

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANGUAGE ACCESS MASTER PLAN & PROTOCOL
2016 (Revised 2017)

1. PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

A. In Cooperation with the Mayor's Office, the Department of Human Services is committed to compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 2 C.S. § 561 et seq. (Act 172 of 2006), and the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter § 8-600 and § A-200, in ensuring meaningful access to City services and programs for individuals with limited English Proficiency ("LEP").

B. The purpose of this document is to establish an effective plan and protocol for the Department of Human Services and its Provider personnel to follow when providing services to, or interacting with, individuals who have limited English proficiency (LEP). Following this plan and protocol is essential to the success of our mission to provide and promote safety, permanency and well-being for children and youth at risk of abuse, neglect and delinquency.

Effective Communication is essential in our work. Ascertaining the needs of LEP, deaf, and hard of hearing people and providing the appropriate services makes it imperative that staff correctly identify a person's primary language, language limitation, or disability. People may mask their inability to understand in an effort to appear compliant or cooperative as well as out of embarrassment or shame at their limitations or disabilities.

Consistent with federal, state, and local law the DHS does not discriminate in its policies or provision of services to clients. To ensure meaningful access to the Department's services for all clients, it provides language assistance services for LEP, deaf, and hard of hearing people.

2. GENERAL POLICY

A. The Department of Human Services (DHS) recognizes that the population eligible for services includes individuals who are Limited English Proficient (LEP). It is the policy of DHS and its Providers to ensure meaningful access to LEP individuals. DHS adopts the following policy to ensure that LEP individuals can gain equal access to DHS' services and communicate effectively. This Plan applies to all DHS and Provider offices and satellite offices.

B. It is the City's policy to grant access to services or programs to every person even when the person has a limited ability to speak, understand, read or write English. DHS intends to take

reasonable steps to provide LEP persons with meaningful access to services and programs. DHS seeks to reduce barriers by increasing its capacity to deliver services and benefits to people in their primary language.

C. DHS and its Providers may not discriminate against LEP, deaf, and hard of hearing people by communicating less frequently or avoiding communication. To ensure effective communication in every aspect of service delivery, DHS provides language assistance services to staff for all clients who require them. Qualified interpretation services are to be provided at all stages of service delivery including meetings, home evaluations and visits, and written communications.

D. The Department of Human Services, rather than the LEP customer, bears the following responsibility:

1. Providing language appropriate services.
2. At the initial point of contact staff have the specific duty to identify and record language needs.
3. LEP, deaf, and hard of hearing people must be informed by staff of the availability of interpreter services and available assistive technology.
4. No staff may assume a person's language capacity even if the person appears to understand English.
5. Obtaining qualified interpreter services when communicating with LEP, deaf, and hard of hearing people even when such assistance is not requested or is refused.
6. Providing clients with translated documents and letters and arranging for the translation of client specific documents.
7. No staff may suggest or require that an LEP client provides an interpreter in order to receive services.
8. Documenting the primary language limitations, and disabilities of clients.
9. Documenting any interpreter services provided and refusals for them in the case records, electronic case management system, and any form where the information is relevant.
10. Use of informal interpreters such as family, friends of the person seeking service, or other customers must be discouraged.
11. Minor children are prohibited from acting as interpreters.
12. Any subjects of an abuse or neglect report currently being investigated are prohibited from acting as interpreters.

E. Providers must ensure effective communication and meaningful access to their services by providing translation and interpretation services for all who require them during all phases of service delivery.

F. If there is a need for interpreting services for court hearings, the CYD DHS staff must notify the Court Representative, the Legal Assistant filing the petition, or the City Solicitor that an interpreter is needed for a court hearing. Requests for interpreters or assistive technology are made for all LEP, deaf, and hard of hearing people.

- G. The preferred method of serving LEP persons is by:
1. Using professional in-person interpreters or sign language interpreters through contracted agencies who provide interpreting services during regular and after hours.
 2. Using telephonic interpreters through a contracted agency that allows staff to place or receive phone calls with interpreter services in 150 languages or Relay Services for deaf and hard of hearing persons.
 3. Using available, trained and competent bilingual staff who volunteer to provide interpreting services.
 4. Using document translation.

