

What can I do if I'm discriminated against?

If you are denied an interpreter, or you are not given important documents in your language, or you are discriminated against because of your national origin, you have a right to file a complaint.

U.S. Department of Justice

(808) 541-2850

www.justice.gov/open/language-access

State of Hawai'i Office of Language Access

(808) 586-8730

www.health.hawaii.gov/ola

Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission

(808) 586-8636

www.labor.hawaii.gov/hcrc

Cut this card out. Keep it in your wallet.
Show this when you go for services.

I speak and understand limited English. I need free, competent language services in:

(Write in your primary language.)

In order to have full and effective access to your programs and government funded agencies.



GET HELP TODAY!

DISCRIMINATION CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE.
IF YOU FEEL YOU MAY BE A VICTIM OF
DISCRIMINATION, YOU HAVE RIGHTS.

FAIR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM

Promotes fair housing and strives to end housing discrimination through education, advocacy, outreach, and litigation.

CALL THE FAIR HOUSING HOTLINE

O'ahu 808.527.8024

Neighbor Islands 866.527.3247

HAWAI'I IMMIGRANT JUSTICE CENTER

Provides free legal services to indigent immigrants, advocacy, and community outreach and education. We safeguard legal rights, unite families, protect abused, abandoned and neglected children and give immigrants hope for a better life.

CALL TO APPLY FOR LEGAL SERVICES

O'ahu 808.536.4302

Neighbor Islands 1.800.499.4302

Our services are free of charge!

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LEGAL AID
SOCIETY OF HAWAI'I



LANGUAGE IS POWER

Language Access & National Origin Discrimination



WWW.LEGALAIDHAWAII.ORG

Have You Heard This Before?

- “I’m sorry, I don’t understand you. You need to learn to speak English.”
- “You don’t need an interpreter, your English is good enough.”
- “Sorry, I can’t help you. Don’t you have someone with you who speaks English?”
- “We’ll get you an interpreter next time, but for now just go ahead and sign this.”
- “You need to bring your daughter with you to interpret for you.”

AN INTERPRETER MUST BE QUALIFIED:

- Must speak your language well.
- Must know the correct terms so you can understand and participate at a meeting or a program.
- Must be neutral. Cannot: tell you what you must do or say, talk about you, take sides, or leave information out.
- Must translate everything exactly as it is said.
- Minors and children should never be used as interpreters.

KNOW YOUR LANGUAGE ACCESS RIGHTS!

LANGUAGE IS POWER.

If English is not your first language, you do not speak English well, or if it's easier for you to speak another language, getting the information you need can be difficult.

You have the right to a free interpreter when you use government-funded programs.

These include: schools, the courts, public housing, welfare agencies, hospitals, police departments, government offices, and some social services agencies and non-profits.

These agencies CANNOT:

- Refuse you services just because you don't speak English well,
- Force you to bring your own interpreter or pay for one, or
- Request that you take action without understanding the situation.

This different treatment is National Origin discrimination and is ILLEGAL.



Language access includes both oral and written assistance.

ORAL INTERPRETATION

- You have a right to ask for a free interpreter, even if you speak, read, write, or understand some English.
- You have a right to decide which language you prefer to use. You can do this by using an “I speak” card.
- You have a right to be given an interpreter in person or over the phone, as soon as possible, without unnecessary delays.

WRITTEN TRANSLATION

- Translation is changing documents from one language into another.
- If the language you speak is frequently encountered, you have the right to have important documents translated for free.
- These include: applications, determination notices, notifications, appeal letters, and court notifications.
- If they are not provided in your language, you have a right to ask for oral interpretation of an English document you don't understand.