

City of Toronto Multilingual Information Provisions Policy

1. Policy Statement

The City of Toronto recognizes that providing information about its programs, services, and engagement activities in languages that reflect the linguistic diversity of the city is an important way for the public to engage, participate, and be informed of City services and programs.

This Policy establishes the principles and the criteria for translation and interpretation of information about the City's services, programs and engagement activities.

This Policy does not apply to information provided by Members of Council, the City's Accountability Officers, City Agencies and Corporations, or to accessibility services, including the provision of American Sign Language (ASL). Accessibility provisions fall under the *City's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan*.

This Policy also does not apply when there are legislative requirements or by-laws for the City to provide information in another language, and/or contract or service delivery requirements with another level of government or a third party.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. **Auto-translation** – the conversion of written text from one language into another language by a device or program without the involvement of a professional human translator.
- 2.2. **City** – refers to the City of Toronto.
- 2.3. **Communications Plan** – refers to plans prepared to communicate the introduction of new City initiatives, changes to policies, services or programs, or for any significant report to City Council or Standing Committee as determined by *Communications Planning Policy*.
- 2.4. **Critical Information** – refers to information that will or may impact the health and safety of Toronto residents and/or communication about a long-term or sudden disruption of the City's critical services.
- 2.5. **Critical Services** – refers to City services that must be provided immediately without which, loss of life, infrastructure destruction, and/or significant loss of

revenue may result. These services normally require resumption within 24 hours to ensure that the health, safety, security and economic well-being of Toronto residents is maintained.

- 2.6. **Division Head** – refers to the City official directly responsible for a City division.
- 2.7. **Home Language** – refers to language spoken most often at home or on a regular basis at home.
- 2.8. **Interpretation** – refers to oral transmission of information from one language into another language.
- 2.9. **Localized Information** – refers to information about City services, programs, and engagement activities operating or being promoted in a specific geographic area, a neighbourhood, and/or a ward or adjacent wards in the city.
- 2.10. **Marketing Information** – refers to information about the City or a City service or program that is intended to promote the City to generate tourism, business growth and/or economic development.
- 2.11. **Neighbourhood** – an area within the city with boundaries referred to as "Neighbourhood Planning Areas", and used for the purposes of local service planning. City of Toronto Neighbourhood Planning Areas have boundaries that are different from Toronto City Wards.
- 2.12. **Professional Translation** – the conversion of written text from one language into another language by a professional human translator.
- 2.13. **Strategic Communications** – refers to the City's Strategic Communications Division or its successor.
- 2.14. **Translation** – the conversion of written text from one language into another language.

3. Principles for Multilingual Information Provision

- 3.1. The City shall provide multilingual information that is reflective of the city's linguistic diversity in accordance with this Policy.
- 3.2. All multilingual information about a City service, program, or engagement activity must comply with the *City of Toronto Corporate Identity Policy*.
- 3.3. All advertising materials must comply with the *City of Toronto Advertising Policy*.

- 3.4. Multilingual information about a City service, program, or engagement activity must comply with the *City of Toronto Accommodation Policy* and, the *City of Toronto Human Rights and Anti-Harassment Policy*, and shall not:
 - 3.4.1. Be or be perceived to be discriminatory or derogatory of age, ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, disability, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, political affiliation, sex, or sexual orientation; and,
 - 3.4.2. Result in inappropriate abbreviations or acronyms.
- 3.5. The City's websites shall provide the option to translate information where available through auto-translation.
- 3.6. City Divisions shall be responsible for determining the necessary budget for translation and interpretation in their annual work-plan and/or project plans.
- 3.7. All requests for translation shall be shared with Strategic Communications and be consistent with any applicable Communications Plan.
- 3.8. The City's 311 service or its successor shall provide live interpretation on demand as requested by a member of the public about all non-emergency City services and information.

