

# Language Access



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
SOCIAL SERVICES

DFS Division of  
Family Services

## What is it?

### **Meaningful Access**

A set of strategies to ensure survivors with Limited English Proficiency are able to speak, understand, and be understood in the language in which they prefer and in which they feel more articulate and powerful.

## Why is it important?

### **Survivor-centered**

Having a robust language access plan to meet the diverse needs of survivors allows for meaningful access to services, expands survivors' options, and enhances their safety.

## Is this required?

### **Yes!**

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Executive Order 13166, the American with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitative Act of 1973 all include protections for people with Limited English Proficiency and people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

## How do we make it happen?

### **Reflection and planning**

Begin by identifying the languages most commonly spoken in your service area. Be creative and innovative in developing a language access plan that leverages your available services while meeting the needs of LEP survivors in your community.