3. LANGUAGE ACCESS COMMITTEE

Language Access Committee

Language Access Coordinator
Byrnadia Fambrough
Department of Human Services
Children and Youth Division
1515 Arch Street – One Parkway Building
Philadelphia, PA 19102
Office: 215-683-5869
Byrnadia.Fambrough@phila.gov

CYD Operations Director
Christi Rinehart
Department of Human Services
Children and Youth Division
1515 Arch Street – One Parkway Building
Philadelphia, PA 19102
Office: 215-683-6050
Christi.Rinehart@phila.gov

4. DIRECT CONTACT WITH LEP INDIVIDUALS

The Department of Human Services has several points of contact with the public:

- Office Walk-Ins – The Client Reception Area regularly receives walk-ins on a daily basis from the public and clients in need of services. Arrangement for language access services can be made promptly upon request.
- Hotline – DHS receive calls from the public to report child abuse and neglect. Arrangement for language access services can be made promptly upon request.
- Investigations – Language access services should be anticipated and the necessary

arrangements made if this information is available when the report is taken; however, this information may not be known until the investigation employee goes out to conduct the investigation. In this instance, arrangement for services should be made promptly.

- Community Visits – Language access services can be anticipated since visits are pre-scheduled.
- Meetings - Language access services can be anticipated and the necessary arrangements made in advance of the meetings.
- Court Hearings – Language access services can be anticipated and the necessary arrangements made in advance of the hearings.

For each such area of contact, language access services will be provided in the following order:

1. Using professional in-person interpreters or sign language interpreters through contracted agencies who provide interpreting services during regular and after hours.
2. Using telephonic interpreters through a contracted agency that allows staff to place or receive phone calls with interpreter services in 150 languages or Relay Services for deaf and hard of hearing persons.
3. Using available, trained and competent bilingual staff who volunteer to provide interpreting services.
4. Using document translation.

5. LANGUAGE ACCESS SERVICES AND PROTOCOLS

1.) Services Provided

The Department of Human Services contracts with a number of agencies to provide language access services to LEP individuals. These services include in-person interpretations, telephonic interpretation, and document translation. These services are provided at no cost to the individuals.

2.) Protocols

To ensure that the inability to communicate in English does not deprive the public of rights and privileges, the Department of Human Services and its Providers will continue to provide an interpreter, at no cost to the individual, pursuant to the following procedures:

- An individual who receives or requests services from the department but has difficulty communicating with department staff, and/or
- When a request for an interpreter is made either orally, in writing or by pointing to a language card, the employee shall make the appropriate arrangement for interpreting services for the language being requested.

3.) Procedures

If there is a need for interpreter services and there is difficulty identifying the language, the employee will utilize the Language Identification Cards. This tool is available for use in the office or field as an aid to help identify clients' primary languages. Cards are available on all floors at 1515 Arch Street or by contacting the DHS Language Access Coordinator at 215-683-5869.

- The cards carry the phrase "Point to Your Language, an Interpreter will be called" printed in many languages.
- Clients can then point to their language.

Once determination is made about the language, the employee shall make arrangements for interpreter services in the following order:

A. Professional In-Person Interpreter – Below is a list of all professional in-person interpreter services available. This list can also be found in the "The Guide for Interpreter Services" located on DHS Central/Translation Services/Language Services. Services must be contacted in the order listed. For any problems accessing the in-person interpreter services, contact the Language Access Coordinator at 215-683-5869.

When contacting the provider and arranging for the service:

- a. Identify yourself as calling from DHS; specify the language that is needed, and scheduling information.
- b. Note that notice requirements differ and must be adhered to when requesting services.
- c. Complete the "Request for Contracted Interpreter Services" form and submit it to the Administrative Services Supervisor in the Accounts Payable Unit, 2nd Floor – OPB (3-6894).
- i. For court-ordered requests, a copy of the DRO must accompany the form when submitted.
- d. Requests must be submitted in a timely manner. The agency bills DHS directly.
- e. For non-emergency/scheduled appointments, the primary provider must be contacted first. If they are unable to accommodate the request, contact the other agencies listed.
 - i. Appointments must be scheduled at least two full business days in advance.
 - ii. Providers must be notified of a cancellation 2 full business days in advance to avoid a charge.
- f. For emergency interpretation services:
 - i. During the normal business hours, contact the providers in the priority order listed.
 - ii. After hours and weekends, contact the "after 5:00" phone numbers for the providers listed.

