



Western Australian Language Services Policy 2020

What is an interpreter?

An interpreter “transfers a spoken or signed language into another spoken or signed language, usually in a limited time frame in the presence of the participants requiring the translation”.

(ANZSCO 272412)

For this policy, a professional interpreter is one who is tertiary qualified and/or holds a NAATI credential.

Interpreting services can be delivered in the following ways:

- face-to-face (onsite)
- by telephone
- video conferencing/calling (Skype).

What is the role of an interpreter?

The role of an interpreter is to:

- facilitate communication between two or more people who use different languages or dialects, either spoken or signed
- ensure messages are transferred accurately, preserving the content and intent of the source message or text without being ‘filtered’ (that is, free of additions or omissions, any bias or judgement)
- be objective and impartial (that is, not give advice or opinions).

An interpreter’s role does not include:

- conducting the interpreting session or taking notes for other staff
- answering questions asked by clients or other people following an interview/meeting/ appointment
- helping clients fill out forms
- having (personal) conversations with the client
- taking clients from one office to another
- advocating for either party, or their own interests during the assignment.

What is the National Interpreter Symbol?



The National Interpreter Symbol is a public information symbol endorsed by Australian, State and Territory Governments. The symbol visually alerts and informs

people that they can ask for an interpreter when accessing government and other services.

Copies of the **National Interpreter Symbol** are available from the Australian Government, Department of Home Affairs website.

It is useful to display the symbol in a prominent position such as the reception area, public meeting areas or service desks.

Universal symbol for Auslan interpreters



This is a universally recognised symbol for Auslan interpreting. It is used to show that an Auslan interpreter can be provided.

Further reading

Office of Multicultural Interests

- **Western Australian Language Services Policy 2020 and Guidelines**
- **Rights and Responsibilities of Western Australian public sector staff, clients, interpreting and translating practitioners and language services providers**