



# Free Interpreting Service for Non-Government Organisations

*The Free Interpreting Service aims to provide equitable access to key services for people with limited or no English language proficiency.*

*Non-government organisations can access the Free Interpreting Service to provide approved casework and emergency services, where the organisation does not receive substantial government funding to provide these services.*

## Why non-government organisations use interpreters

Australia has a rich cultural diversity. The 2016 census revealed that Australians were born in almost 200 different countries and speak more than 300 languages.

Non-government organisations provide a range of casework and emergency services and can use credentialed interpreters to communicate with people who have limited or no English language proficiency. This is particularly important when communicating complex or technical information and can help to establish a relationship and communicate effectively with these clients.

Using the Free Interpreting Service is easy and convenient. It is quick and simple to register and you will be connected to a phone interpreter within a few minutes.



## Services available to non-government organisations

Non-government organisations can use the Free Interpreting Service to access interpreting services delivered by TIS National, including:

- immediate phone interpreting
- pre-booked phone interpreting
- pre-booked onsite interpreting.

Immediate phone interpreting is most useful for unplanned interactions. It provides:

- access to over 3000 interpreters in over 160 different languages
- interpreting services 24 hours a day 7 days a week
- connection to an interpreter within a few minutes of calling.

Pre-booked phone interpreting is useful for planned interactions, such as community events or ongoing appointments, or if you need to request a less common language.

When phone interpreting is not suitable, TIS National can arrange an interpreter to arrive onsite for a face-to-face appointment. This may be important when you have a group of people needing the same language interpreter, when you are discussing complex ideas or when you anticipate that the appointment will go for an extended period of time. Onsite interpreter bookings must be for a minimum of 90 minutes.



## Eligibility

Non-government organisations are eligible to access the Free Interpreting Service if they are:

- an incorporated, not for profit, non-government and community based organisation
- delivering services to anyone in Australia who has a Medicare card
- providing approved casework or emergency services (see below)
- not receiving substantial government funding for the delivery of the service.

The Free Interpreting Service can be used for providing approved casework or emergency services that are essential to economic or social participation (provided they are not listed as an ineligible activity). This includes services that manage issues arising from health conditions, housing, employment, personal or family safety, and financial crisis. These services may include but are not limited to:

- information, referral, support and advice for people with chronic disease, acute health conditions or a disability
- services that facilitate community engagement, including:
  - referral services to third party agencies
  - mentoring programs
  - respite care
- crisis intervention services, including for:
  - domestic violence
  - homelessness
  - unemployment
  - severe financial difficulties
  - legal matters.

The Free Interpreting Service cannot be used by non-government organisations for:

- government funded services (organisations delivering government funded services should discuss access to interpreters with their government funding body)
- clinical medical services (see 'private medical practitioners category')
- recreational activities or programs
- political and media advocacy or lobbying
- vocational training
- immigration advice
- child care services.

## Apply for a client code

To apply for a client code, complete the online application form on the [TIS National website](#).

You can also apply by contacting TIS National on 1300 575 847.

## How to access the Free Interpreting Service

1. Call TIS National on 131 450
2. Provide the operator with the language of the interpreter that you need
3. Provide your client code and the name of the organisation
4. Request an interpreter of a particular gender, if required (subject to availability)

## More information

**Read:** about the Free Interpreting Service on the [DSS website](#).

**Visit:** the [TIS National website](#) to watch videos about TIS National services and how to work with interpreters. You can also find free promotional materials in the TIS National catalogue and order these from the website using the promotional materials request form.

**Contact TIS National:** 1300 575 847 or [tis.lpl@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:tis.lpl@homeaffairs.gov.au).