

Russian-speaking Minnesota

Russian-speaking Minnesotans come from many countries of the former Soviet Union, including refugees of earlier decades and recent Ukrainian arrivals.

Maintained by: Equity and Inclusion Operations Consultant

Art opens a conversation

The Museum of Russian Art offers a Minnesota starting point for exploring art and history. For this language-based brief, it is one doorway, not a portrait of everyone who speaks Russian. A shared language does not settle a person's nationality, cultural ties, or political views.

- **Explore the Museum of Russian Art** — <https://tmora.org/about/>

A different starting point

How would you leave room for a person to name their own identity and preferred language without having to correct your assumptions?

Community overview

Jewish, Orthodox Christian, evangelical, and secular households; national identities that may be in conflict.

Names and terms

Russian-speaking (as a language group); national-origin terms (Ukrainian, Belarusian, and others)

Patronymics are common; ask how the person wants to be addressed.

National identity is sensitive; ask rather than infer from language.

History and place

Origins — empire, Soviet, and named streams

There is no single founding of “Russian-speaking Minnesota.” Ethnic Russian peoplehood is older than the Soviet Union and older than this department. It is not the whole door. Other peoples used Russian as an imperial and Soviet language of school, army, and office. That history is why a language list is not a census of who counts.

History for the meeting

Late-imperial emigration included Jews fleeing pogroms and others leaving the Russian Empire. Some of that older Jewish Minnesota is English-dominant now and is not this CLAS door. Do not mash a 1910 synagogue story onto a 1994 arrival and call it one community.

What people brought

The Soviet period produced later streams: dissidents, Jews denied exit (refuseniks) until Jackson-Vanik and the years that followed opened a way, and then the 1991 collapse of the USSR, which moved people for work, family, and survival. Evangelical Protestants — Baptists and related churches — left in named waves as well. Central Asian and Caucasian families may carry Russian as a public language beside another home language.

What people brought is not one kit: Orthodox practice, Jewish peoplehood, evangelical church, Soviet official atheism, Cyrillic literacy, professional skill the U.S. did not always recognize, and a memory of a state that surveilled. What they met in Minnesota: an English form, a racial order that may file them as white and skip the interpreter, and often one interpreter labeled “Russian.”

The Geography of Russian-Speaking Worlds

Homeland is not one flag. The Russian Federation is a geography some families name. Ukraine is another — and a Ukrainian household that uses Russian is still not this page’s invented people. Belarus, Kazakhstan and other Central Asian states, the Caucasus, the Baltics: Russian as a Soviet-era public language still sits in some of those rooms. Do not referee borders in a waiver meeting. Listen if they name a place.

Homeland

The diaspora is global: Israel and Germany for large Jewish streams, the United States, Canada, and Europe. Brighton Beach is not Minnesota. Brooklyn, northern New Jersey, and California sit on a different map. Secondary migration and church networks built some of what you will meet here.

Minnesota

In Minnesota: Twin Cities households; some inner-ring suburbs; Orthodox parishes and synagogues as named places, not a blob; evangelical and Baptist congregations in some towns, including Greater Minnesota. Do not assume Northeast Minneapolis. Do not assume the person in front of you has been to Russia. Do not assume a Greater Minnesota town has no Russian-speaking church.

Emigration Waves — Foundational Events, Not One Flight

If 1975 is the foundational event of Hmong Minnesota and 1991 of Somali Minnesota, Russian-speaking Minnesota does not get one year. It gets a stack, and you will misread the room if you pick the wrong one.

Foundational events

Late-imperial flight. Soviet emigration in drips and then in named openings. The 1970s–90s Jewish stream — refuseniks, Jackson-Vanik (1974) as U.S. law tying trade to emigration, then the late-1980s and 1990s movement — built part of Twin Cities Jewish life. That stream is Jewish peoplehood meeting Minnesota synagogues and a JCC, not a nesting-doll exhibit. 1991 and the collapse of the USSR moved others: ethnic Russians, mixed families, professionals, people from republics that were suddenly different countries.

