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REPORT ON NEW MANDATED LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

The Department has completed a review and analysis of new federally mandated language requirements for election jurisdictions. On October 13, 2011 the U.S. Census Bureau published new language assistance requirements for election jurisdictions. The determinations were made pursuant to Section 203 of the federal Voting Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. Sec 1973aa-1a. Based on the languages identified by the Bureau, jurisdictions are required to provide language assistance to voters belonging to the covered language groups.

Review and analysis of the new requirements identified two additional language groups for whom Los Angeles County will provide language assistance programs. The language categories are "Asian Indian" and "Other Asian Non Specified." More specifically, the Department has determined that in Los Angeles County these categories will include the following languages: *Hindi, Khmer, and Thai*. In addition, where a local need is determined, the Department will serve additional Asian Indian languages by providing language assistance in the form of bilingual poll workers. These Asian Indian languages include: *Bengali and Gujarati*. The following report includes the data and findings used by the Department to make new language need determinations for Los Angeles County.

Determining the language needs for these specific categories was difficult because they do not refer to a specific language. To identify the language needs specific to Los Angeles County, the Department analyzed available population and demographic data and consulted with prominent Community Based Organizations with specialized knowledge and understanding of the local Asian Indian and broader Asian American Pacific Islander communities.

Cultural and linguistic diversity is one of Los Angeles County's defining characteristics. Aside from being one of the nation's largest election jurisdictions, it is widely recognized as one of the most diverse as well. This diversity makes for a vibrant democracy. For the past decade Los Angeles County has helped to foster an open and inclusive democratic process by providing language assistance in six languages, other than English. Voters with a limited command of English could exercise their right to

vote by having access to translated election materials and bilingual poll workers in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog (Filipino), and Vietnamese. The new mandated languages identified will assist thousands of eligible voters exercise their right to vote and strengthen our democratic process.

The Department looks forward to serving our diverse communities and to continuing its commitment to providing Los Angeles County with fair, accessible, and transparent election services.

2011 Language Determinations in Los Angeles County: Understanding the New Requirements

January 31, 2012

Introduction

On October 13, 2011 the U.S. Census Bureau published new language assistance requirements for election jurisdictions. The determinations were made pursuant to Section 203 of the federal Voting Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. Sec 1973aa-1a. According to the published determinations, Los Angeles County will continue to provide language assistance to persons of Latino (Spanish), Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese heritage but, will now be required to also provide assistance to persons of Asian Indian heritage and for the broader non-specific category of "Other Asian Non-Specified". The two new categories would also be covered by provisions of the California Elections Code, Sec. 12303, 14201. Unlike the existing languages covered by the County, the new categories do not refer to a single defining language. The Department conducted important baseline research in order to determine the appropriate language assistance to be provided to the voters of Los Angeles County that might be included in these two broad categories. This report compiles various data profiling each of the language categories and provides initial recommendations on what languages the Department will focus on in 2012.

The research that was conducted to develop the Department's language determinations and prepare this report included several components:

- 1) An analysis of 2010 American Community Survey data. This included an analysis prepared for the department by the Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration at the University of Southern California;
- 2) Background research on language use and diversity among target populations;
- 3) A series of meetings with key community organizations and advocates to discuss the Department's research and direction (see Appendix 1).

The data collected helped to profile each target population. The profiles look at each group population in Los Angeles County. In particular, we profile:

- The population and electorate;
- Educational attainment and occupation;
- English ability and language spoken.

Challenges to Making Language Determinations

The new language categories of Asian Indian and Other Asian Non Specified present nuanced challenges to developing and implementing new language assistance programs in the County. Neither of the two categories specified by the Census refers to a specific language. While the Asian Indian category generally refers to persons of Asian Indian heritage (that is persons of Indian origin or have ancestors of Indian origin or immigrants from India), the nation of India is characterized by extraordinary linguistic diversity. Similarly, the Other Asian Non Specified category refers to an amalgamation of nationalities artificially grouped by the Census Bureau.

