



Free Interpreting Service for parliamentarians

The Free Interpreting Service aims to provide equitable access to key services for people with limited English proficiency.

Parliamentarians and their staff can access the Free Interpreting Service to communicate with constituents.

Why parliamentarians use interpreters

Australia has rich cultural and linguistic diversity. The 2021 census revealed that over 5.5 million Australians speak a language other than English at home. Further, Australians represent over 250 different ancestries and speak more than 350 languages.

As elected representatives, parliamentarians have a duty to communicate with their constituents, especially to advocate on their behalf. Parliamentarians can use credentialed interpreters to communicate complex or technical information to communities or individuals who have limited English proficiency.

Services available to parliamentarians

Parliamentarians can use the Free Interpreting Service to access interpreting services in more than 150 languages including:

- immediate phone interpreting
- Automated Telephone Interpreting Service (ATIS)
- pre-booked phone interpreting
- on-site interpreting, and
- video remote interpreting.

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

- interpreting services 24 hours a day, every day of the year
- 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 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.

Video remote interpreting complements the phone interpreting services and allows parliamentarians to connect with an interpreter via a video conferencing platform.





Eligibility

All Australian parliamentarians and their staff are eligible to access the Free Interpreting Service if the parliamentarian is:

- a current serving member of any federal, state or territory parliament. This includes members of parliament, senators, members of legislative assemblies and legislative councils.
- using the service to communicate with anyone in Australia who is eligible for Medicare.

The Free Interpreting Service can be used for constituency purposes, including but not limited to:

- community consultations and forums
- advocating on behalf of a constituent.

The Free Interpreting Service cannot be used for:

- campaigning, party membership drives, fundraising or other party related activities
- communicating with people who are not eligible for Medicare, such as tourists, temporary work visa holders and international students.

Register for a client code

Each parliamentarian will need a unique client code to access the service.

To register for a client code, complete the [online registration form](#). If you require assistance to register, contact TIS National's Free Interpreting Service team.

How to access the Free Interpreting Service

1. Call TIS National on 131 450.
2. Provide the operator with the language and gender (if specified) of the interpreter that you need.
3. Provide your client code and the name of the parliamentarian.

You can easily request and manage all of your pre-booked phone, video remote and on-site interpreter bookings through TIS Online. All agencies registered with a TIS National account are automatically registered to use TIS Online.

More information

- Read: about the Free Interpreting Service tisnational.gov.au/FIS
- Order: free promotional materials tisnational.gov.au/promote
- Contact: TIS National on 1300 575 847 or tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au

