

# Interpreting and translation services guidelines (2022)

Promoting effective communication between schools, parents and communities



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# Interpreting services

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Public Schools NSW staff are encouraged to use interpreters to assist in communicating with parents or carers who do not speak or understand English well or who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment.

## Why use an interpreter?

Interpreting is a specialist skill that is not possessed by everyone who is bilingual. It requires a high level of fluency in both languages and the ability to quickly, accurately and appropriately convey the whole message from one language to another. It is important to use an interpreter who has gained accreditation through the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) whenever possible, particularly when dealing with sensitive matters relating to students.

Qualified and registered interpreters are bound by the Australian Institute of Translators and Interpreters Code of Ethics which requires them to practise impartiality, confidentiality and accuracy. In general, it is not appropriate to use students or relatives to interpret. They may not be familiar with the specialist terminology being used; the cultural nuances involved or be sufficiently fluent in both languages to accurately convey the message. They may, in addition, have difficulty in remaining objective and impartial and in maintaining confidentiality.

It is particularly important that schools do not use students to interpret in matters relating to student welfare, counselling or attendance. Students may not have the fluency, knowledge or maturity to adequately convey the message. In addition, using students to interpret for parents may affect the relationship between parents and children and, in some cases, result in conflict.

## Types of interpreting services

### Telephone interpreters

Telephone interpreters can be used for short assignments such as inviting a parent/carer to a meeting or in cases of emergency. They may also be used in situations where on-site interpreters are not available. They can generally be accessed immediately, but may be prebooked if required.

The TIS National Telephone Interpreting Service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for languages other than Auslan.

The National Relay Service is a telephone service which may be used to communicate with a person who is deaf or has speech impairment.

### On-site interpreters

On-site interpreters attend a meeting in person and must be booked ahead of time. They should be used for longer and/or more complex assignments as well as for meetings involving groups. They may be used for deaf or hearing impaired parents/carers or for those who speak languages other than English.

### Online interpreters

Schools may prefer to have their interpreting session online. Some of the agencies that are currently used for onsite interpreting can be used for online assignments.

TIS National, Hunter New England Local Health, Multicultural NSW and the Deaf Society are able to provide online interpreting. See p6 for how to book online assignments of 3 hours or less. Online interpreting is not suitable for assignments of over 3 hours.

Wollongong City Council does not currently provide this service.

## Who may request an interpreter?

Public Schools NSW staff may request the services of an online or on-site interpreter or may contact parents using the TIS National Telephone Interpreter Service or the National Relay Service.

Parents/carers and community members can request that Public Schools NSW staff organise an interpreter for a meeting or interview. Parents and carers may also contact the school or another area of the department using the TIS National Telephone Interpreting Service or the National Relay Service.

## Who pays for interpreters?

The costs of providing interpreter services for parents/carers or community members are, in most cases, met by the department for occasions such as the following:

- matters involving students such as school enrolment, subject choice, reporting on student progress, attendance, welfare or behaviour
- interviews with the school counsellor, principal or year advisor
- meetings, such as School Council, P&C or parent/teacher meetings
- parent information sessions, including those about career education or subject choice
- parent training sessions such as the Families in Cultural Transition (FICT) or Settling In programs.

Interpreters are not funded by the department for events such as graduation ceremonies, awards ceremonies, school performances or school excursions. The cost must be met by the school if it engages interpreters for these purposes.

Costs for interpreters for interviews with parents/carers of international students must also be met by the school.

In general interpreters are not funded for interviews with students unless a parent is present. Occasional exceptions to this may occur if there is an urgent matter related to student welfare.

For advice on whether a planned interpreter assignment falls within these guidelines, school staff may phone 7814 3124.

## Interpreter service providers

Interpreter service providers include both government agencies and independent providers. In most cases, schools engage NAATI accredited onsite interpreters through major providers or telephone interpreters through the TIS National Telephone Interpreter Service. See pages 4-7 for booking information. In some cases, independent providers may also be used.

## Language assistance at parent/teacher meetings

School Learning Support Officers (Ethnic) may be employed to facilitate communication with parents at parent/teacher afternoons or evenings subject to the information set out at pages 9-10.

## Is prior approval required to use interpreters?

### On-site or online interpreting for 3 hours or less

No prior approval is required for on-site or online interpreting assignments of 3 hours or less, provided they meet the guidelines. An assignment time of 3 hours or less is the continuous use of one interpreter for up to, and including, 3 hours.

### Onsite interpreting over 3 hours

Prior approval is required for assignments when an interpreter is booked for more than 3 hours. This includes cases where an interpreter is used for multiple families and each family's session is less than 3 hours. It is the total booking time for each interpreter that must be considered.

To obtain funding approval, schools must submit a departmental [Interpreter Funding Request](#) prior to booking an interpreter. Without this approval, schools will be charged for the assignment. See pages 4-6 for information on how to book these assignments.

### Telephone interpreting

No prior approval is required provided the assignment meets the guidelines. See pages 7-8 for information on how to access telephone interpreters.

# How to access on-site interpreters – major providers

## Onsite interpreting

Provider	Service location	Standard hours	Non-standard hours	Minimum fee	Booking and contact details
<b>TIS National (Department of Home Affairs)</b>	Metropolitan schools only	8am – 6pm Mon - Fri	6pm - 8am Mon – Fri and all day Sat, Sun and public holidays	1.5 hours	<p><b>Booking on-site interpreters</b></p> <p><b>For assignments of 3 hours or less which meet the guidelines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No prior approval is required.</li> <li>Register with TIS Online. Either phone 1300 655 820 or email <a href="mailto:tispromo@homeaffairs.gov.au">tispromo@homeaffairs.gov.au</a>. Provide the client code C018294 and a signature block containing the school name, your position, phone number and email address.</li> <li>Once registered, book using the TIS website.</li> <li>Specify the name of the school in the site address field.</li> <li>Contact TIS if no confirmation is received within 24 hours.</li> </ul> <p><b>For assignments of over 3 hours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the <a href="#">Interpreter Funding Request</a> and email to <a href="mailto:interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au">interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au</a></li> <li>If approved, a Funding Approval Form with a Funding Approval Number will be emailed to you.</li> <li>Call 7814 3124 if no funding approval is received within 48 hours.</li> <li>Register with TIS using the procedure shown for assignments of 3 hours or less and book online using the TIS website.</li> <li>Write the Funding Approval number in the Invoice reference field</li> <li>Specify the name of the school in the site address field.</li> <li>Contact TIS if no confirmation is received within 24 hours.</li> </ul> <p><b>For enquiries</b> or to check bookings phone 1300 655 820 Website: <a href="http://www.tisnational.gov.au/">http://www.tisnational.gov.au/</a></p>
<b>Multicultural NSW</b>	Metropolitan schools only.	7:30am – 6pm Mon - Fri	6pm – 7:30am Mon – Fri and all day Sat, Sun and public holidays	2 hours	<p><b>Booking on-site interpreters</b></p> <p><b>For assignments of 3 hours or less which meet the guidelines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No prior approval is required.</li> <li>Email the completed <a href="#">Interpreter Request Form</a> to <a href="mailto:languageservices@multicultural.nsw.gov.au">languageservices@multicultural.nsw.gov.au</a></li> <li>Contact Multicultural NSW if no confirmation is received within 24 hours</li> </ul> <p><b>For enquiries</b> or to check bookings phone 1300 651 500</p> <p><b>For assignments of over 3 hours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the <a href="#">Interpreter Funding Request</a> and email to <a href="mailto:interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au">interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au</a></li> <li>If approved, a Funding Approval Form with a Funding Approval Number will be emailed to you.</li> <li>Call 7814 3124 if no funding approval is received within 48 hours</li> <li>Email the departmental Funding Approval Form to <a href="mailto:languageservices@multicultural.nsw.gov.au">languageservices@multicultural.nsw.gov.au</a></li> <li>Contact Multicultural NSW if no confirmation is received within 24 hours.</li> <li><b>For enquiries</b> or to check bookings phone 1300 651 500</li> </ul> <p>Website: <a href="http://multicultural.nsw.gov.au/">http://multicultural.nsw.gov.au/</a></p>

