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FY 2024
Bilingual Needs
& Bilingual Pay



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Executive Summary

According to U.S. Census data from the 2023 American Community Survey, 24.3% of Illinois residents (up from 23% in 2021) are estimated to speak a language other than English at home. The most common language spoken at home other than English is Spanish (14.1% up from 13.6% in 2021). To determine the prevalence of bilingual employees and language needs, CMS surveyed State agencies as contemplated by the Illinois Personnel Code. This year, the questions underpinning the annual Bilingual Needs and Bilingual Pay (BNBP) Survey were combined with the Employment Plan Advisory Committee surveys. This combined survey, the FY24 Employment Plans/BNBP Survey, saw an increase in responses with a total of 50 agency responding, up from 43 for FY23.

To gather additional state workforce bilingual aptitude demographics, CMS Diversity & Inclusion added questions about top language abilities to the annual Employee Engagement Survey, which gives every employee an opportunity for direct and personalized answers. CMS also provided tools to agencies to survey their staff members to specifically seek information regarding language aptitude of their staff.

Of the 50 responding agencies, 29 reported tracking bilingual interactions, though the manner in which interactions are tracked differed greatly. Some methods include: computer software, employee estimations, handwritten notes, spreadsheets, and/or billing of interpreter services.

Nearly half of responding agencies (24 of 50) have processes in place for considering bilingual designations for new positions in order to address the number of bilingual staff serving Illinois residents. Of the 24 agencies with processes in place, six agencies have a written policy to address the number of bilingual staff required or desired at satellite locations.

More than 8,700 jobs (8,768) were posted in FY24, and 465 (5% of all postings) of those were for bilingual positions in which the selected candidate will receive bilingual pay of \$100 per month or 5% of the base salary, whichever is higher. In total, 2,028 State employees receive enhanced pay for serving in a bilingual position, the vast majority of which are in Spanish-language positions (78.80%). The remaining employees receiving bilingual pay are in manual communication/ American Sign Language positions (15.58%), Polish language positions (2.02%), or positions requiring one of the other 11 languages for which State employees are being called to use (3.60%). The demographic breakdown of employees receiving bilingual pay is heavily Hispanic/Latinx (73.7%). Nearly 21 percent (20.8%) of employees receiving bilingual pay are White, and the remaining identify as African American (3.1%), Asian American (2.3%), or Native American (0.1%).

A full list of agencies and their individual survey responses can be found on the FY24 BNBP Report Appendix, which can also be found at https://cms.illinois.gov/personnel/dep/bnbp.html.

Introduction

The Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS) is responsible for monitoring and reporting the status and progression for State agencies' bilingual needs and resources. This reporting requires that all State agencies provide information on the nature of their requests for language assistance by the public. Agencies must also be prepared to successfully ensure access with the appropriate bilingual resources to overcome language barriers when they occur.

CMS is directed by the Illinois Personnel Code to oversee the State's bilingual program through formulation of strategies for language proficiency testing, requiring agencies to annually assess their bilingual programs, and filing an annual report with the General Assembly.

Annually, CMS requires each State agency to assess the need for employees with appropriate bilingual capabilities to allow them to provide services to non-English speaking or culturally distinct persons. Pursuant to this legislative directive, each agency completes a survey designed to solicit data and information needed for the agency to assess the extent of its need for bilingual employees.

The CMS FY24 Employment Plans/ BNBP Survey was conducted from August 12, 2024, through September 13, 2024, and received responses from 50 agencies. Participants based responses on FY24 data – July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. For the second year in a row, language aptitude questions were also incorporated into the voluntary Employee Engagement Survey, which was conducted by CMS June 28, 2024, until July 17, 2024. A total of 10,913 State employees from across the enterprise completed the survey, down from 11,601 in 2023.

The annual BNBP Report must include the following elements:

- Each agency's needs assessment;
- Number of bilingual job postings;
- Number of bilingual positions filled;
- Number of employees receiving bilingual pay;
- Number of employees receiving bilingual pay for languages other than signing or manual communication;
- Number of Hispanic/Latinx and non-Hispanic/Latinx employees who receive bilingual pay for languages than signing or manual communication.