4. Multilingual Information Provisions for Critical Information

- 4.1. Information about critical services shall be translated using a professional translator into no less than the top ten languages spoken at home as indicated by the latest census data available, and French, except where:
 - 4.1.1. The information is targeted at a localized area. In such cases, multilingual information provisions for a localized area outlined in this Policy shall apply.
 - 4.1.2. The information is targeted at a specific non-localized community, group or population in Toronto. In such cases, the Division will conduct an assessment of the target audience's linguistic needs and provide multilingual information based on such an assessment. In such circumstances, a rationale for the make-up and number of languages chosen shall be documented in the project file or Communications Plan.
- 4.2. In circumstances of an emergency situation, time pressures, or the urgency to communicate information as soon as possible, information about critical

services shall be communicated immediately in English, and professionally translated information shall be made available as soon as possible.

- 4.3. A member of the public can request to receive information about a critical service in any language. For such requests, the information shall be professionally translated within a reasonable timeframe.
- 4.4. For City hosted public meetings and consultations about critical services, the City shall make best efforts to provide a live interpreter, if requested by a member of the public. Requests must be made at least five business days prior to the meeting and/or consultation.
- 4.5. Each Division Head shall be responsible for determining information that is considered critical.

5. Multilingual Information Provisions for a Localized Area:

- 5.1. Information targeted at a specific localized area that is not available on the City's website through auto-translation, shall be professionally translated when at least 5% of the population in that localized area speaks languages other than English at home as per the latest census data available.
 - 5.1.1. In such circumstances, a summary of the information shall be professionally translated into at least the top three languages spoken at home as per the latest census data available, except where:
 - a. The information is targeted at a city neighbourhood(s). In such circumstances, a summary of the information shall be translated into the top language spoken at home in the neighbourhood(s) as per the latest census data available.
 - b. The Division has:
 - i. Conducted an assessment of the audience's linguistic needs in that localized area;
 - ii. Considered relevant program data and past experience in translating similar information for that localized area; and,
 - iii. Based on that assessment, the Division has determined the need for translation into less or more than three languages in that localized area. In such circumstances, a rationale for the make-up and number of languages chosen shall be documented in the project file or Communications Plan. Should a member of the localized area request translation, a

summary of the information shall be translated into the requested language.

- c. The Division has determined the need to translate the information in full, rather than in summary form.

5.2. For City hosted public meetings and consultations in a specific localized area, the City shall provide a live interpreter, if requested by a member of the public. Requests must be made at least five business days prior to the meeting and/or consultation.

6. Multilingual Information Provisions for City Marketing Information

6.1. Professional translation in summary or full form shall be considered based on the targeted audience of the marketing information:

6.1.1. For international marketing information, marketing materials may be translated into the top spoken language at home of the region and/or country.

6.1.2. For domestic marketing information, marketing materials may be translated into the official language(s) of the province and/or the top three languages spoken at home of the municipality, as per the latest census data available.

6.1.3. For any marketing information aimed at promoting Canada's history and/or cultural events, information may be translated into French.

7. Multilingual Information Provisions for all Other Types of Information

7.1. For all other types of information not captured by the categories above, the Division Head responsible shall determine the translation and/or interpretation of information based on:

7.1.1. Assessment and program data that indicates translation is beneficial or necessary to improve participation rates, compliance or use of City services and programs by a specific ethnic group, neighbourhood or community;

7.1.2. The life-span of the information. Any information that will be used/relevant for six months or more should be considered for translation;

7.1.3. The project or program is high-profile and expected to have City-wide impacts;

7.1.4. Strategic Communications' advice on previous translation requests for similar types of information; and,

7.1.5. Financial implications and budget available for translation.

8. Compliance and Reporting:

8.1. Division Heads shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with this Policy.

8.2. Strategic Communications shall document and track the type of information professionally translated annually by City Divisions.

9. Related City of Toronto Policies

9.1. City of Toronto Accommodation Policy

9.2. City of Toronto Advertising Policy

9.3. City of Toronto Communications Planning Policy

9.4. City of Toronto Corporate Identity Policy

9.5. City of Toronto Human Rights and Anti-Harassment Policy

9.6. City of Toronto Multi-Year Accessibility Plan