Who you meet

Evangelical and Baptist Russians arrived in church-sponsored patterns that sometimes landed in Greater Minnesota, not only in Minneapolis. Later family and employment streams are ordinary immigration, not a refugee poster.

2022 and the war on Ukraine is current structure for some households in this language: relatives under fire, mixed families, people who will not accept a Russian-language flyer that looks like Moscow. It is a trap if you treat every Russian speaker as a combatant or a Putin voter. It is also a trap if you pretend the war is not in the room when they name it. Literacy for the desk. Not a speech you give the family.

Minnesota and Russian-Speaking History

Minnesota put Russian on the CLAS five because the building already knew it would meet this language on notices, health care, cash, food, aging, and voting — not because Compass drew a people-blob titled Russian. That is the honest origin of this spine. A language list is operations. It is not a census.

Places

Places, not a blob: Twin Cities; inner-ring suburbs; some Greater Minnesota towns with evangelical churches. Do not write “the Russian neighborhood” onto a map you do not have. Pattern now. Date a geography when a controlling source exists.

Partners

Partners: synagogues and Jewish Community Centers for some of the Jewish stream; Russian Orthodox parishes some families name; evangelical and Baptist churches in some towns; no single “Russian community center” as the whole. CECLC is a department door — not the community. Pay the partner this household actually uses.

Do not extract Russian-speaking staff as the interpreter or as “the community.” They may be Jewish, Ukrainian, Belarusian, or a third generation that does not want to be your culture desk. A liturgy or a JCC visit is optional professional development. You are a guest. It does not make you the expert.

Culture and everyday life

A Note on This Guide — a language door, not one people

This brief is about Russian as a language door on the department's CLAS five-language standing written list — with Hmong, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese — not as one people. If you invent a single “Russian community” from that list, you have already left this door. A list is not the person and not the dialect. Still book a qualified interpreter.

Who this is

Disaggregate before you open a file. Ethnic Russians. Soviet Jews of the 1970s–90s refusenik / Jackson-Vanik stream. Ukrainian households who use Russian — not the Ukrainian people-page; Compass Ukrainian is about 22,570 (ACS 2019–2023); do not mash. Belarusian, Central Asian, and Caucasian Russian-speakers. Evangelical and Baptist Russians, including some Greater Minnesota towns. Recent arrivals versus 1990s versus a third generation that may not need you to speak Russian at all.

Who this is not

A full mosaic is not a stereotype. A stereotype is when this page becomes the person in the lobby. Shared language is not shared origin, not shared religion, and not shared politics. The Ukraine war is current structure for some households and a trap if you assume every Russian speaker is a combatant or a Putin voter.

There is no Minnesota Compass cultural-community profile titled Russian. Compass immigration table: about 6,483 foreign-born from Russia — date the table you open; that is not a count of speakers. ACS language-at-home figures disagree across vintages. Star Tribune (31 July 2025): Russian is among languages each representing about 2% of Minnesotans who speak a language other than English at home. Minnesota Secretary of State voter materials include Russian. Date the number. Do not invent a community population.

The diversity inside this language is the point. A Jewish grandmother who left on an exit visa in 1989, an Orthodox parishioner, a Belarusian family that uses Russian at the table, a Ukrainian household that will not accept a “former Soviet” interpreter after 2022, a Baptist family in a Greater Minnesota town, a professional who does not need an interpreter and whose elder does — share a language on a form and do not share a Tuesday.

How to read this

Always defer to the person in front of you. This page is a hypothesis you still test on this household.

Family

Family is not one size. Some households look nuclear on an English form and still carry obligation to a parent who does not drive and does not read the form. Some are three generations in one week. Some are a single elder whose children live in another metro. Elder isolation is a named harm in this language door. It is not a cultural virtue.

Who is in the household

The patronymic — a name built from the father — is how a person is fully named in Russian. A form that keeps only first and last has already dropped a who. Ask how to file. Ask who should be in the room.

