



Management Update

Insurance Services: Claims Administration and Self-Insurance

Interpreter and Translation Services to Workers

Effective Date

08/13/2007

REVISED 08/17/07

Topic

**Interpreter and
Translation Services
To Workers**

Issuing Authority

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The department or self-insured employer (SIE) (including the SIE third party administrator) will provide an interpreter to communicate with an unrepresented worker who has limited English-speaking proficiency or similarly limiting sensory impairment.

NOTE: Where a worker with limited English proficiency is represented by an attorney, the department or SIE may communicate through the attorney in English. It is the responsibility of the attorney representative to communicate with his or her client worker. If the represented worker with limited English proficiency contacts the department or SIE by phone or in person without counsel, an interpreter is authorized for the oral communications. The department or SIE is not required to provide interpreters for communications in relation to any proceedings at the BIIA or Court.

When the worker requests interpreter services, the department or SIE may verify whether the worker needs assistance in translation. Workers can report limited English proficiency status on the Report of Accident, SIF2 form, or by notifying the department or SIE by phone or letter.

Limited English proficiency is defined as limited ability or inability to speak, read, or write English well enough to understand and communicate effectively. This includes most people whose primary language is not English. Services should also be provided to workers similarly impacted by hearing, sight, or speech limitations.

Interpreters are authorized when a limited English proficiency worker needs to communicate with the department or SIE, attend medical and vocational appointments, and at independent medical examinations (IME). Authorized interpreters must be provided by the department or SIE for IMEs.

Interpreter services also include written translation of necessary correspondence to and from the unrepresented limited English proficiency worker. Copies of both the original and translated versions of the document should be maintained in the claim file.

Resources

AT&T Language Line Instructions

http://ohr.inside.lni.wa.gov/webhome/resource_docs/InterpreterService.htm

Online Reference System (OLRS)

<http://olrs.apps-inside.lni.wa.gov/>

Claims Training Bulletin: Translation Process

Management Memo: Spanish Translations

Training Handout: Services for the Hearing & Speech Impaired

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Contact [Claims Training](#) if you have any questions.

NOTE: This is an interim policy change. This issue has been referred to the policy committee to be included in upcoming revisions.