Provider	Service location	Standard hours	Non-standard hours	Minimum fee	Booking and contact details
<b>Deaf Society of NSW</b>	Can be used in various locations.	9am – 5pm Mon - Fri	5pm – 9am Mon – Fri and all day Sat, Sun and public holidays	2 hours	<p><b>Booking on-site interpreters</b></p> <p><b>For assignments of 3 hours or less which meet the guidelines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email the completed <a href="#">Interpreter Request Form</a> to <a href="mailto:interpreting@deafsociety.com">interpreting@deafsociety.com</a></li> <li>Contact the Deaf Society if no confirmation is received within 24 hours.</li> </ul> <p><b>For enquiries</b> or to check bookings phone 8833 3611.</p> <p><b>For assignments of over 3 hours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the <a href="#">Interpreter Funding Request</a> and email to <a href="mailto:interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au">interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au</a></li> <li>If approved, a Funding Approval Form with a Funding Approval Number will be emailed to you.</li> <li>Call 7814 3124 if no funding approval is received within 48 hours.</li> <li>Email the departmental Funding Approval Form to <a href="mailto:interpreting@deafsociety.com">interpreting@deafsociety.com</a></li> <li><b>For enquiries</b> or to check bookings phone 8833 3611.</li> </ul> <p>Website: <a href="https://deafsocietynsw.org.au/">https://deafsocietynsw.org.au/</a></p>
<b>Hunter New England Local Health Network (HNELHN)</b>	Various locations in the Newcastle and Hunter area.	All day Mon – Sun	N/A	2.5 hours	<p><b>Booking on-site interpreters</b></p> <p><b>For assignments of 3 hours or less which meet the guidelines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No prior approval is required.</li> <li>Complete the <a href="#">Interpreter Request Form</a> and email to <a href="mailto:HNELHD-multiculturalhealth@health.nsw.gov.au">HNELHD-multiculturalhealth@health.nsw.gov.au</a></li> </ul> <p><b>For enquiries</b> or to check bookings phone 4924 6285.</p> <p><b>For assignments of over 3 hours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the <a href="#">Interpreter Funding Request</a> and email to <a href="mailto:interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au">interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au</a></li> <li>If approved, a Funding Approval Form with a Funding Approval Number will be emailed to you.</li> <li>Call 7814 3124 if no funding approval is received within 48 hours.</li> <li>Email the departmental Funding Approval Form to <a href="mailto:HNELHD-multiculturalhealth@health.nsw.gov.au">HNELHD-multiculturalhealth@health.nsw.gov.au</a></li> </ul> <p><b>For enquiries</b> or to check bookings phone 4924 6285.</p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/multiculturalHealth/Pages/Health-Care-Interpreter-Service.aspx">http://www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/multiculturalHealth/Pages/Health-Care-Interpreter-Service.aspx</a></p>

Provider	Service location	Standard hours	Non-standard hours	Minimum fee	Booking and contact details
Wollongong City Council	Wollongong City area only at present	All day Mon - Fri	N/A		<p><b>Booking on-site interpreters</b></p> <p><b>For assignments of 3 hours or less which meet the guidelines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No prior approval is required.</li> <li>Go to the <a href="#">Interpreter page</a> on the Council website</li> <li>Scroll down to number 2 and click on the <a href="#">Log in</a> icon.</li> <li>On the next page you must provide the new user name and password for the Department. The user email is <a href="mailto:interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au">interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au</a> and the password is Welcome1 (case sensitive)</li> <li>Once logged in click on the Lodge an Application icon.</li> <li>Scroll down to the heading Community and Cultural Services</li> <li>Click on the Start button on the right hand side of this heading</li> <li>Then follow the prompts to make your booking. <b>Please ensure you enter the actual school location in the booking form.</b></li> <li>You should receive a confirmation email after making your booking. If you don't receive confirmation call the Council on 02 4227 7650 or email <a href="mailto:interpreters@wollongong.nsw.gov.au">interpreters@wollongong.nsw.gov.au</a></li> <li><b>For enquiries</b> or to check bookings phone 4227 7650.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note</b> Contact hours are on Mondays between 9am-12pm, Wednesdays 2pm-5pm and Fridays 9am-12pm.</p> <p><b>For assignments of 3 hours or less which meet the guidelines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the <a href="#">Interpreter Funding Request</a> and email to <a href="mailto:interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au">interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au</a></li> <li>If approved, a Funding Approval Form with a Funding Approval Number will be emailed to you.</li> <li>Call 7814 3124 if no funding approval is received within 48 hours.</li> <li>Book online as for assignments of 3 hours or less and include the Funding Approval number in the Special Requirements field.</li> </ul> <p><b>For enquiries</b> or to check bookings phone 4227 7675.</p> <p><b>Note</b> Contact hours are on Mondays between 9am-12pm, Wednesdays 2pm-5pm and Fridays 9am-12pm.</p> <p>Website: <a href="https://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/book-and-apply/language-services/interpreters">https://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/book-and-apply/language-services/interpreters</a></p>
Wesley Mission National Interpreting and Communication Services	Mostly available in metropolitan Sydney but some availability in regional NSW including Queanbeyan.	All day Mon - Fri	Saturdays and Sundays	1 hour	<p><b>Booking on-site interpreters</b></p> <p>Auslan interpreters are available in some locations including Queanbeyan and other regional locations through this provider. Telephone 1300 865 306, ask for NICSS and check availability.</p> <p>Alternatively you can book online by going to the following website address: <a href="https://www.nicss.org.au/book-an-interpreter.html">https://www.nicss.org.au/book-an-interpreter.html</a></p> <p>Where the booking form asks for Contact Person for payment you can enter Mary Binder, 7814 3124 and the email <a href="mailto:interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au">interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au</a></p>