Who speaks

Adult children may speak for an elder in English. That is a hypothesis, not permission to skip the interpreter or to use a child. CLAS still stands. A sixteen-year-old in the lobby is not the qualified interpreter.

Women's labor and professional second generation sit next to older gender patterns in some rooms. Both can be true. Minnesota law still stands on violence, neglect, and who may consent. Do not skip mandated reporting and call it culture.

A Language Door — not a people you invented

The heart of this intelligence is a refusal. Russian on the five is a door onto many peoples. Ethnic Russian peoplehood is real — language, literature, Orthodox memory for some, a state that did harm and a state some people still defend. It is not permission to file a Ukrainian, a Tajik, or a Soviet Jew under one folk

costume.

In this state

Jewish peoplehood in the 1970s–90s stream is not “Russian culture with a menorah.” Ukrainian households that use Russian are not a round-up for this page. Evangelical Russians may organize life around a church in a town that has never heard the word CLAS.

In Minnesota another fact sits on the same desk: many of these households are read as white. The building’s unmarked default will skip the interpreter, skip the Cyrillic notice, and call that fairness. That skip is the gate. White appearance is not English proficiency and not the absence of a people.

This guide is a working orientation. Individual variation always supersedes group generalization. Always defer to the person in front of you.

Core Concepts

Disaggregation. The first grammar. If you cannot name the stream, you do not have a household yet.

Patronymic

Given name, father’s name as a middle element, family name. Dropping it invents a person. Filing it wrong invents a person. Ask.

Formality and titles

First name plus patronymic is respectful address in Russian. First name only can be too familiar with an elder. English “hi guys” is not a translation.

Hospitality

Tea, food, time in some rooms. Refusing everything can read as cold. You still keep medical and legal clocks.

State memory

For some, a Soviet past means you do not volunteer extra facts to a government desk. For some, the Russian Federation is still the frame. For some, 2022 ended that sentence. You do not interrogate loyalty. You do the form.

Church, synagogue, none

A parish, a shul, or a Baptist church may be the actual information channel. It is not “the community.” Do not make clergy the case plan unless this family asked.

Directness

Some Russian-speaking rooms will say the hard sentence without Minnesota Nice. That is not hostility. Follow this room. Do not punish candor and do not invent a Slavic personality.

Religion — Orthodox, Jewish, evangelical, none

Ask. Do not assume Russian Orthodox because the language is Russian. Russian Orthodox, Jewish,

evangelical Protestant, and none all live in this door. Soviet official atheism left a mark in some families that still keep a holiday table.

Streams

The parish is a center of liturgy, memorial, and sometimes mutual aid. It is not the community. Do not BCC one priest and call it consultation. Icons in a home are not a case plan and not a museum.

Practice

Jewish households in the 1970s–90s stream may be secular in the Soviet sense and still Jewish in peoplehood — synagogue, JCC, kosher as a maybe, Hebrew school as a maybe. Do not give them an Orthodox Christian flyer and call it language access. Do not give them a “Russian culture night” and call it Jewish.

Evangelical and Baptist congregations — some in Greater Minnesota — can be the whole public life of a household. Church English and home Russian may sit together. Do not make the pastor the case plan unless they asked.

Do not rank piety. A person who left the church or the synagogue is still this language door if that is the language they need.

Greetings

Handshake is common in many rooms — men, and often women in professional space. Follow this room. Some older Orthodox or observant Jewish settings will change the rule. You nod if a hand is not offered. You do not make a scene in the lobby.

Titles

Titles matter. First name plus patronymic is the respectful Russian address for an adult you do not know well. English Mr./Ms. plus family name is a decent substitute if you cannot produce the patronymic. Do not use a first name with an elder because the form printed it.

This room

Zdravstvuyte is the formal hello. English “hello” is ordinary, especially with the second generation. Say the name. Ask how to say it.

