

How to work with an On-site Interpreter

Preparation

- Book the interpreter as early as possible once you identify a need. Allow extra time for the session, as sessions take up to double the time of a standard session.
- Provide the name of the client, the expected duration of the session and any other relevant information so the interpreter will be familiar with the topic.
- Organise an area where you can talk to the client uninterrupted. Arrange the seating to allow for easy communication.

Before the session

- We recommend that the client and interpreter sit separately from each other to avoid the risk of the client asking the interpreter questions prior to session. If possible, have a designated waiting area for interpreters to ensure prompt commencement of sessions.

During the session

- When the interpreter arrives, allow them to introduce themselves to you and the client.
- Explain your role and the interpreter's role to the client and assure the client that what is discussed in the session will remain confidential between you, the interpreter and the client.
- You are always in control of the session. Interpreters should not direct the discussion.
- Speak directly to the client in the first person and not the interpreter, e.g. "How can I help you?" instead of "How I can help him/her?"
- Maintain eye contact with the client throughout the session, speak clearly and avoid using complex language.
- Interpreters do not interpret any lengthy documents or provide any written services e.g. filling in forms or taking statements.
- Speak in short intervals allowing time for the interpreter to relay the information. Let the interpreter control the length of each segment by signalling to you/the client when to stop.
- Provide clear explanation when the interpreter seeks clarification and do not add additional information that will exclude the client as everything that is said during the session must be interpreted.
- Check whether the client has understood the discussion and is ready to end the session. Always allow the client to ask any questions.

After the session

- If the client requires another appointment, please make these arrangements with the client while the interpreter is present.
- According to professional standards, it is recommended that the client and interpreter do not leave at the same time to prevent the interpreter becoming involved with the client.
- Offer a debriefing if you consider the interpreter may be affected by a particularly stressful situation and/or clarify any questions you both might have from the session.
- If required, provide feedback to the interpreting service provider, as this will help LanguageLoop improve service quality. Also ensure that you provide positive feedback when the interpreter's service meets or exceeds your requirements.

[Languageloop.com.au](https://www.languageloop.com.au)