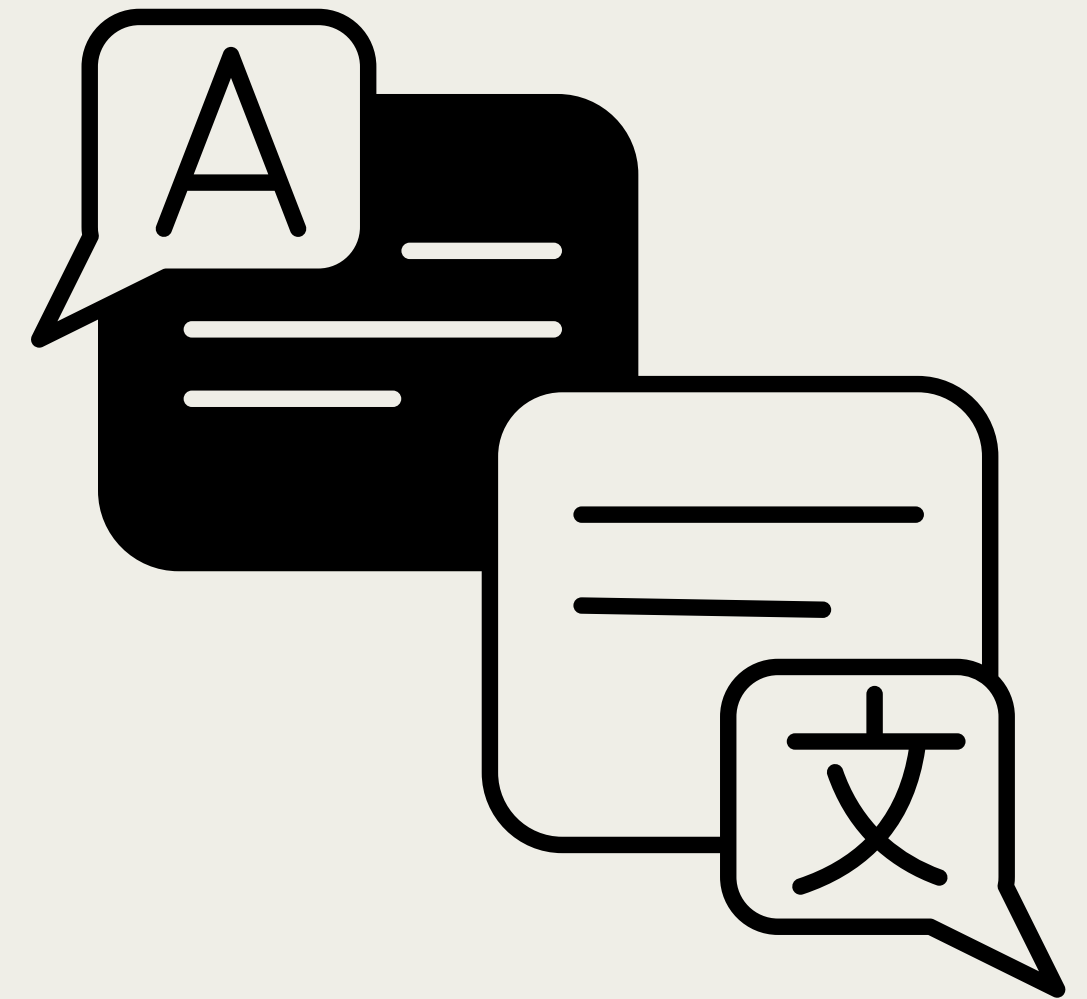


State and Local Language Access Initiatives

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AGENDA

- Introduction
- What is language access anyways?
- Why is this necessary?
- Federal & Legal Background
- State Initiatives
- Local Initiatives
- Best Practices
- Myth Busters
- Resources
- Q & A



INTRODUCTION

- Human Rights Officer at OIPMA
- IRC Advocacy Officer
- Language Access Work in Utah, Nevada, and beyond



WHAT IS LANGUAGE ACCESS ANYWAYS?