As a result, the category does not refer to a single language group or even nationality. This made determining the precise languages to focus on difficult.

Population Group Profiles

In this section we have profiled each targeted language group. The profile provides a more detailed picture of these targeted populations within Los Angeles County.

Asian Indian Population of Los Angeles County

Determining the language needs of the Asian Indian population in Los Angeles County required appropriate consideration and analysis. Asian Indian culture is linguistically complex and diverse. As a result, determining the appropriate language to translate is difficult.

Population and Electorate:

- According to the American Community Survey (ACS), in 2010 there were 76,198 individuals who identified as Asian Indian in Los Angeles County. They account for 6% of the overall Asian population in the County.
- A significant share of the Asian Indian population is adult. Nearly 82% (62,170) of Asian Indians are 18 years of age or older.
- More than a third of Asian Indians are naturalized citizens. According to the ACS naturalized citizens account for 36% (27,096) of the Asian Indian population.
- Surname analyses have revealed that there are more than 20,000 registered voters of Asian Indian heritage in Los Angeles County.¹
- A significant share of the Asian Indian population is clustered into several communities in cities throughout the county. Five cities boast the largest concentration of Asian Indians: Artesia, Cerritos, Diamond Bar, Los Angeles, and Walnut.

Educational Attainment and Occupation:

- The Asian Indian population is fairly well educated. Among the population 25 years and over, 92% are high school graduates or higher.
- More than two-thirds (69%) of this population have a Bachelor's or Graduate degree.
- A significant share of the working age civilian Asian Indian population in Los Angeles County is highly skilled. Nearly 65% of the employed population has jobs in management, business, science, or the arts. Another one in five (22%) hold sales and office occupations.

Language and English Ability:

The 2001 Census of India identified 122 different languages spoken in the country. Language diversity is so pronounced, and a part of Indian culture, that the constitution of India recognizes 22 official languages. Despite the language diversity, however, India does recognize Hindi as the official national language. Hindi is the official language with which the government communicates and is the language spoken by more than 422 million Indian nationals. English is also predominant and declared by the constitution to be an associated national language along

¹ Asian Pacific American Legal Center (2009). "Asian Americans at the Ballot Box: The 2008 General Election in Los Angeles County". http://demographics.apalc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/APALC_BallotBox_LA2008_FINAL.pdf.

with Hindi. While Hindi is the official and predominant language in India, in the Southern states the language is less predominant. Taking this linguistic diversity into account we sought to learn more about the linguistic diversity that might exist within the Asian Indian communities of Los Angeles County. Specifically we sought to identify the predominant Indian languages spoken in Los Angeles County and the level of English acquisition that exists among them.

According to the 2010 American Community Survey, a significant share of the Asian Indian population in Los Angeles County speaks a language other than English. Nearly 80% of the population 5 years of age and older report speaking a language other than English. However, among Asian Indians 5 years and over, less than 23% reported speaking English less than “very well”.

A custom analysis of 2010 American Community Survey data, prepared for the Department by the Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration (CSII) at the University of Southern California, provided important information on the specific languages spoken by those persons who said they speak a language other than English. The analysis reveals a fair amount of linguistic diversity. Of the languages reported by persons in Los Angeles County, five predominant languages emerged (Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Bengali, and Urdu). Interestingly these languages are spoken in Northern, Eastern, and Western states where Hindi has a strong presence, unlike southern states where the language is less prominent.

Table 1.

English Ability Among Asian Indian Speaking a Language Other Than English								
Los Angeles County								
<u>Language</u>	<u>Language Total</u>	<u>Speaks Very Well</u>		<u>Speaks Well</u>		<u>Not well or Not at All</u>		<u>% of Universe</u>
Hindi	23,460	16,984	72%	4,245	18%	2,231	10%	3.10%
Punjabi	10,052	6,996	70%	1,260	13%	1,796	18%	2.49%
Gujarati	8,962	4,956	55%	2,945	33%	1,061	12%	1.47%
Bengali	8,115	4,573	56%	1,941	24%	1,601	20%	2.22%
Urdu	7,276	5,886	81%	1,138	16%	252	3%	0.35%
Tamil	6,209	4,602	74%	1,280	21%	327	5%	0.45%
Telugu	3,693	2,947	80%	578	16%	168	5%	0.23%
Malayalam	3,517	2,338	66%	928	26%	374	11%	0.52%
Marathi	790	627	79%	100	13%	63	8%	0.09%
Total	72,074	49,909	69%	14,415	20%	7,873	11%	-

Source: These data represent weighted estimates based on an analysis by the Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration of the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) 2010 American Community Survey (ACS).

