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## **THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE TN THE NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT**

According to law enforcement experts, foreign-language skills play a role in a broad variety of situations, including: assisting crime victims, interviewing witnesses, fielding emergency calls, listening to wiretaps, conducting community outreach programs.

Major metropolitan areas have the greatest demand for law enforcement personnel with foreign-language skills. Rural areas may also have targeted needs due to concentrated communities of recent immigrants.

The New York City Police Department has set the standard worldwide for foreign language access and is the most diverse police department in the world, with thousands of native speakers of foreign languages who routinely use their foreign language skills to assist the public. NYPD officers speak 75 foreign languages. When the FBI, the Department of Defense, the Secret Service and other Federal agencies need foreign language assistance, they often turn to the NYPD for help. New York City police also routinely support reauests from other local and state law enforcement agencies throughout the area with translation assistance. The NYPD's diversity and foreign language capacity helps the Department in all aspects of its work, from community relations and conventional crime fighting to counterterrorism.

In July 2008, Mayor Bloomberg signed Executive Order 120, creating a centralized language access policy for New York City. Executive Order 120 mandates that all City agencies that provide direct public services create a language access implementation plan

in order to ensure meaningful language access to their services. The Department encourages employees who are not certified, but nonetheless possess language skills, to use their ability to speak a foreign language during the course of their work.

Incentives vary, but specialist pay ranges from 3% to 5% of salary per year for officers with proficiency. Depending on your career goals, certain languages can practically guarantee a position with federal law enforcement and homeland security agencies, which offer signing bonuses and generous pay differentials. For example, the CIA language proficiency bonus ranges from \$200 to \$400 per month, with a hiring bonus of up to \$35,000 for in-demand languages like Arabic.

To sum up, studies show that learning a foreign language actually improves your communication abilities, which are key to career success and transferability. Among other positive side effects, dual-language speakers demonstrate improved listening skills, working memory, mental calculation, reading, multitasking and attention capabilities. With so many potential benefits, and the opportunity to make an even greater impact in your community, it makes sense to look into learning some basic foreign language skills.

Across law enforcement, both professional and ad hoc translators are essential. Police officers and others with foreign- language skills may be called upon, even when off duty, to assist with investigations or other matters. It can be said that requirements for police officers include not only physical skills and knowledge of the law, but also communicative skills and foreign language competence. Policemen must be able to find a common language with different kinds of people, even if they have to speak a foreign language.

## References

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2. Planning Tool: Considerations for Creation of a Language Assistance Policy and Implementation Plan for Addressing Limited English Proficiency in a Department of Corrections [Электронный ресурс]. - Режим доступа: <http://www.najit.org/Documents/LawEnforcement200609.pdf>