

LANGUAGE AND DISABILITY ACCESS

The IDNYC program is committed to ensuring that neither language nor disability is a barrier to accessing services, and that all applicants and cardholders have access to the services for which they are eligible, regardless of their level of English proficiency or disability.

LANGUAGE ACCESS

Interpretation Services to Communicate With Applicants

Policy

Free interpretation services are available to all applicants, and IDNYC's application and document guide are both available in 34 languages. The program undertakes reasonable efforts to make in-person oral interpretation services available, subject to IDNYC program staff ability and capacity. Applicants and cardholders will be assigned to bilingual employees whenever practicable.

The IDNYC program also makes all reasonable efforts to make telephonic interpreters available, and IDNYC Enrollment Centers are equipped with dual headset phone systems. All IDNYC staff are responsible for ensuring that applicants are connected to interpretation services as soon as possible. Language Line Interpretation Services (1-866-874-3972) are available to all IDNYC staff at every Enrollment Center during all hours of operation.

Procedure

If staff is unable to communicate with an applicant at the Enrollment Center, get an interpreter by taking the following steps:

1. Using the Language Identification Card (if available), identify the applicant's chosen language. Language Line operators can also try to help identify the appropriate language if necessary.
2. To access Language Line interpretation services, call 1-866-874-3972, and enter the appropriate codes when promoted. Refer to your Language Line Quick Reference Guide, which contains additional information, including your site's access code. IDNYC staff should use the code designated for his or her specific Enrollment Center, and not codes for other Enrollment Centers. This is important for billing accuracy and enables the program to properly assess and track language needs and requests. See the end of this section for specific access code information.
3. After staff is connected to an interpreter, staff and the applicant should each use a headset to participate on the call with the interpreter.
4. Staff should ask the questions required to help the applicant fill out the application, and must wait for the interpreter to translate the applicant's responses. The data should then be entered into the computer system exactly as the interpreter has translated the applicant's responses.

Employees should only input the information given to them by the interpreter. If an IDNYC staff member needs clarification on a particular answer, s/he should ask the interpreter for clarification during the call. At no time should employees assume information, paraphrase, or draw conclusions based on anything not provided by the interpreter.

The policy above applies to all IDNYC staff who deal directly with the public, including Customer Service representatives speaking to applicants and cardholders over the phone.



Document Translation Services

Policy

IDNYC contracts with Accurate Communication to provide on-site, in-person document translation services for applicants who present foreign documents that cannot be translated by IDNYC staff. When an applicant presents such document, follow the steps below:

1. Before an applicant starts the enrollment process with an Enrollment Specialist, IDNYC Enrollment Assistants should review applicant documents and identify the language need.
2. The Assistant should explain to the applicant that document translation services must be arranged, and the applicant will have to return at a later date and time that is convenient for the applicant.
 - **If you cannot identify the language** of the document presented (or if you cannot communicate with the applicant), call Language Line and, after confirming the language need, follow the procedures outlined below.
3. To arrange for document translations, Assistants should first refer to the list (if available) of IDNYC staff who read non-English languages, and contact that person's Supervisor to see if s/he is available to come in person to translate a document, but only if this will NOT disrupt operations.
4. If no IDNYC staff is available to assist, follow the steps below to contact Accurate Communication to request an interpreter to translate the documents.

To Schedule a Document Translator for an On-Site Appointment

1. Tell the applicant that you are going to schedule a new appointment with a document translator, and ask when the applicant would like to return to the Enrollment Center. The applicant can then leave the Enrollment Center after providing their preferred date, time, location, and contact information.
2. To request document translation services, the Intake Supervisor (or designee) must email a formal request to Accurate Communication at languagerequest@accuratecommunication.net. Attach a fully completed "Foreign Language Service Request Form" to the email.
 - If you are not using the official form, then make sure your email to Accurate Communication includes the following information:

