



ADMINISTRATIVE/FISCAL/CLINICAL/PHF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
ALCOHOL, DRUG AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Section - ADMINISTRATION	Effective: 2/1/2000
Policy - #7 BILINGUAL CERTIFICATION	Revised: 10/24/2007
Director's Approval <u>See signature page</u>	Date _____
Assistant Director's Approval _____	Date _____
Form Ref. -	Reviewed: 10/25/2007
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POLICY:

It is the policy of this Department to ensure linguistic access for all clients in a manner that is culturally competent, respectful, efficient and meets relevant Federal and State Department of Mental Health regulations. In an effort to provide linguistically proficient staff to serve the Spanish-speaking clients, this Department will perform Spanish bilingual certification for its civil service regular employees. (If the bilingual language skills are in Hmong, the Department will identify an individual to test/certify following the same Department procedures.) The manager shall designate the employee (as bilingual) in writing to personnel prior to being effective.

Legal Citation:

PROCEDURE: The testing for bilingual certification will be implemented as follows:

- 1). Per the County of Santa Barbara, an employee whose duty assignments require regular and frequent (at least once a day or five times a work week) use of bilingual language skills in Spanish and English may be eligible for additional compensation. To be eligible, an employee must be approved, tested, and certified by the employee's department. The allowance is provided only while assigned duties require bilingual skills.
- 2). Within 30 days of the hire date, a new employee will arrange with the assistance of Personnel, an appointment for testing for Spanish bilingual certification. A Department manager may also request that a prospective employee be tested prior to being hired or for an employee already in regular civil service (for an undefined period of time) to be tested to qualify for bilingual certification.
 - a) it is the responsibility of each individual who seeks bilingual status to attend the appointment for testing and any identified as mandatory cultural competency training.

- 3). A demonstration of bilingual proficiency is the ability *or* the individual to communicate the ideas, concerns, rationales, in addition to the translation of the words used by both the provider and client in a culturally sensitive manner. This will be accomplished by the following:
- a) The employee will complete the Spanish bilingual test, written and oral, with a score of 85% or better. Employees with a score that is not passing (below 85%) will have that section(s) that needs improvement identified to them. Please see Attachment I for questions.
 - b) They may have one more opportunity to retest only that section(s) that they did not pass with the same examiner within 30 days of the test date.
 - c) An employee who does not pass the second time may repeat the entire test (for a total of three opportunities) with the same examiner within 60 days from the first test.
 - d) When an employee repeats the entire test, he/she may request an alternate examiner who will then be identified and appointed by the Medical Director.
 - e) If an employee does not pass after the third opportunity, he/she may repeat the entire testing process within 6 months of the last test date.
- 4). Bilingual staff will demonstrate a familiarity with the consumer's culture and degree of proficiency in the consumer's spoken (in this case, Spanish), as well as nonverbal communication.
- a) At the end of the Spanish bilingual test (with a passing score) there will be a training session with a handout on interpretation issues as it relates to cultural competency and mental health. Please see Attachment II for handout.
 - b) It is expected that employees who have tested in the past and serve in the capacity of Bilingual status, prior to implementation of this policy and procedures, attend a Department cultural competency training class in interpretation and translation with the consent of their manager.
 - c) The administrator for the Spanish bilingual test will be the Department's cultural competency and training coordinator.
 - d) All test materials and the results will be handled and maintained in a strictly confidential manner.
 - e) As evidence of trained bilingual staff and in compliance with Title VI requirements, this Department does not expect that family members will provide interpreter services.

Assistance:
Reference:
Replaces: