

Accessibility, language access, and inclusive operations

Making documents, meetings, forms, systems, and contact points usable by people with disabilities and people who use languages other than English, as a matter of practice rather than exception.

Goals: Communication and accessibility

Why it matters

Inaccessible forms, unclear accessibility ownership, and translation gaps were among the most concrete barriers DSD staff named. Each one has a fix with an owner.

Questions to begin with

- Who is responsible for accessibility of this item, and do they know it?
- Is this a vital document, and which languages and formats does it need?
- How will someone participate if the default format does not work for them?
- What does the process ask of people, and what can be removed?

Work you can take forward

Run an accessible and culturally responsive meeting

Purpose and materials in advance, accommodation language that does not force disclosure, several ways to participate, clear decisions and owners, accessible follow-up.

Supervisors and managers · Program and policy staff

- **Accessible and culturally responsive meetings: before, during, and after** — program page / library/ja-accessible-meetings
- **Access checks before a meeting, outreach, or session** — program page /library/ja-access-checks

Ask: What should I do before, during, and after a team meeting so everyone can actually take part?

Make a document, form, or notice accessible and plain

Semantic structure, plain language, alternative formats, and a review before publication.

Communications and language access · Program and policy staff

- **Plain language and accessible documents checklist** — program page /library/ja-plain-language

- **Minnesota digital accessibility standard (MNIT)** — program page /library/ext-mn-accessibility
- **Plain language carries complexity: it does not remove it** — program page /library/lm-plain-language-carries-complexity

Ask: How do I write a plain-language notice without losing the details people need?

Plan language and cultural access for a program or contact point

Languages, formats, interpreter availability at first contact, vital-document review, and trusted messengers planned together.

Communications and language access · Service delivery and support planning

- **Language and cultural access planning aid for a program or contact point** — program page /library/ja-language-cultural-access-planning
- **Language access checklist** — program page /library/ja-language-access-checklist
- **Working with a spoken-language interpreter** — program page /library/lm-interpreter

Ask: We are opening a new intake line. What language and cultural access planning should happen first?

Tools and frameworks

- **Tool card: National CLAS Standards** — The National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services, published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health. Public. Permitted use: cite, link, follow as a frame for language and cultural access planning.
- **Tool card: State of Minnesota accessibility standard** — The State of Minnesota digital accessibility standard, currently Section 508 plus WCAG 2.1 Level A and AA, and the accessible document guidance that accompanies it. Public. This program keeps WCAG 2.2 Level AA as its own stronger release target.