



Using TIS National services

The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) is an interpreting service provided by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection to provide interpreting services for people who do not speak English and for agencies and businesses that need to communicate with their non-English speaking clients.

Agency clients need to register with TIS National before they can access TIS National's interpreting services. You can register on the TIS National website.

See: www.tisnational.gov.au/register

Immediate phone interpreting

Immediate phone interpreting is available for agency clients who need an interpreter immediately over the phone. The immediate phone service is available 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

To access an immediate phone interpreter:

1. call the TIS National contact centre on 131 450
2. provide your client code and the name of your agency to the operator
3. provide the name of the non-English speaker to the operator (you can choose to keep this confidential if preferred)
4. provide the operator with the language interpreter you need.

Pre-booked phone interpreting

The pre-booked phone interpreting service is available for agency clients to book a phone interpreter in advance of an appointment.

Pre-booking your phone interpreter will ensure any special requirements can be catered for and that the best available interpreter can be secured for the time you nominate. Pre-booking an interpreter is recommended when the assignment may be complex, requires specialist knowledge or the availability of interpreters in a particular language is limited.

Requests for a pre-booked phone interpreter should be sent using the interpreter booking form on the TIS National website.

See: www.tisnational.gov.au/bookingform

Booking requests will only be taken up to three months in advance of an appointment. Generally, sending pre-booked phone interpreter requests 24 hours in advance of an appointment will improve your chances of securing an interpreter. Pre-booked phone interpreter bookings must be for a minimum of 30 minutes.

On-site interpreting

On-site interpreting is available for agency clients to book a phone interpreter to attend an appointment face-to-face.

When using a phone interpreter would not be suitable, TIS National can arrange for an interpreter to visit your location. On-site interpreting services can be arranged for any location in Australia (subject to interpreter availability).

Requests for an on-site interpreter should be sent using the interpreter booking form on the TIS National website.

See: www.tisnational.gov.au/bookingform

Booking requests will only be taken up to three months in advance of an appointment. Generally, sending on-site interpreter requests two weeks in advance of an appointment will improve your chances of securing an interpreter. On-site interpreter bookings must be for a minimum of 90 minutes.

Cancelling a booking

Cancellations for pre-booked phone and on-site appointments must be made in writing to TIS National including valid reasons for the cancellation at least 24 hours prior to the appointment.

Pre-booked phone or on-site services which are cancelled and the required notice of cancellation is not provided or is provided with less than 24 hours' notice TIS National's standard service charges will apply.

If you receive free services through TIS National, you will not be charged for the cancellation. Any fees will be charged to the funding agency.

TIS National's interpreter allocation policy

TIS National assigns work to interpreters on the basis of their National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) credential level and availability in order to ensure you receive the most qualified available interpreter.

If you request a specific interpreter, TIS National may provide you with that interpreter if TIS National is satisfied that an exceptional circumstance exists to warrant the provision of that interpreter. While TIS National may provide you with specific interpreters, TIS National strongly recommends that you avoid requesting specific interpreters where possible.

Requesting the services of a specific interpreter limits TIS National's ability to provide the most qualified available interpreter for your appointment. When you request a specific interpreter you may receive a less qualified interpreter than if you requested the highest credentialed interpreter available. Requesting a specific interpreter also impedes TIS National's ability to provide an interpreter for urgent requests.

When you request a specific interpreter for a booking, you will be required to provide a reason as to why the circumstances are exceptional on each and every occasion. This will be assessed by a manager. If approved, TIS National will request the completion and return of an indemnity form before your booking request will be processed. If you have been approved previously for a specific booking request and are requesting a further booking with the same interpreter for the same non-English speaker, you may lodge the indemnity form immediately with your booking request.

If your request for a specific interpreter is declined, you will be offered the highest credentialed interpreter available at the time. Should you choose not to accept the interpreter nominated by TIS National and decide to cancel this interpreting request, you must do so in writing at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled appointment in accordance with TIS National's cancellation policy, to avoid charges.

A request for a specific interpreter must be made at least two business days prior to the appointment date.

The role of the interpreter

The interpreter's role is to accurately convey the whole spoken message from one language to another while abiding by the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT) Code of Ethics.

A full copy of the code is available from the AUSIT website.

See: www.ausit.org/AUSIT/About/Ethics_Conduct/Code_of_Ethics/AUSIT/About/Code_of_Ethics.aspx

Information about working with TIS National interpreters is available on the TIS National website.

See: www.tisnational.gov.au/Agencies/Help-using-TIS-National-services/Working-with-TIS-National-interpreters

You can also find out how to get the most out of your interpreting session by viewing the Frequently Asked Questions for agencies on the TIS National website.

See: www.tisnational.gov.au/Agencies/Frequently-Asked-Questions-for-agencies

Promotional material

A range of promotional materials to assist you and your clients to access TIS National services is available online.

See: www.tisnational.gov.au/promomaterials

Providing feedback

TIS National endeavours to provide a high quality service to all of our clients. To provide feedback about a TIS National service, please complete the feedback form on the TIS National website.

See: www.tisnational.gov.au/feedback