

Sign Language Interpreting Services FAQs

General Questions

1) What interpreting services are provided under this contract?

- Basic and scientific sign language interpreting services, i.e., American Sign Language (ASL), Pidgin Signed English (PSE), etc.
- Computer Accessed Real-time Translation (CART),
- Oral interpreting, Oral Tactile, Cued Speech
- Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)
- **NOTE:** Spoken/foreign language interpreting services are NOT provided under this contract but are available at NIH. (See Question 7)

2) Are these services available to everyone at NIH and under what authority?

- NIH provides interpreting services to all NIH employees (regardless of hiring mechanism), patients and their family members, guests and visitors. Services are provided on and off the Bethesda campus including Frederick, Baltimore, Research Triangle in NC, Rocky Mount labs in MT, and NIDDK labs in Arizona.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1992 and 199, is a civil rights act which protects the civil rights of persons with disabilities. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by the federal government, federal contractors, and by recipients of federal financial assistance.

3) Who provides the sign language interpreting services?

- Services are currently provided under a performance based contract with **Access Interpreting (AI)**.
- Performance standards are monitored by the Office of Research Services, Division of Amenities and Transportation Services (DATS) Interpreting Services team.

4) Who pays for interpreting services at NIH?

- Sign language interpreting services are **centrally funded**. All 27 Institutes/Centers (ICs) contribute funds based on the total number of people the IC employees. **Consumers are not charged for services.**

5) Who do I contact to provide my feedback about the services?

- Contact the DATS Interpreting Services Team at 301-402-8180 or email: interpretingservices@mail.nih.gov

6) How can I learn more about sign language interpreting and NIH policy?

- Visit the NIH Interpreting Services **homepage**
<http://www.ors.od.nih.gov/pes/dats/interpret/Pages/index.aspx>
- Review the Sign Language Interpreting Services **user manual** for tips and suggestions
- Read the NIH **Reasonable Accommodation policy**
- Find **announcements** and health related **news**
- Follow us on **Twitter**

7) Does NIH provide spoken/foreign language interpreting and translation services?

- The NIH Clinical Center's Social Work Department offers free spoken language interpreting services for **patients** with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Click here to learn more - <http://www.cc.nih.gov/swd/language/language.html> or call (301) 496-2792.
- The NIH Library provides written translation services to **NIH staff** with a valid ID. Click here for more information - <http://nihlibrary.nih.gov/Services/Pages/Translations.aspx> or call 301-496-2257

Technical Questions

8) How do I submit a sign language interpreting request?

- All requests, edits, and cancellations are done online through a secure portal - <https://portal.ainterpreting.com/> accessible from the Interpreting Services website - <http://www.ors.od.nih.gov/pes/dats/interpret/Pages/index.aspx>
- First-time users create a user-profile by logging into the portal on your NIH desktop computer or through VPN and follow the prompts.
- For assistance with technical issues and questions email support@ainterpreting.com.

9) Can I access the AI Portal from home?

- This is a secure site residing behind the NIH firewall and can only be accessed from a Government computer onsite or remotely with VPN access.

10) How far in advance should I make my request?

- Requests can be entered at any time but we recommended entering your request as soon as you schedule a meeting or event. Requests entered at least **five (5) days** in advance of the event will be filled.

11) If my request is for an “Open to the Public” event, who do I list as the consumer?

- Public events should be listed as “General Audience.” Please include in the comments section the number of Deaf/HH people confirmed and the type of service requested. **NOTE:** *Interpreting services will not be provided at events where no Deaf/HH people are present or identified in advance.*

12) How do I make a recurring request?

- Recurring requests are entered the same way as one-time requests.
- **NOTE:** *Please remember to leave detailed instructions about how the recurring request, for example: every other Tuesday from 2-4 pm or every Third Thursday from 10 am-12 pm.*

13) How can I be sure my request has been entered into the system?

- The system sends a confirmation email within one (1) business day. The email contains the name of the interpreter and Tracking Number (TERP). Reference this number when making changes or cancellations.
- **NOTE:** *In some cases, interpreters may change due to last minute rescheduling. If for any reason you don't receive an email confirmation contact AI at NIH@ainterpreting.com.*

14) How do I edit or cancel an existing request?

- Edits and cancellations are done online the same way you enter a request through the secure portal - <https://portal.ainterpreting.com/>. When cancelling a request you will be prompted to give a reason. After the request has been cancelled you will receive an email confirming the cancellation.
- **NOTE:** *Remember to cancel your request at least **two (2) business days (48 hours)** prior to the event to **avoid billable charges to NIH**.*

15) What should I do if an interpreter is required for an emergency situation or after normal business hours?

- Normal business hours are 6:30 AM – 6:30 PM, Monday – Friday *except Federal holidays*.
- On-call interpreters will be dispatched in emergency situations outside of normal business hours.
- Emergency situations are defined as urgent or critical issues between supervisors and employees or doctors and patients using Occupational Medical Services (OMS) meetings, Employee Assistance Program (EAP), police, etc. that must be addressed immediately.
- **Call 1-571-730-4330 (after hours only)** to reach AI's Emergency Coordinator, who will take all the necessary information and dispatch a certified interpreter within 40 minutes.