., recognizes the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Circular 4702.1A, "Title VI and Title VI-Dependent Guidelines for FTA Recipients" which requires recipients and subrecipients develop a Language Assistance Plan (LAP) with the provisions of Section VII of the DOT LEP Guidance;

NOW THEREFORE, the purpose of this document is set forth that Three Rivers Community Action, INC., formally adopt Hiawathaland Transit's Language Assistance Plan which conforms to the requirements outlined in FTA's Circular 4702.1A and US DOT's LEP Guidance.

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[Signature] 3/19/14
(Executive Director) (Date)

[Signature] 3/19/2014
(Chair Person) (Date)

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611 Broadway Avenue
Wabasha, MN 55981

NOTARY

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution is a true and correct copy of the resolution presented to and adopted by the Three Rivers Community Action, INC Board of Directors at a duly authorized meeting thereof held on the 19th day of March, 2014 as shown by the minutes of the meeting in my possession.

[Signature] Notary Public
(Name) (Title)

