

From: Symmes, Brian <BrianSymmes@gov.sc.gov>  
To: Godfrey, Rob <RobGodfrey@gov.sc.gov>  
CC: Adams, Chaney <ChaneyAdams@gov.sc.gov>  
Date: 9/22/2016 12:55:14 PM  
Subject: FW: Statement for WLTX re: HABLA translation services

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Don't know if you all ever spoke closed the loop with WLTX on this, but wanted to keep you apprised of how DSS is responding.

I've asked her to strengthen the message in the first paragraph to reiterate that the services provided by this program will still be available, but it will be done through more cost-effective programs.

They are holding until I give a go ahead, so let me know of any concerns.

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From: Wingo, Karen [mailto:Karen.Wingo@dss.sc.gov]  
Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2016 12:22 PM  
To: Symmes, Brian  
Subject: Statement for WLTX re: HABLA translation services

Will call you with background in a few minutes:

Almost two decades ago, the Department of Social Services and USC partnered together to create the HABLA project which provided Spanish to English translation services to constituents served by the Department. The HABLA project is just one of the many ways the Department partners with USC to better serve citizens in the state. Over the last several months, the Department and USC have been going through routine contract renegotiations. During this process, both entities were committed to identifying ways to improve efficiencies and eliminate duplication. While the contract has not been finalized, DSS and USC made the decision to phase out the HABLA Project over the next several months due to the number of translation services providers available throughout the state. The decision to eliminate the program, while a difficult one, demonstrates both USC and DSS' commitment to making fiscal restraint and service efficiency a priority.

Wendy E. Sellers, PhD, MSW, MA, Co-Founder and Former Director of the HABLA Project states as follows: "One of the experiences I am most proud of in my career as a social worker and Returned Peace Corps Volunteer has been witnessing the evolution of the partnership between DSS and the HABLA Project. So much acceptance and cultural competency throughout South Carolina have unfolded during these past 17 years. While I am sad to hear that the unique collaboration is coming to an end, I feel confident that DSS is a better place because of the lasting impact of HABLA. I see the passing of the torch to a new model of public assistance for our brothers and sisters of all languages as a positive sign of the progress of human services statewide."

The HABLA Project will continue to provide Spanish translation services for DSS constituents and staff through November 30, 2016. During this period of time, the University and DSS will work together to ensure the full and complete transition of translation services to other providers and translation services will continue to be provided to DSS constituents, as needed, after the HABLA Project ends on November 30, 2016.

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