This FY24 BNBP Report includes all statutory required elements.

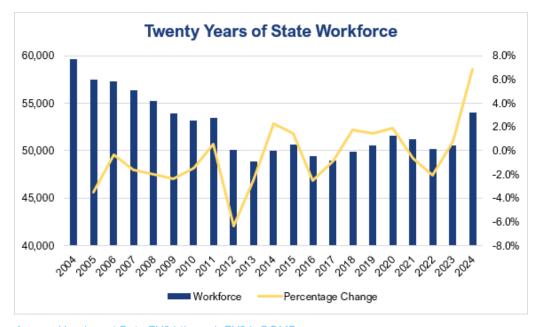
Data Collection and Agency Assessment

Methodology

The data included in this report includes data from the following sources: fiscal year 2024 (FY24) Employment Plans/Bilingual Needs Bilingual Pay (BNBP) Survey of State agencies; annual Employee Engagement Survey of State employees; CMS personnel database, which houses employee-level data for all state employees employed in Personnel Code-covered positions (~90% of the State workforce); and SuccessFactors hiring platform, which contains data on job postings and job applicants.

The State of Illinois is currently implementing a once-in-a-generation technology transformation of its human resources systems. Unfortunately, this impacts the access to and reliability of employee-level data for the second half of FY24 (January 1, 2024, through June 30, 2024). CMS has taken actions in response to this unprecedented challenge to provide as meaningful a picture of representation within the State's workforce. Therefore, where employee or workforce data reported as of December 31, 2023, that is specifically called out. Agency Survey responses and Employee Engagement Survey responses are directed to FY24 – July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. Job posting data is drawn from the SuccessFactors electronic hiring process system based on positions posted during that same FY24 timeframe.

It is also noteworthy that the reported efforts and outcomes are occurring during a season of unprecedented growth across the State workforce. The workforce grew by nearly 7% from the end of FY23 to the end of FY24, reaching a population of more than 51,000 employees. This is the largest the State workforce has been since 2008. The information was gathered from overall agency headcount data maintained by the Governor's Office of Management and Budget. Because the headcount numbers include non-Code staff (e.g. ISP sworn officers or IDOT engineers), there is a sizable difference between the numbers (e.g. ~47,000 versus ~53,000), but it serves as a good snapshot of where today's workforce size stands in the State's recent history.

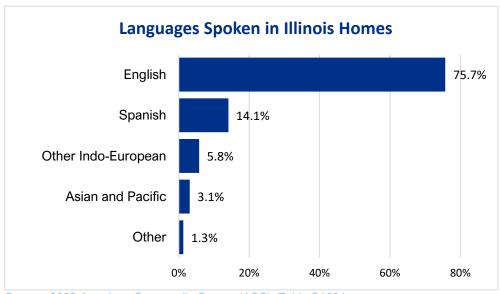


Agency Headcount Data FY04 through FY24, GOMB



Illinois Non-English-Speaking People

According to U.S. Census data from the 2023 American Community Survey, 24.3% of the people who reside in Illinois (up from 23% in 2021) are estimated to speak a language other than English at home. The most common language spoken at home is Spanish (14.1% up from 13.6% in 2021). Of those who spoke a language other than English in the home, 62.5% speak English "very well," indicating a strong bilingual presence among Illinois households.



