Health Care Interpreter (HCI) Guidelines and FAQ

PacificSource Community Solutions

Federal and state regulations require Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) to provide free certified or qualified interpretation services to their members. This aligns with the goals of better health, better care, and lower costs. It also improves patient safety for the CCO's Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population.

Who pays for the provision of HCI services?

CCOs are responsible for ensuring member access to HCI services. Members may not be charged. HCI services will be paid for by the CCO as long as they support a covered Medicaid service. A list of criteria for covered Medicaid services can be found at the Oregon Health Authority's website: Oregon.gov/OHA.

How can a provider arrange and bill for HCI services?

Interpreter services may be arranged by physical health, behavioral health, oral health, and home health providers. If a provider has qualified or certified interpreters on staff, the provider's office may bill the CCO directly, using the HCPCS code **T1013.**

As of January 2021, the Oregon Health Authority allows an administrative add-on fee for interpreter services at fee-for-service (FFS) healthcare visits (including telehealth visits) when interpretation is provided by a certified or qualified interpreter. Bilingual providers are not separately reimbursable for interpreter services. PacificSource Community Solutions will continue to allow the add-on fee for interpreter services without an end date. For full billing guidance, please visit Oregon.gov (search "Interpreter Services Fee").

Providers who do not have interpreters on staff may arrange for services through one of the organizations below. These contracted HCI vendors bill PacificSource Community Solutions directly, therefore, neither provider nor member should receive a bill for these services. PacificSource Community Solutions' contracted HCI vendors include:

Certified Languages International: 844-226-4885

- Services are offered for PacificSource Community Solutions members anywhere.
- Offers telephone and video remote interpreting services (on-demand and prescheduled)
- Customer code: 203588
- On-demand video services: PacificSource.cli-merfi.com Access code: 203588ps

English 2 Spanish: 541-316-8089

- Services are offered for PacificSource Community Solutions members anywhere.
- Offers on-site (Spanish, ASL, and Purépecha), on-demand virtual and telephone interpretation, as well as documentation translations.
- For more information, visit English2Spanish.com.
- For scheduling requests, email Scheduling@English2Spanish.com.

Global Interpreters USA: 503-409-2559

- Service area includes Lane, Marion, and Polk Counties.
- For more information, visit GlobalInterpretersUSA.com.

LaVo Translations, Inc.: 503-477-7907

- Service area includes Marion, Polk, Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, and Clark Counties.
- For more information, visit LaVoTranslations.com.

Linguava Interpreters: 800-716-1777

- Service area includes Benton, Clatsop, Clackamas, Columbia, Crook, Deschutes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, Tillamook, and Washington Counties in Oregon; and Clark County in Washington.
- Offers telehealth, ASL, and document translation services.
- For more information, visit Linguava.com.

National Interpreting Service, Inc.: 503-932-8460

- Offers sign language services only.
- Services are offered for PacificSource Community Solutions members anywhere.
- For more information, visit NationalInterpretingService.org.

Oregon Certified Interpreters Network, Inc.: 503-461-6409

- Services are offered for PacificSource Community Solutions members anywhere.
- PIN: 57655614
- For more information, visit OregonCertified.com.

Passport to Languages: 800-297-2707

- Services are offered for PacificSource Community Solutions members anywhere.
- Offers telehealth, ASL, and document translation services.
- Providers and members may call to schedule the service.
- No access code is required for this vendor. The caller should state that they are calling on behalf of a PacificSource Community Solutions member, and provide the member's name, date of birth, and identification number.
- For more information, visit PassportToLanguages.com.

Professional Interpreters, Inc.: 971-304-7330 or 971-240-2661

- Services are offered for PacificSource Community Solutions members anywhere.
- Offers telehealth services.
- For more information, visit ProfessionalInterpretersOR.com.

Stars Interpreters: 503-884-1476

- Service area includes greater Portland, Salem, and Eugene.
- For more information, visit StarsInterpreters.com.

How much notice is required to schedule an interpreter through the CCO?

Generally, HCI companies require at least 48 hours' advance notice to arrange for on-site HCI services. Telephone and video interpretation services are readily available through the organizations that offer them.

Which interpreters are eligible for credentialing?

The OHA's Health Care Interpreter Program recognizes two levels of credentialing: **qualification** and **certification.**

- Both are registered by OHA.
- Both must complete an OHA-approved 60-hour training program.
- Both require 24 hours of OHA-approved continuing education (CE) every four years.
- Certified interpreters get their certification by passing a national exam for medical interpreters.

See OHA's side-by-side qualification checklist by going to Oregon.gov: Enter HCI Requirements in the search field.

Note: Bilingual employees who are not trained as either qualified or certified medical interpreters are not eligible for reimbursement. For quality and safety reasons, providers should not use untrained bilingual employees or bilingual patient family members for medical interpretation.

What is the difference between certified, qualified, and bilingual interpreters?

PacificSource Community Solutions is required to pay for qualified or certified interpreters as long as they can provide evidence of training. Providers will be asked to sign an attestation letter to indicate qualifying criteria have been met and evidence of training is available.

- A **certified interpreter** has the highest level of medical interpreter training. Certified interpreters are certified as competent by a professional organization or government entity through rigorous testing based on appropriate and consistent criteria. This includes passing a standardized national test.

- A **qualified interpreter** has been assessed for professional skills, demonstrates a high level of proficiency in at least two languages, and has the appropriate training and experience to interpret with skill and accuracy while adhering to the National Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, published by the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care. A qualified interpreter will have:
  - A high school diploma
  - 60 hours of interpreter training approved by the Oregon Health Authority
  - Proof of language proficiency in English and target language
  - Their name listed on the OHA's HCI Registry. More information is available at Apps.Oregon.gov/SOS/LicenseDirectory
- A **bilingual individual** is a person who has some degree of proficiency in two languages. Bilingualism does not by itself ensure the ability to interpret. A bilingual employee may provide direct services in both languages but, without additional training, is not qualified to serve as an interpreter and therefore **not eligible for reimbursement**. Providers are discouraged from using bilingual patient family members for interpretation.

What resources are available for learning to work with a medical interpreter?

For guidance on building HCI capacity, as well as best practices for using medical interpreter services, try these pages:

- AAMC.org/system/files/c/2/70338-interpreter-guidelines.pdf
- NCIHC.org/ethics-and-standards-of-practice
- MassGeneral.org/interpreters/working-with-an-interpreter
- Oregon.gov/oha/oei/Pages/hci-training.aspx

Who can providers contact with questions about interpreter services?

Providers may contact our Customer Service Department at **800-431-4135,** TTY: 711. We accept all relay calls.