



**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY/PROCEDURE**

SUBJECT BILINGUAL BONUS	POLICY NO. 602.01	EFFECTIVE DATE 05/04/2015	PAGE 1 of 6
APPROVED BY:  Director	SUPERSEDES 602.01 04/21/2011	ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE 04/02/1979	DISTRIBUTION LEVEL(S) 1

PURPOSE

- 1.1 To establish the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) policy and guidelines for governing bilingual bonus payments consistent with the provisions of the Los Angeles County Code, Section 6.10.140.

DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Bilingual Bonus:** Compensation paid to certified bilingually proficient employees whose assignments require fluency in English and at least one foreign language, as well as knowledge of, and sensitivity toward, the culture and needs of the foreign-language group clientele which LACDMH serves. This bonus does not constitute "base rate" pay. American Sign Language is considered a foreign language for purposes of this bonus.
- 2.2 **Translation:** The conversion of a message from the source language text into an equivalent in the target-language text.
 - 2.2.1 **Source language:** The language in which a message is originally given.
 - 2.2.2 **Target-language:** The language into which a message is to be translated or interpreted.
- 2.3 **Interpretation:** The conversion of an oral message from one language, the source language, into another oral language or sign language, the target-language.

POLICY

- 3.1 To qualify for the bilingual bonus, employees must meet all of the following eligibility conditions:



**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY/PROCEDURE**

SUBJECT	POLICY NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	PAGE
BILINGUAL BONUS	602.01	05/04/2015	2 of 6

- 3.1.1 Hold permanent and full-time status; or hold a temporary or recurrent position.
- 3.1.2 Possess a valid Language Proficiency Certificate issued as a result of the County's Bilingual Proficiency Examination, which tests for proficiency to either speak, read, and/or write the language.
- 3.1.3 Be assigned to duties that require the use of the foreign language(s) on a continuing and frequent basis to meet the public service responsibility of LACDMH. Examples include:
 - 3.1.3.1 An employee who is assigned a caseload that requires the use of a second language.
 - 3.1.3.2 An employee whose assignment requires regular, ongoing contact with the public where the use of a second language is necessary. The employee also possesses and displays a knowledge of, and sensitivity toward, the culture and needs of the foreign-language group.
 - Administrative and managerial positions do not routinely meet this condition since they are not considered public contact positions. However, in some situations, with the Deputy Director's written approval, an administrative or managerial position may be designated as one involving significant public contact in which bilingual skills are needed and would further the LACDMH public service responsibility.
 - 3.1.3.3 A bilingual examiner.
 - 3.1.3.4 An employee who is available for translation/interpretation services.
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of the Deputy Director or designee at the level of Program Manager to determine the skill required for the assignment and to ensure the employee is properly certified for the needed skill.



**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY/PROCEDURE**

SUBJECT	POLICY NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	PAGE
BILINGUAL BONUS	602.01	05/04/2015	3 of 6

PROCEDURE

- 4.1 LACDMH may administer examinations and establish eligible lists for some positions with foreign language skills as a requirement.
 - 4.1.1 Candidates tested for bilingual proficiency as part of the examination process, if successful, are issued a Language Proficiency Certificate.
 - 4.1.2 Successful candidate names are placed on the eligible lists. LACDMH may select candidates from the eligible lists when the foreign language skills are needed, including translation of materials and/or interpretation services by diverse LACDMH Programs/Units.
 - 4.1.3 Candidates who are selected from the eligible lists are employed on the condition that they use their bilingual skills while holding the position and may participate in translation of materials or interpretation services upon solicitation by various LACDMH Programs/Units.
- 4.2 The bilingual bonus is authorized, canceled, or continued by making a request through the Personnel Action Request (PAR) System.
- 4.3 The Deputy Director or designee at the level of Program Manager requesting interpretation/translation services can retrieve the Bilingual Bonus Employee List from the LACDMH Human Resources Bureau (DMH-HRB) Processing Unit at (213) 972-7006.
- 4.4 A Request for Interpretation/Translation Services (RITS) form (Attachment 1) should be sent to a supervisor at the level of Program Manager or above. The RITS must be signed by the Program Manager.
 - 4.4.1 Denied RITS will necessitate the processing of a new RITS. The requestor can contact the HRB Manager for consultation of denials.
- 4.5 Programs requesting translation/interpretation services shall be responsible for coordination of all logistical aspects involving the translation/interpretation request.



