



December 11, 2024

Dear Tribal Leaders:

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Minority Health (OMH) invites you to participate in a virtual Tribal listening session on Monday, January 13, 2025, from 1:00pm – 2:00pm ET. The Tribal feedback will help inform the implementation of two anticipated fiscal year (FY) 2025 grant initiatives regarding a National Coordinating Center for Language Access Services and Promoting Access with a Language Services Assistance Symbol. To register for the Zoom meeting, please use this link: [Meeting Registration – Zoom](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about how to join the session.

The **National Coordinating Center for Language Access Services** initiative will develop technical components needed to host the Center, connect, and engage a collaborative network of community-based organizations, and promote the Center nationally to health and human service organizations and agencies. OMH also expects the project to address gaps in access to language services and improve the quality of care and health outcomes for individuals with limited English proficiency. The forecast for the notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) is posted on [grants.gov](#).

During the listening session, OMH will seek Tribal feedback on the following questions related to the anticipated National Coordinating Center for Language Access Services:

- What are the current resources and approaches used within your Tribal community to support language access services?
- What are the barriers to health care and social services experienced by individuals seeking to use language access services within your Tribal community?
- What partnerships and other resources might be needed to develop a National Coordinating Center for Language Access Services for Tribal communities?

During FY 2024, OMH initiated the development of a universal symbol that will indicate the availability of language assistance service. The **Promoting Access with a Language Services Assistance Symbol** initiative will demonstrate the effectiveness of a universal symbol developed by OMH in raising awareness and prompting individuals to request language assistance services in health settings. Individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and people with disabilities face barriers to health care and social services that increase their risk for poor health outcomes. Language assistance services are all oral, written, and signed language services needed to assist effective communication for individuals with LEP and people with disabilities. OMH also expects funded projects to demonstrate progress towards health care communication related Healthy People 2030 objectives. Related information can be found at this [link](#). The forecast for the notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) is posted on [grants.gov](#).

During the listening session, OMH will seek Tribal feedback on the following questions related to the proposed Promoting Access with a Language Services Assistance Symbol initiative.

- What are the barriers to accessing language assistance, health care and social services experienced by individuals that might be alleviated by a language services assistance symbol within your Tribal community?
- What partnerships and other resources might be needed to demonstrate the effectiveness of a universal symbol in raising awareness and prompting individuals to request language assistance services in Tribal health settings?

In addition to participating in the listening session, Tribal leaders also may submit written comments to OMH at minorityhealthinfo@hhs.gov by Thursday, February 13, 2025, using the subject line “National Coordinating Center for Language Access Services” and/or “Promoting Access with a Language Services Assistance Symbol.”

We are committed to honoring the nation-to-nation relationship with American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Tribes. We look forward to continuing our partnership with you that supports OMH in achieving its mission to improve the health of AI/AN populations through the development of policies and programs that help eliminate health disparities.

Sincerely,

Tarsha M.

Cavanaugh -S7

CAPT Tarsha Cavanaugh, PhD, MSW, LGSW
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Digitally signed by Tarsha M.
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