

## **FY24 USAGE REPORT**

# Metro Language Access Pilot Program

A partnership between the Metro Human Relations Commission  
and the Tennessee Language Center

**July 2024**

# Overview of the Pilot Program

The Metro Language Access Pilot Program was developed by the Tennessee Language Center (TLC) in partnership with the Metro Human Relations Commission (MHRC) in the year 2023. The goal of the program was to provide technical assistance to five Metro departments to develop and implement Language Access Plans, provide interpretation and translation services, and create educational materials for staff related to language access. A secondary goal of the program was to gather information regarding language services usage across the selected departments, with the hope that such information could be used to help other Metro departments budget for the provision of language services.

After assessing language needs through a survey and conversations with representatives from ten Metro departments, TLC and MHRC narrowed down the list to five departments with pressing language needs and/or a high level of interest in implementing language services:

- Department of Codes and Building Safety
- Finance Department
- Metro Arts
- Metropolitan Social Services
- Office of Family Safety

According to their particular needs as determined during the language needs assessment stage, TLC provided services including the following: elaboration or update of Language Access Plans, provision of free interpreting services (both telephonic and in-person), and translation of forms and other essential documents. TLC also provided translation services for blog and social media posts. One of the original goals of the program was to provide training to Metro staff on language services and intercultural communication. Nevertheless, the difficulties involved in trying to schedule dates and times that would be adequate for staff led us to the conclusion that developing some kind of asynchronous online training would be beneficial, with the added advantage of Metro having permanent ownership of the materials once developed.

# Background

## Language Access in Davidson County

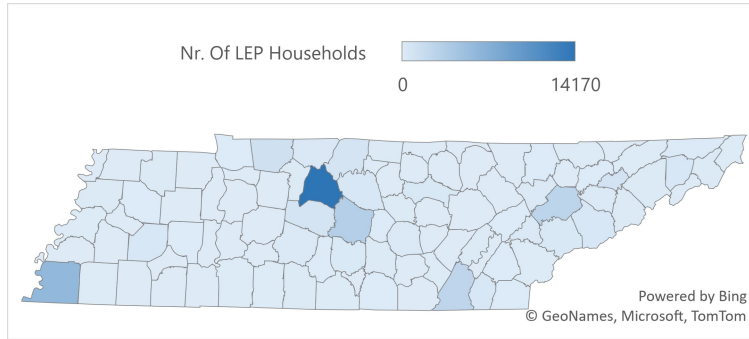
As the Title VI coordinator for Metro Nashville, the Metro Human Relations Commission (MHRC) is responsible for overseeing the implementation of language access plans and other language access initiatives across all Metro Government departments. In 2017, MHRC issued a comprehensive report to assess language services provided to LEP individuals. Additionally, MHRC collects information on Title VI compliance on an annual basis, which includes departmental implementation of Language Access Plans. Despite these efforts, most Metro departments do not currently have a Language Access Plan in place.

## The LEP Landscape of Davidson County

Metro Nashville is the area with the highest concentration of LEP individuals in the State of Tennessee (Figure 1). According to Census Data for the year 2022, Davidson County had a total of 663,264 inhabitants. Out of this number, 60743 (%10.08) spoke English “less than very well” and are therefore considered LEP individuals (Figure 2). These individuals represent 14170 of all households in Davidson County, an increase of 2725 households since 2015 (Figures 3 and 4). Considering this information, and the fact the that immigrant population in Davidson County is expected to continue its growing trend, it makes sense for local governments to pay more attention to serving their LEP constituents.