## How to access online interpreters – major providers

Provider	Service location	Standard hours	Non-standard hours	Minimum fee	Booking and contact details
<b>Hunter New England Local Health Network (HNELHN)</b>  Please note that online interpreting is the preferred method of interpreting for this agency during COVID-19 restrictions. Onsite appointments can be made but a good reason must be supplied for approval to be given	All locations where Internet is available	All day Mon – Sun	N/A	2.5 hours	<b>Booking online interpreters</b> <b>For assignments of 3 hours or less which meet the guidelines (please note online sessions are not appropriate for assignments over 3 hours)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No prior approval is required.</li> <li>Ascertain the parent’s access to (and familiarity with) the technology required to participate in an online meeting, also choosing a convenient date and time. The parent may prefer to come to the school to participate in the online session provided the Principal agrees. You may wish to use the <a href="#">Telephone Interpreter Service</a> for your discussion at this initial stage.</li> <li>Create a zoom meeting on your laptop and send a link to this meeting to the parent if they will be joining the meeting from home.</li> <li>Complete the <a href="#">Interpreter Request Form</a> taking care to choose Hunter New England Local Health in the service provider field, nominating <b>online</b> in the assignment details field and providing the link to the zoom meeting you have arranged.</li> <li>Email the completed form to <a href="mailto:HNELHD-multiculturalhealth@health.nsw.gov.au">HNELHD-multiculturalhealth@health.nsw.gov.au</a></li> <li><b>For enquiries</b> or to check bookings phone 4924 6285.</li> </ul> Website: <a href="http://www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/multiculturalHealth/Pages/Health-Care-Interpreter-Service.aspx">http://www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/multiculturalHealth/Pages/Health-Care-Interpreter-Service.aspx</a>
<b>Deaf Society</b>	All locations where Internet is available	9am – 5pm Mon - Fri	5pm – 9am Mon – Fri and all day Sat, Sun and public holidays	Up to 1 hour	<b>Booking video remote interpreters</b> <b>For assignments of 3 hours or less which meet the guidelines (please note online sessions are not appropriate for assignments over 3 hours)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No prior approval is required.</li> <li>Ascertain the parent’s access to (and familiarity with) the technology required to participate in an online meeting, also choosing a convenient date and time. The parent may prefer to come to the school to participate in the online session provided the Principal agrees.</li> <li>Create a zoom meeting on your laptop and send a link to this meeting to the parent if they will be joining the meeting from home.</li> <li>Complete the <a href="#">Interpreter Request Form</a> taking care to choose the Deaf Society in the service provider field, nominating <b>online</b> in the assignment details field and providing the link to the zoom meeting you have arranged.</li> <li>Email the completed form to <a href="mailto:interpreting@deafsociety.com">interpreting@deafsociety.com</a></li> <li><b>For enquiries</b> or to check bookings phone 8833 3611.</li> </ul> Website: <a href="https://deafsocietynsw.org.au/">https://deafsocietynsw.org.au/</a>

