While this diversity is one of the greatest assets of Los Angeles County, linguistically this may pose some challenges to providing services. Meeting the needs of our diverse communities is an opportunity to better serve all Angelenos. There is a significant number of underserved Angelenos such as Black\textsuperscript{43}, Asian and Pacific Islander,\textsuperscript{44} and Indigenous Latinx immigrants.\textsuperscript{45} More than half of the county speaks a language other than English at home.\textsuperscript{46} Adding to that, over 2.5 million Angelenos are Limited English Proficient (LEP).\textsuperscript{47} Five of eight Service Planning Areas (SPAs) countywide are majority non-English speaking.\textsuperscript{48} This issue isn’t unique to our region. Other diverse counties, like San Francisco and San Mateo, have trouble engaging their Spanish, Cantonese, and Mandarin speaking communities despite the population’s eligibility for CalFresh.\textsuperscript{49}

Community members voiced the need for more cultural and linguistic support services. This ties in with the previously stated theme in providing more direct support to meet the needs and safety of CalFresh-eligible populations. Improved cultural and linguistic support services may result in increased trust and participation.
DID YOU KNOW...

THERE ARE AT LEAST 185 LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN HOMES ACROSS LOS ANGELES.

There are civil rights policies that require language support services; however, this only covers dominant languages such as English, Spanish, Mandarin, Korean, and Farsi.⁵⁰

Language justice means creating multilingual and culturally appropriate spaces where everyone’s voices are heard and valued.⁵¹ This can include organizational practices, advocating for equitable policies, and building social movements. Some important components to language justice include:

INTERPRETATION VS. TRANSLATION.

Interpretation is the spoken process of delivering messages from one language into another (i.e., at live events or on the phone). Whereas, translation is the written process of developing documents from one language into another (i.e., legal documents, websites, etc.).

NON-DOMINANT LANGUAGES.

Translating or interpreting language is not always straightforward. For instance, a number of indigenous languages may require intermediary support, such as Mam (a Mayan dialect) to Spanish to English. Known as “lingua franca,” a bridging language is needed to connect information between people who do not have a shared common language.

NON-WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS.

Some populations do not use written languages and there are also individuals who have a hard time understanding written documents. Service providers have addressed this by using a combination of interpretation with telephonic signatures, a person’s recorded verbal agreement in place of a signature.