Source: 2023 American Community Survey (ACS), Table S1601

Agency Participation and Bilingual Engagement Findings

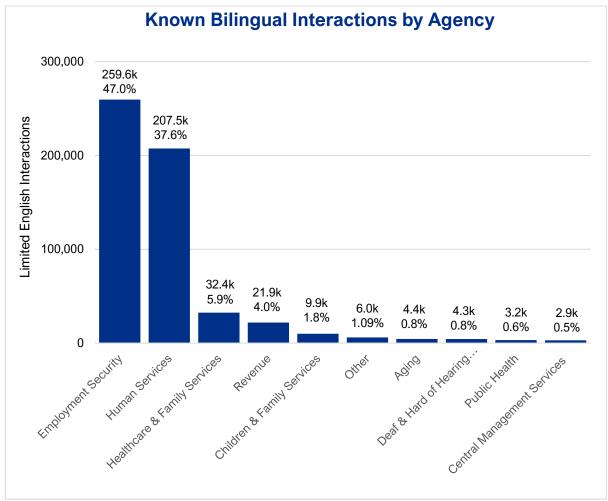
A total of 65 agencies were invited to participate in the FY24 Employment Plan/BNBP Survey. A total of 501 (77%) agencies responded, a marked increase from the 66% of agencies that responded to the FY23 Bilingual Needs and Bilingual Pay survey.

A full list of agencies and their individual survey responses can be found on the FY24 BNBP Report Appendix, which can also be found at https://cms.illinois.gov/personnel/dep/bnbp.html.

State Agencies' Needs Assessments, Bilingual Interactions

Of the 50 agencies who responded to the survey, 29 track bilingual interactions with the public in various ways. For FY24, agencies reported more than half a million interactions (552,188) in which interpretation or translation was necessary to assist a limited-English speaking client.

The number of bilingual interactions at the nine agencies who reported 2,000 or more interactions are reflected below. Bilingual interactions at the remaining 21 agencies are reflected in the "Other" column.



Of the 30 agencies who reported interactions with individuals that required interpretation or translation, the top five agencies for each duration category are set out below. Agencies were asked to report the number of interactions that lasted less than 15 minutes; were longer than 15 minutes, but less than an hour; more than an hour, but less than half a day; and half a day or more.

Top Five Agencies for each Length of Interaction							
Description	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th		
Fewer than 15 minutes	Human Services (101,700)	Human Services (101,700)	Healthcare & Family Services (10,058)	Aging (2,381)	Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission (1669)		
15-60 minutes	Employment Security (241,465)	Human Services (91,322)	Children & Family Services (9,516)	Healthcare & Family Services (5,840)	Revenue (2,561)		
61-240 minutes	Revenue (18,573)	Healthcare & Family Services (16,223)	Human Services (14,529)	Employment Security (7,789)	Public Health (960)		
240+ minutes	Healthcare & Family Services (324)	Revenue (219)	Children & Family Services (99)	Aging (44)	Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission (43)		

Bilingual Policies

Recognizing the importance of effectively serving a State population that contains many limited-English speakers, the FY24 Employment Plans/BNBP Survey again asked agencies about implementation of policies related to language access and bilingual staffing. The FY24 BNBP Report reflects that additional agencies have incorporated written policies related to language access and bilingual positions and services into their work. Six agencies (up from four in FY23) have written policies to address the number of bilingual staff, while 29 agencies reported having policies in place to determine whether their employees had enough linguistic ability to effectively interact with the public.

Policy to Address Number of Bilingual Staff				
Department of Corrections				
Department of Employment Security				
Department of Healthcare and Family Services				
Department of Juvenile Justice				
Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security				
Workers' Compensation Commission				

Source: FY24 Employment Plan/BNBP Survey

Policy to Assess Linguistic Ability					
Commission on Equity and Inclusion	Department of Revenue				
Department on Aging	Department of Transportation				
Department of Agriculture	Guardianship and Advocacy Commission				
Department of Central Management	Human Rights Commission				
Services					
Department of Children and Family	Illinois Criminal Justice Information				
Services	Authority				
Department of Commerce & Economic	Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing				
Opportunity	Commission				
Department of Corrections	Illinois Environmental Protection Agency				
Department of Employment Security	Illinois Gaming Board				
Department of Financial and Professional					
Regulation	Illinois Liquor Control Commission				
Department of Human Rights	Illinois Lottery				
Department of Human Services	Illinois Racing Board				
Department of Innovation and Technology	Illinois State Fire Marshal				
Department of Insurance	Illinois State Police				
Department of Labor	Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission				
Department of Juvenile Justice					

