

CIRCULAR



Title
Handling "I Speak" Cards

Topic/Number
CIR-08-03

Effective Date
August 29, 2008

Related to:
CIR-02-10 (Foreign Language Translation Services), Effective Date July 17, 2002

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

I. BACKGROUND

The DC Office of Human Rights (OHR) has developed a "Know your Rights" card for use by limited and non-English proficient (LEP/NEP) persons in understanding their rights under the *DC Language Access Act of 2004* (1) to free written translation and oral interpretation services when accessing services from District Government agencies, (2) to copies of vital documents in their own language, and (3) how to file a complaint when unable to receive access to a service from a District Government agency in their own language. The OHR encourages LEP/NEP individuals to carry the "I Speak" cards at all times and to present the card when accessing District Government service.

The "Know Your Rights" card is a bi-lingual, two-sided card that is available in six (6) different languages: Amharic, traditional Chinese, French, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese. It contains a detachable, wallet-sized "I Speak" card that states the following in both English and one of the six (6) languages:

"I speak (Language). I need language assistance. Please make note of my spoken language in your records, as well as my need for an interpreter."

II. Handling Persons Who Present "I Speak" Cards

When a person presents an "I Speak" card to a sworn or civilian Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) member, and the member does not speak the language indicated on the card, the member must immediately obtain an in-person or telephonic interpreter for that language.

In-person oral interpretation is provided through MPD-certified bilingual personnel, who may be located by contacting the Office of Unified Communications by radio.

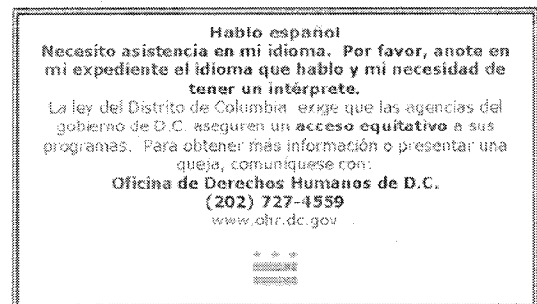
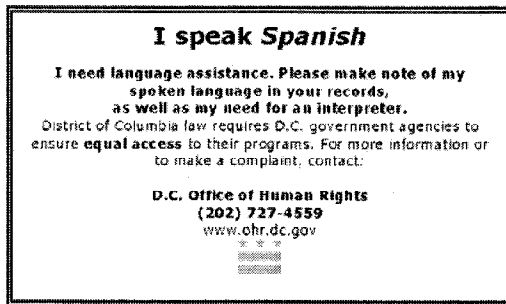
Telephonic oral interpretation can be obtained through Language Line, Inc., a private telephonic interpretation service. Instructions for accessing the Language Line through a land line or wireless telephone are provided in Circular 02-10 (Foreign Language Translation Services), Effective Date July 17, 2002, and the MPD "Language Line Information Card", which is available at all Police District stations, as well as from the Asian Liaison Unit, Latino Liaison Unit, and MPD Office of Language Access Programs, Room 5031, 300 Indiana Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001, (202) 727-9023.

An oral translation of an MPD document may also be obtained through MPD-certified bilingual personnel or the Language Line. Written translations of MPD documents may be obtained through the MPD Office of Language Access Programs.

For further information on the "Know Your Rights" cards, please contact Mr. Enrique Rivera, Office of Language Access Programs, at 727-9023 or at enrique.rivera@dc.gov.

III. **SAMPLE "I SPEAK SPANISH" CARD**

A sample "I Speak Spanish" card is reproduced below. Note that one side is in English and the other side is in the second language.



This Circular shall remain in effect until the required procedures are incorporated in the appropriate directive.

Cathy L. Lanier

Cathy L. Lanier
Chief of Police

CLL:PH:JAE:ER:JGW:PS