B. Telephone Interpretation – The Department of Human Services contracts with Language Line Solutions which is a resource that allows staff to place or receive phone calls with interpreter service in 150 languages. The procedures are as follows:

- 1) Place a call to, or have just received a call from a person who speaks a language requiring

interpretation. By conference call (see instructions below), you dial Language Line Services at [REDACTED]. An English-speaking operator will answer and ask you the below questions.

- a. What language is needed? Tell the operator what language your caller speaks, or, if you are not sure, what language you think your caller speaks.
- b. What is your Client I.D. Number? The Client I.D. Number for DHS is [REDACTED].
- c. What is your organization's name? The Philadelphia Department of Human Services.
- d. What is your personal code? Your personal code is the last four digits of your office phone number.

2) A speaker of the language you request will be on the line quickly (usually within seconds). Tell the interpreter the purpose of the call, and what information needs to be relayed. Then call or add the non-English speaker to the line. At the end of the call, tell the interpreter "end of call".

Making Conference Calls

1. With caller on the line press the transfer key
2. Dial the extension of the outside number
3. When the third party is on the line, press the CONF soft key

For deaf and hard of hearing persons, Voice Relay Services is available. To access clients by telephone and use relay services, deaf or hard of hearing persons must have the necessary equipment installed in their home. DHS does not provide any relay equipment.

TTY - Teletypewriter, Text Telephone Services

A voice message is relayed to a Communication Assistant (CA) who types the message and relays it to the TTY user. The TTY user then types the response to the CA who relays a voice message back to the hearing individual.

Procedure:

1. Have the phone number of the deaf or hard-of-hearing person that you are trying to reach available.
2. Call the relay service at [REDACTED] to access a Communication Assistant.
3. Provide the CA with the phone number for the person you are trying to reach. They will place the call.
4. Talk as though speaking directly to the person you called. The CA will relay your conversation.
5. Each time you finish speaking say: "Go ahead" to let the CA know you are ready for the TTY user's response.

C. Bilingual Volunteer Employees – The list of qualified and approved Language Proficient Employees is periodically updated and can be found on DHS Central by following this path:

Translation Services: Language Proficient Employees.

- a. Contact the selected employee by e-mail and copy the direct supervisor to request assistance. Include in the e-mail the language needed, date, time and location of interpretation, case name, estimated duration of service, and any additional information that may be helpful.
- b. Language proficient employees contact the requestor to confirm the appointment if supervisory approval has been given or decline the request. Supervisory approval is limited to a single event and must be obtained for each assignment.
- c. Language Proficient Employees must:
 - i. Have attended mandatory interpreter training and are approved to provide these services.
 - ii. Continue to be responsible for the performance of their normal duties when accepting any volunteer assignment.
 - iii. Are compensated with overtime or compensatory time for those hours acting as interpreters after their normal duty hours.

Court Hearings

- a. Requests for interpreters for court hearings are directed to the Law Department by contacting the assigned Solicitor, Court Representative, or the Legal Assistant preparing the petition for filing.
- b. Requests must be made as early as possible in advance of the court hearings. Subsequent needs for interpreters are the responsibility of the Court.
- c. If while in court, DHS staff become aware that an interpreter has not been arranged for the hearing, they must inform the DHS Court Representative or the City Solicitor so that one can be secured.
- d. The Solicitor must ensure that the court order for each hearing reflects the request for an interpreter or assistive technology.

Providers

- a. Providers are responsible for securing interpreter services when providing services and at Provider initiated events. Providers are encouraged to avail themselves of the provision in City contracts for language –related services which allows non-profit organizations to enter into contracts with City language service agencies at City negotiated rates.
- b. Providers are responsible for the payment of interpreters during the delivery of services at all provider initiated contacts with the family both in the home and elsewhere.
- c. If the Provider fails to enlist interpreter services and DHS staff have ample notice or can arrange it on an emergency basis, they are responsible to do so. When this occurs, DHS should report this to the Provider Relations and Evaluation of Programs (PREP) Unit.