Do not import Somali right-hand rules or the Black nod onto this page. This is not those grammars. Physical contact: follow this person. A hug from staff is not warmth if the household did not offer it.

Naming — given name, patronymic, family name

A common Russian pattern is given name, patronymic, family name: a person is Ivan Petrovich Sokolov because his father is Petr. Maria Ivanovna Sokolova because her father is Ivan. The patronymic is not a middle name you may drop for convenience. Databases that drop it invent a person. That invented person then fails a match in MHCP, child welfare, and school.

How to file

Family names may take a gendered ending. Sokolov / Sokolova is the same family. The form that flags the difference as fraud has already chosen a household type. Ask how to file. Ask how this person wants the English record to read.

Jewish, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Central Asian, and Caucasian names in this language door will not all look like Ivan and Maria. Do not “correct” a name toward a Russian textbook. Pronounce it. Ask.

The form that demands first-middle-last and a hyphen will invent a person. Do not invent a last name, and do not invent a middle initial from a patronymic without asking. Three people in one household may not share a “last name” the way a Swedish Minnesota form expects. That is not fraud until you have a reason.

Dates of Significance

Orthodox Nativity and Pascha follow the Julian calendar for many Russian Orthodox households — often later than Western Christmas and Easter. Schedule around them when you can. They are not a day off the work. They are literacy.

Calendar

Jewish High Holidays, Passover, and other calendar days matter in the Jewish stream. They are not “Russian holidays.” Open the Jewish calendar if that is the household.

9 May — Victory Day in Soviet and Russian memory of 1945 — is real for some elders and a political fight for others after 2022. Listen. Do not put a victory parade on a case note. Do not lecture.

1991 is literacy, not a holiday. 24 February 2022 is current structure for some families. Do not put “Fall of Saigon party” energy — or a Ukraine-war slogan — on a case note.

New Year's Eve (Novy God) was the large Soviet winter holiday and still is for some secular families. A calendar click on this program is literacy for scheduling. It is not community engagement.

Etiquette

Shoes off in some homes. Follow the household. Accept a little tea or food if offered. Hospitality is a virtue. You still keep medical and legal time.

In the home

Elders first. Formal address until invited. Flowers in odd numbers for some living-room visits is a pattern you do not need to perform; you do need to not mock it.

Time

Do not walk into a living room and photograph an icon corner, a Sabbath table, or a family photograph wall. Do not touch ritual objects.

On-time for appointments. Traffic and multi-household logistics are real. Courtesy-yes then no-show happens when the plan was never agreed. Ask whether they agree. Confirm in the language they use.

Do not enter a parish, synagogue, or church as a researcher. Guest, if invited.

Language and Communication

Russian is on the five. It is not Ukrainian. It is not Belarusian. It is not “former Soviet.” An interpreter labeled Russian who is the wrong language for this household is still a closed door — and after 2022, a political door. Confirm. CLAS: still book a qualified interpreter. A list is not the person and not the dialect.

Language

Cyrillic literacy and Latin literacy are not the same. Many elders read Russian in Cyrillic and do not read the English PDF. Some U.S.-born adults do not read Cyrillic. A “Russian notice” in Latin transliteration can still be a closed door. Put the language they read on the line.

Elders may be LEP. Professionals may not be. White appearance is not English. Do not take a light accent as “no interpreter needed” without asking.

A direct answer may be the point, not rudeness. A short English yes may be exhaustion or courtesy. Do not take a smile as consent. Ask whether they agree with the plan.

Do not make a Russian-speaking coworker the interpreter.

LGBTQ

Queer and trans Russian-speakers exist in Minnesota. Conservative Orthodox, evangelical, and some family climates can mean silence or exile. The Russian Federation’s laws targeting LGBTQ people are current structure for some households and irrelevant in others. You do not assume either.

This person

Staff duty is the same as on the other spines: use the name they use; do not out them to an elder as cultural humility; Minnesota Human Rights Act still applies.

Do not use this chapter to raid a household. Do not pretend the tension is not there. Do not treat RF propaganda law as Minnesota practice.

