



Legislation Text

File #: 3503-2022, Version: 1

The purpose of this legislation is to amend Ordinance 2157-2022, pertaining to the requirement of language access services for residents of limited English proficiency.

The City provides programming and services that need to be accessible to all residents, from registration forms for programs, 311, and emergency services. In order to ensure that Columbus is a welcoming city, it is necessary to introduce into our City Code a requirement that all city offices, based on their level of providing vital public documents and services to residents, provide some level of language access services so that our diverse immigrant, refugee, and migrant population can have the same levels of access as those with greater English proficiency. Ordinance 2157-2022 creates new chapter 174 to require city offices to provide these services, as are deemed necessary by each office, and to create policies that will cover such items as identifying public documents for translation, interpretation services, annual reporting, and community outreach efforts.

This ordinance amends the previous legislation by altering the effective date of sections 174.02-174.05, as established in Ordinance 2157-2022, from January 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023, in order to allow City offices sufficient opportunity to prepare and execute the new requirements.

EMERGENCY DESIGNATION: This ordinance is necessary as an emergency measure given the immediate need to alter the effective date to allow City offices sufficient opportunity to prepare and execute the new requirements under the Columbus City Codes.

To amend Ordinance 2157-2022, pertaining to the requirement of language access services for persons of limited English proficiency to better interact with city government, and to declare an emergency.

WHEREAS, the City of Columbus represents and welcomes all residents regardless of national origin, and is committed to making Columbus a city that provides opportunity for all; and

WHEREAS, the City of Columbus is home to an increasingly diverse population, including immigrants, refugees, and migrants from across the world, who add to the economic strength and cultural richness of the community; and

WHEREAS, in many cases, these New Americans have limited English proficiency, but need the same access to city services as proficient English speakers; and

WHEREAS, the City of Columbus needs basic rules in place to ensure this access, regardless of the city office that these residents are attempting to access; and

WHEREAS, to ensure this, City Council passed Ordinance 2157-2022, which enacted new chapter 174 of the Columbus City Codes to require language access services be provided for vital public documents and city programming; and

WHEREAS, to allow City offices sufficient opportunity to prepare and execute the new requirements, Council is amending Ordinance 2157-2022 to alter the effective date from January 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the normal operations of the various City departments in that it is important to allow for planning for implementation of the provisions of this new code so as to afford access to residents of limited English proficiency to vital city services; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That Ordinance 2157-2022 is hereby amended, as follows:

See Attachment

SECTION 2. That for the reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Mayor, or 10 days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.