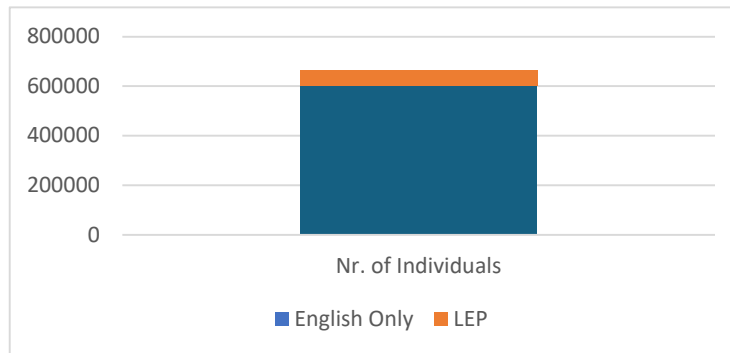
**Figure 1**

*Concentration of LEP households by County in Tennessee*



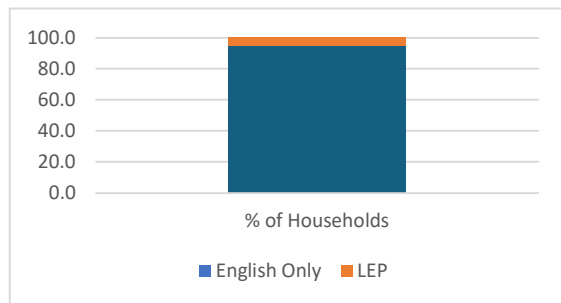
**Figure 2:**

*LEP Population in Davidson County (2022)*



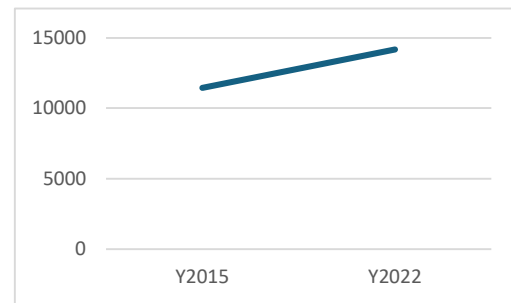
**Figure 3**

*Households in Davidson County by Language (2022)*



**Figure 4:**

*Nr. of LEP Households in Davidson County (2015 vs 2022)*



# Usage and Reach

## Summary

During FY24, TLC:

- Provided 6107 minutes of interpreting services in 11 languages
- Translated approximately 23,000 words covering 8 languages
- Created 4 new language access plans and updated 1 language access plan
- Helped Metro Government provided live interpretation for the Mayor’s State of Metro address for the first time in Nashville’s history.

## Service Totals

The Tennessee Language Center spent a total amount of \$36,071.37 dollars, provided by our sister agency, CTAS, to provide language services to MHRC, the Mayor’s Office, and five Metro Departments. These costs include those associated with planning and implementing the Pilot Program (\$ 6,750.00).

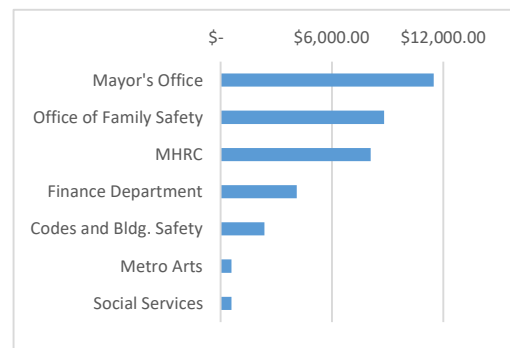
**Table 1**

*Total Costs per Department*

<b>Department</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Mayor's Office	\$ 11,476.37
Office of Family Safety	\$ 8,814.44
MHRC	\$ 8,090.00
Finance Department	\$ 4,120.52
Codes and Bldg. Safety	\$ 2,370.04
Metro Arts	\$ 600.00
Social Services	\$ 600.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 36,071.37</b>

**Figure 5**

*Total Costs per Department*



## Interpreting Totals (In-person + Telephonic)

\$6,367.64 dollars were used to cover the interpreting needs of the Mayor’s Office, the Metro Office of Family Safety, and the Metro Human Relations Commission. The costs incurred by the Mayor’s Office were the highest, as the State of Metro Address event involved simultaneous interpretation in two languages and voiceover work, which are significantly more expensive than regular in-person interpreting and over the phone interpreting.