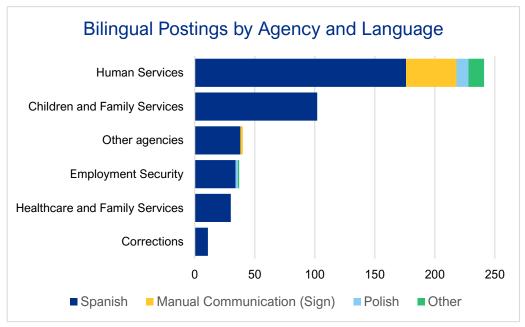


Number of Bilingual Job Postings, Position Review Process, and Bilingual Pay

Bilingual positions are those positions that are established with language skills as a minimum criterion, as those language skills are required in order to be effective. Bilingual pay, which is negotiated with the State's largest labor partner and incorporated into administrative rule is currently set at \$100 per month or 5% of an employee's base salary, whichever is higher. Employees *not* in bilingual positions who have language skills and use those skills in performance of their work are also entitled to enhanced pay for the time they used their skills to perform their job. The below data refers only to bilingual positions and employees receiving bilingual pay because they are employed in a bilingual position.

- 19 agencies combined to post 465 bilingual positions in FY24
- 84% (391 positions) of the posted bilingual positions required Spanish language skills
- 9% (44 positions) of the bilingual postings required American Sign Language skills
- 3% (16 positions) of bilingual postings were seeking candidates with Polish language skills.
- 4% (18 positions) of bilingual postings were divided between Braille, Chinese, Russian, and Ukrainian language positions.

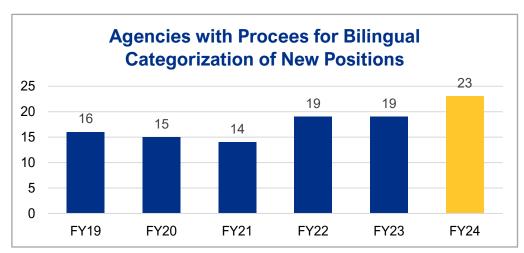
The Department of Human Services (DHS) continues to lead the State in number of bilingual job postings accounting for just over half (52%) of all bilingual postings with 241, again followed by the Department of Children and Family Services with 102 (22%). With 37 (8%), the Department of Employment Security replaced the Department of Healthcare and Family Services with 30 postings (6%) as the third highest number of bilingual postings during FY24.



SuccessFactors posting data, 7/1/23 - 6/30/24



Establishing a position as a bilingual position allows an agency to require the candidate to have satisfactory language skills to be selected and entitles the incumbent to receive bilingual pay. FY24 saw a continuation of the steady increase in the number of agencies who reported having a process in place to evaluate whether a new position should be established as a bilingual position.



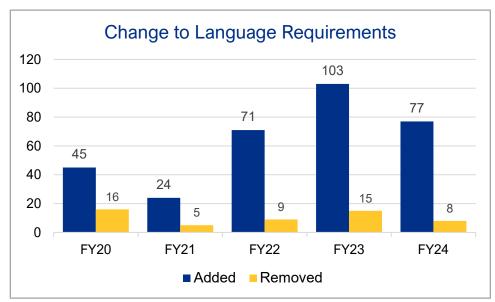
Prior year BNBP Reports; FY24 Employment Plans/BNBP Survey

The 23 agencies with such a process are below.

