CULTURE & LINGUISTIC CAPACITY

While diversity is one of the greatest assets of Los Angeles County, linguistically this may pose some challenges to providing services. There is a significant number of underserved Angelenos such as Black, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Indigenous Latinx immigrants. More than half of the county speaks a language other than English at home. Meeting the needs of our diverse communities is an opportunity to better serve all Angelenos.

“Services are good, but when we have to go to the office it's very different. People don't attend to us properly because we don't speak the language.”

– REGION 2, SOUTH LOS ANGELES

TOP COMMUNITY CONCERNS

LACK OF CULTURAL AND LANGUAGE SUPPORT.
Community members felt staff capacity to respond to their cultural and linguistic needs varied. It would be off-putting and uncomfortable if they were matched with someone who did not understand them.

MISTRUST.
Community members shared it was difficult to trust service providers due to a perceived lack of cultural and linguistic fluency. This adds to poor and frustrating participant-provider interactions.

WORDING AND TRANSLATION ISSUES.
Certain translated phrases may be extremely wordy and lack culturally-appropriate translations.

MYTH:
Public food benefit enrollment is only available in English.

FACT:
Services must be legally provided in 10 languages. For additional languages, certified interpretations are available. However, many non-English speakers may still find it challenging to navigate systems when these services are not known to them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• Cultivate a resilient systems of care workforce to better respond to the needs of CalFresh-eligible populations

• Support existing DPSS staff with training to improve participant experiences

• Increase the availability of qualified language support services

CHECK OUT THE PROJECT AT GOODFOODLA.ORG/CALFRESH