



U. S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

July 26, 2002

Ms. Shirley Parraguirre  
County Clerk  
200 South 3rd St.  
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Dear Ms. Parraguirre:

This is to advise you that the Director of the Census has determined that Clark County is now subject to the bilingual election requirements of Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 1973aa-1a, with respect to persons of Spanish heritage. This determination was made pursuant to criteria set forth in Section 203 and is based on 2000 Census data showing that there are a significant number of voting age citizens with limited-English proficiency within Clark County who require materials and information in their primary language to participate effectively in the political process. The determination became effective upon publication in the Federal Register. We are enclosing a copy of the Federal Register publication, as well as a copy of relevant provisions of the Voting Rights Act and the Attorney General's minority language guidelines.

Under Section 203, all information that is provided in English about voter registration, elections, and voting, including information provided in the polling places and the voting booths, must be provided in the languages of members of the covered language groups to the extent needed to allow them to participate effectively in the electoral process and all voting connected activities. The requirement applies to information that is communicated orally as well as in writing, but does not require that information in minority languages be provided to people who have no need for it. The obligations apply to all elections conducted by Clark County. The same duty applies to any other governmental units within Clark County, such as school districts or municipalities, to the extent they conduct voter registration or elections.

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The requirements of Section 203 take effect immediately upon publication of the determinations and, therefore, they must be implemented for the next election. A successful minority language election program will require close, ongoing consultation with all segments of the affected minority community. Such consultation will assist in ensuring accurate translation of election materials, as well as the best ways to disseminate election-related information to the language minority community. In addition, the involvement of members of the language minority community will be essential in meeting your obligation to promptly identify, hire and train prospective bilingual poll officials for the upcoming election to be placed at all precincts at which they may be needed.

The requirements of Section 203 are explained in more detail in our enclosed guidelines. For example, Sections 55.19 and 55.20 provide information concerning written material, and oral assistance and publicity, respectively. Section 55.17 discusses the process of "targeting" information in the minority language to people who need it. We emphasize the importance of ongoing communication with the jurisdiction's minority language community, who can best identify the most effective channels of communication and help identify bilingual persons to serve as poll officials. See Section 55.16.

One successful program may differ from another, based on the particular local situation and the needs of the local minority language community. However, there are elements that are common to all successful programs, such as:

- Ongoing consultation with the language minority community;
- Procedures for translating materials into the minority language (e.g., translation by a trained translator, review by community groups);
- Publicity, including use of minority language media and selection of sites for posting or distributing materials;
- Procedures to ensure voter registration opportunities for language minority voters;
- Procedures for selecting sites to have bilingual poll officials, and the identification, recruitment and training of bilingual officials;
- Procedures for updating the program based on population shifts or other new information;

- Procedures for oral translation and obtaining answers to questions at the election offices and polling places;
- Backup procedures that can be put into place promptly, if necessary;
- Record keeping (lists of bilingual poll officials, details of outreach)

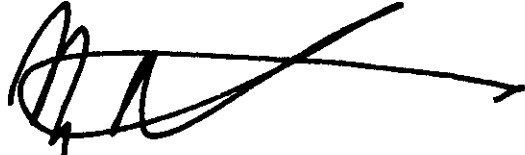
These elements are neither mandatory nor exhaustive. A successful program will be tailored to local needs and crafted in close consultation with the local minority community. We do hope, however, that they are helpful to you in devising an effective program.

Jurisdictions also subject to the special requirements of Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 1973c, must obtain preclearance of any changes affecting voting that may occur as a result of implementation of the minority language program. We fully appreciate the time constraints that you face, and assure you that we are prepared to provide expedited review of your program. We also note that what we will review under Section 5 are any unprecleared procedures you adopt as well as the results of these new procedures, e.g., the procedures for providing election information in the minority language as well as the quality of the minority language translations that make up the finished product: we would review, for example, the procedures for translating materials into the minority language without waiting for the actual translation of all materials.

We hope that the information and materials we have enclosed are helpful. Additional information is available on the Voting Section Internet site at [www.usdoj.gov/crt/voting](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/voting). If you would like to discuss this matter further, please feel free to contact

Voting Section Special Litigation Counsel John Tanner by phone at 202-514-2386 or by facsimile transmission at 202-307-3961.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "RFB", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ralph F. Boyd, Jr.  
Assistant Attorney General

Enclosures