The CSII analysis further confirms the high level of English acquisition that exists in Asian Indian communities. Among individuals who speak an Indian language, 89% say they speak English “Very Well” or “Well.” These data suggest a fairly bilingual population with a good command of the English language. The level of English ability does vary by specific language group. The majority of people that reported speaking English “Not Well” or “Not at All” are within the four predominant languages we identified.

“Other Asian Non-Specified” Populations in Los Angeles County

The U.S. Census determination of “Other Asian Non-Specified” (herein referred to as Other Asian) is regarded as a subgroup within the general Asian Language Minority group. Asian language determinations issued by the U.S. Census Bureau have, in most cases, referred to a specific national origin or ethnic group (e.g. Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Japanese, etc.). The Other Asian category, however, does not refer to a single or specific origin or ethnic group. In its October release of new language determinations for jurisdictions, the Census Bureau did not issue any clarification or additional guidance to jurisdictions as to the suggested or specific language minority groups to be covered under the category. In the absence of clarifying guidance from the U.S. Census Bureau or Voting Rights Section of the Department of Justice, the Department identified specified Asian subgroups reported in the American Community Survey that could be considered Other Asian and selected the two most prominent Other Asian groups in Los Angeles County to target for language assistance.

For purposes of determining specific groups to consider in the Other Asian category, we reviewed American Community Survey documentation on Race category definitions of Asian². In addition, we reviewed the Race question on the 2010 American Community Survey questionnaire. The questionnaire lists any group other than, Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Guamanian or Chamorro, Japanese, Korean, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, or Vietnamese as “Other Asian.” Based on this review it was determined that Other Asian can refer to those Asian group categories reported by respondents other than, Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Guamanian or Chamorro, Japanese, Korean, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, or Vietnamese.

Six specific Asian groups with a population within Los Angeles County of at least 1,000 were identified. Of these, Cambodian and Thai (the two largest population groups) were selected to further profile and target for language assistance. Because Cambodian and Thai are the largest they are likely to have larger target populations--voting Age Citizens who speak English less than well or not at all.

Table 2.

"Other Asian" Populations 2008-2010		
<i>Los Angeles County</i>		
	<u>Total</u>	<u>% of Total Asian</u>
Cambodian	32,397	2.4%
Thai	23,735	1.8%
Indonesian	10,066	0.7%
Pakistani	9,016	0.7%
Sri Lankan	6,156	0.5%
Laotian	3,141	0.2%

Source: Total Asian Alone by Selected Groups. 2008-2010 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

² “A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Island, Thailand, and Vietnam.” U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey: 2010 Subject Definitions. http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/data_documentation/SubjectDefinitions/2010_ACSSubjectDefinitions.pdf

Cambodians in Los Angeles County

Population and Electorate:

- Cambodian communities in Los Angeles County account for 2.4% of the total Asian population (32,397).
- Nearly 80% (25,181) of the population are adults.
- Naturalized citizens comprise a sizable share of the Cambodian population. Four out of every ten Cambodians (44%) are naturalized citizens.
- More than one-third of the adult Cambodian population is registered to vote in Los Angeles County. According to a report on the 2008 General Election from the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC), there were 8,553 Cambodian registered voters in Los Angeles County in 2008.
- Our initial research suggests that a sizable share of the Cambodian community in Los Angeles County is concentrated in the following cities: Long Beach, Signal Hill, Lakewood, Pomona.

