

RESOLUTION NO.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGING THE IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS AND DIRECTING THE CREATION OF A LANGUAGE ACCESS ORDINANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the County of San Mateo is a culturally and linguistically diverse County in our nation with nearly half the population speaking a language other than English at home; and

WHEREAS, our communities who do not speak English as a first language have experienced hardship and a lack of access to information and services in the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2023 Half Moon Bay shooting, and the Bay Area storms, due to a lack of access to language resources; and

WHEREAS, acknowledging that language matters fosters a better sociocultural and diverse environment that would improve accessibility to resources; and

WHEREAS, by promoting equitable access to language services, the County of San Mateo strives to promote the health and welfare of all communities; and

WHEREAS, the County provides existing language access resources and programming within and across departments to expand access to services and adhere by existing federal and state regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Board remains dedicated to the mission of promoting equal access and protecting the diversity and the general welfare of our communities, continuing to improve and advance resources and access to and for all people;

WHEREAS, the Board wishes to direct the County Executive's Office to take the following actions to create a language access ordinance:

1. *The County Executive's Office will work with a Subcommittee of the Board of Supervisors and County Attorney's Office to draft a language access ordinance intended to strengthen accessibility of County programs, services, information, and facilities to populations with limited English;*
2. *The drafted ordinance will consider efficacy and feasibility of implementation to meet desired outcomes;*
3. *The drafted ordinance will be accompanied by an implementation and funding plan;*
4. *Consideration will be given to the necessary elements to ensure intended outcomes and compliance, including but not limited to, adequate resources, training and technical assistance, accountability structures, and clear timelines to onboard effective implementation;*
5. *The Board Subcommittee on Language Access will plan to present the ordinance for consideration by the Board of Supervisors;*

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of San Mateo County recognizes the importance of language access in our County and directs the creation of a language access ordinance and implementation plan in accordance with this Resolution.