- Your contact information
 - The nature of the request (document translation services)
 - Date and time for on-site document translations services (based on the applicant's preferred date and time)
 - Requested language
 - Purchase order or contract number
3. Accurate Communication will send an email confirmation confirming receipt of the request. Accurate Communication will then send another email confirming the availability of a document translator at the requested date and time, along with the translator's name and contact information.
- Once the Intake Supervisor receives the second confirmation email, the Intake Supervisor (or designee) should contact the applicant to confirm the location, date, and time of the appointment.
4. The Intake Supervisor (or designee) should contact the applicant 24 hours before the appointment to remind them of the date, time, and location of their appointment. If the applicant cannot make the appointment, work with them to reschedule and send another request to Accurate Communication based on the applicant's availability.
5. Once the applicant and translator are on-site for the appointment, review the documents presented and have the translator interpret the document. Then, proceed with the usual enrollment process. Make sure the translator does not leave before the Enrollment Specialist and the Integrity Specialist (if applicable) speak with the document translator.
6. Paperwork: The document translator will provide an Accurate Communication job reference/confirmation form that includes the date of assignment, time, language request, and additional information. Both the Intake Supervisor (or designee) and the translator must sign this document.
7. The Intake Supervisor (or designee) should also fill out the IDNYC /Accurate Communication Receiving Report. Then, scan the Receiving Report and the confirmation form provided by the translator and email it to the Operations Coordinator, Dalia Perez, at perezd@hra.nyc.gov. Please indicate in this email if there was a no-show or any other relevant information. Do NOT include the applicant's personally identifying information, only the relevant application number and/or IDNYC number.

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DISABILITY ACCESS SERVICES AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Visually-Impaired Persons:

The IDNYC program provides the following services for individuals who are visually impaired:

- Applications and document guides are available printed in 16-point font for those who are visually impaired.
- Applications in Braille are also available for those who are blind and able to read Braille. All Braille applications and document guides should be kept in the workstation desk and should only be brought out as needed.
- If a blind applicant is not able to read Braille, IDNYC staff should read through the application with the applicant and help them complete it.

People who are Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing:

The IDNYC program provides the following services for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing:

- **For applicants who are hard of hearing:** a Portable Induction Loop system is available at every Enrollment Center. The Intake Supervisor must periodically test and ensure that the system is ready to be used.
- **For applicants who are deaf:** Sign language interpretation services will be provided through Purple Video Remote Interpreting Service (Purple VRI). This service is available on-demand via the site's tablet at most Enrollment Center locations. Note that this service is not available at the Department of Finance Business Centers in Brooklyn (210 Joralemon St, 1st FL) and Manhattan (66 John St, 2nd FL) due to poor internet connectivity. At these two locations, in-person ASL interpretation will be provided upon request.

Applicants with Physical Disabilities That Make it Difficult for Them to Pose for an IDNYC Photo

Policy

All IDNYC card applicants must have their picture taken at the Enrollment Center; this photo must meet specific IDNYC program criteria. These criteria require that: the applicant position himself/herself so that the entire body face the camera directly; the blue screen is visible on all sides and above his/her face; and the applicant should make a neutral expression with his/her eyes open and mouth closed.

If the applicant is accompanied by a caretaker, the caretaker can help position the applicant to ensure that the picture meets IDNYC photo requirements.

If the applicant is unable to pose for a photograph that adheres to the criteria above, the applicant should be referred to the IDNYC Homebound program.

To refer an applicant to the Homebound program, follow these steps:

- Take the name and phone number of applicant/contact person,
- Inform applicant that you will forward their name and phone number to the homebound unit, and that a homebound representative will be contacting them to set up a homebound appointment.
- Staff will inform the Intake Supervisor that they were unable to take a frontal photo. The Supervisor will then request a homebound visit by sending an email to Lisa A. James Jackson at jamesl@hra.nyc.gov (make sure to CC the Customer Service Manager at greenc2@hra.nyc.gov). The **Subject Field** should indicate that this is a “Homebound Request.” In the body of the email, the Supervisor will indicate:
 - Applicant name
 - Phone number of a contact person
 - Reason for making a homebound request

OTHER DISABILITIES

If an individual with a disability requires a service or accommodation in order to participate in IDNYC, and it is not described above, please contact your Intake Supervisor.