

SECURING INTERPRETERS



The individual or family and your team will need regular, reliable access to appropriate interpretation to help facilitate important meetings and appointments.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN AN INTERPRETER

Consider utilizing an interpreter for initial meetings but wait to make any big commitments to allow the newcomers to determine if the interpreter is a good fit. While it is not necessary to find a professional interpreter, there are some qualities and skills you will want to look for:

- **Volunteer or Contract Work:** First, your team will want to determine if you need someone who can volunteer their time, or if you have it in the budget to hire someone.
- **Availability and Reliability:** When inquiring about the possibility of working with them, explain the types of services and other meetings you will need to interpret for. Ask them about their current schedule so you can get a sense if they will be a good fit.
- **Accuracy:** It is important that this person has very good language skills as you and the newcomers will rely on them to accurately interpret important information.
- **Confidentiality:** Information shared during a meeting or appointment or in documents should be kept private unless newcomers give the interpreter permission to communicate to necessary personnel or share information.
- **Impartiality:** Interpreters should always be impartial and cannot offer counseling, advice, or their personal opinions or beliefs.
- **Advocacy:** It is essential that the interpreter supports and advocates for the newcomers and makes sure their voice is heard and their rights are being upheld.
- **Cultural Competency:** The interpreter should demonstrate competency for American cultural values and practices and the cultural values and practices of the newcomers.
- **Amiable and Trustworthy:** You and the newcomers will likely spend a considerable amount of time with this person. It is important that the newcomers will be able to trust this person as they will be relying on them to explain important information to them.

WHERE TO FIND AN INTERPRETER

Potential sources of low-cost or free interpreters are colleges/universities, student groups, mosques, churches, and cultural groups. Your local WR office may also be able to refer you to interpreters.

US ties, children, friends and family of the newcomers cannot be used for formal interpretation of required core services. The only exception to this is for the airport pick-up.

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SERVICES THAT PROVIDE INTERPRETATION

Social Security, Department of Social Services, schools and medical services will usually have interpretation services available free of charge either as a courtesy or requirement. This service can either be done via telephone or on site. For medical appointments, especially with specialists, you may need to call in advance of the appointment to ensure an interpreter will be provided.

NECESSARY BACKGROUND CHECK AND TRAINING

Each interpreter you source must undergo a background check, sign and submit a confidentiality agreement, and undergo WR interpreter training prior to the newcomer's arrival.

OTHER FORMS OF INTERPRETATION

Consider downloading apps that offer interpretation. While these should not be used for official meetings, they can be a very helpful resource. Here are some that volunteers use:

- Tarjimly
- Google translate