Agency
Department on Aging
Department of Agriculture
Department of Children and Family Services
Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
Department of Corrections
Department of Employment Security
Department of Financial and Professional Regulation
Department of Healthcare and Family Services
Department of Innovation and Technology
Department of Insurance
Department of Labor
Department of Juvenile Justice
Department of Public Health
Human Rights Commission
Illinois Commerce Commission
Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission
Illinois Gaming Board
Illinois Independent Tax Tribunal
Illinois Lottery
Illinois Racing Board
Illinois State Police
Pollution Control Board
Workers' Compensation Commission

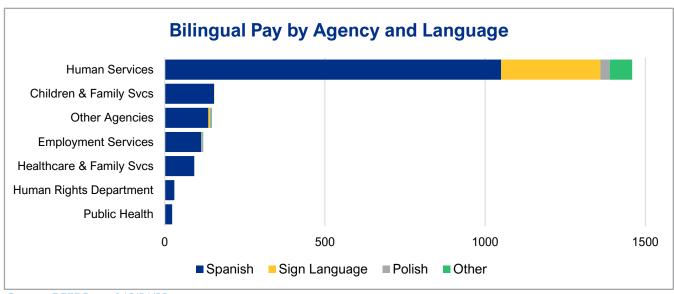


In addition to evaluating new positions, agencies have also been evaluating existing positions for propriety of requiring language skills to effectively perform the work. Since FY21, agencies have been adding language requirements to positions much more frequently than removing the requirements. FY24 continued this trend with the second most additions and second less instances of bilingual positions being reverted to non-bilingual positions by removal of language requirements.



Prior year BNBP Reports; FY24 Employment Plans/BNBP Survey

Not only did DHS have the most bilingual position postings in FY24, but the agency also made the most hires into bilingual positions (472 of 582 hires into bilingual positions for 81.1%). DHS also employed the most staff in a bilingual position, and therefore, the most staff receiving bilingual pay (1,459 of 2, 082 for 70%).



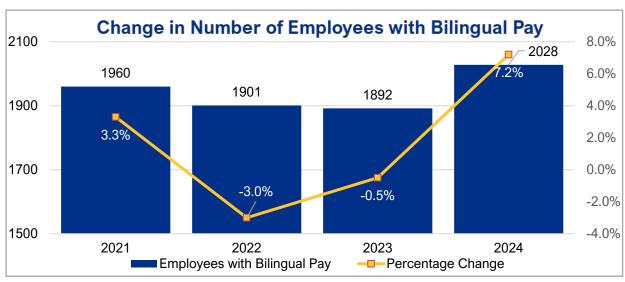
Source: PEERS as of 12/31/23



Of the 2,028 Code-covered employees in the State receiving bilingual pay, 78.8% (1,598) of them were employed to use their Spanish language skills in serving the people of Illinois. Another nearly 16% (316) of bilingual employees are employed to serve those who use American Sign Language. The remaining 114 employees are split between Polish (41) and various other languages (73).

Historic Bilingual Pay

In FY24, the State saw the number of employees receiving bilingual pay grow by the largest percentage in the last five years (7.1%) and at a rate higher than the general workforce growth (6.9%).



Prior year BNBP Reports; PEERS data as of 12/31/23

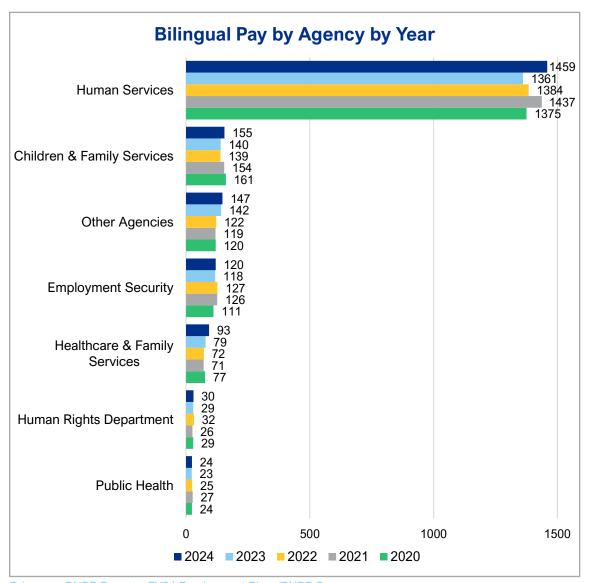
The demographic breakdown of the employees receiving bilingual pay has remained relatively stable over time. The FY24 demographic breakdown of employees receiving bilingual pay changed only slightly, with the largest increase a 0.5% increase over FY23 in Asian American employees in bilingual positions.

