



To enhance mission performance, TSA is committed to promoting a culture founded on its values of Integrity, Innovation, and Team Spirit.

NOTE: Pursuant to Section 101 of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (49 U.S.C. 114(n)), this directive, and all related Handbooks, Attachments, and Appendices establish Transportation Security Administration (TSA) policy and must be applied accordingly.

REVISION: This revised directive cancels and supersedes TSA MD 1100.00-8, *English Language Requirements*, dated July 1, 2010.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES: Section 2, Scope, revised to exclude contractors; Section 4, Definitions updated; and various clarifying administrative changes throughout the directive.

1. **PURPOSE:** This directive provides TSA policy and procedures regarding English language requirements for work-related duties while employees are on duty.
2. **SCOPE:** This directive applies to all TSA organizational elements and all TSA employees.
3. **AUTHORITIES:**
 - A. The Aviation and Transportation Security Act, Pub. L. 107-71 (ATSA)
 - B. 42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq.*, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended
 - C. 29 CFR Part 1606
 - D. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Compliance Manual: Section 13
4. **DEFINITIONS:**
 - A. Foreign Language: For the purposes of this directive, any language that is not English.
 - B. National Origin Discrimination: Denial of equal employment opportunity because of an individual's, or his or her ancestor's, place of origin; or because an individual has the physical, cultural, or linguistic characteristics of a national origin group.
5. **RESPONSIBILITIES:**
 - A. The Office of Human Capital (OHC) is responsible for developing and implementing this directive, and providing consultation and advice on related corrective actions and procedures.
 - B. Managers, supervisors, and other designated officials are responsible for:
 - (1) Notifying and informing their employees of this directive and its parameters;

- (2) Ensuring that new employees understand the English language requirement in the workplace during the hiring process, and when employees are appointed to positions within their respective airports or other TSA facilities; and
- (3) Maintaining a work environment free from national origin discrimination, including but not limited to discrimination related to national origin groups and physical, linguistic, or cultural backgrounds and traits.

C. All TSA employees are responsible for:

- (1) Understanding and adhering to this directive at their respective airport or TSA facility;
- (2) Conveying and executing security and safety measures consistently throughout the agency with coworkers, stakeholders, and the traveling public on a daily basis and in times of crises and emergencies; and
- (3) Working in and perpetuating an environment free from national origin discrimination, including but not limited to discrimination related to national origin groups and physical, linguistic, or cultural backgrounds and traits.

6. POLICY:

- A. It is the policy of TSA that all employees shall communicate with co-workers in the workplace in English, both written and spoken, while on duty. It is vital that procedures and instructions are clearly and consistently understood by the workforce and its stakeholders, including the traveling public.
- B. The requirements and reasons for this policy shall be clearly explained to all employees by management.
- C. Consistent with ATSA-mandated qualifications standards, all Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) shall be able to read, write, and speak English well enough to carry out written and oral instructions regarding the performance of screening duties; and provide direction to, and understand and answer questions from, English-speaking individuals undergoing screening. ATSA outlines the expectations for English proficiency of TSOs.
- D. Employees may utilize their foreign language skills if they are considered necessary for a work-related task, objective or need (e.g., to assist a passenger who does not speak English).
- E. TSA employees are not required to exclusively speak English during breaks or when off duty on work premises.
- F. Management shall not discriminate in selection for employment or promotion due to national origin. Such discrimination would include selecting native English-speaking candidates over qualified non-native English speakers due to their native English-speaking status.

7. PROCEDURES:

- A. Notification of this policy by management to their respective employees may be done through various means of communication including but not limited to meetings, memoranda, postings, and emails.
- B. Corrective and disciplinary actions shall be taken in accordance with [TSA MD 1100.75-3, *Addressing Unacceptable Performance and Conduct*](#), and the associated [Handbook](#).

8. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION: This policy is approved and effective the date of signature unless otherwise specified.

APPROVAL

Signed

March 18, 2015

Karen Shelton Waters
Assistant Administrator for Human Capital

Date

EFFECTIVE

Date

Distribution: Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Assistant Administrators, Chief Counsel, Regional Directors, Federal Security Directors, Supervisory Air Marshals in Charge, Business Management Division Directors, Administrative Officers, and Human Resources Specialists

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