

YES

- A 1974 Supreme Court Decision (Lau v. Nichols – 414 US 563) established that government agencies discriminate against people with limited English proficiency (LEP) if they do not provide language assistance for them when they seek access to their services or benefits. The court found that the language a person uses is so closely connected with their national origin that language-based discrimination is essentially discrimination based on national origin. This court decision was followed by federal and state executive orders (federal # 13166 issued in 2000 and NY #26 issued in 2011), federal and state regulations and federal agency guidance (from DOJ, HHS, HUD and SSA), and state civil rights laws that clarified the obligation to provide such language assistance. This is incorporated into the ethics rules of several professions, including those working in law and medicine.