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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWS RELEASE

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Dane County Sheriff's Office Works to Increase Language Access

Madison, WI – August 29, 2024 – The Dane County Sheriff's Office will be unveiling improved language access policies and procedures aimed at fostering equitable access and inclusivity. Over the past several months, the Sheriff's Office has been fine-tuning language access policy and procedure with the assistance of the Department of Justice and Dane County's inaugural language access and reporting specialist, in the County's Office for Equity and Inclusion. The process is ongoing and will include ongoing internal and external partnership and engagement.

The language access policy is designed to cater to the needs of our diverse population, recognizing that meaningful language access and effective communication is essential for accessing services and ensuring public safety. The Dane County Sheriff's Office is committed to access and equity across functions and services and enhancing its capacity to serve all Dane County residents and communities.

Key components of our plan include:

- Ensuring accurate, timely, and meaningful access to Sheriff's Office programs, services, and activities for all individuals it encounters regardless of national origin or primary language at no cost to those individuals.
- Providing specialized language access training to all Sheriff's Office staff.
- Implementing a testing and certification process for bilingual/multilingual Sheriff's Office staff to ensure the most effective, qualified communication to individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP)/with a preferred language other than English,
- Continuing and expanding the use of telephonic and video interpretation services available to all agency personnel at any time.



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- Translating vital documents the Sheriff's Office utilizes to access its programs, services and/or activities, to include legal documents, into the top five languages used in Dane County.

“Our language access policies and procedures are a testament to our commitment to equality and inclusion,” said Sheriff Calvin Barrett. “By proactively addressing language barriers, we are fostering a more connected community where everyone can fully participate.”