TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT  
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF  

FROM: KEVIN M. MCGUIRE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  

RE: REVISED – CODING PRIMARY LANGUAGE IN CARES and  
HOW TO ASK FOR AN INTERPRETER BROCHURE  

PROGRAM AFFECTED: ALL PROGRAMS  

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS  

SUMMARY  
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Civil Rights (OCR) has 
recommended that we remind all staff that the CARES system has a code to identify a 
customer’s primary language and a code to identify whether the customer needs an 
interpreter. When data entering information for customers, make sure to code the 
CARES ADDR screen properly to indicate what the customer’s primary language is and 
whether they need an interpreter. The correct CARES procedures are listed below.  

FIA has developed a brochure for you to give to customers who do not speak English, 
which tells them in many languages: “We will mail you important notices about your 
case in English. If you need help understanding them, please call the telephone 
number below. Tell the worker or voicemail your name, your language, your social 
security number or date of birth, and your telephone number. Say: ‘I need an 
interpreter.’ Your worker will return your call with an interpreter on the line.” The 
brochure is form number DHR/FIA 676 “How to Ask for an Interpreter.” Supplies will be 
delivered to local offices about March 15, 2005. Please give a copy of the brochure at 
application and redetermination to applicants and customers, when you note that they 
have limited English proficiency.  

CARES PROCEDURES  
> On the CARES ADDR screen enter a code in the Prim Lang field that identifies the 
customer’s native language.  
> In the Interpreter Needed field, enter a Y or an N to identify the customer’s need for 
translation services.  

INQUIRIES  
Please direct questions to Marilyn Lorenzo at 410-767-7333 or Fern Parson at 
410-767-7064.  

cc: FIA Management Staff DHR Help Desk Constituent Services