Provider	Service location	Standard hours	Non-standard hours	Minimum fee	Booking and contact details
<b>Multicultural NSW</b>	All locations where Internet is available	7:30am – 6pm Mon - Fri	6pm – 7:30am Mon – Fri and all day Sat, Sun and public holidays	1 hours	<p><b>Booking video remote interpreters</b></p> <p><b>For assignments of 3 hours or less which meet the guidelines (please note online sessions are not appropriate for assignments over 3 hours)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No prior approval is required.</li> <li>Ascertain the parent’s access to (and familiarity with) the technology required to participate in an online meeting, also choosing a convenient date and time. The parent may prefer to come to the school to participate in the online session provided the Principal agrees. You may wish to use the <a href="#">Telephone Interpreter Service</a> for your discussion at this initial stage.</li> <li>Create a zoom meeting on your laptop and send a link to this meeting to the parent if they will be joining the meeting from home.</li> <li>Complete the <a href="#">Interpreter Request Form</a> taking care to choose Multicultural NSW in the service provider field, nominating <b>online</b> in the assignment details field and providing the link to the zoom meeting you have arranged.</li> <li>Email the completed form to <a href="mailto:languageservices@multicultural.nsw.gov.au">languageservices@multicultural.nsw.gov.au</a></li> <li><b>For enquiries</b> or to check bookings phone 1300 651 500.</li> </ul> <p>Website: <a href="http://multicultural.nsw.gov.au/">http://multicultural.nsw.gov.au/</a></p>
<b>Wesley Mission</b>	All locations where Internet is available	8:00am – 6pm Mon - Fri	N/A	1 hour	<p><b>Booking video remote interpreters</b></p> <p><b>For assignments of 3 hours or less which meet the guidelines (please note online sessions are not appropriate for assignments over 3 hours)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No prior approval is required.</li> <li>Ascertain the parent’s access to (and familiarity with) the technology required to participate in an online meeting, also choosing a convenient date and time. The parent may prefer to come to the school to participate in the online session provided the Principal agrees.</li> <li>You can use various software tools for the video interpreting session. If using FaceTime, or Skype for Business you require a user name to be given to NABS so they can provide it to the interpreter. NABS will provide you with the interpreters username and at the time of the meeting click the video call button to connect.</li> <li>If using Zoom you will need to create a zoom meeting on your laptop and send a link to this meeting to NABS who will provide it to the interpreter. You will also need to provide it to the parent if they will be joining the meeting from home.</li> <li><b>For enquiries</b> or to check bookings phone 1300 651 500.</li> </ul> <p>Website: <a href="http://multicultural.nsw.gov.au/">http://multicultural.nsw.gov.au/</a></p>
<b>TIS National</b>	All locations where Internet is available	8am – 6pm Mon - Fri	6pm - 8am Mon – Fri and all day Sat, Sun and public holidays	1.5 hours	<p><b>Book as for onsite interpreting through the online booking system. From 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022 there will be a dedicated channel for video meetings.</b></p>



## How to access telephone interpreters

Provider	Standard hours	Non-standard hours	Minimum fee	Booking and contact details
<b>TIS National (Department of Home Affairs)</b>	8am – 6pm Mon - Fri	6pm - 8am Mon – Fri and all day Sat, Sun and public holidays	15 mins	<p><b>Telephone interpreting</b></p> <p><b>Immediate access – client is at a different location</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the parent/carers is available to take the call.</li> <li>• Phone 131 450 and follow the automated prompts. Say which language is required and answer “Yes” to the question about having a registered account and answer “No” to the question about having an ATIS account. You will be connected to an operator.</li> <li>• Provide your full name, telephone number and name of the school or office. Quote Client Code C018294. The operator will ask for assignment details. Provide the client’s name (if known) and telephone number.</li> <li>• The operator will locate an interpreter immediately in most cases.</li> <li>• Brief the interpreter about the purpose of the call.</li> <li>• The operator will ring the client and the interpreter will stay on the line to assist you with your call in a three-way conversation.</li> </ul> <p><b>For enquiries</b> phone 131 450 Website: <a href="http://www.tisnational.gov.au/">http://www.tisnational.gov.au/</a></p>
<b>TIS National (Department of Home Affairs)</b>	8am – 6pm Mon - Fri	6pm - 8am Mon – Fri and all day Sat, Sun and public holidays	15 mins	<p><b>Telephone interpreting</b></p> <p><b>Immediate access – client is at the same location</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain to the client that you will be phoning an interpreter.</li> <li>• Phone 131 450 and follow the automated prompts. Say which language is required and answer “Yes” to the question about having a registered account and answer “No” to the question about having an ATIS account. You will be connected to an operator.</li> <li>• Provide your full name, telephone number and name of the school or office. Quote Client Code C018294. The operator will ask for assignment details.</li> <li>• The operator will locate an interpreter.</li> <li>• Brief the interpreter about the purpose of the call.</li> <li>• The interpreter will stay on the line to assist you with your call in a three-way conversation with the client.</li> </ul> <p><b>For enquiries</b> phone 131 450 Website: <a href="http://www.tisnational.gov.au/">http://www.tisnational.gov.au/</a></p>