Race/Ethnicity	Total	FY24 Percentage	FY23 Percentage
Hispanic/Latinx	1,495	73.7%	74.4%
White	422	20.8%	20.8%
African American	63	3.1%	2.9%
Asian American	46	2.3%	1.8%
American Indian/Alaskan	2	0.1%	0.1%
Total	2,028		

Source PEERS as of 12/31/23



Similarly, the distribution of employees receiving bilingual pay has stayed relatively stable for the last five years. DHS is the largest State agency and the largest employer of bilingual staff.



Prior year BNBP Reports; FY24 Employment Plans/BNBP Survey

The small participation rate of the Employee Engagement Survey makes it difficult to draw meaningful conclusions about the data extrapolated to the broader workforce, but the data reveals that agencies have considerable work to do in learning about the linguistic abilities of their staff. For example, Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had relatively high response rates to the Employee Engagement Survey at 39% and 35% respectively. DPH understood its workforce to have 25 employees (2.1%) with sufficient linguistic ability to render effective customer service to individuals with limited English skills. However, 53 of the 461 DPH employees responding to the Employee Engagement Survey (11.5%) identified language skills beyond English. Similarly, the EPA expected 6 of its 752 (0.7%) staff to have linguistic skills; and yet, 30 of 362 responding employees (8,3%) identified possessing such skills.

Bilingual Pay Findings

Agencies continue to value requiring language skills for new and existing positions and work to fill bilingual positions which results in bilingual pay for the employees holding those positions. The outcome of this value is reflected in several ways. The number of employees in bilingual positions grew by 7.1%, even more than the 6.9% overall workforce growth over the same period of time.

Of the 8,768 jobs posted during FY24, 19 agencies posted 465 bilingual jobs, or about 5% of all positions. The vast majority (84% or 391 postings) were for Spanish-speaking positions, followed by American Sign Language with 9% (44 positions). The Department of Human Services continues to lead all agencies in bilingual postings (52%), hires for bilingual positions (81%), and number of employees receiving bilingual pay (70%).

The number of agencies reporting having a process in place to determine whether a new job posting ought to be categorized as bilingual grew by four over FY23 (19 to 23).

According to the Bilingual Needs Survey, 77 positions were revised to include a bilingual designation and only eight had the bilingual designation removed from the position description. In FY24, agencies reported 149 employees vacating positions designated with the bilingual option and 582 employees hired into positions designated with the bilingual option. This is an improvement from FY23, which saw approximately 1.7 hires into bilingual positions for every employee who left a bilingual position (85 departures and 141 hires). In FY24, nearly four hires were made into a bilingual position for every employee who left a bilingual job (149 departures and 582 hires).

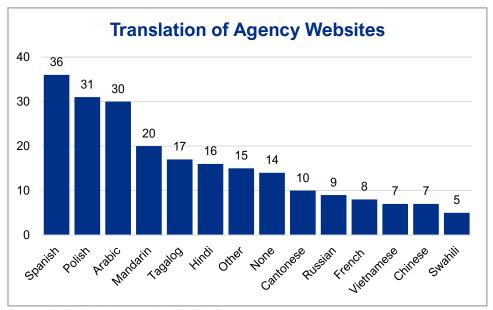
Furthermore, 60% (30 of 50) of responding agencies reported that their budget includes an allocation for bilingual employment, namely ample appropriations to employ a sufficient number of bilingual employees to serve Illinois' culturally diverse population. However, agencies do not appear to have a firm understanding of the linguistic skills of their staff beyond those in bilingual positions. The data from the FY24 Employee Engagement Survey, while from a small sample size, points to a much larger percentage of employees with linguistic skills than agencies recognize.

Promoting Awareness of Bilingual Services

The public and agencies serving the public must be aware of the bilingual services available to support any limited-English speaking interaction. State agencies are responsible for ensuring that all public communication tools are fully translated and accessible to all Illinois residents despite any language barrier.

