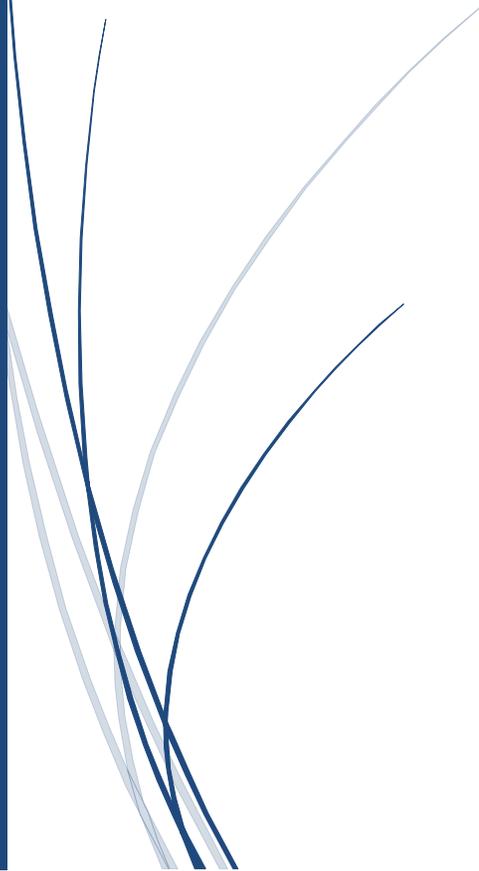


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NIH/ORS/DATS

Interpreting Services

Consumer Guide



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Introduction

As the nation's largest employer, the Federal government is committed to increasing and improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities and removing barriers that impede communication or deny equal access. Title 5 USC, Section 3102 authorizes Federal agencies to employ or assign others to provide communication services for employees who qualify under the law for reasonable accommodations.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH), an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services is proud of its diverse workforce and provides centrally funded sign language interpreting services to its Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) employees, patients, and visitors, under a performance- based service contract.

The Office of Research Services (ORS), Division of Amenities and Transportation Services (DATS) manages this contract and has developed this Consumer Guide. Please email us at InterpretingServices@ors.od.nih.gov or visit our [webpage](#).

We hope you find this Consumer Guide useful and we look forward to working with you.

Linda Kiefer

Program Manager/COR

NIH/ORS/DATS

NIH Interpreting Services Policy

In accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and the [NIH Manual Issuance 2204](#), NIH is responsible for providing sign language interpreting services as a reasonable accommodation to employees, applicants, visitors, and patients, unless doing so would cause undue hardship on the agency (Ref. [Manual Section J](#)).

Requests for full-time continuous interpreting services for individual employees will be considered on a case-by-case basis (Ref. [Manual Section G](#)).

NIH provides interpreting services through a central funding mechanism to ensure that all applicants and employees with disabilities have equal access when competing for a job or performing the essential functions of their job. Centrally funded means that each

Institute/Center (IC) helps pay for these services based on the number of employees working for the IC. Consumers of these services pay nothing provided the services are used as intended.

Interpreting services are provided under a performance based contract and include: American Sign Language, Computer Aided Realtime Translation (CART) and Video Remote Interpreting (VRI).

How to Request Services

Steps for Requesting Interpreting Services

1. First-time users create a user-profile by logging into the secure [Access Portal](#) using your NIH desktop computer or through VPN and follow the prompts.
2. Create new requests, edit or cancel existing requests in the [Access Portal](#) or from any mobile device connected to WiFi, in the **uSked** mobile app. Download the app free from [iTunes](#) and [Google Play](#).
3. To enter requests, fill in all required fields and specify any personal preferences or special instructions for interpreters. You can also attach flyers or other materials about your event to your request
4. Submit your request into the workflow or save it as a draft to work on later.
5. Once submitted into the workflow, you will receive a confirmation email with a unique job number.