Provider	Standard hours	Non-standard hours	Minimum fee	Booking and contact details
<b>Prebooked TIS National (Department of Home Affairs)</b>	8am – 6pm Mon - Fri	6pm - 8am Mon – Fri and all day Sat, Sun and public holidays	30 mins	<p><b>Telephone interpreting</b></p> <p><b>Prebooking assignments</b></p> <p>In many cases it is unnecessary to pre-book a telephone interpreter. However if you require an uncommon language, e.g. Dinka, Karen, or a specific time is required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Book online at <a href="http://www.tisnational.gov.au/Agencies/Forms-for-agencies/New-Job-booking-form">http://www.tisnational.gov.au/Agencies/Forms-for-agencies/New-Job-booking-form</a></li> </ul> <p>TIS National will email a confirmation to the contact email address when they receive the request and another confirmation (including a job number) when an interpreter has been allocated. The instructions for making your prebooked call will also be in the email.</p> <p><b>For enquiries</b> phone 131 450 Website: <a href="http://www.tisnational.gov.au/">http://www.tisnational.gov.au/</a></p>
<b>National Relay Service</b>	24 hours a day, 7 days a week	N/A	N/A	<p><b>Telephone interpreting</b></p> <p><b>Relay Service</b></p> <p>Call the National Relay Service helpdesk from Monday to Friday between 8am and 6pm for detailed instructions on how to contact a deaf or speech impaired client.</p> <p>Help desk phone number: 1800 555 660 Email: <a href="mailto:helpdesk@relayservice.com.au">helpdesk@relayservice.com.au</a> SMS: 0416 001 350</p> <p><b>Further information</b> is available from the National Relay Service website, go to <a href="https://www.communications.gov.au/what-we-do/phone/services-people-disability/accesshub/national-relay-service">https://www.communications.gov.au/what-we-do/phone/services-people-disability/accesshub/national-relay-service</a></p>

## Using individual contractors or employees

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In some circumstances, schools may choose to use contractors or employees to provide interpreting or language support.

Current contractors are those people who have previously been assessed and met the definition of a contractor rather than an employee based on the Australian Taxations Office's employee/contractor decision tool. They have provided services for some time now and will be paid via the accounts payable system.

Current contractors providing interpreting or language support to schools must provide an invoice for the work undertaken. The contractor or the school forwards this invoice via email to [interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au). Members of the Multicultural team will record the required data and forward the invoice to Schools Finance for payment through the accounts payable system.

If schools wish to use new contractors to provide these services they must follow the correct procedures. The relevant information can be found at [Delegations, purchasing and use of contracts or panels](#) under the headings "Engaging consultants, contingent workers, and other services providers/contractors" and "Engaging other service providers contractors."

In general, if an individual is currently employed by the department in a permanent, temporary or casual role, they must be paid through the payroll system for language support provided outside their normal employment arrangement. This is regardless of whether or not they have an Australian Business Number (ABN).

### Provision of language assistance after hours by SLSOs (Ethnic)

The department will cover the cost of School Learning Support Officers (SLSOs) (Ethnic) providing language assistance at parent/teacher interviews held after-school where this work occurs outside of the usual working hours of the SLSO (Ethnic).

SLSOs (Ethnic) may be used to provide language assistance at parent-teacher interviews at any school at which they are employed. As an emergency measure and in the absence of an alternative, an SLSO (Ethnic) from another school may be employed in a secondary employment arrangement as a short term temporary SLSO (Ethnic) provided that:

- the secondary employment is after the contract hours of the employee's principal employment
- they report to a teacher at the other school
- the work undertaken under this type of arrangement is for the purpose of language assistance.

People with the appropriate skills, who are not employed substantively in any school, may be employed as an SLSO (Ethnic) on a short term temporary basis for the purposes of providing language assistance at parent/teacher meetings. The normal processes for the employment of short term temporary employees will apply as will the minimum number of hours for employment of a short term temporary employee.

### SAP HR Payroll

Schools should use MSS to pay SLSOs (Ethnic) providing language assistance at parent-teacher meetings held after school.

### Additional hours/overtime

Payment will be by additional hours/overtime claim when:

- the after-hours language support is being provided to a school where the permanent or long temporary SLSO (Ethnic) has already worked that day in accordance with their normal employment arrangements
- the after-hours language support is being provided to a school which has an employment relationship with that employee but the language support is provided on a day on which the SLSO (Ethnic) does not usually work at that school
- a short term temporary SLSO (Ethnic) provides after-hours language assistance on a day when they have already worked for 6.25 hours.