Hair, Dress, and Body

There is no daily Russian costume in the lobby. Second generation looks like Minnesota. Do not ask whether they “still dress Russian.” Head covering happens in some Orthodox churches, some Jewish settings, some evangelical rooms. It is not a security threat and not a consent problem.

Dress

White appearance is not the absence of a language gate and not the absence of a body that staff may still other. Do not touch. Do not comment on gold, a cross, a Magen David, or a headscarf as a case note.

Winter dress is Minnesota. It is not ethnography.

Music

Orthodox chant is liturgy, not a playlist. Jewish music — liturgical and popular — belongs to the Jewish stream, not to a “Russian mix.” Bard song, Soviet-era popular music, and contemporary pop exist. Evangelical rooms have their own hymn and chorus life.

Variation

A playlist is not engagement. A funeral or a liturgy is not staff entertainment. Knowing that music splits along stream will stop you from putting one YouTube mix on a Heritage Month table and calling it this door.

Named variation is the point. An Orthodox memorial, a Jewish wedding, and a Baptist hymn night are not one “Russian culture night” you can BCC.

Sports

Hockey, soccer, figure skating, and chess carry prestige in some post-Soviet families. Ordinary school sport is ordinary for the second generation. Do not assume the kid plays. Do not make sport the only excellence you can see.

Not the whole person

Sport clubs are social infrastructure for some. They are not language access and not a case plan. A hockey sticker on a minivan is not proof the elder reads English.

Greater Minnesota and Twin Cities both play. A club flyer in English is still a closed door for the parent who needs Russian on the line.

Literature

Russian is a major written language with a long literature. That fact is literacy: this is not a people without letters. It is not a prompt to quote Tolstoy in the lobby. Jewish, Ukrainian, and other literatures sit in some of the same households. Do not mash them.

Literacy in the lobby

Cyrillic literacy for many elders is the actual operations fact. A notice that exists only in English, or only in Latin letters, is a closed door. U.S.-born adults may not read Cyrillic and may still be the person who has to explain the form.

You do not need a novel. You need the language this person reads.

Art

Icons are liturgical art in Orthodox homes and parishes — not décor for a unit bulletin board. Soviet visual culture, contemporary work, and Jewish arts in the 1970s–90s stream are not one exhibit.

Guest

There is no single Minnesota museum that is this whole door. Guest. An icon is not a case plan. A festival is not consultation. Do not photograph a sanctuary as professional development without being asked.

Heritage Month tables that mash matryoshka, a menorah, and a Ukrainian vyshyvanka into one “Eastern European” booth have already mashed what this brief asks you to keep apart.

War, the State, and the Ukraine Trap

Empire, Soviet surveillance, collapse, Jewish emigration under Jackson-Vanik, and later enforcement climate for some arrivals — that is the political stack. A DHS badge is not automatically help. For some

people, a government form is a thing you survive. That is not “paranoia.” It is pattern.

The badge

The war on Ukraine is current structure for some households in this language: family under fire, mixed marriages, people who left Russia, people who did not, people who will not speak politics in a lobby. It is a trap if you assume every Russian speaker is a combatant or a Putin voter. It is also a trap if you punish someone for not performing the politics you prefer.

Do not use 1991 or 2022 as a personality. Do not ask a person to narrate a war for your professional development. Do not collect status you do not need.

Adjacent Peoples — Do Not Mash

Not Ukrainian. Compass Ukrainian cultural community is about 22,570 (ACS 2019–2023). Open that people-page for a Ukrainian household. A Ukrainian family that uses Russian still gets to name their people. Ask. A Russian interpreter can still be the wrong door.

Adjacent doors

Not Belarusian mash. Not a “former Soviet” interpreter for a Kazakh or Georgian household that needs another language. Not Somali. Not the African American CI. Not “white = no cultural intelligence.”

Historic German- and Scandinavian-Minnesota unmarked culture is the European American door, not this one. A white face in the lobby does not tell you which spine to open.

