

## 12.0 Services for Non-English Speaking Clients

### 12.1 Implementing Services

The BDVP will employ and provide services to all qualified individuals regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age or disability.

The BDVP commits to providing meaningful access to its services for all persons regardless of language/English proficiency. "Limited English proficiency" is defined as the inability to speak, read, write, or understand the English language at a level that permits individuals to interact effectively with Center staff.

To ensure meaningful access, all BDVP staff should abide by the following procedures:

- 1) Notice shall be provided to LEP persons of the right to access services and the right to an interpreter
  - All persons requesting services at the BDVP shall be advised of their right to an interpreter.
  - The language of the person shall be noted on intake forms and whether the person is requesting an interpreter.
  
- 2) Competent interpreters shall be provided for LEP persons
  - "*Competent interpreter*" is defined as a person with proficiency in both English and the language of the client who has a commitment to confidentiality, ethics, and an understanding of the boundaries of the role of the interpreter. All efforts shall be made to provide a confidential, competent interpreter who has no other relationships with the client. Family members, friends, children, or other clients should not be used as interpreters. The client shall not be responsible for providing the interpreter.

This applies to all BDVP services, including but not limited to crisis line services, walk-in services, residential and non-residential counseling, legal advocacy and all required/optional group meetings offered by the BDVP.

3) All documents requiring the signature of the client and regarding expectations, rights, and responsibilities of the client shall be interpreted in full detail to the client unless a translated version is available.

The BDVP staff shall adhere to the following procedure to comply with its policy of language accessibility to LEP persons:

A. Crisis call:

1. For incoming calls in which the caller is speaking another language, the Pacific Interpreters (language line) shall be immediately accessed. If the caller speaks limited English, notify them of their right to an interpreter. If there is difficulty communicating, the language line shall be accessed.

2. Documentation: Language of the client and need for an interpreter shall be noted on the intake sheet and file.

B. In-person client services: Including shelter, legal advocacy; non-residential services.

1. Inform client of right to interpreter and ask if they need one
2. Identify language needs and record on intake
3. Safety shall be assessed and the client advised of all legal and shelter options, as well as all services offered by the BDVP.
4. All interpreters provided by BDVP shall sign a confidentiality statement.

C. Residential services

1. The above procedures for in-person services shall be followed.

2. At the time of intake, the incoming resident will be informed (through an interpreter if necessary) of all rights and responsibilities as a resident, grievance procedures, and of all required and optional individual and group services.
3. When a person is required to sign a document that document shall be interpreted fully to a person if no written translation is available.
4. Interpreters should be scheduled for all individual meetings with family advocate, and any group meetings which the client may wish to attend.
5. It is each shift's responsibility to check in with all LEP clients (women and children). Inquiry should include but not be limited to any needs, concerns or requests that they may have. Staff should utilize the language line, bi-lingual staff or an approved interpreter for these sessions.

## **12.2 Procedure regarding access of services**

### **1) Equal Access**

The BDVP shall provide equal access to all of its services, regardless of immigration status.

### **2) Confidentiality**

The BDVP shall keep all information about non-citizen clients confidential and shall not report the immigration status of an individual to any government agency without the client's permission. Staff are not to document in the file the status of the immigrant resident.

### **3) Non-cooperation with INS**

The BDVP will not contact INS with regard to a client or a perpetrator. The BDVP will not cooperate with the INS in instituting removal (deportation) proceedings of the perpetrator. This does not mean that staff will not cooperate with the prosecution of the perpetrator, if the client chooses this path.

### **4) Notice**

The BDVP shall provide notice to all clients that its' services are provided regardless of immigration status, that the client does not need to disclose her immigration status or social security number, that the BDVP will not report any information about the client to INS.

