Translation Planning: A Quick-Start Guide for Outreach & Equity

Clear, accessible communication is essential to meaningful public engagement. If you're planning to translate outreach materials, this one-sheet can help you stay organized, on budget, and aligned with best practices.

Step 1: Determine Scope and Budget

- **Define your needs.** What documents, materials, or digital content need translation?
- **Decide which languages.** Consider your community's demographics, most commonly spoken languages, and environmental justice populations.
- **Estimate cost.** Most vendors charge by the word. Translation services are often more affordable than expected—especially with short, focused content.

Tip: Prioritize materials that include deadlines, public notices, or calls to action.

Step 2: Select a Translation Vendor

- **Use State Contract PRF75, Category 2** for pre-vetted language services: mass.gov/doc/prf75
- **Share your:**
  - Source material
    Target language(s)
    Timeline and any formatting preferences

Tip: Ask vendors if they also provide editing or proofreading by a second fluent speaker.

Step 3: Review Translations with Care

- **Quality check recommended.** If possible, have someone fluent in the target language review the material for accuracy and tone.

- **Who can review?**

    - Some vendors provide this service as part of their process
      Colleagues, outreach team members, or trusted community partners

Important: Only ask someone to review content if language translation is part of their paid responsibilities. Respect time and expertise, language justice is equity work.

Step 4: Publish and Share

Once approved, distribute your translated materials across all outreach channels:

- Website and social media
- Email or text notifications
- Printed flyers or mailers
- Public meetings or events

Tip: Label translated content clearly (e.g., "Español," "Português") and offer it in formats that match your original materials.

For questions or help integrating translation into your engagement strategy, reach out to your outreach consultant or communications team.

Translation supports access, inclusion, and compliance. Plan ahead and make it part of your process.