

Oversight of Multilingual Access Services: Unemployment Insurance

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Annual Report to the Legislature



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Purpose

In compliance with Section 316 of the California Unemployment Insurance Code, as amended by Assembly Bill (AB) 138 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 78, Statutes of 2021), this report outlines the Employment Development Department's (EDD) language accessibility efforts in the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program from January 2025 to December 2025.

Language Access Office

The EDD's Language Access Office continues to lead the Department's language access initiatives and key 2025 efforts which include:

- Expanding translated materials for Limited English Proficient customers.
- Enhancing access to interpreters in over 200 languages, including 25 indigenous languages.
- Providing staff training and technical assistance.
- Ensuring clear, equitable communications and oversight of multilingual services.

The **Multilingual Access Advisory Committee** continues to serve as a vital bridge between the Department and California's diverse communities. Comprised of community stakeholders and language access advocates, the Committee provides meaningful input on enhancing multilingual services and outreach strategies. Meeting bimonthly, the Committee shares feedback on customer experiences and advises the Department on ways to improve cultural responsiveness and accessibility for individuals with limited English proficiency, including speakers of indigenous languages and members of the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community.

The **Language Access Taskforce**, an internal working group led by the Language Access Office, is dedicated to improving language access across all EDD services and programs. During 2025, the Taskforce focused its efforts on reviewing internal processes, developing multilingual resources, and ensuring compliance with language access requirements.

Enterprise Language Access Efforts

In 2025, EDD improved language access through the following enterprise efforts:

- **Babel Notices: Included Babel Notices in vital documents provided to customers.** A **Babel Notice** is a multilingual notice that features the top 15 languages and is included with English vital documents sent to customers. It informs customers that the document contains vital information and explains how to access language services to receive the document in their preferred language. These notices are a critical component of EDD's commitment to language access and equitable service delivery for all Californians.

- **Training:** Enhanced training for public contact employees serving Limited English Proficient customers with an emphasis on resources and tools when serving Deaf and hard-of-hearing customers.
- **Interpreter Services:** Expanded services to include on-demand and real-time Video Remote Interpreting for American Sign Language and other Sign Languages at all EDD locations.
- **Speech-to-Text Tool:** Launched in June 2025, this tool transcribes EDD Fraud Hotline voicemails in 300+ languages, aiding fraud investigations. The system can transcribe voicemail messages from more than 300 languages into English, significantly improving efficiency and language accessibility in fraud investigations. Notably, the Speech-to-Text project received the [Best of California Award](#) at the 2025 Government Innovation Summit.
- **Plain Language Initiative:** Simplified communications across various platforms, e.g., online applications, benefit guides, training resources, and webpages, earning [California's Best Workforce Initiative](#) award at the 2025 Government Innovation Summit.

Unemployment Insurance Language Access Efforts

Vital Forms: The Unemployment Insurance program published 246 vital forms in the EDD's top 15 languages on the Department's [Language Resources webpages](#).

UI Live Agent Chat: Launched in July 2025, this feature provides UI customers with real-time chat support with a UI representative, offering a fast and convenient alternative to calling the contact center. The service is available weekdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. It includes real-time translation for seven languages (Armenian, Korean, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Tagalog, Traditional Chinese, and Vietnamese), allowing customers to communicate in their preferred language. At the end of each chat, customers are invited to complete a short survey to share feedback, helping EDD continuously enhance the customer experience.

Wage Reporting Tool: Launched in October 2025, this tool, available in the Department's top eight languages, helps claimants report earnings accurately. The tool is accompanied by comprehensive instructions and detailed explanations of the several types of income that must be reported during the benefit period.

Data Collection and Monitoring

EDD strengthened data practices to monitor language access:

- **Telephonic Interpretation:** EDD received 48,552 requests for third-party telephonic interpretation services in 2025. Spanish was the most requested language.
- **Language Lines:** EDD received 560,385 calls through its dedicated unemployment language lines for Limited English Proficient LEP claimants. These lines are available in seven languages: Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin, Tagalog, Korean, and Armenian. In 2025, total call volume increased by 2,735 calls, or 0.49 percent, compared to 2024 (557,650). The monthly average for calls in 2024 was 46,471, while the 2025 monthly average rose to 46,699, marking a slight increase of 228 calls per month year-over-year. EDD continues to serve all Limited English Proficient LEP UI claimants via dedicated phone lines or third-party interpretative services.

