

~~10-1103.~~

~~(A) EACH STATE DEPARTMENT, AGENCY, OR PROGRAM SHALL TAKE REASONABLE STEPS TO PROVIDE EQUAL ACCESS TO PUBLIC SERVICES TO PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY.~~

~~(B) EQUAL ACCESS SHALL BE ACHIEVED BY:~~

~~(1) THE PROVISION OF INTERPRETERS FOR PERSONS WHO CANNOT ADEQUATELY UNDERSTAND OR EXPRESS THEMSELVES IN SPOKEN ENGLISH;~~

~~(2) THE TRANSLATION OF FORMS AND DOCUMENTS ORDINARILY PROVIDED TO THE PUBLIC INTO ANY LANGUAGE SPOKEN BY 3% OF THE STATE POPULATION OR THE POPULATION WITHIN THE GEOGRAPHIC JURISDICTION OF A LOCAL OFFICE OF A STATE DEPARTMENT, AGENCY, OR PROGRAM; AND~~

~~(3) ANY ADDITIONAL METHODS OR MEANS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE EQUAL ACCESS TO THE STATE PROGRAM.~~

~~(C) EACH STATE DEPARTMENT, AGENCY, OR PROGRAM SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS IMPLEMENTING THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SUBTITLE BY MARCH 1, 2002.~~

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

(a) The General Assembly finds that it is the policy of the State that departments, agencies, and programs are authorized to provide equal access to public services to persons with limited English proficiency.

(b) (1) In this Act the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) "Equal access" means to be informed of, participate in, and benefit from services offered by a State department, agency, or program; at a level equal to English-proficient persons.

(3) "Limited English proficiency" means the inability to adequately understand or express oneself in the spoken or written English language.

(4) "Program" means all of the operations of a State department, State agency, or any other instrumentality of the State.

(c) (1) Each State department, agency, or program shall:

(i) On or before September 1, 2001, respond at the request of the Department of Human Resources to a survey to determine the need for interpretation and translation services based on current requests for services; and

(ii) On or before September 1, 2001, provide to the Department of Human Resources a description of the current measures taken to provide interpretation and translation services.

(2) For purposes of the response to the survey required under paragraph (1)(i) of this subsection, requests for services or services provided through a volunteer