

Integrated Managed Care and Interpreter Service

Frequently asked Question

Who is Universal Language Service?

Universal Language Service (Universal) is the contractor that provides interpreter services to Washington State Medicaid eligible clients for Healthcare appointments and Social Service appointments for the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and Department of Children, Youth and Family (DCYF) offices

How do I request interpreters?

In order to request an interpreter through the HCA contractor, you must [register](#) with Universal's online scheduling platform.

Once you are registered, Universal will train providers how to access an interpreter using their online service portal.

The HCA Interpreter Services program is available to healthcare providers serving limited English proficient (LEP), Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Blind Medicaid clients and individuals applying for or receiving DSHS or DCYF services. For more information, visit HCA's [Interpreter Services webpage](#).

Do I have to use Universal?

HCA will not reimburse you for interpreter services if you did not use the online scheduling platform to request the job through Universal first.

What if Universal cannot provide an interpreter?

If Universal is unable to fill your request, you may choose another agency to fill the job. Once you have received a paid invoice, follow instructions under "How do I get reimbursed?"

How do I get reimbursed?

Once you contact a private agency, schedule the interpreter, and pay for their services, you will need to submit the following documents via secure email to billing@ulsonline.net for reimbursement:

1. Copy of paid invoice
2. Job number from Universal
3. Completed reimbursement voucher

HCA will not issue reimbursements that exceed the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) agreed rate of \$39.76 per hour or ASL rates that exceed the approved [Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing \(ODHH\)](#) rate. If a private contracted ASL or CDI Interpreter is not established on the ODHH website, the maximum allowable payment is fifty-five dollars (\$55) per hour.

You are responsible for the remainder balance.

What is the Collective Bargaining Agreement?

In 2011, The Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) was established between spoken language access providers (LAP) interpreters and the Governor of Washington to ensure equal access to pay, professional development, union management meetings and grievances. The CBA was determined to be the contract that DSHS and HCA will comply with when providing services to Medicaid and DSHS LEP clients utilizing LAP's.

For more information about the CBA, you can review the document on the OFM website, WFSE [Language Access Providers](#).

American Sign Language interpreters are not part of the union or covered by the CBA.



Does Universal provide American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters?

Yes, ASL interpreters are available. Contact [Universal](#) for more information.

Can I request an interpreter last minute?

Yes. However, it is best to request an interpreter in advance to allow interpreters the opportunity to review their schedule. Universal cannot guarantee a last minute request will be filled.

What services are not covered by HCA?

The HCA does not pay for interpreter services for:

- Administrative Services
 - Scheduling appointments
 - Appointment reminder phone calls
 - Paperwork
- Travel (For spoken languages only)
- Inpatient hospital services (e.g. labor and delivery)
- Nursing facility services
- Public health agencies and public health hospitals (certified public expenditures)

When can I request a specific interpreter?

Specific interpreters may be requested for the following situations:

- Gender preference
- Cultural requirements
- Sign, Sign Relay (CDI) or Tactile interpretation
- Medical conditions that qualify as medically necessary

What is considered medically necessary?

Medical conditions that are considered medically necessary to have a specific interpreter provide services include:

- Continuing counseling sessions
- Applied Behavior Analysis therapy sessions
- Cancer treatments as requested by the medical provider
- Pediatric Private Duty Nursing sessions in the home setting, in which the treatment plan requires frequent communication, such as:
 - When the child's care needs are changing,
 - Where a change in Interpreter will impact the health outcome, or
 - Effectiveness of the interaction
- Effectiveness of treatment plan or any treatment or medical procedure where a change in interpreter will impact the effectiveness and efficacy of the treatment or procedure