Some households are mixed. Ask this household. Never one East-European module.

Counts, Dated — no invented population

There is no Minnesota Compass cultural-community profile for Russian. Do not invent one to make this spine look like Hmong or Somali.

Counts

Minnesota Compass immigration table: about 6,483 foreign-born from Russia. Date the table you open. That is not a count of Russian speakers. It is not Jewish. It is not Ukrainian. It is not the third generation born here.

What the count is not

Star Tribune, 31 July 2025, on languages spoken at home: German, French, Chinese, Russian, and Arabic each represent about 2% of Minnesotans who speak a language other than English at home. The same reporting said Vietnamese, Chinese, and Russian home-speaker populations had stayed about the same. Date that article. ACS vintages disagree. Date the vintage.

Minnesota Secretary of State voter materials include Russian. That is operations evidence that the state already treats this language as a public-contact fact. It is not a population.

Compass Ukrainian: about 22,570 (ACS 2019–2023). Do not add it to 6,483 and call the sum “Russian-speaking Minnesota.” A rate is not the person. Pattern now — date the number when a controlling source exists.

Doors and Sources

DHS Equal Opportunity and Access LEP resources — five primary written languages: Hmong, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Vietnamese. The ten-language block and the fifteen interpreter cards also include Russian. A list is not the notice and not the interpreter.

Public doors

Minnesota Compass immigration table (Russian immigrants ~6,483 — date it). Minnesota Compass Ukrainian cultural community profile — adjacent, not this page. Star Tribune, 31 July 2025, languages at home. Minnesota Secretary of State multilingual voter materials.

Learn on your own time

Synagogues and Jewish Community Centers some Jewish households name. Orthodox parishes some families name. Evangelical and Baptist churches in some towns. CECLC is a door, not the community.

Learn on your own time. Do not make a Russian-speaking colleague your unpaid tutor. Do not BCC one priest or one rabbi and call it consultation. Pay partners you actually have. Report back.

Services, opportunity, and participation

Education

There is no Compass education table for “Russian speakers.” Pattern now — date the number when a controlling source exists. Do not invent a rate.

School and language

Soviet and post-Soviet credentials were often high — engineering, medicine, teaching — and not always recognized here. A person who was a professional in 1994 and a warehouse worker in 1996 is not a personality. Children of that stream may be in English-dominant schools with a parent who still cannot run an IEP in English.

Elders may be LEP and fully literate in Cyrillic. Professionals and the U.S.-born may not need an interpreter and may still have a parent who does. Do not skip the interpreter because the adult in the lobby is white, employed, or accent-light.

A parent who speaks fluent Russian and limited English is not illiterate. The English-only form is the gate. Put Russian on the line. Confirm it is Russian, not Ukrainian.

Other Considerations — unvarnished, not Minnesota Nice

Unvarnished, because Minnesota Nice is how a room that treats everyone the same deletes facts.

Named harms

Alcohol harm and family violence exist in some households in this language door. They are not “the culture.” They are not a Slavic joke. You follow the law. You still see a household, not a crime scene walking in. Do not skip mandated reporting and call it humility.

Elder isolation is real for some post-Soviet elders: thin English, adult children at work, winter, no single community center that holds everyone. A missed appointment can be a bus and a language, not noncompliance.

The Russian Federation's anti-LGBTQ legal climate is current structure for some families. Queer and trans Russian-speakers exist in Minnesota. Minnesota's Human Rights Act still applies. You use the name. You do not out someone to kin and call it culture.

Immigration status fear is real for some recent arrivals. Do not collect status you do not need. Do not treat fear as noncompliance.

Do not treat every Russian speaker as one origin or one politics. Staff who share this community may add facts. They do not get to delete a fact because it is hard to say.

Health

There is no Compass health profile for this language door. Pattern now — date a rate when a controlling source exists. Do not invent one to fill the spine.

