



Free Interpreting Service for parliamentarians

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

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

Why should parliamentarians engage an interpreter?

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 engage a credentialed interpreter to communicate complex or technical information to communities or individuals who have limited or no English language proficiency.

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 of calling.

Services available to parliamentarians

Parliamentarians can use the Free Interpreting Service to access interpreting services delivered by TIS National, including:

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

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

- access to more than 2700 interpreters in more than 150 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 on-site 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 TIS National's existing phone interpreting services and allows agencies 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.

Register for the Free Interpreting Service

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

To register for a client code, complete the online [client registration form](#) on the TIS National website. If you require assistance with registering contact TIS National on 1300 575 847 or tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au.

How to access the Free Interpreting Service

1. Call TIS National on 131 450 to access immediate phone interpreting.
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 to the operator.

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
- **Read:** about how to access TIS National's online booking system [TIS Online](#)
- **Watch:** videos about TIS National services and how to work with interpreters: tisnational.gov.au/videos
- **Order:** free promotional materials from the online TIS National catalogue: tisnational.gov.au/promomaterials
- **Contact:** TIS National Free Interpreting Service Team on 1300 575 847 or tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au