To further improve language accessibility services, EDD continues to closely monitor data metrics to better support California's Limited English Proficient LEP population, ensuring all claimants can access the full range of available services. This ongoing data collection and analysis is vital in addressing and improving language barriers while ensuring equitable access to EDD programs and resources.

Community Outreach

In 2025, EDD advanced its omni-cultural outreach to enhance awareness, trust, and access to EDD programs among California's diverse communities. Beginning in January, staff participated in 22 outreach events across the state, reaching more than 529,800 attendees in regions including Sacramento, the Bay Area, Central California, Los Angeles, and San Diego. These events focused on connecting with African American, Latino/Hispanic, and Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, offering bilingual staff, in-language materials, and culturally relevant engagement. Through these efforts, EDD reaffirmed its commitment to equity and inclusion by ensuring that all Californians can access essential information and services in ways that are linguistically and culturally responsive.

As part of its expanded outreach strategy, EDD partnered with 11 community-based organizations across California to strengthen connections with diverse communities. By collaborating with trusted local groups, including chambers of commerce, faith-based organizations, and nonprofits, EDD effectively shared program information, bridged communication gaps, and reached individuals who may not have previously engaged with the Department. These partners supported outreach through a variety of methods, such as video announcements, distributing materials, hosting events and virtual workshops,

and sharing information via social media and newsletters. This statewide network included organizations serving Black and African American, Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI), and Latino/Hispanic communities, collectively hosting 22 outreach events that advanced EDD's mission to make its programs more visible, approachable, and equitable for all Californians.

Since January 2025, EDD has led a comprehensive advertising campaign to raise awareness of the Department's programs and services through a diverse mix of media channels, including digital banners, video, connected TV, streaming audio, radio, and social media. Featuring messaging in eight languages – English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Tagalog, Armenian, Mandarin, and Cantonese – the campaign ensured broad and inclusive outreach across California. This multilingual, multimedia strategy generated more than 241.4 million views statewide, significantly expanding EDD's visibility and reinforcing its commitment to equitable access for all Californians.

Additionally, EDD leveraged social media to promote language access and culturally relevant engagement across California's diverse communities. To raise awareness about language access services, the Department created short-form videos illustrating real-life scenarios that guided customers to multilingual resources, generating 62,000 views and a 3 percent engagement rate. As part of its omni-cultural outreach, EDD boosted Spanish-language Paid Family Leave posts for Mother's Day and Father's Day, achieving nearly 1 million views and reaching Spanish-speaking audiences statewide. Additionally, EDD showcased its community involvement through "day-in-the-life" videos highlighting direct engagement at local events, earning 27,500 views and the highest engagement rate (3.6 percent) among the campaigns.

EDD also provided updates with news releases announcing valuable resources to EDD's Limited English Proficient customers:

- [Modernizing the State's Unemployment Program: Helping EDD Pay Customers faster and Accurately](#)
- [CA EDD Celebrates International Customer Experience Day by Highlighting Upgrades That Put Customers First](#)
- [CA Invests \\$2.7 Million in Employment and Training Services Who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing](#)
- [Award Winning Innovation Breaking Down Language Barriers](#)

[EDD's Language Resources webpages](#) and social media platforms provide valuable information about the Department's multilingual services, including the accessible support for the Department's vital forms that are available in 15 languages, along with other key updates.

Conclusion and Plans for 2026

EDD's steadfast commitment to advancing language accessibility supports the Department's mission to strengthen California's economic growth by delivering valuable and innovative benefits and services. In 2026, EDD will further enhance programs through EDDNext modernization efforts, further expanding and enhancing the translation of the information available on our webpages, improving our chat services for unemployment customers, as well as simplifying the program's bi-weekly certification questions with plain language enhancements, all designed, so more people can easily understand and access the services they need in their preferred language. The Language Access Office continues to meet the provisions of AB 138 and remains committed to serving California's diverse language populations.



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