

Sign Language Interpreting Services FAQs

General Questions

1. What interpreting services are provided under this contract?

- Basic and scientific sign language interpreting services
- Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART)
- 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 the NIH workforce, patients*/families, and visitors. Services are available upon request to any NIH location.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1992 and 199 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 provided under a performance based contract with Access Interpreting.
- The Interpreting Services program is managed and the contract performance standards are monitored by the Office of Research Services, Division of Amenities and Transportation Services (DATS).

4. Who pays for interpreting services at NIH?

- Services are **centrally funded**. All 27 Institutes/Centers (ICs) contribute funds, based on the total number of people the IC employees. **Consumers do not pay for services.**

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

- Interpreting Services program at 301-402-8180 or email: interpretingservices@mail.nih.gov

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

- Interpreting Services program **webpage**
<http://www.ors.od.nih.gov/pes/dats/interpret/Pages/index.aspx>
- Sign Language Interpreting Services [Consumer Guide](#) and [FAQs](#)
- [Sign Language Interpreter Policy - 2206](#)
- [Reasonable Accommodation Policy – 2204 \(Section J\)](#)

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

- **Spoken and translation interpreting services are NOT covered under this contract.**
- The Clinical Center does offer spoken language interpreting services to **patients and their families** with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Contact the Social Work Department to learn more - <http://www.cc.nih.gov/swd/language/language.html> or (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?

- First-time users create a user-profile by logging into the secure [Access Portal](#) and follow the prompts.
- New requests can be entered, edited or cancelled in the [Access Portal](#) or from any mobile device in the **uSked mobile app**. Download free from [iTunes](#) and [Google Play](#).
- Fill in all required fields, specify personal preferences or special instructions for interpreters, upload flyers or other materials about your event.
- Submit your request into the workflow or save it as a draft to finish up later.
- Once submitted, you will receive a confirmation email with a unique job number.
- For general technical support email support@ainterpreting.com. For VRI (AVIA) technical support email nih@ainterpreting.com

9. How do I enter a request for a patient or family member?

- Requests for patients are entered into the Access Portal like all other requests. Priority scheduling is given to patients and their families and services are available 24/7.
- When requesting services outside of [normal business hours](#), email nih@ainterpreting.com or call 571-730-4330 (after hours only) to reach AI's emergency coordinator 24/7, who will take all the necessary information and dispatch a certified interpreter to arrive within 40 minutes.
- Requestors should identify the patient or accompanying family member by name requiring services to participate in a consultation or medical procedure with a description for the interpreter to be assigned. **NOTE:** According to <https://clinicalcenter.nih.gov/participate/pdf/NIH-2753.pdf>, there are certain statutory exceptions that do not require prior approval to release patient PII to contractors providing a service to patients (see #9 listed).

10. Can I make requests from home?

- Yes using VPN access or on your mobile device with the **uSked mobile app** available for download free from your favorite app store.

11. How far in advance should I make my request?

- As early as possible. Requests can be entered 24/7 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. Requests entered after that cannot be guaranteed.

12. 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 are available upon request for all NIH hosted or sponsored events; but will not be performed where no Deaf/HH people are present.*

13. 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.*

14. How can I be sure my request has been entered into the system?

- The system will automatically send a confirmation email when you submit the request. The email contains the name of the interpreter and unique job number. Reference this number when making changes or cancellations to your request.
- **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.*

15. How do I edit or cancel an existing request?

- Log into the system to edit or cancel your request. 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.*

16. 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* or for **patients** at the Clinical Center outside of normal business hours, within 40 minutes.
- Email nih@ainterpreting.com or call 571-730-4330 to reach AI's emergency coordinator 24/7.

**Defined as urgent/ critical issues between supervisors and employees, doctors and patients, involving Occupational Medical Services (OMS), Employee Assistance Program (EAP), police/fire/rescue, etc.*