Technical Support

- General support email support@ainterpreting.com.
- VRI (AVIA) support email nih@ainterpreting.com

Important Reminders

- Enter requests as early as possible to ensure delivery of desired services. **NOTE:** Requests made less than five (5) days before the scheduled event may not be filled as requested or may require your event to be rescheduled.
- Recurring requests are made online the same way as one-time requests; remember to leave instructions in the notes section to indicate the frequency, time, and location.
- Provide your interpreter with copies of the meeting agenda, handouts, slides or other meeting related materials, whenever possible.
- The system will send a confirmation email after your request has been submitted. It will include the name of your interpreter and a unique 6-digit job number. **NOTE: In some cases, interpreters may change due to last minute rescheduling.**
- Use your 6 digit job number to modify or cancel your existing request within two (2) business days of the scheduled event. **NOTE:** Any scheduled interpreting services that are no longer required should be cancelled as soon as possible in order to free up

resources. Cancellations made less than 48 hours from the event will be billed in full to NIH. If you are unable to make edits to your request, reach out to the scheduling team at nih@ainterpreting.com for assistance.

- All interpreting service requests must be arranged through Interpreting Services contract to ensure quality control.

Making Urgent or After Hours Requests

- Normal business hours are **6:30 AM – 6:30 PM, Monday – Friday** except *Federal holidays*.
- On-call interpreters will be dispatched in emergency situations* to provide services outside of normal business hours.
- 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.

**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.*

Tips for Event Organizers Speakers, and Meeting Chairs

Planning Events

Sign language interpreting services are available UPON REQUEST for all events at NIH. However, interpreters will be instructed to leave after 15 minutes if no one needing services shows up.

NOTE: *Unused services are billable to NIH; so we ask that you CANCEL the request if no one requiring services confirms attendance within 48 hours.*

Promoting Events

Please include the following language in your promotional materials prior to the event:

Sign language interpreting services are available for all NIH events, upon request. If you or someone you know needs interpreting services to participate in this event, you may enter the request through the [Access Portal](#) or contact the event organizer_____. Please make your request no later than _____. Click to learn more about the [NIH Interpreting Services program](#). Access Federal Relay at 800-877-8339. Individuals needing other reasonable accommodations should contact the event organizer or their ICs for support.

Provide Copies In Advance

When possible, provide the interpreter with a copy of meeting agenda, slides, and handouts prior to the event. Update the interpreter on any changes as soon as possible. In addition, provide lists of names, acronyms, technical terminology, etc.

Multimedia Needs/Requirements

Inform Events Management of visual aids, demonstrations, etc. that will occur during the assignment. If multi-media will be used confirm that a CLOSED CAPTION version is available. If not, provide a copy of the script or slides for preview. *NIH policy requires all video media used be 508 compliant and Closed Caption.*

Seating and Lighting

Consider where the D/HH persons may be seated in the room. Check the lighting to ensure that the interpreter is not in a shadow and can be easily seen by the D/HH participants. Arrange for an additional light source if the room will be darkened for any reason. While no one can dictate where they sit, seating should be provided to the interpreter.

Interpreter's Role

Remember the interpreter's role is to facilitate communication, not to participate in the meeting. The person(s) who are not D/HH should speak directly to and look directly at the D/HH person, not the interpreter. Avoid conversing with the interpreter while he/she is working. Keep in mind that interpreters interpret everything that is heard and seen within the assignment. Therefore, if you don't want something interpreted don't say or sign it.

Speaking Tips

Speak in a conversational tone and pace using everyday speech patterns. Avoid over enunciating or over simplifying words. Avoid phrases like "tell her" or "ask him." These are indicative of speaking about not to the D/HH person. Look at and address the D/HH person directly. Pause at the end of a main idea. Allow time for team interpreters to trade places. Pause for questions and check to be sure that the D/HH person understands the message. Allow time for the D/HH person to review handouts or visual aids before explaining them to the group.

Small Group Meetings

In small group meetings, only one person should speak at a time. Interruptions or engaging in side conversations should be avoided as it causes confusion for the interpreter. The meeting chairperson can manage the group by asking everyone to take turns. This will reduce confusion and enable the interpreter to accurately facilitate communication.

Tips for Supervisors and Patient Caregivers

Personal Preferences

Communication flows easiest when there is a level of rapport and trust between the interpreter and the consumer. The D/HH consumer should also be asked which method of interpreting they prefer, i.e. American Sign Language, Oral, Computer Assisted Real-Time Transcription, etc.,) before entering a request for services.

