



The Language Interpreter Center

Frequently Asked Questions

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What is the Language Interpreter Center?

The Language Interpreter Center is a collaborative, multi-agency, public-private effort to create a pool of qualified language interpreters for social service agencies, state and federal government, for-profit and non-profit businesses and medical care providers in Alaska.

Eleven sponsors worked collaboratively to implement the Language Interpreter Center, including the Rasmuson Foundation, Anchorage School District, Municipality of Anchorage, Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center, Alaska Bar Association, Alaska Court System, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Alaska Office of Public Advocacy, Alaska Public Defender Agency, ConocoPhillips, and United Way of Anchorage.

The Alaska Immigration Justice Project is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the human rights of immigrants and refugees, houses the Language Interpreter Center.

What are the goals of the Language Interpreter Center?

- Provide qualified interpreters to government, business and service organizations for Alaskans with limited English proficiency.
- Train and certify interpreters and translators in medical, legal, social service and community interpreting.
- Develop and implement a system for linking customers with qualified interpreters and translators.
- Create a statewide central registry of interpreters.
- Offer training for groups and agencies on the roles, responsibilities and professional ethics of qualified interpreters.

Why would the Language Interpreter Center benefit me as an interpreter?

- The Language Interpreter Center will assess the skill level of interpreters.
- The Language Interpreter Center will provide training, employment opportunities and career paths for eligible applicants.
- Eligible applicants will be listed on a registry of interpreters.
- The Center will connect applicants with customers needing interpreters throughout Alaska.

How do I enroll with the Language Interpreter Center?

- Applicants must fill out a registration-of-interest application.
- Applicants must participate in our screening process.

What is the purpose of the screening?

Our screening process is used to determine the language and interpreting skills of the applicant. The screening process includes the following steps:

- Fill out and return a registration-of-interest application
- Fill out and return a self-assessment questionnaire.
- Take written and oral assessments:
Call the Language Interpreter Center 907-279-2457 and make an appointment for the written and oral assessments. The oral assessments are done by ALTA Language Services and the cost is \$126.00 for two tests; English and the target language. If there is no test in your language, than the cost is only \$63.00.

Who will be conducting the training, how do I enroll, and what is the cost?

- Eligible applicants who have been selected through our screening process, passed a background check and have signed a contract with the Language Interpreter Center will have access to interpreter training by qualified trainers.
- Training costs vary depending on grants and the number of participants.

What are the requirements to become a certified interpreter?

One of our goals is to develop standards and qualifications to become a certified interpreter in medical, legal and social service interpreting in the state of Alaska.

Requirements for certification will include:

- passing written and oral tests in English and the target language
- passing an ethics test
- adhering to a code of professional conduct
- passing a background check
- participating in continuing education development.

What are the beginning skills required to become an interpreter?

- Broad knowledge of English and another language.
- Ability to speak fluently in both languages so as to be readily understood.
- Ability to understand completely what others say in either language.
- Good memory skills.
- Knowledge of specialized vocabulary and concepts in the areas of medicine and law.

How much do interpreters earn?

The salary range of interpreters will depend on the qualifications and experience of the interpreter. In most states outside of Alaska the range is \$20-\$50 per hour.