Limited English Proficiency Plan

District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP)

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I. INTRODUCTION

This *Limited English Proficiency Plan* has been prepared to address the District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program's (DA VWAP) responsibilities as a recipient of federal financial assistance as they relate to the needs of individuals with limited English language skills. The plan has been prepared in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, et seq, and its implementing regulations, which state that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin.

Executive Order 13166, titled *Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency*, indicates that differing treatment based upon a person's inability to speak, read, write or understand English is a type of national origin discrimination. It directs each agency to publish guidance for its respective recipients clarifying their obligation to ensure that such discrimination does not take place. This order applies to all state and local agencies which receive federal funds, including District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP).

• Plan Summary

The District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) has developed this *Limited English Proficiency Plan* to help identify reasonable steps for providing language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency [LEP] who wish to access services provided. As defined Executive Order 13166, LEP persons are those who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English. This plan outlines how to identify a person who may need language assistance, the ways in which assistance may be provided, staff training that may be required, and how to notify LEP persons that assistance is available.
In order to prepare this plan, the District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) used the four-factor LEP analysis which considers the following factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served by the District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP).
2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) services.
3. The nature and importance of services provided by the District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) to the LEP population.
4. The interpretation services available to the District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) and overall cost to provide LEP assistance. A summary of the results of the four-factor analysis is in the following section.

II. MEANINGFUL ACCESS: FOUR-FACTOR ANALYSIS

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served or are likely to require District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP).

The District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) reviewed the 2017 U.S. Census Report and determined that 17,110 persons in Muscogee County [9.3% of the population] speak a language other than English. In Muscogee County, of those persons with limited English proficiency, 9,700 speak Spanish, and 4,007 speak Indo-European, 2,672 speak Asian and Pacific Island languages, and 731 speak other languages. Also reviewed disability report for the year 2016. Out of the population in 2016 12.8% of the people have disabilities. Those disabilities are, but are not limited to, hearing, vision, cognitive, and ambulatory.

2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP)

The District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) staff reviewed the frequency with which Commissioners, office staff and maintenance staff have, or could have, contact with LEP persons. This includes documenting phone inquiries or office visits. To date, District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) has had no requests for interpreters and no requests for translated program documents. The Commissioners, office staff and maintenance staff have had very little contact with LEP persons.

3. The nature and importance of services provided by District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) to the LEP population.

There is no large geographic concentration of any type of LEP individuals in the service area for District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP). The overwhelming majority of the population, 90.7%, speak only English. As a result, there are few social, service, professional and leadership organizations within District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) area that focus on outreach to LEP individuals. The District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) Commissioners and staff are most likely to encounter LEP individuals through office visits, phone conversations, notifications from maintenance staff of impacts on services and attendance at Commissioners meetings.

4. The resources available to the District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP), and overall costs to provide LEP assistance.

The District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) reviewed its available resources that could be used for providing LEP assistance, which of its documents would be most valuable to be translated if the need should arise, and contacted local citizens that would be willing to provide voluntary Spanish translation if needed within a reasonable time period. Other language translation if needed would be provided through a telephone interpreter line for which District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) would pay a fee.

III. LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE

A person who does not speak English as their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English may be a Limited English Proficient person and may be entitled to language assistance with respect to District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) services. Language assistance can include interpretation, which means oral or spoken transfer of a message from one language into another language and/or translation, which means the written transfer of a message from one language into another language.

How the District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) staff may identify an LEP person who needs language assistance:

- Post notice of LEP Plan and the availability of interpretation or translation services free of charge in languages LEP persons would understand.
- District staff including Road Foreman, Road Supervisors, Engineer and Office staff, will be provided with "I Speak" cards to assist in identifying the language interpretation needed if the occasion arises.
- All District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) staff will be informally surveyed periodically on their experience concerning any contacts with LEP persons during the previous year.

  When the District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) sponsors an informational meeting or event, a staff person may greet participants as they arrive. By informally engaging participants in conversation it is possible to gauge each attendee's ability to speak and understand English. Although translation may not be able to be provided at the event it will help identify the need for future events.

A. Language Assistance Measures-Although there is a very low percentage in District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) of LEP individuals, that is, persons who speak English "not well" or "not at all", it will strive to offer the following measures:

1. The District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) staff will take reasonable steps to provide the opportunity for meaningful access to LEP clients who have difficulty communicating English.

2. The following resources will be available to accommodate LEP persons:

i. Volunteer interpreters for the Spanish language are available and will be provided within a reasonable time period.

ii. Language interpretation will be accessed for all other languages through a telephone interpretation service.

iii. Sign Language interpretation will be accessed for those with hearing disabilities.

iv. Braille will be easily accessible to those with seeing disabilities.

v. For those with cognitive disabilities, there will be a paraprofessional onsite to help assist with any special needs.

IV. STAFF TRAINING

The following training will be provided to all staff:

- Information on the Title VI Policy and LEP responsibilities.
- Description of language assistance services offered to the public.
- Use of the "I Speak" cards.
- Documentation of language assistance requests.
- How to handle a potential Title VI/LEP complaint.

All contractors or subcontractors performing work for District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) will be required to follow the Title VI/LEP guidelines.

V. TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENTS

- District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) weighed the cost and benefits of translating documents for potential LEP groups. Considering the expense of translating the documents, the likelihood of frequent changes in documents and other relevant factors, at this time it is an unnecessary burden to have any documents translated.
- Due to the very small local LEP population, District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) does not have a formal outreach procedure in place, as of 2010. Translation resources have been identified and are limited in this region. However, when and if the need arises for LEP outreach, District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) will consider the following options:
- When staff prepares a document, or schedules a meeting, for which the target audience is expected to include LEP individuals, then documents, meeting notices, flyers, and agendas will be printed in an alternative language based on the known LEP population.

VI. MONITORING

Monitoring and Updating the LEP Plan- District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) will update the LEP Plan as required. At a minimum, the plan will be reviewed and updated when data from the 2010

U.S. Census is available, or when it is clear that higher concentrations of LEP individuals are present in District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) area. Updates will include the following:

- The number of documented LEP person contacts encountered annually.
- How the needs of LEP persons have been addressed.
- Determination of the current LEP population in the service area.

- Determination as to whether the need for translation services has changed.
- Determine whether local language assistance programs have been effective and sufficient to meet the need.
- Determine whether District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) financial resources are sufficient to fund language assistance resources needed.
- Determine whether the District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) fully complies with the goals of this LEP Plan.
- Determine whether complaints have been received concerning the agency's failure to meet the needs of LEP individuals.

VII. DISSEMINATION OF District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program (DA VWAP) LEP PLAN

- Post signs at District office notifying LEP persons of the LEP Plan and how to access language services.