Let Them Decide

There is more than one way to accommodate someone with hearing impairment other than providing an interpreter. Program managers arranging meetings where Deaf/HH persons may be in attendance are responsible for asking each individual his/her preference and allow sufficient time for scheduling/planning.

Sharing Arrangements

If two or more D/HH persons work in close proximity, discuss with them the feasibility of sharing one or more interpreters throughout the day. *Note: For this kind of arrangement to be successful it requires full cooperation from each person, coordination of tasks, and flexibility from all involved.*

About Sign Language Interpreters

Trained Professionals

Interpreters under the NIH Interpreting Services contract are experienced, trained practitioners who are nationally certified by the [National Association of the Deaf \(NAD\)](#) and/or the [Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf \(RID\)](#) to facilitate communication between spoken and signed languages.

Specialists

Some interpreters have received advanced technical training and specialize in one or more fields. Holders with a specialist certification have demonstrated specialized knowledge and greater familiarity with language used in fields such as legal and medical.

Multilingual Skills

Some interpreters are skilled in variety of communication modes used to interpret for persons with both vision and hearing loss.

Interpreters' Code of Ethics

RID, along with the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), co-authored the ethical code of conduct for interpreters. Both organizations uphold high standards of professionalism and ethical conduct for interpreters. At the core of this code of conduct are the seven tenets:

1. Interpreters adhere to standards of confidential communication.
2. Interpreters possess the professional skills and knowledge required for the specific interpreting situation.
3. Interpreters conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the specific interpreting situation.
4. Interpreters demonstrate respect for consumers.
5. Interpreters demonstrate respect for colleagues, interns, and students of the profession.
6. Interpreters maintain ethical business practices.
7. Interpreters engage in professional development.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Sign Language Interpreting Terminology

American Sign Language (ASL)

A visual language relying on spatial relationships to identify subjects, objects, and verbs, while using body and facial expressions to identify adjectives, adverbs, and other information, similar to how voice inflection is used in spoken languages. ASL has its own grammatical structure, syntax, idioms, and usage which are quite different and distinct from English. ASL is the predominant language of D/HH people in the United States and Canada, except Quebec. However, signed languages are not universal - like spoken languages, sign languages are native and unique to any community of people.

Close-vision Interpreting

Requires an interpreter to reduce the size and space of their signs for a DeafBlind person.

Communication Access Real-Time Translation (CART)

Real time captioning provides a word-for- word transcription of what is being said live. Text may be read on a laptop or projected onto a large screen monitor for large groups.

Consecutive Interpreting

An interpreter translates what the speaker is saying into another language.

Cued Speech

A visual communication system using eight handshapes in four locations ("cues") in combination with natural mouth movements of speech.

Deaf Interpreting

A deaf Interpreter communicates for a deaf person when hearing interpreters cannot understand enough to provide adequate interpretation.

DeafBlind Interpreting

Interpreting for a person who is deaf and blind.

Interpret Sign to Voice

Interpreting from a signed language (e.g., ASL) to a spoken language (e.g., English).

Interpret Voice to Sign

Interpreting from a spoken language (e.g., English) to a signed language (e.g., ASL). Colloquially referred to as Sign Interpreting; historically referred to as Expressive Interpreting.

Interpretation

The process of translating messages produced in one language immediately into another language spoken or signed.

Oral Interpreting

The ability to transliterate a spoken message from a person who hears to a person who is D/HH and understand and repeat the message of the person who is D/HH.

Pidgin Sign English

Pidgins are a class of languages with limited vocabulary, few inflectional endings, and a relatively small sets of sounds. Contact language which combines some features of English with some features of (ASL).

Sight Translation

Translation of a written document by saying aloud or signing.

Simultaneous Interpreting

Describes the most familiar case in which the interpretation is delivered nearly instantaneously after the original message.

Tactile Interpreting

Tactile signing or interpreting is done by signing shapes in the palms of a deafblind person.

Team Interpreting

Two or more interpreters work in sync with each other.

Translation

The process of changing a written message from one language to another.

Whispered Interpretation

The interpreter whispers the message to the person, or small group of people, who do not speak the language the larger group is using.