Future Plans

Use Professional In-person Interpreter Services. DHS offers professional in-person interpreter services to all individuals requesting services from the department. Services are available up to

200 languages. DHS will continue to inform the public about these services through its website and will train all of its staff on using this service.

Use Telephonic Interpretation. DHS offers telephonic interpretation services to all individuals requesting services from the department. Services are available up to 200 languages. DHS will continue to inform the public about these services through its website and will train all of its staff on using this service.

1.) Services Provided

To ensure that the inability to communicate in English does not deprive the public of rights and privileges, DHS will continue to provide translations of vital documents, at no cost, for LEP individuals.

2.) Protocols for Document Translation

Vital written documents include, but are not limited to: consent and complaint forms; intake and application forms with the potential for important consequences; written notices of rights; notices of denials, losses or decreases in benefits or services; notice of disciplinary action; signs; and notices advising LEP individuals of free language assistance services.

3.) Procedure for Submitting a document for translation:

- A. Vital documents and letters have been translated into many languages and are available on DHS Central.
- B. When client-specific documents or documents not already translated in the language required must be translated:
 - i. Contact the DHS Language Coordinator at 215-683-5869 to assess the need for translation services and process if appropriate. The translated documents are then forwarded to the requestor.

4.) Signage

To aid the public in obtaining language access services, DHS currently displays Language Identification Posters in the Client Reception Area, which includes the visitation and meeting rooms. Interpreting services are provided promptly upon request

5.) Website

- a. The DHS extranet website contains information about the agency's programs and activities. All website content can be translated to any language through the use of Google Translate or Microsoft Office translate tools.
- b. Currently the following forms and/or letters are available on the intranet website in seven (7) languages:

- i. GPS – Unsubstantiated and closed - CBPS Letter;
- ii. FSP Goal Change – Court Notification Letter;
- iii. Notification of Protective Custody – Letter #1;

c. In Fiscal Years 2017-18, DHS will translate additional select documents and make them available through the website, newsletter, and/or community engagement meetings and other events. DHS will periodically review the DHS webpages with the goal of improving its accessibility to LEP persons. This includes identifying the most important information to be translated and the best means for disseminating translations to LEP communities.

d. Taglines will be included in the website that explain that LEP individuals can obtain a translation of documents or that interpretation is available in our office.

6.) Future Plans

DHS will continue to review and determine appropriate materials to be translated and update its website regularly. DHS will continue to communicate and enforce the protocols for language access services to all employees who come in contact with the public. . DHS will place Language Identification Posters in all DHS locations where service is provided to the public. These locations include the Sex Abuse Collaboration site, the Achieving Independence Center, the Achieving Reunification Center, and the Philadelphia Juvenile Justice Services Center.

C. BILINGUAL STAFF

1.) Current Staff

The list of qualified and approved Language Proficient Employees is periodically updated and can be found on DHS Central by following this path: Translation Services; Language Proficient Employees.

- a. Contact the selected employee by e-mail and copy the direct supervisor to request assistance. Include in the e-mail the language needed, date, time and location of interpretation, case name, estimated duration of service, and any additional information that may be helpful.
- b. Language proficient employees contact the requestor to confirm the appointment if supervisory approval has been given or decline the request. Supervisory approval is limited to a single event and must be obtained for each assignment.
- c. Language Proficient Employees must:
 - i. Have attended mandatory interpreter training and are approved to provide these services.
 - ii. Continue to be responsible for the performance of their normal duties when accepting any volunteer assignment.
 - iii. Are compensated with overtime or compensatory time for those hours acting as interpreters after their normal duty hours.

2.) Future Plans-

- a.) Hiring.

If it's determined that there is a need for a specific language speaking staff for a particular assignment, DHS has the option of requesting a bilingual exam through the Office of Human Services. Other options include requesting a selective factor certification from an already existing Civil Service eligible list.

b.) Staff interpreters.

DHS will continue to recruit for volunteer interpreters. All volunteers must go through the formal language certification process in order to provide interpreting services.

c.) Language sensitive assignments.

Currently, DHS does not have employees in language sensitive assignments. Bilingual staff are requested to provide interpreting services as needed and if available.