Educational Attainment and Occupation:

- A significant share of the adult Cambodian population has less than a high school education. Among Cambodians 25 years and older, nearly 40% reported having less than a high school diploma.
- More than two-thirds (69%) have only a high school diploma or less education.
- The Cambodian work force is fairly diverse, with Cambodians working in various occupation sectors. More than one-third (35%) work in service, transportation, or production occupations. Conversely, 30% hold occupations in management, business, science, and arts sectors.

Language and English Ability:

While 23 different living languages have been identified in Cambodia, the official and predominant language in the country is Khmer, Central. The language is spoken by approximately 88% of the population. In addition, Khmer is the widespread language spoken by immigrants abroad (Canada, China, France, Laos, United States, Vietnam).

The Cambodian voting population in Los Angeles County is likely to benefit greatly from language assistance. Data from the CSII analysis of 2010 American Community Survey revealed that one-third of the Cambodian population in the County does not speak English well or at all.

Table 3.

English Ability Among Selected "Other Asian" Speaking a Language Other Than English Los Angeles County							
Language	Language Total	<u>Speaks Very Well</u>		<u>Speaks Well</u>		<u>Not Well or Not at All</u>	
Thai	25,778	10,036	39%	8,397	33%	7,345	28%
Mon-Khmer (Cambodian)	28,708	12,485	43%	6,645	23%	9,578	33%

Source: These data represent weighted estimates based on an analysis by the Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration of the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) 2010 American Community Survey (ACS).

Thai Population in Los Angeles County

Population and Electorate:

- Thai communities in Los Angeles County account for less than 2% of the total Asian population (23,735).
- Nearly 90% (21,362) of the Thai population are adults.
- Naturalized citizens account for 42% of the Thai population in Los Angeles County.
- No surname analysis exists to estimate the Thai registered voter population.
- Initial research suggests clustering of Thai communities in the cities of: Cerritos, Glendale, Long Beach, Los Angeles.

Educational Attainment and Occupation:

- The Thai population in Los Angeles County has a strong level of educational attainment. More than 80% of the Thai population has a high school diploma or higher.
- More than four in ten are college educated. 42% report holding a bachelor's or graduate degree.
- The Thai work force is distributed across all occupation sectors. Only 10% of the work force is concentrated in service, transportation, or production occupations.

Language and English Ability:

The national language of Thailand is Thai. The language is spoken by more than 20 million inhabitants. While there are more than 74 other languages spoken in Thailand the country has a high literacy rate (89%). This suggests that Thai is widely understood throughout the country.

The Thai population in Los Angeles County is likely to benefit from language assistance. Data from the CSII analysis show that a majority of the Thai population in the county speaks English less than "Very Well", and a quarter speak English "Not Well" or not at all.

Findings

Overall, the new language categories of Asian Indian and Other Asian Non Specified present nuanced challenges to developing and implementing language assistance programs. Neither of the two categories specified by the Census refers to a specific language. While the Asian Indian category generally refers to persons of Asian Indian heritage (that is persons of Indian origin or have ancestors of Indian origin or immigrants from India), the nation of India is characterized by extraordinary linguistic diversity. Similarly, the Other Asian Non Specified category refers to an amalgamation of nationalities artificially grouped by the Census Bureau. As a result, the category does not refer to a single language group or even nationality. This made determining the precise languages to focus on difficult.

After reviewing and analyzing available data and discussing our findings with key community organizations we make the following recommendations:

1. Asian Indian

- Provide translated materials in Hindi. The Hindi language is the national language of India and is spoken by a majority of the population in the country. The language is used by the government to communicate with citizens and the state. Our research of the various Indian languages spoken in Los Angeles County shows that Hindi is clearly the predominant language. Moreover, data also suggests that those who reported another Indian language

are likely to come from states where Hindi is understood or may likely have some command of English. A majority of Indian language speakers identified languages spoken in more northern, eastern, and western states. Hindi is less predominant in the southern states of the country.

