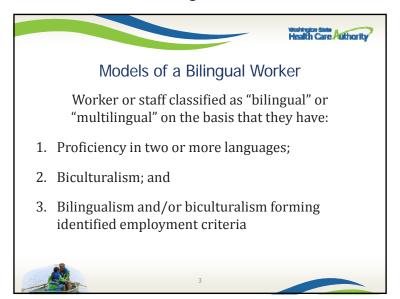
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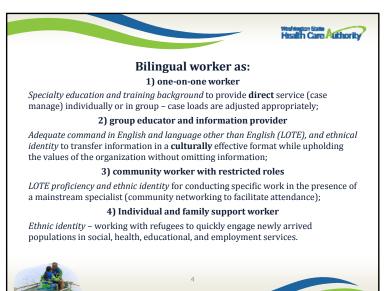
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Defining roles
Bilingual employee

Preferred definition:
A person employed to use their language skills in English and another language with a linguistic proficiency in both languages appropriate to the function of their position who also understands and shares the values of the non-English speaking community they are employed to work with and their employing agency

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## Testing bilingual employees

WA DSHS Language Testing and Certification

In 1991, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) in Washington State initiated an effort to certify its bilingual staff, social service and medical interpreters, and translators working for DSHS throughout its many divisions and programs. This effort was the culmination of lawsuits and civil rights complaints brought against DSHS for not providing equal access to services for Limited English Proficient (LEP) clients. As part of a consent decree, DSHS agreed not only to provide (and pay for) interpreters for clients, but also to ensure the quality of interpreter services provided. DSHS chose to ensure quality through the development and administration of standardized tests.

The Language Testing and Certification program (LTC) was created to develop systems, methods, procedures, and policies in carrying out the department's legal commitment. State laws (RCW 41.56.030; 41.56.113; 41.04.810; 43.01.047; and 74.04.025) requiring the department to provide language services to its LEP clients and to certify and authorize its language access providers were each amended and enacted during the 2010 legislative session.

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## Test development

## Testing of bilingual employees

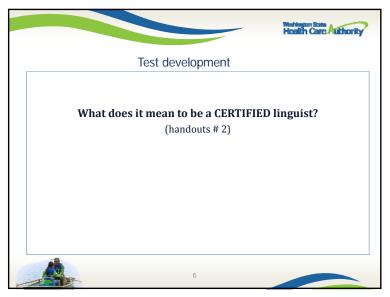
State Agencies will need to develop policy and procedures to regulate and standardize the activities of this type of employees. Compensation mechanism will need to be established (per encounter, percentage of time, etc.) that recognizes the bilingual skills of staff who have been tested and provided with training.

## **DSHS/HCA** testing requirements

Position Clusters, Test Requirements, and Scope of Practice



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