

Interim Report

Today, November 25, 2009, the BHA posts its Limited English Proficiency Policy on its web site. The adoption and publication of this Policy reflects BHA's commitment to continue to develop effective ways for non-English speaking persons to access BHA's direct services to applicants, participants, and residents. Publication of the Policy, however, does not mean that BHA has in place full implementation of its language assistance services. That will come over time.

To date, BHA is continuing to issue public notices of hearings, policies and other important issues in multiple languages. BHA's lease continues to be available in 6 languages (English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, and Haitian-Creole). A pilot program has begun in the Division of Grievance & Appeals – maintaining a log of contacts and languages spoken, providing interpretive services where necessary, translating certain Vital Documents or utilizing a general notice (in 10 languages advising of the importance of the document and how to obtain interpretive services). BHA continues to work on its Language Assistance Services Implementation Plan and Procedures, and a draft is currently being reviewed and revised by staff. Because of their critical importance to tenants, participants, and applicants BHA intends to focus initially on procedures and documents involving termination of tenancies or program participation, and on the application process for assistance. We have undertaken consultation with several groups regarding interpretive resources. We are examining staff needs. Some documents are in the process of translation. We are committed to implementation of a sound program, but in an organization as large and programmatically complex as this one implementation will be phased in over time. We will issue updated reports similar to this one. We welcome your comments, and suggestions. These may be sent to the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Christy.Doyle@bostonhousing.org.