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Boston: Learn Spanish, city's first common non-English language

Posted by Matt Rocheleau January 22, 2013 10:58 AM

Print

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Front-line city employees recently completed a pilot program to learn the most common non-English language in Boston.

The two-day course taught the workers basic greetings and phrases in

an effort
their first
protocol
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and this is
at City
speaking

The two-day course taught the workers basic greetings and phrases in Spanish to make City Hall more welcoming to residents who speak Spanish as a language, according to the city. And, the employees reviewed existing signs for where to direct people who need more assistance in another language.

“City Hall should be accessible to every Boston resident, regardless of the language they speak,” said a statement from Mayor Thomas M. Menino.

“Constituent service has always been a priority of my administration, and it is one more step to continue to improve the customer service experience at City Hall, and expand our outreach to the growing population of Spanish-speaking Bostonians,” he added.

Approximately 900,000, or about 15 percent, of Boston residents speak Spanish, city officials said. Since 2000, the city's Hispanic population has increased by 74 percent.

Nearly 40 percent of residents in Boston Public Schools are Hispanic, and 27 percent of the city school district's English language learners are Spanish speakers, officials said.

For more information, contact mjrochele@gmail.com.

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