Access

Elder isolation, depression, and alcohol harm sit in some rooms. War and displacement sit in others. Soviet-era medical culture was biomedical and hierarchical for many; “traditional Slavic medicine” as a staff story is often tourism. Ask what this person uses. Co-create. Do not mock. Do not skip the waiver because a home remedy is in the story.

Mental-health stigma exists in some families. Naming a counselor is not the same as a family accepting one. A smile is not a PHQ-9.

Believe reported pain. Do not invent a Slavic or “European stoicism” slide. Do not fold this into Tuskegee or into an Asian mash.

Gender match may be requested in maternal and intimate care. Offer it. Book the interpreter even if the person is white. Confirm Russian, not a “former Soviet” default.

Work and Government

Professional work, trades, small business, public employment, and under-recognized Soviet credentials all live here. A small-business owner and a waiver recipient may be the same extended family.

Work

Russian-speaking staff exist inside DHS and counties. They are not unpaid interpreters and not “the community.” Identity is not a staffing plan.

Staff

Relationship and hospitality may precede a signature. That is not permission to skip a notice. It is a reason the first visit may not be the decision. The notice still has to exist in Russian, in a script they can read.

An English eList comment period is not how this language door was reached.

Health-care and Human-service Encounters

Language. Interpreter. Cyrillic. Patronymic. Who is in the room. Assuming English because the person is white. Elder isolation. Enforcement climate for some. Alcohol and family violence as facts, not folklore.

Language

Confirm it is Russian. Still book a qualified interpreter. Offer gender match. Ask who should hear. Ask how to file the name. Do not make staff the interpreter.

The meeting

Believe reported pain. Do not invent stoicism. Mandated reporting still exists. So does the duty not to treat a whole language as a risk score. Do not collect status you do not need.

Connections to human services

Workplace culture and service delivery are both candidates.

Language: Russian is on the five. An interpreter labeled “former Soviet” is a closed door. Ukrainian is a different language and a different brief. Still book a qualified interpreter. A list is not the person and not the dialect. Cyrillic is not optional decoration on a notice that actually has to be read.

Names: given name, patronymic, family name. The database that drops the patronymic or flags Sokolov / Sokolova as unmatched fraud is a gate that follows the person.

Assuming English because the person is white is a CLAS failure wearing Minnesota Nice.

Hour caps, exception processes, and life-sharing matches without language are not culturally neutral.

Enforcement climate: some recent arrivals skip clinic, school, and waiver meetings. That is not noncompliance. Do not collect status you do not need.

Notices and comment: an eList and an English PDF is not how this language door was reached. Empty follow-up cells are theater. SOS already prints Russian for voters. The packet can too.

Workforce: Russian-speaking staff are not the interpreter pool and not the community. Staff are colleagues, not the curriculum. Do not treat them.

Legislation, funding, rule: you cannot advocate for a channel you will not study. This cultural intelligence exists so the 40% has a household in it — not a paternalistic program designed in a building that treated a white face as no CI and a language list as a people.

Practice considerations

Russian is a shared language across people with very different national identities; for Ukrainian households, assuming Russian identity can be a harm. Book the language the person asks for.

What to ask

- Which language should we book: Russian or Ukrainian?

- How would you like to be addressed?
- Who should be in the room?

Access considerations

- Interpreter language matches the request.
- Notices in the requested language, reviewed.

Who to involve

- Language access lead or interpreter services, with the dialect written on the request.
- Equity Director for the administration or the person responsible for the program.
- Community partner organizations identified in this brief, with a clear purpose, role, compensation, and plan to report back.

Assumptions to examine

- Do not infer nationality or politics from language.
- Do not assume religion.

Continue the connection

- **Community engagement or co-design effort** — program page </paths/gp-3>
- **Equity Analysis Toolkit** — program page </learn/equity-toolkit>
- **Community engagement and connections** — program page </learn/community-connections>
- **Learning and resources** — program page </learn>

Sources

- **Community self-description** — A community-informed source and representation review are still needed.