Refer to [HR Payroll program](#) website for details. Select the [EZY find](#) link for process details on *Overtime for permanent/temporary staff*.

### **Casual / Short-term temporary engagements**

An SLSO (Ethnic) may be engaged as a casual/short-term temporary when:

- they are providing language support to a school with which they have no contract and,
- when the work is on a day when they haven't worked in any other school, and,
- the total hours worked do not exceed 6.25 hours.

If a short term temporary SLSO (Ethnic) provides after-hours language assistance they must be paid for a minimum of 2 hours or for the full number of hours worked (whichever is the greater), provided the total hours worked are less than 6.25 hours.

Note: if the language support is being provided to a school that has no contract with the employee but the employee has a contract with another school, and the employee has already worked that day in the other school, payment will be by means additional hours/overtime.

Refer to [HR Payroll program](#) website for details. Select the [EZY find](#) link for *Casual/Short Term Temporary (STT) staff nomination request* and *Creating a casual or Long Term Temporary engagement*.

### **Reimbursement of costs**

The department will cover the cost of salaries paid to SLSOs (Ethnic) providing language assistance at after-school parent-teacher meetings. This will be provided as reimbursement to schools through the Sundry Tax Invoice facility.

To claim reimbursement schools will need to email the following information to [interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au)

- school name and code
- the *SAP Employee Level Salary Cost Report* for each employee which will substantiate the claim through the provision of the daily salary charge and date worked
- the language used by each individual SLSO (Ethnic) at the parent-teacher meeting
- total hours of language assistance provided by each individual.

### **Further information**

- For interpreting and language assistance, contact the Communications and Translations Advisor on phone 7814 3124 or email: [interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au)
- For instructions and information on SAP HR Payroll, see: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/inside-the-department/hr-payroll-program>
- For help with SAP HR processes, contact EDConnect on phone 1300 32 32 32 during business hours or log an online enquiry.

## Interpreting considerations

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There are a number of factors school staff should consider before using an interpreter.

### Which provider should I use?

#### Onsite interpreting in metropolitan areas

Metropolitan users can choose either of the two major providers, TIS National (Department of Immigration and Border Protection) or Multicultural NSW for interpreting assignments in languages other than Auslan. There are also some private providers who may be used as they have previously been determined to be contractors. Please see page 8 for more information.

For Auslan interpreting, metropolitan users can choose the Deaf Society of NSW or Multicultural NSW. The Deaf Society has a greater number of interpreters available. Some private providers of Auslan are also available.

#### Non metropolitan areas

Users in the Hunter and New England area or in the Wollongong area may be able to book onsite interpreters through the Hunter New England Local Health Network or the Wollongong City Council respectively. However, not all languages are available in all areas. The Deaf Society also has some regional interpreters available. Please phone to check availability before booking and to ask if travel time will be involved.

Multicultural NSW and TIS National do not, in general, supply interpreters to non-metropolitan areas.

Where on-site interpreters are not available, please use the TIS National Telephone Interpreting Service or the National Relay Service.

#### School Learning Support Officers (Ethnic)

School Learning Support Officers (Ethnic) are specialised staff who may provide language support for parent/teacher afternoons or evenings. Please see page 9 for more information.

### Cost of interpreting

Charges for interpreting are subject to change. Current information on interpreting fees is available on the major providers' websites.

Some independent interpreting service providers set their own fees.

#### On-site interpreters

Cost should be considered when requesting an interpreter. Assignments should generally be from Monday to Friday in school hours

The minimum number of hours charged by providers varies from 1 ½ to 2 ½ hours. Where possible, interpreting assignments should be within the minimum number of hours.

#### Telephone Interpreting Service

Because the department is charged from the moment staff are connected to the Telephone Interpreter Service, staff should ensure that the client is available to take the call before the Interpreter Service is phoned.

#### National Relay Service

Use of the National Relay Service generally costs the same as a local call. Please see the following webpage for more information: <https://www.communications.gov.au/what-we-do/phone/services-people-disability/accesshub/national-relay-service>

### Which language?

Identifying the correct language is critical. It should not be based on the client's country of birth as several languages or dialects may be spoken in a country. For example, a person born in Cambodia may speak Khmer, any of the Chinese languages or French. While some people speak multiple languages, they may be more proficient in one language than another. Ask the interpreting service or the family for advice if you are unsure about the appropriate language to use.