D. TRAINING ON STAFF, POLICY AND PROTOCOL

1) Training Protocol

a. DHS Language Access Plan & Protocol is posted on the intranet and provided as a hard copy during the on the job training to all staff members who have direct contact with children and families.

b. DHS will distribute the LEP plan to all staff and will have a current electronic copy available so all staff will be knowledgeable of LEP policies and procedures.

c. All staff providing direct services to children and families will receive annual LEP training, or training upon employment, and then annually.

d. LEP training will include information on the following topics:

- Legal obligation to provide language assistance;
- LEP plan and protocols;
- Identifying and responding appropriately to LEP individuals;
- Documenting LEP individual's language preference;
- Obtaining interpreters (in-person and over-the-phone);
- Using and working with interpreters (in-person and over-the-phone);
- Translating procedures;
- Documenting language requests; and
- Using or not using bilingual staff as in-house interpreters.

e. DHS will circulate this language access policy and related protocols to all staff within 10 days after adoption. Every year, DHS will circulate the revised policy and protocols to all staff after adoption. Within nine months of the adoption of this policy, DHS will provide training in regard to this policy and the appropriate use of interpreters and translators, to all staff who have regular interaction with LEP individuals. All new staff members who have direct contact with children and families will receive training within six months of the beginning of their

employment with DHS. After their initial training, all staff members will receive refresher training in language access every year.

f. In order to establish meaningful access to information and services for LEP individuals, staff that regularly interact with the public and those who will serve as in-house interpreters will be trained on DHS' LEP policy, plan and protocols. Training will ensure that staff members are effectively able to work in person and/or by telephone with LEP individuals. Management staff will be included in this training, even if they do not interact regularly with LEP individuals, to ensure that they fully understand the policy, plan, and protocols so they can reinforce their importance and ensure implementation.

g. Orientation- New staff training will be provided on the DHS Language Access Plan and Protocol and provide guidance on how to effectively communicate with LEP residents.

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f. In order to establish meaningful access to information and services for LEP individuals, staff that regularly interact with the public and those who will serve as in-house interpreters will be trained on DHS' LEP policy, plan and protocols. Training will ensure that staff members are effectively able to work in person and/or by telephone with LEP individuals. Management staff will be included in this training, even if they do not interact regularly with LEP individuals, to ensure that they fully understand the policy, plan, and protocols so they can reinforce their importance and ensure implementation.

g. Orientation- New staff training will be provided on the DHS Language Access Plan and Protocol and provide guidance on how to effectively communicate with LEP residents.

2.) Future Plans

a. Continue to make staff aware of the protocol and language access resources across DHS and the Provider Agencies. The DHS Language Access Coordinator will continue to provide training to all new hire staff and annually to all staff who have direct contact with children and families. The Coordinator will also attend regularly scheduled meetings with staff at all levels to provide reminders about the language access protocol and available resources and provide the necessary guidance.

E. ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

This section applies does not apply to DHS at this time.

6. NOTICE OF THE RIGHT TO LANGUAGE ACCESS

1. Posters notifying LEP individuals of their right to language services will be developed and displayed in areas of public contact. These posters will contain a simple message, such as, "Free Interpreter services are available. Please ask for assistance.", and will be in English as well as the principle languages spoken in the service area.
2. Department notices and flyers will also provide notice of the availability of language services and a simple instruction on how to request language assistance.
3. Taglines will be included in or attached to a document. Taglines in languages other than English can be used on documents written in English that describe how individuals with LEP can obtain translation of the document or an interpreter to read or explain the document. DHS will contact the office of Immigrant Affairs for support in creating taglines.
5. In all areas of public contact and on its website, DHS will post and maintain clear and readable signs in the languages most prevalent in the City notifying LEP individuals that free translation and interpretation services are available to them.