- the ability for individuals to communicate effectively, comfortably, and confidently in their preferred language
- made practical through translation, interpretation
- a vehicle for language justice

Language Justice = people have a right to express themselves in the language they choose and in which they feel most powerfully and authentically themselves



WHY IS THIS NECESSARY?

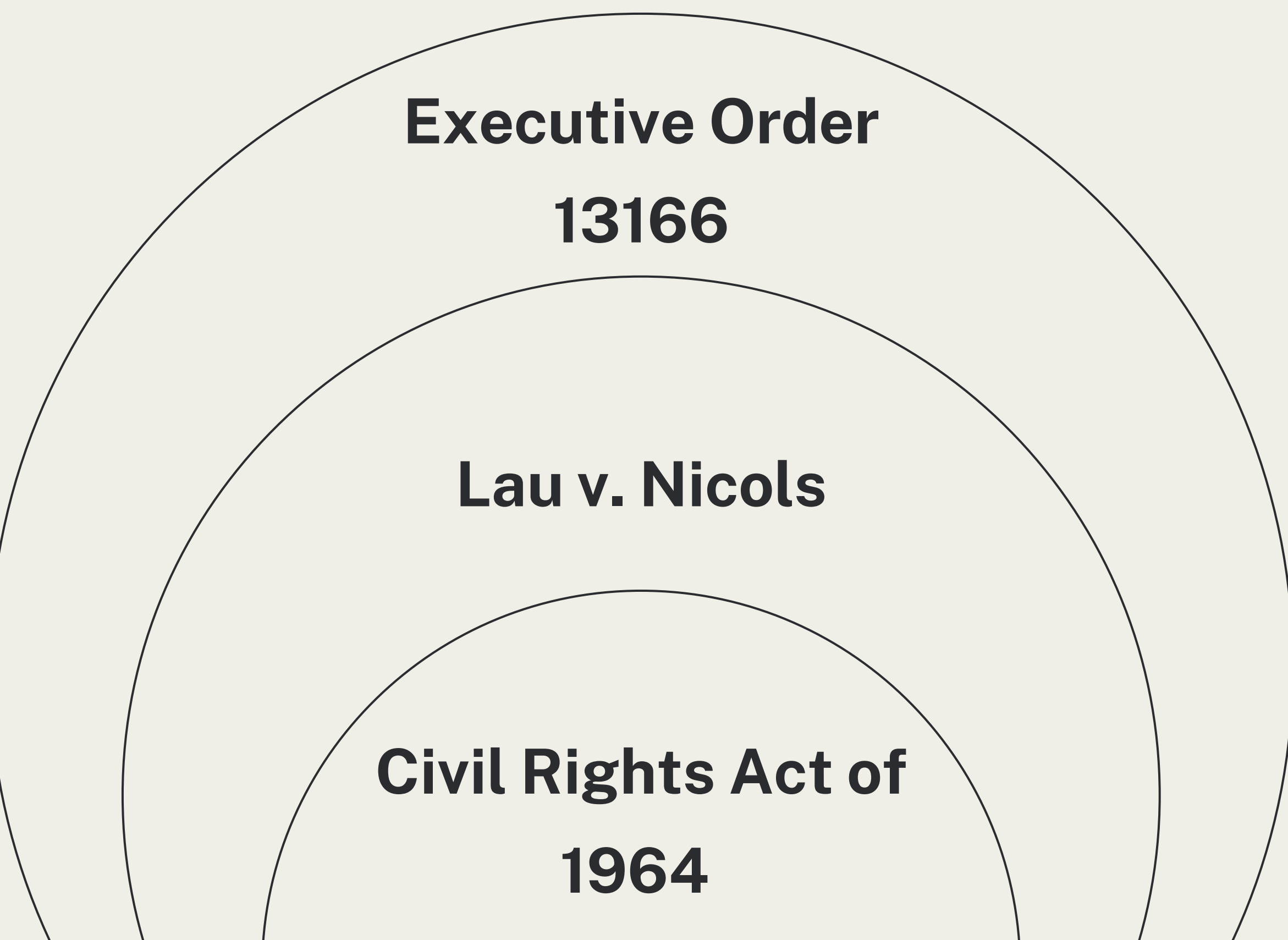
Imagine you're trying to register your child for school, report a crime, access tax forms, find out about a snow day... but you can't access information in a language you understand?

