



MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

190 – LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) / HEARING IMPAIRED PERSONS

GENERAL ORDER: 2025-05
ISSUED: February 13, 2025

EFFECTIVE: February 13, 2025

REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:
Assistant Chief Craig Sarnow
DATE: December 23, 2025

ACTION: Amends General Order 2023-11 (March 3, 2023)

WILEAG STANDARD(S): NONE

ROLL CALL VERSION

**Contains only changes to current policy.
For complete version of SOP, see SharePoint.**

190.05 DEFINITIONS

D. QUALIFIED INTERPRETER/TRANSLATOR ROSTER

A roster of department members who are qualified as foreign language or sign language interpreters and are authorized to act as interpreters for the department. The Human Resources Division will create and maintain the roster and periodically provide the ~~Technical Communications Division~~ Department of Emergency Communications (DEC) with the most updated version.

190.10 PROCEDURE

A. Department members are to abide by the following procedures set forth in this standard operating procedure at all times absent exigent circumstances. The AT&T Language Line is available to assist in communicating with limited English proficient individuals via emergency and non-emergency calls to the department. Furthermore, to assist members to properly conduct interviews, investigations, and customer service requests, the ~~Technical Communications Division shall keep~~ DEC has a Qualified Interpreter/Translator Roster. ~~The Technical Communications Division shall also keep contact information of approved private agencies that provide certified foreign language interpretation, or translation, and hearing-impaired interpretation services.~~

D. The department, absent exigent circumstances, shall assign interpreter/translator duty only to department members who have voluntarily placed their names on the Qualified Interpreter/Translator Roster. The department shall compensate those members eligible for compensation under the terms of their respective collective bargaining agreement or Milwaukee City Ordinance [Chapter 350](#) ~~of the City Ordinance~~ for interpretation/translation services.

F. LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) EMERGENCY AND NON-EMERGENCY CALLS

~~2. Telecommunicators handling foreign language requests shall contact the AT&T Language Line utilizing the One Touch "language line" button in the "frequently used" area of the Guardian screen.~~

3. ~~Telecommunicators are to remain on the line while the AT&T central operator puts the call through to the interpreter who will give an identification number. The telecommunicator shall then tell the interpreter exactly what information is needed and facilitate a conference call, which shall be recorded, for the member requesting the service (telecommunicators making the call for another department member may drop out of the call if no longer needed). When members have completed the call they will say, "End of call."~~
24. Department members may contact telecommunicators by telephone (414-933-4444). They shall inform the telecommunicator that they need foreign language interpretation/translation services of a particular language. If uncertain of the language for foreign language services, the AT&T service will assist in obtaining the appropriate interpreter. Department members may also contact the AT&T Language Line directly utilizing the phone number and information contained within their calendar book.

G. GENERAL REQUESTS FOR INTERPRETER OR TRANSLATOR

3. Civilian members or office personnel in need of a qualified interpreter or translator shall notify their shift commander, who will then, notify a ~~Technical Communications Division~~ DEC supervisor.
4. A ~~Technical Communications Division~~ DEC supervisor will ~~make~~ assist in making the necessary arrangements for a qualified interpreter or translator from the Qualified Interpreter/Translator Roster or an appropriate agency.

H. INVESTIGATIONS AND COMPLAINTS

3. Complaints
- b. The supervisor must first seek the assistance of another supervisor who is a qualified interpreter or translator, and can interpret or translate in the complainant's language before seeking the assistance of a department approved interpretation or translation agency from the listing maintained by the ~~Technical Communications Division~~ DEC.

190.15 SIGNAGE

All districts and other work locations open to the public must have a Free Interpretation Poster for public display to inform individuals that the Milwaukee Police Department offers free interpretation and translation services for individuals with limited English proficiency. The poster will be displayed in English, Spanish, and Hmong. The ~~Printing and Stores~~ Section will update the posters with other foreign languages as needed, based on the city of Milwaukee foreign language demographics.

190.30 GUIDELINES FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED

B. ON-CALL INTERPRETER SERVICES

1. The ~~Technical Communications Division will maintain~~ DEC has a list of sign language and oral interpreting services that are available (on-call 24 hours per day) to provide qualified interpreters as needed. Each of these services will be chosen after having been screened for the quality and skill of its interpreters, its reliability, and other factors. ~~The Technical Communications Division will update this list annually.~~

190.35 HEARING IMPAIRED SERVICES

- A. ~~The Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) feature of the telephone system allows communication with hearing impaired persons via alternating text keyboard messaging over standard telephone lines. Telephones at telecommunicator stations are equipped with the TDD feature.~~
- B. ~~TDD calls may be identified by/received as:~~
 1. ~~An electronic tone (activated by the caller via their TDD).~~
 2. ~~Silence (all silent calls are treated as potential TDD calls).~~
 3. ~~A synthesized voice (alerts that a call is from TDD).~~
 4. ~~A relay announcement (notifies that a call is coming from TDD).~~
 5. ~~A Telecommunication Relay Service (TRS). TRS services act as intermediaries in calls for services, wherein an operator relays information via a traditional phone with the telecommunicator and via a TDD with the caller requesting service. The largest percentage of TDD calls received by the department are TRS calls.~~
- C. ~~If a TDD call becomes disconnected, or it is unknown/unclear what the need is, telecommunicator shall attempt to re-connect the caller via TDD at the number displayed when the call rang in. If there is no answer on the call back, telecommunicators shall create a "call for police" assignment at the displayed address and include in the text that the origin of the call was an interrupted/disconnected TDD contact.~~

190.4035

RESOURCES FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED



JEFFREY B. NORMAN
CHIEF OF POLICE