



# NEWS RELEASE

## Chicago Police Department

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### **CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT HIRES FIRST-EVER LANGUAGE ACCESS COORDINATOR**

*New role will help improve meaningful access to CPD programs and services  
for individuals with limited English proficiency*

**CHICAGO** – The Chicago Police Department today announced the addition of a new key role that will improve meaningful access to CPD services and programs for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP).

In her new role as CPD's first-ever Language Access Coordinator, Roxana Cortes, who previously served with Chicago Public Schools as a translation specialist, will support the Department's efforts toward compliance with language access policy requirements mandated by the consent decree, as well as from the City of Chicago Office of New Americans.

"Impartial policing is central to promoting broad community engagement, fostering public confidence in our department, and building partnerships between our officers and the communities we serve," said Deputy Superintendent Barbara West, who oversees CPD's Office of Constitutional Policing and Reform. "We're fortunate to have someone with Roxana's skillset and experience guide our efforts as we provide equal language access to CPD programs and services for all Chicago residents."

The consent decree guiding CPD's reform efforts mandates a series of impartial policing practices that will ensure meaningful access to CPD programs and services for individuals with limited ability to speak, read or write in English. These requirements include a review and revision of CPD's language access policy; ensuring that qualified and Department-authorized interpreters are used in accordance with CPD policy, including for the provision of Miranda warnings; and publishing English and translated versions of the language access policy into any non-English language spoken by a limited or non-English proficient population that constitutes 5% or 10,000 individuals, whichever is less, on the official CPD website.

The City of Chicago's various departments have been collecting detailed data about the frequency and types of LEP interactions in order to assist the city's immigrant and LEP residents more efficiently. City departments have been utilizing a professional, 24-hour real-time interpretation hotline to ensure that LEP communities have full access to all city functions.

Each department has created a language access policy and implementation plan, which outlines the current services provided to the LEP community, along with any new staff training or growth plans related to serving LEP persons. Cortes will be instrumental in drafting and implementing CPD's language access policy.

“Over the course of my career, I've developed an understanding and a passion for the needs of immigrants and refugees who require language access to city services,” said Cortes, who also served as a lecturer with The University of Chicago Department of Romance Languages and Literatures. “I'm looking forward to working with CPD as we implement a system of equal language access for our impacted communities.”

While over 1,200 CPD officers have self-identified as possessing some level of proficiency in languages ranging from Spanish, Polish and Chinese to Arabic and Romanian, Cortes will also implement an accreditation system that includes independent assessment, testing, training and proficiency certification for the multilingual officers.

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