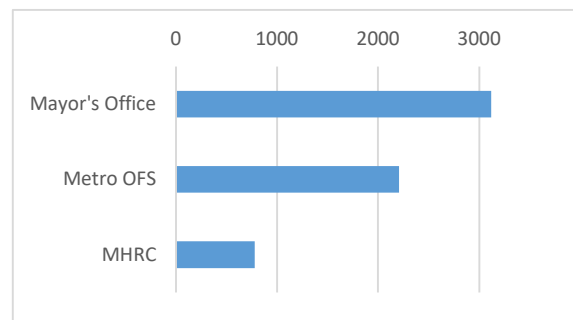
**Table 2**

*Total Minutes and Cost per Department*

Department	Minutes	Cost
Office Of Mayor Freddie O'Connell	3120	\$ 4,160.00
Metro Office Of Family Safety	2207	\$ 1,147.64
Metro Human Relations Commission	780	\$ 1,060.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>6107</b>	<b>\$ 6,367.64</b>

**Figure 6**

*Total Minutes per Department*



## Interpreting Totals (In-Person + Telephonic) – By Department and Language

The Tennessee Language Center provided 6107 minutes of interpreting services, both in-person and telephonic. Spanish and Arabic were the most commonly requested languages, followed by Farsi, Kinyarwanda, Dari, Nepali, among others.

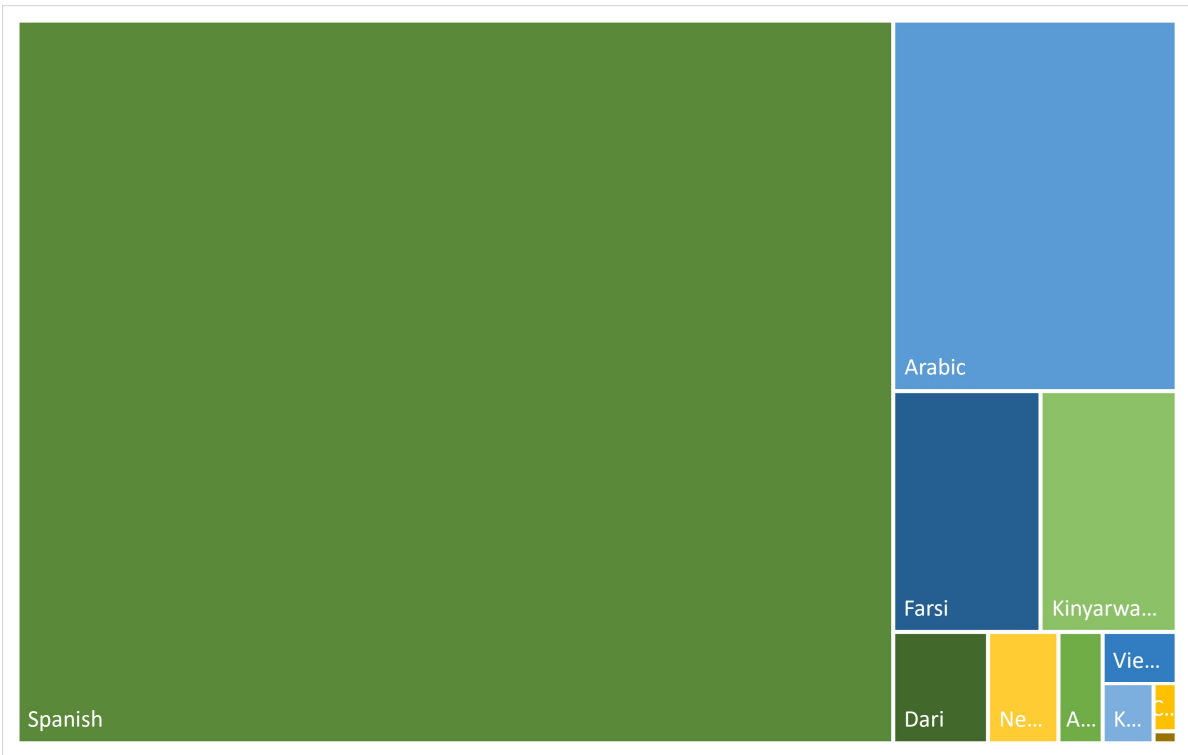
**Table 3**

*Total Minutes per Language and per Department*

Department	Amharic	Arabic	Creole	Dari	Farsi	Kekchi	Kinyarwanda	Kurdish	Nepali	Spanish	Vietnamese
Metro Human Relations Commission		360								420	
Metro Office Of Family Safety	36	45	8	77	259	2	239	22	57	1434	28
Office Of Mayor Freddie O'Connell		360								2760	
<b>Total Per Language</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>4614</b>	<b>28</b>

