



SAN JOSE POLICE DEPARTMENT

TRAINING BULLETIN

TO: ALL DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

FROM: Edgardo Garcia
Chief of Police

SUBJECT: TRANSLATING DOCUMENTS

DATE: June 12, 2020

BULLETIN #2020-012

Translating Documents

The modern availability of online language conversion tools serves as a quick method for getting a general sense of the facts in a written document. However, word for word conversion from a foreign language into English text does not account for the nuance, context, or alternate word usages which are often central to the intended meaning of a written message. This is one of the many reasons that the Department maintains a Language Access Plan. The plan defines Translation as: *“the replacement of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent written text in another language (target language). Translation requires special knowledge and skills.”*

The Language Access Plan states in part, that the Department translates its vital documents into Vietnamese and Spanish and translates other documents when there are external and internal requests. The Department maintains a contracted service for this purpose.

Additionally, Duty Manual section C 1317.1 states in part, that if a document needs to be translated during the course of an investigation and certified personnel are unavailable, the Unit Commander or designee shall determine the need for the document to be translated and shall make the appropriate arrangements with the contracted interpretation/translation service.

Department personnel are reminded that while online tools serve as an expedient method for getting a sense of the facts, they do not provide sufficiently reliable translation to support Probable Cause. If a foreign language text is to be used to form the basis of a search/arrest warrant or an affidavit of probable cause, the investigating officer should seek out appropriate translation services as described in the Department Language Access Plan and in Duty Manual section C 1317.1.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edgardo Garcia".

Edgardo Garcia
Chief of Police

EG:PC