**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY/PROCEDURE**

SUBJECT	POLICY NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	PAGE
BILINGUAL BONUS	602.01	05/04/2015	4 of 6

- 4.6 A copy of all approved RITS should be sent to the LACDMH Ethnic Services Manager at the Program Support Bureau, Quality Improvement Division, via fax number (213) 252-8747.
- 4.7 The Deputy Director or designee at the level of Program Manager who finds the need to meet the public service responsibility of communicating with foreign language clientele can submit a Request for Bilingual Bonus Authorization/Termination/Continuation.
 - 4.7.1 If the employee passes the proficiency examination, the Bilingual Coordinator shall attach a copy of the Language Proficiency Certification to the Request for Bilingual Bonus form and submit the request to the Departmental Human Resources Manager or designee for approval.
- 4.8 The Deputy Director or designee at the level of Program Manager determines whether a given assignment requires a bilingual employee.
- 4.9 The Deputy Director or designee at the level of Program Manager has responsibility for authorizing a bilingual bonus.
 - 4.9.1 Supervisory levels are not to be delegated final authority to approve a bilingual bonus.
- 4.10 The DMH-HRB Staff shall review the Request for Bilingual Bonus form and complete the Human Resources Use Only section.
- 4.11 DMH-HRB Staff shall determine the effective date when no requested effective date is indicated.
- 4.12 DMH-HRB Staff shall notify the appropriate requestor if the Bilingual Bonus form is not approved as submitted.
- 4.13 The DMH-HRB Processing Staff shall enter the information into electronic Countywide Accounting and Purchasing System (eCAPS). The Request for Bilingual Bonus form, along with a copy of the Language Proficiency Certificate, shall be filed in the employee's Official Personnel Folder.



**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY/PROCEDURE**

SUBJECT	POLICY NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	PAGE
BILINGUAL BONUS	602.01	05/04/2015	5 of 6

- 4.14 Authorization to receive the bilingual bonus terminates whenever the employee is rated less than competent in an official Performance Evaluation, begins an unpaid leave, has been on a continuous leave of absence for sixty (60) days, changes pay location, changes classification, demotes, promotes, or transfers between County departments.
- 4.15 The Deputy Director or designee at the level of Program Manager must terminate the bonus via a PAR, but no later than five (5) business days, after eligibility ceases.
- 4.16 The Deputy Director or designee at the level of Program Manager has the responsibility for resubmitting a bilingual bonus authorization to reinstate the bonus, via a PAR, when a transaction or event which terminates the bilingual bonus has taken place.
- 4.17 Payment of the bilingual bonus may only be authorized as long as the facts upon which it is based continue to exist and the employee continues to remain eligible.
- 4.18 Salary employees certified to receive the bilingual bonus established in County Code Section 6.10.140 shall receive additional compensation at the rate specified by the Board of Supervisors. Hourly employees shall receive additional compensation at the hourly rate specified by the Board of Supervisors.
- 4.19 In no event shall such compensation be effective before the employee is certified or before the first day of his/her assignment to the qualifying position.
- 4.20 At least annually, DMH-HRB shall audit all work locations with employees receiving a bilingual bonus.
 - 4.20.1 The Deputy Director or designee at the level of Program Manager for that work location shall confirm in writing that the employee identified as receiving a bilingual bonus meets the criteria as set forth in the eligibility section of this policy.



**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY/PROCEDURE**

SUBJECT	POLICY NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	PAGE
BILINGUAL BONUS	602.01	05/04/2015	6 of 6

- 4.21 On a monthly basis the Payroll staff shall notify the DMH-HRB Bilingual Bonus Coordinator to stop payment of the bilingual bonus for those employees receiving the bonus but have been on a continuous leave absence for sixty (60) calendar days.
- 4.22 The Deputy Director or designee at the level of Program Manager has the responsibility to terminate a bilingual bonus when the qualifying conditions no longer exist, such as, no longer required to use the foreign language on the job.
- 4.23 The DMH-HRB is responsible for maintaining a current list of employees receiving bilingual bonus. The list shall be categorized by employee name, payroll title, pay location, language, and language competency level. This list can be accessed by LACDMH managers by contacting DMH-HRB.

AUTHORITY

- 1. [Los Angeles County Code, Section 6.10.140](#)
- 2. Memoranda of Understanding between the County and Certified Bargaining Units

ATTACHMENT (HYPERLINKED)

- 1. [Request for Interpretation/Translation Services \(RITS\)](#)

REFERENCES

- 1. LACDMH Policy No. 200.03, Language Interpreters
- 2. Personnel Action Request (PAR) System

RESPONSIBLE PARTY

LACDMH Human Resources Bureau
LACDMH Program Support Bureau, Quality Improvement Division