


**County of San Bernardino
Department of Behavioral Health**

**Providing Written Communications in Threshold/Primary
Languages for Consumers/Family Members Policy**

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Policy It is the policy of the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) to provide all written communications for all consumers and their family members in the appropriate threshold/primary language and at a level that is easily understood to ensure appropriate access to services and all information relating to said services is available for review. This policy applies to all behavioral health services, including specialty mental health (SMH) and substance use disorder (SUD).

Purpose To ensure appropriate access to services as well as reduction of barriers experienced by diverse populations who have been historically underserved.

Note: If the consumer/family member is visually or hearing impaired, other communication methods must be utilized as appropriate (See [ACA 1557 Procedure](#)).

Implementation and Practice All forms given to consumers/family members, including but not limited to, forms signed by client, informational forms, letters, etc. shall be provided in the threshold/primary language of the consumer/family members. When providing forms to a consumer/family member who is visually impaired or has literacy barriers, please refer to the important note above.

Definitions **Threshold Language:** The annual numeric identification on a countywide basis, of 3,000 beneficiaries or five (5) percent of the Medi-Cal beneficiary population, whichever is lower, whose primary language is other than English, for whom information and services shall be provided in their primary language.

Primary Language: That language, including sign language, which must be used by the beneficiary to communicate effectively and which is so identified by the beneficiary.

Consumer: A person with lived experience of mental health issues.

Family Member: A parent or caretaker of a child, youth, adult, or older adult, who is currently utilizing, or has previously, utilized mental health services.

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**Providing Written Communications in Threshold/Primary
Languages for Consumers/Family Members Policy, Continued**

**Related Policy
or Procedure**

DBH Standard Practice Manual:

- Field Testing of Written Materials Policy ([CUL1010](#))
 - Field Testing of Written Materials Procedure ([CUL1010-1](#))
 - Satisfying Consumer Language Needs Policy ([CUL1004](#))
 - Providing Translation Services Procedure ([CUL1011](#))
 - 2006 State Informing Materials Procedure ([QM6012](#))
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Reference(s)

- California Code of Regulations, Title 9, Section 1810.410 (a-e)
 - California Code of Regulations, Title 9, Section 3200.210
 - Executive Order 13160, 2000
 - Dymally Alatorre Bilingual Services Act, 1973
 - Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 5600.2 (g)
 - Department of Mental Health Information Notice 10-02
 - National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS), Standards 1-14
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