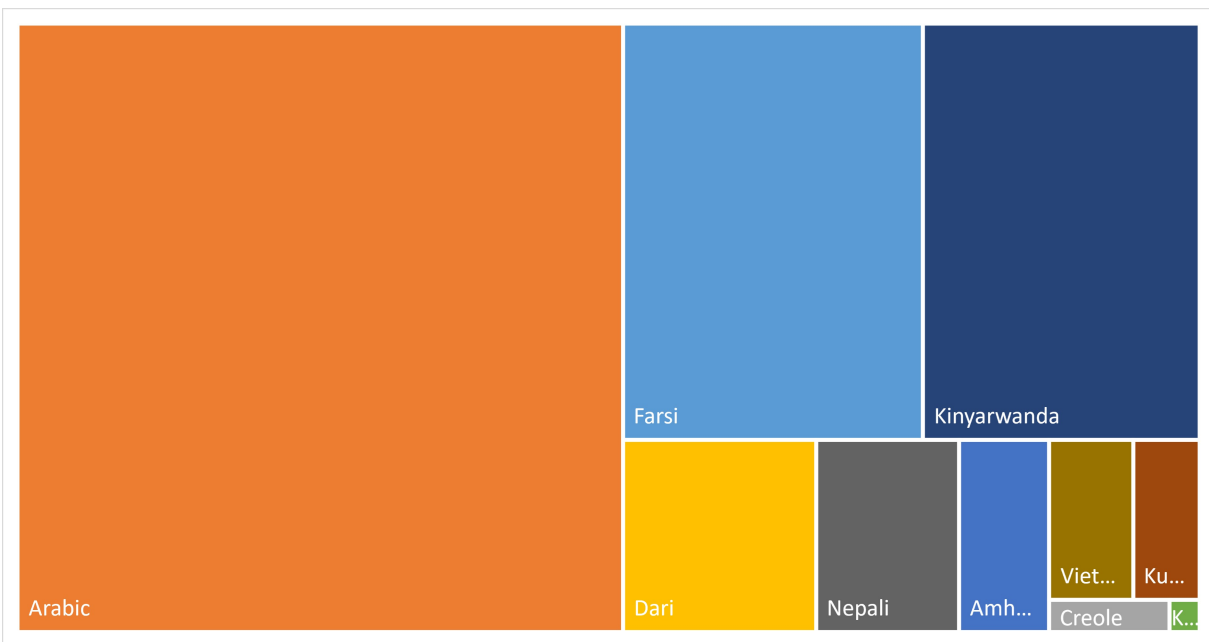
**Figure 7**

*Interpretation Volume per Language*



**Figure 8**

*Interpretation Volume per Language (Other than Spanish)*



## Interpreting – Telephonic

Out of the total 6107 minutes of interpretation provided, 2207 correspond to over the phone interpreting. Although most departments were offered this service and set up with PIN numbers to use the service, only the Metro Office of Family Safety used the service. Between the months of February and June 2024, the Metro Office of Family Safety used an average of 441.4 minutes per month, at an average monthly cost of \$229.53.

**Table 4**

*Office of Family Safety. Telephonic Int. Usage per Month*

<b>Month</b>	<b>Minutes</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>February</b>	433	\$ 225.16
<b>March</b>	437	\$ 227.24
<b>April</b>	1004	\$ 522.08
<b>May</b>	198	\$ 102.96
<b>June</b>	135	\$ 70.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>2207</b>	<b>\$1,147.64</b>

**Table 5**

*Office of Family Safety. Telephonic Int. Monthly Averages*

<b>Avg. Minutes per Month</b>	<b>Avg. Cost per Month</b>
441.4	\$ 229.53

## Interpreting – In-Person

A total of 65 hours (3600 minutes) of in-person interpreting services were provided, at an average cost of \$1.45 per minute.

**Table 6**

*In-Person Interpreting per Department*

<b>Department</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Metro Human Relations Commission	13	\$ 1,060.00
Office Of Mayor Freddie O'Connell	52	\$ 4,160.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>\$ 5,220.00</b>



## Document Translation Totals

Most of the funds available for language services were used for document translations. In contrast with interpretation services, most departments did request translations, mainly of commonly used forms and other outreach messages, like flyers and social media posts.

