


FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT  GENERAL ORDER	SUBJECT: LANGUAGE SKILLS SUPPORT UNIT		NUMBER: 537
	EFFECTIVE DATE: November 7, 2022	REVIEW: November, 2025	
RESPONSIBLE ENTITY: MAJOR CRIMES BUREAU			<input type="checkbox"/> New Directive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Replaces: 530.10 <input type="checkbox"/> Revised:
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS	CALEA:	VLEPSC: ADM.02.02	

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish guidelines and procedures for the Department's Language Skills Support Unit (LSSU).

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD) to serve the needs of all complainants, victims, and witnesses of all serious crimes by delivering efficient services, comprehension of potential community cultural barriers, and enhancement of case closure and prosecution. The Department's LSSU facilitates these objectives by providing support to all Department entities investigating serious criminal offenses requiring translation, interpretation, or communication assistance in languages other than English. The LSSU serves as a decentralized, non-standing unit under the purview of the Major Crimes Bureau (MCB) Commander and provides enforcement and investigative support, assistance, and mediation to all Department members who encounter individuals with limited English-speaking proficiency. Officers who encounter individuals who may be deaf or hard of hearing shall refer to [FCPD Standard Operating Procedure \(SOP\) 11-044](#) for further guidance.

III. GENERAL PROCEDURES

- A. **Organization:** The LSSU resides within the operational purview of the MCB Commander and is comprised of Department members who possess qualified foreign language skills with the ability to translate and interpret at an established proficiency level. A list of available foreign languages is available on [BlueNET](#).
- B. **Assignments:** Administrative control, general supervision, and daily activities of LSSU detectives shall be the responsibility of the station, division, or bureau commander where a LSSU detective is assigned. Occasionally, it may become necessary for LSSU detectives to be temporarily re-assigned to work with an investigative entity on a particular case. In these instances, the LSSU supervisor

shall seek approval for the temporary assignment through the affected division or station commander.

- C. **LSSU Request Form:** All requests shall be submitted via the [on-line scheduler](#) prior to the anticipated date and time of LSSU assistance. Department members requesting LSSU assistance due to a call out or during the preliminary stage of an investigation shall submit the LSSU request form when feasible.
- D. **Call-Outs:** The LSSU supervisor ensures that sufficiently qualified detectives are kept on a rotating call-out schedule 24 hours/day and 365 days/year. The updated call-out list shall be made routinely be available to on-call MCB supervisors and the Department of Public Safety Communications (DSPC) supervisor. LSSU detectives who are on-call shall be provided a take-home police vehicle for efficient responses to scenes and may be summoned whenever deemed necessary by a supervisor. Call-out requests should be made to through the on call LSSU Supervisor directly, and should be performed whenever a language barrier exists causing hinderance to an investigation for the following crimes:
1. Homicide
 2. Abduction
 3. Suicide
 4. Fatal or Serious Injury Accidents
 5. Malicious Wounding
 6. Rape and Sexual Assault
 7. Hostage/Barricade Incidents
 8. Stolen Auto with Apprehension
 9. Robbery with Apprehension
 10. High Risk Warrant Services

Note: The Department member requesting the assistance of LSSU shall document all support provided by LSSU and the lead investigator shall be responsible for subpoenaing the LSSU member for court as needed.

- E. **Telephone Assistance:** Officers and detectives who encounter language barriers during the preliminary investigation stages of a major crime may request telephone assistance from an on-call LSSU detective, provided no individual at the scene or other bi-lingual officer is available to assist, or the Language Line is not available or would not be appropriate under the circumstances.
- F. **Outside Jurisdiction Requests:** Outside jurisdiction requests for a LSSU detective shall be subject to the approval of the MCB Commander or acting Duty Officer. Outside jurisdiction requests should be made through DPSC, who will

then notify the MCB Commander during regular working hours, or the acting Duty Officer if the request is made after 1700 hours or on weekends. The outside jurisdiction shall be notified via telephone or mutual aid radio by DPSC of the status of their request.

General Order 537 becomes effective on the above date and rescinds all previous rules and regulations pertaining to the subjects.

ISSUED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Owens", written over a horizontal line.

Chief of Police

APPROVED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and appears to be "John" followed by a large flourish.

County Executive