



Australian Government

Services Australia

Initial contact and identification of services for Indigenous Australians 125-01000000

Currently published version valid from 26/07/2022 9:10 PM

Background

This document outlines information relating to initial contact and identification of services for Indigenous Australians.

Government intent

Customers who contact Services Australia may be facing situations where they need extra assistance. The Service Officer by employing appropriate questioning techniques encourages the customer to fully explain their situation. This will assist in establishing what services would best suit the customer's circumstances. The Service Officer identifies an appropriate referral to the specialist officer.

There are two types of Indigenous specialist officers each having a specific role in helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers.

Methods of initial contact

When a customer first contacts Services Australia and enquires about certain payments and services, the Service Officer runs the [First Contact Service Offer \(FCSO\)](#) workflow which guides the screening process.

The focus is on identifying the customer's readiness, capability and capacity to look for and accept work and highlights the important issues that need consideration.

A customer may make an initial contact in writing, face-to-face or by phone.

Identification of services

The Service Officer identifies if a referral is appropriate to the specialist officer. Specialist Officers often act as a link between Services Australia and the many community based support services available to people requiring extra assistance and support.

Contents

[Identifying and offering a package of services for an Indigenous customer](#)

[Indigenous specialist officers](#)

[Closing dates for lodgement of students and Australian Apprentice claims](#)

[Indigenous Employment Program](#)

[Self service terminals](#)

[New Enterprise Incentive Scheme \(NEIS\)](#)

[Community Development Program \(CDP\)](#)



Australian Government

Services Australia

Accessing an Indigenous interpreter 125-17060200

Currently published version valid from 19/07/2022 10:22 PM

Background

This document outlines information how to access interpreter services for Indigenous Australians with limited English language proficiency.

Indigenous languages

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is diverse with numerous language groups that exist across Australia. There is not one common language spoken by Indigenous Australians.

Indigenous Australian languages are some of the oldest surviving languages spoken in the world. Traditionally there were over 500 different language groups and each group had their own distinctive cultural beliefs, language and dialects.

Approximately 150 Indigenous languages are spoken in Australia today. Indigenous Australians may speak up to 4 or more different Indigenous languages and/or dialects, with English often the least spoken.

Indigenous interpreting

Language can be one of the many barriers multilingual Indigenous Australians face when contacting Services Australia. Providing access to an Indigenous interpreter improves communication, engagement, mutual understanding and respect.

The agency is committed to using Indigenous interpreters for customers where English is not their primary language. The use of a customer's friend or relative as the interpreter is actively discouraged. This avoids potential problems with language competency, impartiality, content integrity and confidentiality.

Note: it is never appropriate to use a child as an interpreter.

Indigenous interpreting services

The agency provides customers with free access to Indigenous interpreters. Indigenous language services are delivered through the following arrangements:

Rostered on-site Indigenous interpreters (sessional interpreters)

On-site interpreters are available at 3 service centres in Western Australia (Broome, Kununurra and Halls Creek). This interpreting service is to be accessed in the first instance, if appropriate.

If a customer can attend one of these service centres, they will have immediate access to a face to face Indigenous interpreter.

On-demand telephone interpreting service

The on-demand telephone interpreting service provides immediate access to an Indigenous interpreter. Interpreters are available in certain Indigenous languages that include:

- Anmatyerr (pronounced An-mat-ear)
- Arrernte (Eastern Central) (pronounced A-rundaurarra)
- Burarra (pronounced Bur-rad-da)
- Kriol (Top End) (pronounced Cre-ole)
- Pitjantjatjara (pronounced Pit-junt-jara)
- Pintupi-Luritja (pronounced Pin-tupee- La-rich-a)
- Warlpiri (pronounced Wall-pree)
- Yolngu Matha (pronounced Yol-new Ma-tha) including Djambarrpuyngu (pronounced Jom-ba-poyng-oo)

- Torres Strait Creole, also known as Yumpla Tok
- Meriam Mir
- Kala Lagaw Ya
- Kala Kawaw Ya

Booked Indigenous interpreting service

Booked Indigenous interpreters can be available for on-site, telephone or remote customer appointments.

Requests for booked Indigenous interpreters are submitted in the Interpreter Management System (IMS), accessed via the Front of House (**FOH**) desktop app.

Interpreter services information

Interpreters help customers who speak a language other than English conduct their business.

