

Language Justice Spectrum Pilot

2025 Impact Report

Language rights are human rights. In California, at least 1 in 5 residents is limited English proficient. When language barriers persist, communities are excluded from vital services, emergency information, and decision-making, undermining trust and health outcomes. Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJs) play a vital role in ensuring healthy outcomes for all. In 2025, the Public Health Alliance of Southern California partnered with six LHJs to pilot the Language Justice Spectrum, a practical assessment and guidance tool designed to strengthen language access and advance language justice within public health systems.

1 | Language Justice Spectrum

Inspired by community power-building frameworks, the Spectrum emphasizes people and positionality by recognizing who holds decision-making power and how lived experience, language, and role within an institution shape access to resources. This embeds equity and partnership into everyday public health operations.



2 | 2025 Pilot at a Glance

Participants	Approach	Data Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 LHJs 31 Staff <p>Includes Depts Across</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity Communications Clinical Services Emergency Preparedness Leadership 	<p>A multi-layered participatory model combining cross-departmental self-assessment with the Spectrum tool, tailored technical support, and community engagement to center existing expertise and set shared priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical assistance Facilitated Discussions <p>Post-survey (52% response rate) focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> usability effectiveness organizational learning

3 | Key Outcomes

What LHJs Achieved

- ✓ **Completed** 6 comprehensive self-assessments establishing organizational baselines
- ✓ **Engaged** community-based partners to align priorities and surface gaps
- ✓ **Sparked** cross-department learning and leadership-level dialogue

What Participants Reported

- 🎯 **Increased awareness** of overlooked language and accessibility needs (i.e., Deaf & Hard-of-Hearing communities, dialects, data disaggregation)
- 🎯 **Greater clarity** on next steps, including staff training, policy development, and infrastructure building
- 🎯 The Spectrum is **useful and actionable** for evaluating language services

4 | Impact & Value



The pilot helped shift language justice from the margins to a shared public health responsibility.

It validated existing efforts while revealing where deeper investment is needed; particularly in staff capacity, sustainable systems, and community partnership. Several LHJs have already begun integrating findings into strategic planning, advisory structures, and policy development.

"[The Spectrum tool] gave them [staff] an understanding of what language access is and what language justice can look like for public health."
 – LHJ Staff Pilot Participant

5 | What's Next

- **Scale** the Spectrum statewide with tailored technical assistance
- **Adapt** the tool for Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to strengthen partnership and accountability
- **Develop** field-building resources (policy guides, examples, learning tools)
- **Explore** alignment with healthcare partners to improve long-term health outcomes



Read the Full Impact Report Here!



Get Involved

- **LHJs & CBOs:** Pilot the tool, share feedback, and integrate findings into planning
- **Leaders:** Champion language justice and encourage use of the Spectrum
- **Funders:** Invest in training, technical assistance, and broader adoption of the Spectrum

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