



Goodhue County  
**Health and Human Services**

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**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

<b>Requested Board Date:</b>	January 21, 2025	<b>Staff Lead:</b>	Nina Arneson
<b>Consent Agenda:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<b>Attachments:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Action Requested:</b>	Approve to continue the HHS Bilingual Services Pilot, and recommended updates.		

**BACKGROUND:**

[On June 18, 2024 Goodhue County HHS Bilingual Service Pilot](#) proposal was brought forward for the Goodhue County’s Personnel Committee, and HHS Board review and approval which was received.

The staff then went into learning and implementation mode as we began to set up and pilot this service as proposed. This all took some time including we had our first test taker in August of 2024. We have had a total of 3 professional complete the testing, and we have been able to set up 1 of them with this new pilot service. This professional has provided 20.25 hours of bilingual services to HHS Spanish speaking customers and earned additional \$30.38 during the months of September – December 2024.

**Here are some of things we have learned during this time:**

- The company itself has been easy to work with and scheduling tests online.
- Test takers have shared the AI technology used with the language testing does not really give a good sense of how well you speak, as there are many different dialects of Spanish.
- Our staff have put together test taking tips as this AI testing is different and help test takers to have a better idea of what to expect when testing.
- We have consulted with our HHS Cultural Liaison who is also a certified interpreter, native speaker of Spanish, and who has regular interactions with the professionals that have taken the tests.
- Staff are reporting that this type of service is making a difference. Some of our Spanish speaking customers seem more comfortable in coming to the HHS building with much less hesitation coming to the front desk. Also, as some of them have learned that an HHS professional speaks their language and can help in Spanish; they have expressed “a big sigh of relief” as it takes some stress away for them. The customers have been very appreciative of having HHS staff easily help in Spanish.

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**Here are our recommendations for updates, and next steps:**

1. Continue the pilot and provide another update of the progress in December 2025.
2. Update reading, writing, and processing the case to be included in addition to speaking with the bilingual service pay.
3. Update Intermediate High score to be included in addition to Advanced, Superior or Distinguished on the Language Testing International (LTI) Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) test for passing.
4. Research other counties bilingual services compensation setup.

**RECOMMENDATION:** GCHHS Department recommends approval as requested.