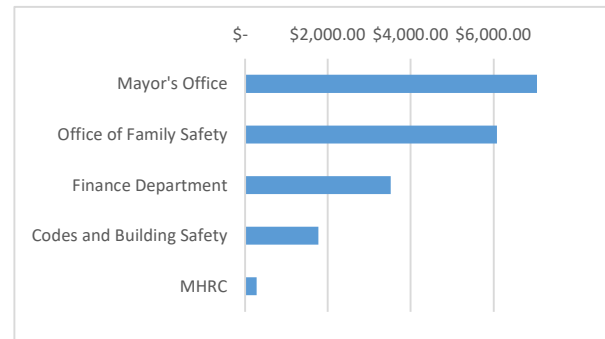
**Table 7**

*Total Translation Costs per Department*

<b>Department</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Mayor's Office	\$ 7,316.37
Office of Family Safety	\$ 6,082.44
Finance Department	\$ 3,520.52
Codes and Bldg. Safety	\$ 1,770.04
MHRC	\$ 280.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 18,969.37</b>

**Figure 9**

*Total Translation Costs per Department*



## Document Translation – Languages by Department

### Department of Codes and Building Safety

- Arabic
- Kurdish (Badini)
- Kurdish Sorani
- Spanish

### Finance Department

- Arabic
- Kurdish (Badini)
- Kurdish Sorani
- Spanish

### MHRC

- Spanish

### Office of Family Safety

- Arabic
- Spanish

### Mayor's Office

- Amharic
- Arabic
- Burmese
- Kurdish (Badini)
- Kurdish (Sorani)
- Somali
- Spanish
- Swahili

## Language Access Plans

TLC spent \$9,675 to develop or update LAPs for the five participating departments. This amount covers the total cost of planning the pilot program with MHRC, conducting the language needs assessment for the departments, and preparing or updating the LAPs.

**Table 8**

*Program Costs Related to Elaborating Language Access Plans*

<b>Department</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<i>MHRC</i>	\$ 6750.00
<i>Codes and Bldg. Safety</i>	\$ 600.00
<i>Finance Department</i>	\$ 600.00
<i>Metro Arts</i>	\$ 600.00
<i>Social Services</i>	\$ 600.00
<i>Office of Family Safety</i>	\$ 525.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 9675.00</b>

# User Feedback

## Department of Codes and Building Safety:

“Metro Codes Administration was selected to participate in the Language Access Program last November, and in less than six months we’ve helped hundreds of LEP customers onsite and many, many more virtually. The vital resources provided through this program, such as document translations and real-time interpretations, have allowed us to vastly improve building and neighborhood safety education and permit services throughout our LEP communities. We are so grateful for this opportunity and are hopeful for a continuation of our partnership!”

## Office of Family Safety:

“The Office of Family Safety is very grateful to TLC for including us in their grant program to receive interpretation and translation services. Our experience has been truly outstanding. We serve survivors of interpersonal violence who are often distressed, in traumatic situations and in fear for their lives. TLC interpreters have shown respect and professionalism to our staff and to our clients, making it possible for our office to provide crucial services in an efficient manner. Through TLC, we have also gotten materials timely translated into other languages, enabling us to reach underserved communities that have language barriers.”

“Using the TLC language services was quick and easy. I was connected to an interpreter within 30 seconds. The interpreter that worked with my client and I was kind and helpful and assisted us with professionalism and ease. This has consistently been my experience on every occasion while using TLC’s services.”

“I wanted to share how efficient and helpful TLC interpretations services are. We received a call from a distressed person seeking help in Dari (Persian). I immediately connected with TLC and it took less than a 1 minute to be connected with an interpreter. Our client was extremely distressed and was terrified of her abuser, she mentioned how scary it is to be in a country where she can’t understand anything, away from family and friends, and to only be able to communicate with her abuser. The situation was very delicate as she lives in an apartment complex where all the abuser’s family also resides. I was able to safety plan with her, and we created a personalized plan to escape her abuser. We will be able to continue services with her thanks to the interpretation services your team has secured for our office!”