

**AB 229, THRESHOLD LANGUAGE TRANSLATION
FOR PROVIDERS OF IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES
ASSEMBLYMEMBER ADRIN NAZARIAN**

Bill Summary:

AB 229 would require the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to translate all written content intended for providers of In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) into the state threshold languages: English, Spanish, Armenian, and Chinese. This bill would also permit CDSS to work with counties and the County Welfare Directors Association to repurpose existing, county-produced translations of written materials.

Background:

The IHSS program provides personal care and domestic services to Medi-Cal-eligible seniors and persons with disabilities to help them remain safely in their own homes and communities. More than half a million IHSS providers will serve an estimated 560,000 recipients in 2019-20. Statewide, it is estimated that about 40 percent of providers (about 205,000 individuals) speak or read a primary language other than English.

Current state law and regulations require CDSS to translate information notices and resources for IHSS recipients into the four most common languages spoken by IHSS recipients (known as the “CDSS threshold languages”).

However, no such requirement exists for IHSS providers. The result is that approximately 40 percent of providers across the state receive program instructions, timesheets, tax notices, forms, and other important materials in a language they do not primarily read or speak. If a provider is unable to understand the already complicated IHSS rules, it may jeopardize their pay and, ultimately, their job.

While CDSS has begun translating written content for providers, resources related to timesheets, paid sick leave, and violations remain untranslated.

Purpose:

This bill would add a statutory requirement that all written materials to be mailed to or

electronically viewed by IHSS providers—including but not limited to informational notices, notices of action, and forms—to be translated into the CDSS threshold languages (currently English, Spanish, Armenian, and Chinese).

Translating materials into these four primary languages would mean that tens of thousands of IHSS providers would be able to access important materials about their job—and how they get paid—in the language they actually read.

Los Angeles County, for example, has an estimated 31,000 providers who primarily speak Spanish; 17,000 who speak Armenian; and 9,000 who speak Cantonese or Mandarin Chinese. With AB 229, these providers—along with thousands of providers across the state—would be able to access the necessary information they need to do their job in their primary language.

The State ultimately has an obligation to ensure providers can perform IHSS duties in a way that best assists beneficiaries. By ensuring that the same language translation rules that apply to IHSS recipients also apply to providers, AB 229 will reduce duplicated workload, provide consistency across the state, and move IHSS toward equity for all providers.

Support:

County Welfare Directors Association of California (co-sponsor)
California Association of Public Authorities (co-sponsor)
UDW-AFSCME Local 3930, AFL-CIO (co-sponsor)

Opposition:

None on file

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