



FAQ: Interpretation Services

What is interpretation?

Interpretation is the process of converting spoken or signed messages from one language into another, while maintaining the meaning, tone and intent of the source language. While translation works with the written word, interpretation is the real-time counterpart to translation, focusing on spoken language communication.

There are two main types of interpretation:

- **Simultaneous:** interpreters communicate the source language to the target language in real-time. This often occurs in conferences or presentations, when more than one language is needed, using equipment like headsets.
- **Consecutive:** interpreters listen to segments of what is being spoken, and wait for the speaker to finish, and then convey the message into the target language. This usually takes place in settings where interpretation is needed for only one language, or in appointments where people are communicating directly back and forth.

What interpretation services are available to CareOregon members?

All contracted CareOregon providers must make interpreting services available to CareOregon members.

Interpreters may operate on-site, over the phone, or via video.

In accordance with OAR 950-050-0160, providers must work with qualified or certified interpreters when arranging for or providing services to a person who has interpretation needs. Exceptions are allowed when the provider:

- Has documented proficiency in the preferred language of the person
- Has made a good faith effort to schedule a qualified or certified interpreter and has found that none are available; in this scenario they may schedule an interpreter who is not certified or qualified
- Has maintained records that the person with interpretation needs was offered interpretation services at no cost and the person declined and chose a different interpreter, which could include a family member or friend

Health care providers must provide personal protective equipment to health care interpreters providing services on-site.

CareOregon's interpretation services cover the following occurrences for CareOregon members:

- Onsite medical, dental, behavioral, or social health appointments
- Scheduling or rescheduling appointments
- Appointment reminders
- Appointment follow-ups
- Relaying test results
- Registration for procedures/admissions

Who are the CareOregon contracted vendors?

CareOregon pays for interpreting services through approved vendors. We have contractual arrangements with these vendors who will prioritize scheduling certified and qualified interpreters for CareOregon member appointments that we encourage providers to use. Should a provider use a vendor other than a CareOregon approved vendor, the provider will be responsible for coordinating and paying the interpreting services. When using CareOregon approved interpretation vendors, the interpretation vendor will bill CareOregon directly for the appointment.

Current Vendors:

- Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization (IRCO)
 - Website: [The Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization | IRCO](#)
- Linguava
 - Website: [Linguava Interpreters | Language Access Solutions | Portland OR](#)
- Oregon Certified Interpreters Network (OCIN)
 - Website: [Oregon Certified Interpreters Network](#)
- National Interpreting Service (NIS)
 - Website: [National Interpreting Service –](#)

How do I schedule an interpreter for a member?

Each vendor has a specific workflow and multiple pathways for scheduling an interpreter.

Information on how to connect with a vendor can be found in a couple of different locations

- [CareOregon-Language Services for Providers](#)
- [Language services \(colpachealth.org\)](#)
- [Language services \(jacksoncareconnect.org\)](#)
- [CareOregon Advantage - Language services for providers](#)
- [Provider support \(careoregondental.org\)](#) (“Interpretation resources for providers” dropdown)
- [Vendor Intake Guide](#)

How do I prepare for an in-person or telehealth interpretation appointment?

Here are a few tips to help prepare for a scheduled interpretation session:

- **An appointment that includes interpretation often requires more time.**
 - It is helpful to have a brief huddle with the interpreter before the appointment to make sure they have all the information that they need.
 - Schedule the interpreter to arrive ahead of the start of the appointment if you anticipate that they might need support with check in.
 - Please provide any context or background information that would be helpful to the interpreter so, especially during instances of specialized care. This helps interpreters with providing culturally relevant and accessible interpretation services.
 - When you schedule an appointment, it is important to let the vendor know of any preferences of the member may have for their interpreter (gender, dialect etc). The vendor may not be able to accommodate all preference but will do their best to find an interpreter that meets the member’s needs.

How do I prepare for an on-demand interpretation appointment?

Here are a few tips to help with preparations for an on-demand interpretation appointment:

- If possible, please provide the interpreter with as much context as possible such as the setting, purpose of the appointment, and any pertinent background information.
- If there is an issue with sound or clarity, or issues in understanding each other, it might be helpful to tell the member to stay on the call and conference in a different interpreter. It’s important to explain to the member that you are switching interpreters for an improved experience.

What should I expect when I am working with an interpreter during an appointment?

Here are a few helpful tips to keep in mind when working with a professional interpreter

- Formulate messages in short but complete thoughts. Interpreters will likely wait until an individual finishes a complete thought to jump in with the interpreted message. The interpreter will rely on their memory or note-taking skills to capture everything that is communicated.
- The interpreter will speak in first person. Speak directly to the member. Find out what's important to them or what they have understood by asking the member directly rather than asking the interpreter's opinion.
- Interpreters strive to interpret everything that is said without inserting personal assumptions or opinions. This means they will not finesse or filter information, they will interpret background noise and side conversations, and they will not take it upon themselves to change the tone or level of the language. Use plain language and avoid saying anything you don't want repeated to the member. Do not take offense if the interpreter repeats anything that sounds unprofessional.
- Interpreters should not be providing systems navigation beyond interpreting what the words spoken during an encounter. Please do not ask the interpreter to fill out paperwork with the member; instead assist the member directly with the interpreter's support.
- The interpreter wants to be part of the care team and will welcome an opportunity to share cultural perspectives and ideas; however, these conversations should not take place in the presence of the member and these perspectives should always be verified with the member to ensure it applies to them.

How can I get I speak cards/Interpretation posters mailed to my clinic/provider location?

To get I Speak Cards/Interpretation Posters mailed to your clinic/provider location, please complete and submit this form [I Speak Cards and Do you Need and Interpreter Handout/Poster Request Form](#). Please refer to [this guide](#) for additional instructions.

Please make sure to include amounts of each item that are needed the mailing address and mailing attention. You will be notified when the request has been received, processed and mailed.

How do I schedule telecommunication relay or captioned services for a member?

Telecommunication relay and captioned telephone services allow individuals that are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, or have speech disabilities to communicate by telephone in a manner that is functionally equivalent to telephone services. This service is offered by the federal government through FCC funding. In Oregon it is Hamilton/Oregon Relay. <https://hamiltonrelay.com/oregon/>

To access telecommunication relay and captioned telephone services, the requestor needs to call the toll-free number listed on the website or dial 711 and give them the phone number to dial.

- Oregon Relay offers the following services
 - **TTY (Text Telephone):** The most common way to connect to relay – allowing a person who is deaf or hard of hearing to type their messages and read the other person's responses.
 - **Voice (Voice Carry Over):** VCO users speak directly to the person being called and, through specialized equipment, read what is spoken by the other party.
 - **HCO (Hearing Carry Over):** HCO users listen directly to the person called and, through specialized equipment, type their responses to the other party.
 - **DBS (DeafBlind Service):** DBS users type their messages and read the other person's responses, typed by the Communication Assistant (CA), on a braille display.

- **STS (Speech-to-Speech):** STS involves specially trained Communication Assistants (CA) who are familiar with the speech patterns of a wide variety of individuals who have difficulty being understood.
- **CapTel (Captioned Telephone):** Users speak directly to the other party and listen while reading captions of what's said to them.
- **Voice: The Oregon** Relay program allows standard phone users to communicate with individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or have difficulty speaking and who may use a TTY, TeleBraille or other assistive telecommunications devices.
- **Spanish Relay:** Spanish Relay is available for all Relay calling options offered in your state. Spanish and English translations are available in select states.

For any additional questions regarding interpretation services please reach out to laservices@careoregon.org