



BEST PRACTICES FOR HIRING BILINGUAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WORKERS

Best Practices for Hiring Bilingual Domestic Violence Workers

1. Agencies need to be aware of the basic legal requirements such as [*Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*](#) which requires organizations and individuals to ensure that persons of limited English proficiency have meaningful and equal access to benefits and services.
2. Agencies and clinics that serve bilingual clients must develop a comprehensive plan to provide services including considering the number and skill level of bilingual office staff to be hired, the quality and availability of interpreters or interpreting services that will be used, and the population size that will be served.
3. Consideration should be given to developing adequate multicultural policies and procedures, including application of appropriate language tests and measurements to assess for multicultural competence, required level of competence of the employees, when and which interpreting services should be utilized (if any), and costs of bilingual programs.
4. Identify hiring personnel qualified to assess (or arrange assessment) of language proficiency for bilingual staff and interpreters.
5. Developing a relationship with a national or local service that provides translation is useful when documents and forms need to be translated, especially when the translation is urgent or in an unusual language.
6. Guidelines regarding the basic competencies for mental health bilingual professionals and interpreters can be found in the code of ethics for each profession. For example see the American Psychological Association (APA) Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, the National Association of Social Work (NASW) Code of Ethics, or the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics.
7. Provide bilingual supervision and resources for bilingual staff.
8. Organizations should complete the [*Self-Assessment and Planning Tool*](#).

Proficiency Exams

1. State universities and colleges have oral Spanish proficiency tests a few times a year. These are typically open to anyone for around \$75 an exam.

2. There are several online written and multiple choice exams such as [Webspanol: Spanish level test](#) and the [Don Quijote Spanish language test](#). However, these tests are not recommended due to their uncertain validity in measuring actual Spanish proficiency.
3. Multicultural competency exams include: the [Cross-Cultural Counseling Inventory](#), the [Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-and-Skills Survey](#), the [Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale](#), and the [Multicultural Counseling Inventory](#).

Translation and Interpreting Services

Nationwide services include:

1. Pacific Interpreters
1-800-311-1232
www.pacificinterpreters.com
2. Interpreters Plus
1-877-995-8989
www.interpretersplus.com
3. AT&T Language Line
1(800)752-0093 ext. 196
www.language.com
4. Telelanguage
1-800-826-3253
metrolanguages.com

Guidelines for becoming an effective bilingual worker

Effective bilingual workers need to:

1. Acquire self-awareness of their own language and cultural competency.
2. Have knowledge of codes of ethics pertaining to working with diverse populations.
3. Have competent skills in multicultural issues and treatment, and continued support and education in providing culturally appropriate services.
4. Be honest when defining their own language competence in speaking, writing, and reading a particular language.
5. Seek out bilingual supervision or peer support (networks and professional associations are available to support multicultural diverse therapists).



Codes of Ethics


1. American Psychological Association (APA) Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct
www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.html
2. American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics
www.counseling.org
3. National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics
www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp

Resources

1. Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/racefa.html>
2. Language Assistance Self-Assessment and Planning Tool for Recipients of Federal Financial Assistance
<http://www.lep.gov/selfassesstool.htm>
3. Latinos and Domestic Violence Training Materials
<http://www.latinodv.org/handouts.php>
4. Sus Derechos (Spanish language pamphlet with LEP information for survivors)
<http://www.latinodv.org/handouts.php>
5. What Does it Mean to be Bilingual Enough? Recommendations for Providing Effective Bilingual Services
<http://www.latinodv.org/ppts.php>
6. Language Access and Domestic Violence
<http://www.latinodv.org/handouts.php>

Networks and Professional Associations

1. Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD)
<http://www.multiculturalcounseling.org/>
2. National Latino Psychological Association (NLPA)
<http://www.nlpa.ws/>
3. California Latino Psychological Association (CLPA)
<http://www.latinopsych.org/Links.html>
4. Latino Psychological Association of New Jersey, Inc. (LPANJ)
<http://www.lpanj.org>

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5. American Psychological Association's Multicultural Guidelines
<http://www.apa.org/pi/oema/resources/policy/multicultural-guidelines.aspx>
 6. American Psychological Association
Division 35 - Society for the Psychology of Women
Section 3: Section on Concerns of Hispanic Women
<http://www.apa.org/about/division/div35.html>
Division 45 - Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race
<http://www.apa.org/about/division/div45.html>
Division 17 - Society of Counseling Psychology
Section on Ethnic and Racial Diversity
<http://www.div17.org/sections/ethnic-and-racial-diversity/>

Encuentro LATINO

National Institute on Family Violence



All links in this document are active as of April 30, 2015.

