



Title VI Resources for Effective Communication

As required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Tompkins County provides translation and interpreting services to assist individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and persons with disabilities who may need special assistance in order to have meaningful access to County programs and services. The County provides translation and interpreting services at no cost to the public. LEP individuals and persons with disabilities may choose to have an adult friend or family member interpret for them, if they prefer. However, children under the age of 18 should only be used to interpret in emergencies.

Below is information on the translation and interpreting services that County staff can use to ensure effective communication with LEP individuals and persons with disabilities.

Language Line is a phone-based language interpretation service. Staff who have three-way calling on their office phone can use Language Line to call LEP individuals. Staff can identify the appropriate language by using a language identification flashcard, found in [Appendix E of the County's LEP Plan](#).

To access Language Line:

1. Call 1-866-874-3972.
2. Provide the County's client ID number. (If you do not have the client ID number, you can request it from your department's Title VI Coordinator)
3. Indicate the language you need; you will be connected to an interpreter.
4. Brief the interpreter, give any special instructions, and provide your office phone number for tracking purposes.
5. Call the LEP individual via three-way call.
6. Speak directly to the LEP individual and pause at the end of a complete thought. You may sometimes be asked for clarification or repetition.

Empire Interpreting Service can assist when County staff need to communicate in-person with LEP individuals or persons with sensory impairments who communicate using American Sign Language (ASL).

To schedule an in-person interpreter with Empire:

1. Call 1-844-620-8594.
2. Identify that you work for Tompkins County and provide your name and office phone number.
3. Provide the location, date, and time that the interpreter is needed; the name of the client/recipient who will be using the interpreter; the requested language; and a brief description of the nature of the appointment.
4. For billing purposes, indicate if the appointment is expected to last more than two hours.

In addition to these third-party services provided by the County, New York State offers a free service when communicating via telephone with persons who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind, or speech-disabled. **New York Relay** is a statewide phone service that connects calls between a hearing caller and a caller with a speech or hearing impairment. The service uses specially trained Relay operators and all calls are confidential.

To make a Relay call:

1. Dial 7-1-1 (or 800-421-1220).
2. Press 1 to make a Relay call. An Operator will answer and identify themselves by their Operator number.
3. Give the Operator the phone number of the person you are calling and they will connect the call.
4. Speak directly to the individual (not the operator) and say "Go ahead" at the end of a complete thought.
5. The Operator will relay the information between you and the other person.

If you are contacted by a caller with a hearing or speech impairment who uses the Relay service to call you, the Operator will identify this by saying "This is New York Relay." **Don't hang up.** Hang-ups are frustrating for speech- and hearing-impaired callers. Continue the conversation as described above.

For more information on the Tompkins County Title VI Program, including the LEP Plan and ADA Program Plan, visit:
<http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/tccp/titleVI>