

# FDR Business Operations Memo

**Title:** Alternate Language Memo-Updated  
**Date:** 8/16/2021  
**Response Due:** 8/23/2021

## Response Instructions:

- 1) Before sending a reply email, insert your company name at the beginning of the subject line.
- 2) Ensure any supporting attachments include your company name in the file name.

## Overview

**Note: This communication is an addendum to the Alternate Language Memo communication distributed on February 10, 2020.**

**8/11/2021 Update**

As referenced in the previous memo, Cigna has a Cultural Linguistics Unit (CLU) which, serves to aid in providing language access resources in the member's primary or preferred written language. In utilizing this service, Cigna now requires that the translated alternate language request includes the Language code as well as the Language description.

Please see the attached Language code spreadsheet for a complete listing of language codes and language descriptions.

**Specific examples include:**

- If a member requests their correspondence in an alternate language please be sure to include the language description to ensure all dialects are captured in the request.  
*Example 1 John Smith requests to have his written notices translated into Mandarin Chinese.* The request should include “**CMN**” for the language code and “**Mandarin Chinese**” for the language description.

**2/10/2020**

**Cigna FDR,**

Cigna continues to support members, providers and partners in navigating a complex health care system through clear, plain and transparent communication.

CMS requires plans take into account special language requirements when providing written communication and notices to members consistent with Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. CMS guidelines require marketing materials, such as promotional, enrollment, and benefit materials, be made available in the member's preferred language.

As an FDR, please attest that your organization will perform the following to ensure compliance with CMS regulation:

- Offer and provide language access resources in the member's primary or preferred written and spoken language at no cost, at all points of contact, and timely;
- Provide both verbal and written notices to members informing them of their right to receive language assistance services free of charge;
- Maintain sufficient resources for communicating with members in their primary or preferred written and spoken language through qualified/competent interpreter resources such as competent bilingual or multilingual staff, staff interpreters, contracted interpreters from outside agencies, remote interpreting services, ensuring timely and high-quality communication.

**Specific examples**

- If the member has indicated an alternate language or format preference, notices must be mailed within the applicable regulatory adjudication and notice timeframes for the particular case type.
- If there are certain facts and circumstances that prevent the FDR from mailing the required notice in an alternate language/format within the applicable adjudication timeframe, the FDR must document the facts and circumstances that prevented them from doing so within the case file. The documentation must include an explanation of why the documentation could not be produced within the regulatory timeframe and the FDR must make best efforts to communicate the information to the member via the most effective means. *For example, if the member requests notices in Russian and the FDR cannot mail a Russian notice within the required timeframe, the FDR must document why they were unable to do so. A language line should be established to communicate verbal notices to the beneficiary in Russian within the regulatory timeframe while they are fulfilling the written notice. In this instance, if the written notice is not mailed within 3 calendar days of the verbal notice, the case will be deemed to be out of compliance for written notification.*

If fulfilling the request in an alternate format (e.g., braille) would result in undue financial and administrative burden to the FDR, the FDR should document the case file accordingly. Additionally, the FDR must communicate with the member via another effective means and provide evidence to the member's ability to understand the other means of communication.

If you have any questions regarding this memo, please contact your assigned Business Relationship Manager

#### FDR Action

- [Click Here](#) to acknowledge receipt of the communication.
- Return to [FDRBusinessOperations@Cigna.com](mailto:FDRBusinessOperations@Cigna.com).

<p><b>QUESTIONS?</b> We're here for you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Questions about the memo?</b> Contact your assigned FDR Business Relationship Manager or Email <a href="mailto:FDRBusinessOperations@cigna.com">FDRBusinessOperations@cigna.com</a></li> <li>➤ <b>Do you need to be removed from this distribution?</b> Email <a href="mailto:FDRBusinessOperations@cigna.com">FDRBusinessOperations@cigna.com</a></li> <li>➤ <b>Does someone need to be added to this distribution?</b> Email <a href="mailto:FDRBusinessOperations@cigna.com">FDRBusinessOperations@cigna.com</a></li> </ul>
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**Thank You!**

**FDR Business Operations**

[FDRBusinessOperations@Cigna.com](mailto:FDRBusinessOperations@Cigna.com)