7. DATA COLLECTION AND ANNUAL REPORT

The following information will be required to be monitored and collected by front-line staff and will be aggregated via quarterly reports by DHS:

1. Number of LEP encounters (By Language), ASL encounters, when they occurred and total time of interaction
2. Type of Language Services Provided to LEP Customers
3. Number of Documents Translated
4. Language Services Expenditures

Additionally, Language Access Coordinators will be required to report quarterly on the following:

1. Number of bilingual staff
2. Number of staff trained in Language Access/Cultural Competency

Annual Report/Data Collection

1.) DHS will conduct an annual evaluation of its Language Access Plan to determine its overall effectiveness, review the progress of department goals and identify new goals or strategies for serving LEP residents. The designated staff will lead the evaluation with the assistance of the Operations Director. The evaluation will include the following:

- a. Assessment of the use of telephonic interpretation, in-person interpretation and translation services.
- b. Assessment of data collected about the LEP's primary language.
- c. Assessment of the number and types of language requests during the past year.
- d. Assessment of whether staff members understand the Language Access Plan and procedures, how to carry them out, and whether language assistance resources and arrangements for those resources are up-to-date and accessible.
- e. Assessment of complaint information; and
- f. Assessment of soliciting feedback from LEP individuals and community groups.

2.) Case Management staff will record each person's language of choice in electronic format to ensure that the information can be used by staff and tracked by the language access coordinator.

- a. If the individual is identified as being Limited English Proficient, the person's language of choice will be noted for future contacts.
- b. DHS' Language Access Coordinator will track the number of individuals that are assisted or unable to be assisted by the person's language of choice. This information will be considered as part of the annual Language Access Plan report.

3.) Evaluation results and recommended changes will be shared by DHS' Language Access Coordinator and incorporated into annual report which is required to be filed under Philadelphia Home Rule Charter § 8-600. The Language Access Coordinator will also keep records of any language access services provided and will make this information available during the annual review process. In connection with updates to the Language Access Plan, DHS may use some of the following tools to conduct further assessment:

- a. Request comments and feedback from visitors that have received language services
- b. Establish a tracking system to collect primary-language data for individuals that participate in programs and activities

8. LANGUAGE ACCESS COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

You may file a formal Language Access grievance with the Office of Immigrant Affairs if you believe you have been wrongly denied the benefits of this Language Access Plan. You must file your complaint within 6 months of the alleged denial. To file a formal complaint, you must fill out a Language Access Grievance Form and submit the form in person, by mail or e-mail to:

Office of Immigrant Affairs
 Orlando Almonte
 Language Access Program Manager
 Municipal Services Building
 1401 JFK Blvd., 14th Floor, Suite 1430
 Philadelphia, PA 19102
 E-Mail: orlando.almonte@phila.gov

The form will also be available on the OIA website.

Additionally, any person, regardless of immigration status, may submit a formal legal complaint through the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations. To do so, please complete a Public Accommodations Discrimination Intake Form and submit in person or by mail to:

Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations
The Curtis Center
601 Walnut Street., Suite 300 South
Philadelphia, PA 19106

To access the form and for more information, please visit www.phila.gov/humanrelations

9. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation Plan Logistics

Major milestones in our plan will include:

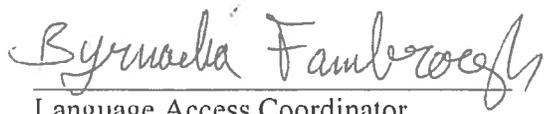
- Updating DHS' website to make public aware of language access services
- Updating DHS' Hotline phone system to include option for interpreting services
- Continuing to provide translation services to all persons who are not English proficient
- Updating agency language access tools and resources
- Training staff to ensure language access services are offered and provided promptly

Timeline

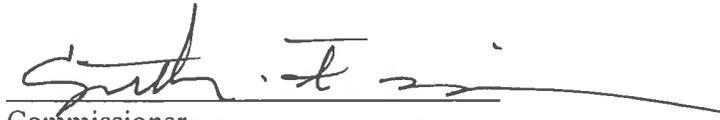
2017

- The Language Coordinator and the Operations Director will meet with the Communications Office and the IT Office to determine the information to add to the website regarding language access services.
- The Language Coordinator and the Operations Director will meet with the IT Office to update the Hotline phone system to include option for interpreting services.
- The Language Access Coordinator will post the updated plan and protocol on DHS' intranet and extranet.
- DHS will continue to broadly translate materials and provide on-site interpretation as needed, and to track these activities.
- The Language Coordinator and the Operations Director will meet with the Communications Office to determine what documents should be translated and added to DHS' website.
- The Language Coordinator will continue to provide training and attend supervisory and management meetings to provide guidance on the language access protocol.

10. SIGNATURE PAGE



Language Access Coordinator
Byrnadia Fambrough
Department of Human Services


Commissioner