- To enhance the level of assistance provided to our Asian Indian communities and to account for the known linguistic diversity within these communities, the Department should also recruit bilingual poll workers that can provide oral language assistance in either Gujarati or Bengali languages, depending on the local need identified. While we are confident that a majority of limited English speaking Asian Indian voters will have some comprehension of Hindi or some command of English, having oral assistance available in these languages will provide further assistance on Election Day.

2. Other Asian Non Specified

- After a review of available Census Data the Department should provide translated materials to limited English speaking Cambodian and Thai voters. These languages include Khmer (Cambodian) and Thai.

APPENDIX 1.

**Asian Indian and Asian Not-Specified Languages Needs Assessment
 Summary of Meetings with Community Organizations**

Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

Date	Participating Organization	Topic	Comments
11/22/11	South Asian Network, Asian Pacific American Legal Center	Introduction; Definition of Asian Indian and its language	To continue meeting
12/13/11	South Asian Network, Asian Pacific American Legal Center	Determination of the languages for needs assessment; Outreach to the Asian Indian community	Prepare Robo Call survey; sent outreach staff job announcement
12/16/11	Asian Pacific American Legal Center	Determination of Asian Not- Specified Language	Suggested Cambodian, Accepted by APALC on 12/23/11
1/5/12	South Asian Network, Asian Pacific American Legal Center	Review Robo Call survey questionnaires; RR/CC asked for Bengali language assistance for the call recording	SAN assisted in Bengali Robo Call recording on 1/6/12; Robo Call was launched on 1/11/12

APPENDIX 2.

Asian Alone Population, by Selected Groups		
Los Angeles County		
Estimate	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>% of Asian</u>
Total:	1,351,793	-
Asian Indian	76,198	5.6%
Bangladeshi	3,735	0.3%
Cambodian	32,397	2.4%
Chinese , except Taiwanese	371,785	27.5%
Filipino	328,877	24.3%
Hmong	799	0.1%
Indonesian	10,066	0.7%
Japanese	105,339	7.8%
Korean	215,847	16.0%
Laotian	3,141	0.2%
Malaysian	809	0.1%
Pakistani	9,016	0.7%
Sri Lankan	6,156	0.5%
Taiwanese	19,653	1.5%
Thai	23,735	1.8%
Vietnamese	93,739	6.9%
Other Asian	42,069	3.1%
Other Asian, not specified	8,432	0.6%

Source: Total Asian Alone by Selected Groups. 2008-2010 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

APPENDIX 3.

Demographic Profile: Asian Indian, Cambodian, Thai
 Los Angeles County

	Asian Indian	Cambodian	Thai
Total population	76,198	32,397	23,735
18 years and over	62,170	25,181	20,574
Naturalized Citizens	27,096	14,238	10,005

Educational Attainment	Asian Indian	Cambodian	Thai
Population 25 years and over	53,696	20,372	18,445
Less than high school diploma	8.10%	39.10%	17.00%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	9.20%	20.20%	18.30%
Some college or associate's degree	13.50%	24.90%	22.60%
Bachelor's degree	33.30%	12.50%	30.40%
Graduate or professional degree	35.90%	3.30%	11.70%
High school graduate or higher	91.90%	60.90%	83.00%

Linguistic Isolation	Asian Indian	Cambodian	Thai
Population 5 years and over	71,563	31,218	22,996
English only	21.70%	15.10%	13.20%
Language other than English	78.30%	84.90%	86.80%
Speak English less than "very well"	22.50%	49.00%	55.70%

Occupation	Asian Indian	Cambodian	Thai
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	41,159	13,008	13,144
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	64.80%	30.20%	29.80%
Sales and office occupations	21.70%	29.50%	26.60%
Service occupations	7.40%	18.90%	29.80%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	4.80%	16.50%	9.80%

Source: 2008-2010 American Community Survey 3-year Estimates

APPENDIX 4.

Additional Resources Used for Language Research

<http://www.mapsofindia.com/culture/indian-languages.html>

http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Data_Online/Language/Statement1.htm

<http://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/censusinfodashboard/index.html>

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=in