



ASIAN AMERICANS  
**ADVANCING  
JUSTICE**  
CHICAGO

# Strategies for Improving Access for Asian Language Speakers

PREPARED FOR:

Metropolitan Mayors Caucus  
Diversity Issues Task Force

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# Background on the AAPI Community



- There are **800,140** Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) in Illinois
- **77% of Asian Americans** in Illinois speak a language other than English at home, and of those, more than 38% speak English less than “very well.”
- More than **two dozen Asian languages** are spoken in Illinois



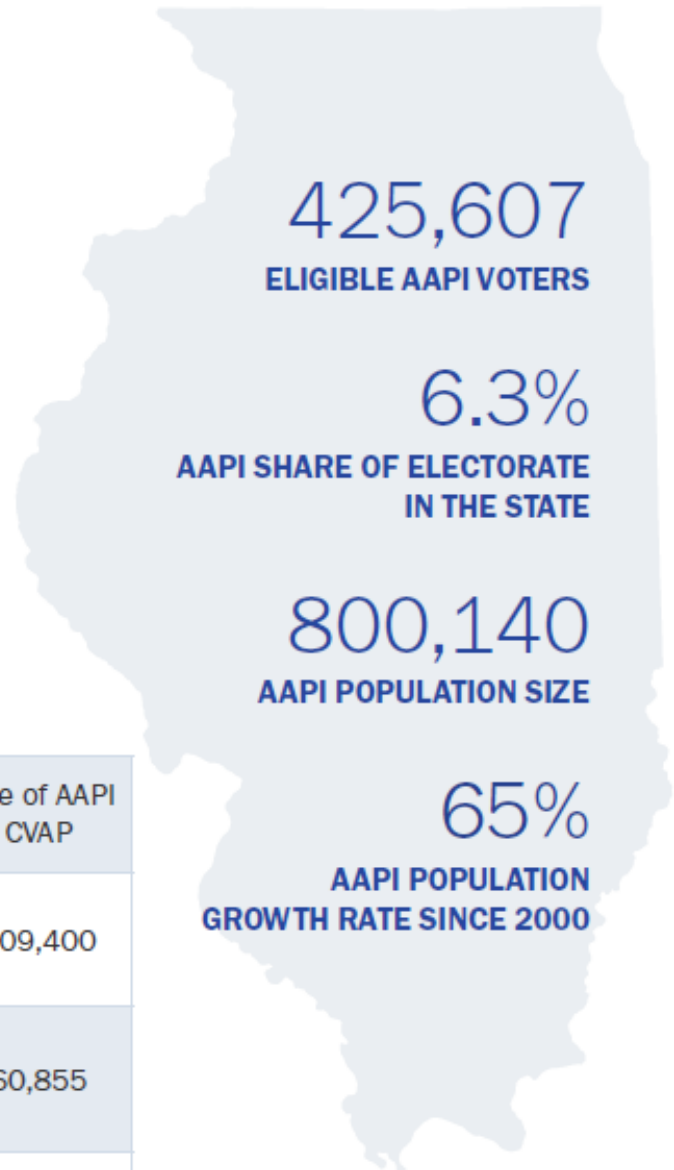
# Illinois

## POPULATION FACTS

- Largest AAPI ethnic groups in Illinois include: Indian (270,793), Filipino (156,121), Chinese (149,429), Korean (71,447), Pakistani (42,481), Vietnamese (40,311).
- From 2012 to 2018, the number of eligible AAPI voters in Illinois grew 28%
  - This compares to a 2% growth rate for the statewide eligible voting population between 2012 to 2018
- AAPI youth (ages 18-29) comprise 23% of the AAPI CVAP population in Illinois
- AAPIs age 50 and up comprise 39% of the AAPI CVAP population.

## COUNTIES WITH HIGHEST AAPI POPULATIONS

	% of AAPIs in County	Size of AAPI Population	% of AAPI CVAP in County	Size of AAPI CVAP
Cook County	7%	378,830	6%	209,400
DuPage County	12%	110,415	9%	60,855
Lake County	8%	53,455	6%	26,320



# Language Needs



- Top languages spoken in Illinois *outside of* Chicago by population size
  1. Spanish (40% LEP)
  2. Polish (45%)
  3. Tagalog, incl. Filipino (23%)
  4. Chinese, incl. Mandarin & Cantonese (48%)
  5. Arabic (26%)
  6. Gujarati (42%)
  7. Korean (51%)
  8. Urdu (21%)
  9. Hindi (22%)
  10. Russian (44%)

# Language Needs



- Languages *outside of Chicago* with the highest rates of Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
  1. Vietnamese (57% LEP)
  2. Khmer (57%)
  3. Korean (51%)
  4. Thai, Lao, or other Tai-Kadai languages (50%)
  5. Chinese, incl. Mandarin, Cantonese (48%)

# Strategies for Improving Language Access



1. Determine which languages are **most prevalent** in your community
  - Consult community-based organizations and publicly available data (e.g. Census, American Community Survey)
2. Use an **equity lens** to choose which languages to provide interpretation and translation in based on available resources
  - Consider which language groups have the highest rates of limited English proficiency (“%LTVW”)

# Strategies for Improving Language Access



3. Provide **written translations** of critical information/resources and telephonic or in-person **interpretation** for services
  - Many government agencies use a third-party for written translation and telephonic interpretation, such as Language Line or Propio Language Services
  - Hire staff who are bilingual in the most prevalent language spoken in your geography
  - Ask community-based organizations to review written translations for accuracy and cultural relevance (and compensate them for their work)
  
4. **Train staff** on language access protocols



# Resources



- [Data on language spoken at home in Illinois](#)
- [AAPI Voter Data in Illinois 2020](#) (created by AAPI Data and APIAVote)
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