On enrolment information is collected on the main language/s other than English spoken at home and whether an interpreter would be required, if available. This data can be accessed in the Enrolment Registration Number (ERN) System.

### Political, religious or cultural sensitivities

In certain circumstances political, religious or cultural sensitivities may influence the success of an interpreting situation. For example, in cases where people have come to Australia as a result of war or conflict, particularly where they may have experienced torture or trauma, they may find it difficult to communicate through interpreters perceived to belong to an opposing group, even if they speak the same language. To ensure that the

most appropriate interpreter is chosen, ask the interpreter service or the family for advice.

## Gender

In some circumstances it is advisable to book a female interpreter for a female client and a male interpreter for a male client. This may apply when sensitive issues such as those regarding violence, child protection or health need to be discussed.

## Parent/teacher interviews

Where a school's parent body comprises significant numbers from language backgrounds other than English, it is recommended that one teacher coordinates interpreter requests for parent/teacher interviews to avoid misunderstandings by interpreter providers about the number of interpreters required. On occasions when more than one interpreter is required for the same language, on the same date and time, this should be clearly indicated on the request, e.g. Korean (1 of 2), Korean (2 of 2). Care should be taken not to make a booking request twice.

A separate interpreter request form is needed for each interpreter required. However:

- one interpreter may interpret for more than one interview within the minimum timeframe, provided the assignments are consecutive
- one interpreter may interpret in two languages, for example, Mandarin and Cantonese if they are bilingual.

## Tips for using interpreters

### Telephone Interpreters

- Conduct the interview in a quiet and private space to ensure confidentiality and that the parties can all hear one another.
- Where possible, use a telephone with a speaker.
- For same location interviews, sit facing the client. Be aware of facial expressions and body language.
- Explain who you are, the purpose of the meeting and how it will be conducted.
- Speak in the first person at all times.
- Keep the amount of information to be interpreted at any one time short, with one idea per sentence.
- Include a pause after each sentence, so that the participants do not talk over each other or cut each other off.
- Avoid or minimise technical language and avoid acronyms.

### The National Relay Service

- Speak directly to the caller. (Only speak to the relay officer if there is a problem with the call.)
- Pause at the end of each phrase or sentence to allow time for the relay officer who is typing to catch up.
- Repeat and spell difficult words, names and phone numbers.
- Say go ahead after each response.
- End the call with 'goodbye', or 'signing off' or something similar.

### On-site Interpreters

- Take control of the meeting. Introduce yourself to the client and the interpreter and then introduce the interpreter to the client.
- Explain the role of the interpreter to the client.
- Explain who you are, the purpose of the meeting and how it will be conducted.
- Sit facing the client with the interpreter equidistant like the 3 points of a triangle so that you can speak directly to all parties involved.
- For Auslan interpreting check the seating preference with the deaf or hearing impaired person to enable their communication with the interpreter.
- Look directly at the client even when the interpreter is speaking.
- Speak to the client in the first person e.g. "Can you tell me..."
- Keep the amount of information to be interpreted at any one time short, with one idea per sentence.
- Avoid or minimise technical language and avoid acronyms. Ask the client if the pace you are talking at is appropriate or if any clarification is required.
- Get feedback during the meeting to make sure the client is satisfied with the interpreting process and cease the meeting if not. Explain that you will reschedule and why.

# Translations

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## Translations available for parents and schools

Many departmental publications have been translated in languages other than English. Parents and school staff can access these on the department's website.

### Translations website

Translated documents can be viewed at the following website

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/translated-documents>

## Translation suggestions

The department arranges translations of important school information relevant to all or most schools. If you wish to make suggestions on new translations please phone 7814 3124.

## Requests for translations by individual schools

As funding is limited, individual school translations will only be funded in cases relating to urgent matters

regarding student welfare. Funds are not available to translate documents such as school newsletters.

To check if a proposed translation meets the guidelines for funding, telephone 7814 3124.

## School funded translations

If schools wish to fund their own translations, advice on cost and how to prepare documents for translation can be obtained from the Multicultural team by phoning 7814 3124.

While advice will be provided it should be noted that it is the school's responsibility to arrange the translation.

Further information is also available at:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/interpreting-and-translations/translations>

## More information

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For more information regarding interpreting and translation services contact:

NSW Department of Education

GPO Box 33, Sydney NSW 2001

Phone: (02) 7814 3124

Email: [interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:interpreting@det.nsw.edu.au)