



Apex Police Department General Order



Title Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit		Order Number 319-20
Effective Date: April 22, 2020	Amends:	
CALEA Standard:	Rescinds:	
Reference: Town of Apex Personnel Policy	Pages: 5	
Forms: F319 - Language Proficiency Application		

Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit

Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to establish procedures for employees to demonstrate proficiency in specific languages that are prevalent in the Town of Apex, and receive a specialized skill benefit for providing interpretation/translation assistance to staff.

Policy

It is the policy of the Apex Police Department to provide the highest level of service to our community; including those who are unable to or have difficulty communicating in English. In order to offer these members of the community the same level of service as we do for those who speak English, the department has identified a need to use the skills of its employees who can interpret/translate in other languages, and provide them compensation for the use of this specialized skill.

Eligibility

1. Full-Time, Part-Time, and Limited Service Employees, released from probation (normally six months for civilian employees and twelve months for sworn employees), in the below positions are eligible for the Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit.
 - Police Officer—any rank
 - Telecommunicator—any level
 - Police Records Clerk
 - Any other as approved by the Chief of Police

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2. The Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit will be limited to those languages prevalent in the Town of Apex. These languages will include:
 - Spanish
 - Portuguese
 - Hindi
 - Russian
 - Turkish
 - Mandarin
 - American Sign Language (or equivalent)

3. Language prevalence will be determined through a review of those interpreter services used by the department in the previous three years.
 - The review will include:
 - A list of languages used by the department
 - The number of times the language was needed
 - The total time interpreter services were provided for the language
 - Any recommendations for changes to those languages included in the Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit
 - The review will be completed by the Deputy Chief of Police, or his/her designee, and submitted to the Chief of Police by January 31st of the year following the period subject for review.

4. Employees will apply for the Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit by completing form F319 - *Language Proficiency Application* and submitting it to the Chief of Police, or his/her designee, through the chain of command.
 - Once reviewed, employees will receive a copy of their processed form F319 - *Language Proficiency Application* notifying them of the status of their request.
 - Approved applications will be forwarded to the Administrative Coordinator and Professional Standards supervisor to schedule proficiency testing through an approved vendor.

Testing

1. Employees wishing to be considered for the Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit must first demonstrate their proficiency through testing.
2. Testing will be conducted through a third party vendor approved by the Chief of Police.
3. Employees must demonstrate proficiency by obtaining a score of 70% or higher on the provided proficiency test.

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4. The Administrative Coordinator and/or Professional Standards supervisor will schedule proficiency testing with employees and the vendor.
 - The Professional Standards supervisor or designee will proctor all proficiency tests.
 - Tests will only be scheduled during normal office hours (normally Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm).
 - Employees must make arrangements to test while on-duty; overtime is not approved for proficiency testing.
5. Employees who score 70% or higher will be notified through a Personnel Order granting them the Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit.
 - The benefit effective date will be the first day of the next full pay period after passing test scores are received by the Administrative Coordinator.
6. Employees who do not score 70% or higher will be notified by the Administrative Coordinator, and will be provided a copy of their test results.
 - Employees who do not demonstrate proficiency by scoring 70% or higher on the provided proficiency test are not eligible to re-test for one full year from the date of their last test.
7. Employees receiving the Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit must re-test every five years to maintain the benefit.
 - Employees will submit a new form F319 - *Language Proficiency Application* to initiate the process to schedule re-testing.
 - To avoid a lapse in the Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit, employees should apply for re-testing no fewer than 30 days from the expiration of their Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit.
 - The expiration date will be five years from the effective date on the Personnel Order which grants the employee the Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit.

Responsibilities

1. Employees receiving the Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit are expected to assist department staff with interpretation/translation.
 - When on-duty, employees receiving the benefit are expected to make every effort to provide the requested interpretation/translation assistance as soon they are available to do so.
 - When off-duty, employees receiving the benefit who are requested to assist by a sworn command officer at the rank of Lieutenant or higher are expected to make

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every effort to provide the requested interpretation/translation assistance as soon as possible.

- Interpretation/translation assistance from off-duty personnel should be limited to critical incidents and/or incidents where obtaining immediate information is necessary, and no other interpretation/translation assistance is available.

2. Employees receiving the benefit may deny requests for interpretation/translation assistance when called upon; however, if they do so three or more times without adequate justification, or if they fail to meet the expectations associated with the benefit, the benefit may be temporarily suspended or removed.

- The length of any suspension will be determined by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
- Employees who have had the benefit suspended may request to have the benefit reinstated by submitting form F319 - *Language Proficiency Application* and a memorandum to the Chief of Police, through their chain of command.
 - The memorandum must include an action plan regarding how the employee will meet the department's interpretation/translation expectations going forward.
 - The Chief of Police or his/her designee will make the final determination as to whether the benefit will be reinstated.
 - Once a determination is made, a processed copy of the employee's form F319 - *Language Proficiency Application* will be forwarded to the employee.
- Employees who deny any additional requests for interpretation/translation assistance or fail to meet the expectations associated with the benefit after being suspended will have the benefit revoked for the remainder of the benefit eligibility period (benefit expiration date).
 - Employees who have had the benefit revoked may reapply for the benefit after the expiration date of the benefit period from which the benefit was revoked.
 - Employees must also submit a memorandum, including an action plan regarding how the employee will meet the department's interpretation/translation expectations going forward.
- Occurrences of employees denying requests for interpretation/translation assistance when called upon without adequate justification or failing to meet the expectations associated with the benefit will be noted in the employee's personnel file, and will be included in the employee's performance appraisal(s).

3. The benefit may be temporarily suspended for employees who are not available for full duty due to an injury, light-duty assignment, no duty, suspension, etc. for a period of 30 days or more.

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- The benefit will be reinstated on the first day of the first full pay period in which the employee returns to full duty.

Benefit

1. The Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit is a 2.5% increase over base salary, and limited to 2.5% regardless of the number of languages in which the employee has demonstrated proficiency.
2. Employees are authorized the Language Proficiency Specialized Skill Benefit in addition to any other specialized skill benefit.
3. The benefit may be modified/eliminated by the Chief of Police or Town Manager at any time due to budgetary limitations or for any other reason.

BY ORDER OF:



John W. Letteney
Chief of Police