

Being Culturally Sensitive in the Application Process

- Support and obtain professional development and training for frontline and eligibility staff on diversity and cultural and linguistic competence. Share articles and other materials that will help in this effort.
- Emphasize customer service and courtesy. Accurate information should be provided in a respectful and timely manner.
- Ensure that everyone is aware of outside resources that may exist, and how and when it is appropriate to access those resources.
- Develop written guidelines for handling situations that are procedural in nature, such as accessing TTY or language-line services and interpreters.
- Train and retrain frontline workers on your agency's policies and procedures regarding communication issues, such as serving individuals who speak little or no English.
- Identify bilingual staff or those who have an affinity with other cultures in your agency who can make a connection with individuals whose primary language is not English.
- Train and retrain frontline workers on how to serve individuals who have special communication challenges, such as a limited literacy level.
- Do not assume that supervisors are knowledgeable about the behaviors, attitudes, and skill sets necessary to work effectively with diverse populations. They may also need training.
- Consider cross-training with an organization that can teach you about a specific culture. In return, you can teach them about the SNAP application process so they can relay this information to their constituents.