



OFFICE OF  
INTERNAL AUDIT



## FIRE RESTRICTIONS UNTIL OCTOBER 2024



**NOTICE:** Deschutes County has enacted public use fire restrictions on all County-owned land and all unprotected land in the unincorporated areas of the county until October 15, 2024.



## RESTRICCIONES DE FUEGO HASTA EL OCTUBRE DE 2024



**AVISO:** el condado de Deschutes ha promulgado restricciones de uso público de fuego en todos los terrenos que son propiedad del condado y todas las tierras no protegidas en las áreas no incorporadas del condado hasta el 15 de octubre de 2024.




## Language Access Audit Follow-up: Responsibilities Clarified; Efforts Underway to Update Policies

September 2025 Our [2025 audit of the language access program](#) found unclear guidance and procedures around language access services that led to confusion and inconsistency. Though the County provided language access services there was some risk of noncompliance with federal law. Nine months later, Administration assigned responsibility for the program to Risk Management but was still working to update the Civil Rights Act policy to include language access, create a plan for improving language access, and implement procedures across the County to ensure staff complied with policy.



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## Recommendation Status Key:

 <b>1</b> <b>Resolved</b> <i>Management addressed risk. Auditors will no longer monitor.</i>	 <b>4</b> <b>In Process</b> <i>Recommendations are in progress. Auditors will continue to monitor.</i>	 <b>0</b> <b>Accept Risk</b> <i>Management accepted the risk of not implementing the recommendation.</i>
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Responsibility for language access assigned to Administrator overseeing Risk Management.

Resolved 

Initial finding: There was some risk of noncompliance with federal language access rules. Two-thirds of departments/offices did not proactively identify documents for translation and notices about the availability of interpretation were not easy to find. No specific person was assigned responsibility for language access.

Recommendation: The County Administrator should assign responsibility for the language access program to a specific person.

Update: The County Administrator assigned the language access program to the Deputy County Administrator who oversees Risk Management.

Risk Management tasked with updating Civil Rights Act policy.

In Process 

Initial finding: Language access portions of the Civil Rights Act policy did not provide clear guidance to staff.

Recommendation: Administration should update the Civil Rights Act policy to provide clearer guidance and include best practices.

Update: Administration planned to implement this recommendation by July 1, 2025. Implementation was delayed because a Deputy County Administrator was temporarily performing the Human

Resources Director duties during a position vacancy. The County Administrator has now tasked Risk Management with updating the Civil Rights Act policy.

Administration and Human Resources working to create a language access plan.

In Process



**Initial finding:** The County didn't know what language access services were needed and provided across the organization. The County's language access plan did not address timeframe, objectives, or funding needs. Perhaps most importantly, elements that would have identified need and how many resources the County should provide were either problematic or missing.

**Recommendation:** Administration should create a language access plan based on the Language Access Assessment and Planning tool.

**Update:** Administration planned to implement this recommendation by December 1, 2025. Implementation will be delayed because a Deputy County Administrator was temporarily performing the Human Resources Director duties during a position vacancy. Administration staff will work with Human Resources staff to create a plan.

Administration planning to assist with developing tailored language access procedures.

In Process



**Initial finding:** Without procedures, translated documents were not readily available and contracted vendors were underused and uncoordinated. Some staff were reluctant to use interpreters because there was not a budget for it and relied on phone app interpretation programs or friends and family of people seeking service instead. A countywide contract signed in April 2024 was not used at all when auditors checked invoices in November 2024.

Recommendation: Administration should add mandatory countywide procedures to the language access policy.

Update: Rather than implementing a single mandatory countywide procedure, Administration planned to coordinate with each department/office to develop tailored procedures. As of September 2025, no procedures were yet implemented.

### Policy for bilingual employees in the works.

In Process



Initial finding: Bilingual employees bore the burden of unclear policies and procedures. Some bilingual employees were overstretched or provided services without receiving a bilingual stipend. One employee got so many requests to interpret for coworkers that they were considering giving up the pay differential because it took up so much time.

Recommendation: Administration should create a policy for the bilingual program that clarifies selection/hiring, testing, expectations, and compensation.

Update: Administration planned to implement this recommendation by December 1, 2025. Implementation will be delayed due to a vacancy in the Human Resources Director position.

**Next Steps:** We will continue to report on the status of in-process audit recommendations in our Global Follow-up Report at the end of each calendar year.

The mission of the Office of Internal Audit is to improve the performance of Deschutes County government and to provide accountability to residents. We examine and evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, and equity of operations through an objective, disciplined, and systematic approach.

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