- 1 in 5 people speak a language other than English at home (ACS data 2019)
- 25 million+ Americans identify as having limited English proficiency (LEP)
- 350+ languages spoken in the US!



**Safer, Connected, Empowered, Successful
Communities**

FEDERAL AND LEGAL BACKGROUND



Executive Order 13166

Executive Order 13166

affirms Title VI's language access requirement and outlines additional requirements.

Lau v. Nicols

Lau v. Nicols

United States Supreme Court unanimously decided that the lack of supplemental language instruction in public school for students with limited English proficiency violated the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act

prohibits discrimination based on national origin

Any agency receiving federal funds, even indirectly, is required to provide language access services

STATE INITIATIVES

- State agencies must take “**reasonable steps**” to ensure limited English proficient (LEP) individuals have “**meaningful access**” to programs, services, and activities.
- an agency complies with federal requirements when **language access services (i.e., interpretation or translation) are accurate, timely, effective, and provided without cost to the LEP individual.**

Executive

New York

Executive orders in 2021 and 2011 to mandate state agencies develop language access plans.

Legislative

Hawaii

HRS 312C established the Office of Language Access and the Language Access Advisory Council.

Agency

Utah

Utah State Board of Education is leading schools and administrators to develop language access plans and policies through technical guidance.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- Localities, too, are required to provide language access services.
- Often, these efforts are the ‘first line’ in ensuring language access.

Executive

King County, WA

Executive order to address the translation of vital documents.

Legislative

Anchorage, AK

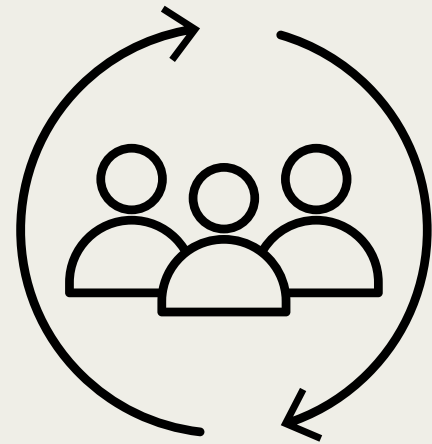
Designates a Mayor’s Language Access Liaison and mandates information is provided to LEP and deaf community members.

Agency

Reno Police Department

RPD has a cohesive language access plan that has informed city and state-wide efforts.

BEST PRACTICES



Inclusive

- **all LEP individuals** regardless of the frequency of their primary language in a particular geographic area or service population.
- accommodations for **limited literacy** or primary language does not have a written form.
- **removes digital and arbitrary barriers** for language access.



Comprehensive & Smart

- defined within **explicit, inclusionary, and technologically aware** terms.
- utilizes existing resources.
- designed to be **cost-effective**.
- reflects the **service needs of impacted communities**.



Impactful

- clear **implementation and enforcement** strategies within policy language and practices.
- **accountable** through data collection processes (i.e., tracking communities served) and public posting.



~~Language
Access is Too
Complicated~~

~~Language
Access is a
Partisan Issue~~

~~Language
Access isn't
Important~~

~~Language
Access is Too
Expensive~~

RESOURCES

- The Department of Justice has developed [a self assessment and planning tool](#) to assist agencies in determining how to provide “meaningful access” to LEPs.
- Frequently asked language access questions and their answers are available [HERE](#) from lep.gov.
- This [policy guide](#) from the Refugee Advocacy Lab, written in conjunction with the IRC, shares best practices in language access policy and delivery.
- Migration Policy Institute’s [Language Access page](#) has a collection of resources, templates, and guides.
- Colorado’s Spring Institute’s [Interpreter Network](#).

Thank you!

QUESTIONS?

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