



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: COUNTY MANAGER

File #: 20-320

Board Meeting Date: 5/19/2020

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Michael Callagy, County Manager
Justin Mates, Deputy County Manager

Subject: Resolution approving a second amendment to the agreement with Certified Language International

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution approving a second amendment to the agreement with Certified Languages International to continue to provide telephone interpretation services to San Mateo County departments in support of language access services extending the term through July 31, 2021 and increasing the amount by \$125,000 for a new not to exceed amount of \$275,000.

BACKGROUND:

In August of 2017, this Board formed an ad-hoc committee to study the County's need for a Language Access Policy. This committee researched existing national and state law, conducted a countywide assessment of existing language services, and identified existing gaps in language access services.

In August of 2018, this Board approved an agreement with Certified Languages International in order to provide language access services, such as over the phone interpretation and document translation, to County departments. The original agreement was for a term from August 7, 2018, through June 30, 2019, with a not-to-exceed amount of \$150,000. On May 1, 2019, the agreement was amended to extend the term through July 31, 2020, with no increase to the not-to-exceed amount.

During the contract period, the Office of Community Affairs has managed and tracked usage by departments and recommends extending the current agreement for another year as well as increase the funding to respond to growing needs due the COVID-19 crisis. This will allow each department to continue to have access to language services as well as provide much needed unforeseen support to the Emergency Operations Center for interpretation and translation services.

DISCUSSION:

According to the 2018 U.S. Census data from the American Community Survey, nearly half of San Mateo County residents (46%) speak a language other than English in their homes. Collectively, the County's residents speak more than 100 different languages from across the world with the most prevalent being English, Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Russian, and Hindi. The purpose of a countywide language access service is to achieve consistency across departments and to facilitate the use of language services.

Over the past two years, the Office of Community Affairs has managed and tracked utilization of both over the phone interpretation and translation services. A total of 11 County departments out of 20 that were offered language services have utilized interpretation and/or translation services. The utilization of both interpretation and translation services has doubled from the first year to the second year not including COVID-19 related requests. In addition to the County's top five languages referenced above, the County has also received requests for others such as Burmese, Japanese, Indonesian, Korean, Portuguese, Samoan, Tongan, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

Now more than ever language access is crucial to the safety and health of San Mateo County's community at large. Over \$50,000 of the current agreement has been used for translation requests for COVID-19 related messages from the Emergency Operations Center beginning March 10, 2020. Taking into account the current utilization by County departments with the projected estimated usage of translation requests, including the addition of over the phone interpretation services now offered to the Emergency Operations Center, the Office of Community Affairs recommends that the not-to-exceed amount of the agreement be increased by \$125,000 for a total of \$275,000, and that the term of the agreement be extended through July 31, 2021.

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the attached resolution as to form.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The term of extension is August 1, 2020, through July 31, 2021. The maximum amount payable under the agreement is \$275,000. Budgetary appropriation for this agreement will be included in the FY 2020-21 Recommended Budget.