Over the last year, agencies have taken steps to increase the language accessibility of their websites. In fact, this year's reporting reflects an 89% increase (19 to 36) in the number of websites translated into languages other than English. Of the 50 responding agencies, 36 (72%) have Spanish translation, followed by 31 (62%) in Polish, and 30 (60%) in Arabic to round out the top three languages represented by the responding agencies. (Counts are inclusive of agencies translating into multiple languages.)

Tellingly, nearly half of the FY23 BNBP Survey responding agencies (20 of 43 or 47%), reported that their public website was not translated at all. This year, that number dropped by 25% (20 to 15).



Source FY24 Employment Plan/BNBP Survey.

Of the 50 agencies who completed the survey, 26 utilized the State's master contracts provided by CMS and DoIT for translation services. Eight agencies, including six that also use master contracts, utilize external translation services beyond the existing master contracts.

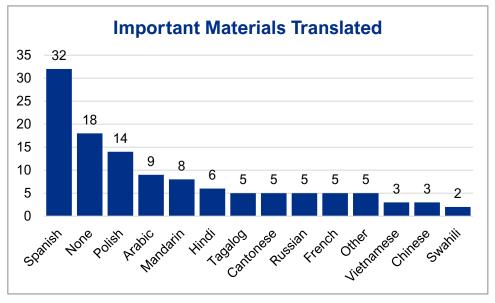
In addition, 11 of the 14 agencies that reported their website was not translated into a language other than English also reported that the agency regularly engages in customer service. Only two of those 11 reported interactions requiring interpretation or translation during FY24: Department of Public Health (3200) and Illinois Commerce Commission (782). These two were joined by 30 other agencies that also engaged in at least one interaction in which interpretation was needed.

However, agency tracking of bilingual interactions across several modes of communication remains varied. Email interactions are tracked by 18 agencies, while telephone interactions and in-

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person interactions were tracked by 22 and 20, respectively. (Counts are inclusive of agencies tracking numerous types of interactions.) Twenty-one agencies reported not tracking bilingual interactions. In addition to what kinds of interactions are tracked, the manner of tracking differs across agencies as well. The most common approach for tracking interactions was with employee estimates (17 agencies) and the next most common approach was computer software tracking (12 agencies).

Survey respondents were also asked about translation of the important materials related to their programs. The results followed a similar trajectory as the translation of websites, though 18 agencies reported that their program materials were not translated into any language other than English, four more than reported English-only websites. Spanish was also the most translated language followed by Polish, Arabic and Mandarin, just like the website translation data. The Department of Human Rights had materials translated into the most languages (14) including Arabic, Cantonese, French, Mandarin, Polish, Spanish, Vietnamese, Bengali, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, and Urdu. Of the 18 agencies who do not have materials in languages other than English, 10 also reported zero limited-English interactions requiring interpretation or translations during FY24.



Source FY24 Employment Plan/BNBP Survey.

Review of FY24 Action Items

- Bilingual Need Guidelines: To support agencies in developing a process by which they
 can identify how many bilingual individuals should be part of their staff, CMS will produce a
 set of guidelines.
 - a. Agencies will have the opportunity to review guidelines and identify the minimum number of bilingual staff needed to provide equitable service and participation by their agency.
 - b. Agencies will have an opportunity to develop a plan of action for hiring the expected increased number of bilingual individuals.
 - c. Employment Plan Advisory Council members will have an opportunity to ask agencies to present their CMS guide assessment results on how many bilingual individuals should be part of their staff.
 - d. Employment Plan Advisory Council members will have an opportunity to ask, support and help disseminate new bilingual positions.

Update: CMS D&I established guidelines for quantifying the need for bilingual staff. The guidance was issued December 5, 2023, and the guidance was discussed on the December 11, 2023 Statewide Labor/HR calls, which typically has more than 250 participants from across the State, including agency HR staff, Labor Relations teams, EEO Officers, as well as a not insignificant amount of agency senior staff as well. As a result, in FY24, 77 existing positions were converted into bilingual positions by adding language skills to the minimum requirements.

- 2. **Bilingual Pay Memo:** To support an increase in bilingual staff representation, CMS produced a Salary Treatment of Bilingual Staff Memo on May 3, 2021. This bilingual memo noted that, "...agencies should include the value of bilingual skills in their salary offers."
 - a. CMS will recirculate this Bilingual Memo to all agencies via Human Resource meetings, Employment Plan Advisory Councils, Agency Equal Employment Officers, and established Employee Resource Groups
 - b. This will allow the agencies to identify additional promotional spaces that allows all Human Resources, Senior Leadership, and staff to be informed and advocate.
 - c. Employment Plan Advisory Council members will have the opportunity to inquire on the distribution methods and actions of the CMS Bilingual Memo.

Update: CMS recirculated the 2021 Memo to Agency Human Resources Directors on December 5, 2023. Salary Treatment for bilingual staff was also a training topic on Statewide Labor/HR calls in both August and October 2023, which typically has more than 250 participants from across the State, including agency HR staff, Labor Relations teams, EEO Officers, as well as a not insignificant amount of agency senior staff as well.

3. Employee Engagement Survey: To better assess the State workforce's language aptitudes, CMS has incorporated bilingual questions to the annual Employee Engagement Survey. This allows individual employees to complete the survey. Promoting this opportunity with the goal of increasing employee survey completion, would allow further

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insight into any missed bilingual pay opportunities. CMS will continue to produce the survey in Fall of 2024.

- a. CMS will circulate link and highlight opportunity for bilingual insights through Human Resource meetings, Employment Plan Advisory Councils, Agency Equal Employment Officers, and Employee Resource Groups.
- b. This will allow agencies to identify additional promotional spaces that allows all staff to receive link and information.
- c. Employment Plan Advisory Council members will have the opportunity to inquire on the distribution methods and actions taken by each agency to promote the Employee Engagement survey.

Update: CMS discussed the Employee Engagement Survey with HR professionals from around the State, including that questions about language skills would be included. Moreover, in an attempt to assist agencies with providing the most accurate and in-depth data about their staff and any linguistic abilities they may have, CMS provided a tool by which agencies could directly survey their staff about using language skills in their work. Agency-specific analysis of the Employee Engagement Survey responses are also shared by CMS to Agency Heads and Chiefs of Staff.

CMS will work to fine tune these tools further in order to continue to grow in understanding about the skills of the State workforce and to assist agencies in finding ways to better serve Illinois residents.

FY25 Action Items

- 1. Continue to Improve Access to State websites and important materials in additional languages CMS will work with the Department of Innovation and Technology and the 14 agencies whose websites were not translated into any language other than English and the 18 agencies whose important materials were not translated into any language other than English to improve accessibility of this important information to individuals who may have limited English skills.
- 2. **Align Language Access work** CMS Diversity & Inclusion will build out its expert support with the newly established Bilingual Needs/Language Access Statewide Manager position to assist agencies in addressing identified gaps in their bilingual needs.
- 3. **Employee Engagement Survey** CMS will work with agencies to better utilize internal tools to understand the linguistic skills their employees hold, to encourage equitable and consistent use of bilingual pay, and to support agencies' efforts to better engage with their bilingual staff.

Conclusion

CMS continues to strive for equity in representation and in building an inclusive workplace. An example of these efforts is the revamping of this annual report and goals to ensure increased collaboration, leveraging of existing resources and collective growth. To do so, all State agencies will receive a copy of these goals and be given the opportunity to join quarterly meetings of the four Employment Plan Advisory Councils through CMS invitations and facilitation.

Future reports will measure what recommendations from councils were received and implemented by each agency.

A full list of agency responses to the web based FY24 Employment Plans/BNBP Survey can be found online at: https://cms.illinois.gov/personnel/dep/bnbp.html.

Contact Information

Patricia Santoyo-Marin
Deputy Director, Diversity & Inclusion
Illinois Department of Central Management Services

Patricia.Santoyo-Marin@Illinois.gov