- for help with how to work effectively with interpreters, see [Guidelines for using interpreters](#)
- for the benefits of using interpreters (for customer and staff), see [Interpreter Services](#)
- if a customer requires an immediate telephone interpreter, see [Contacting an on-demand telephone interpreter \(Interpreter Connect\)](#)
- if a customer is deaf or hard of hearing and requires an
 - immediate interpreter, explore their [nominee](#) arrangement, or see [Using the National Relay Service \(NRS\)](#)
 - interpreter for a future appointment, see [Interpreter Services for customers who are deaf or hard of hearing](#)
- if a customer requires an interpreter for a future appointment, see [Booking an interpreter for an appointment](#)

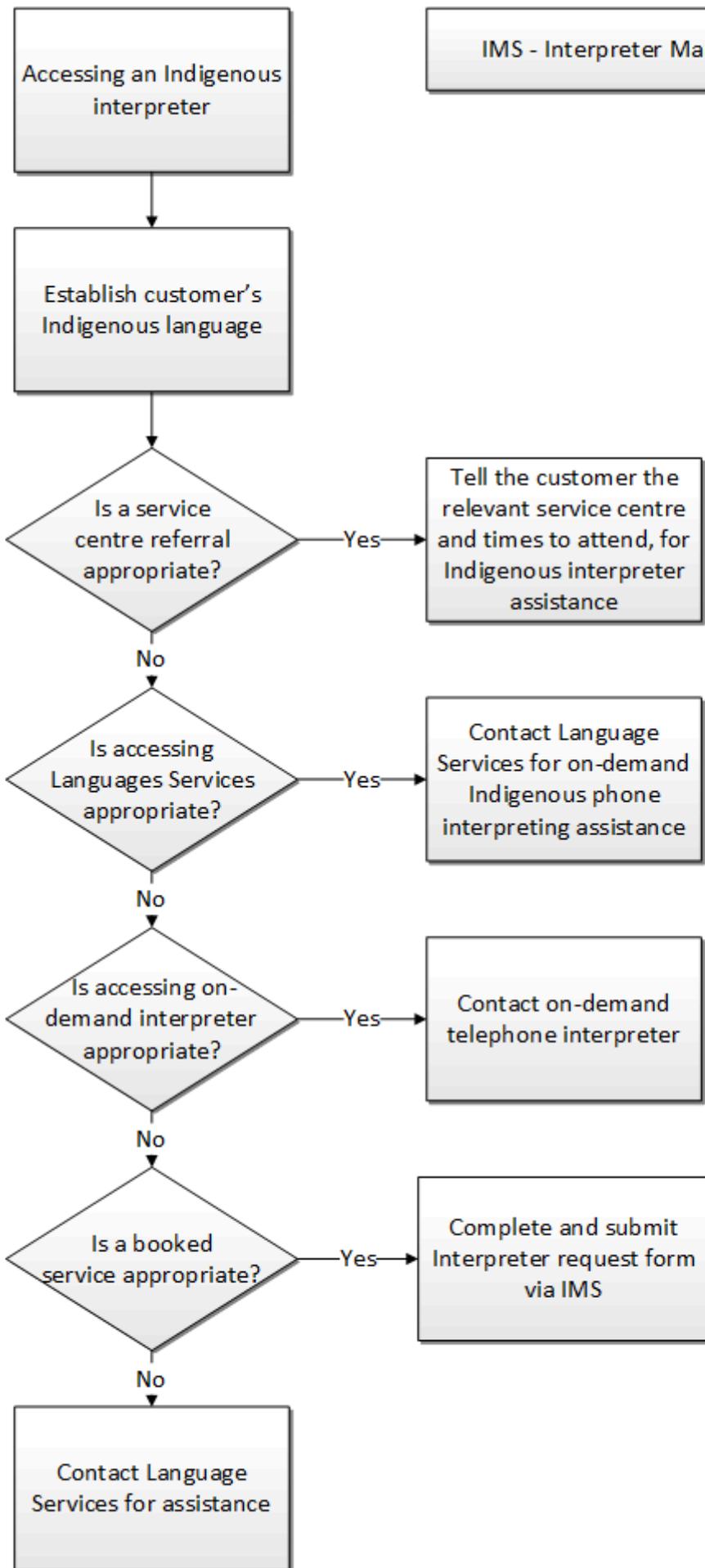
The [Resources](#) page contains a table on Indigenous sites and time zones to use for booking appointments, contact details for Language Services, a link to the Services Australia website, a link to external websites and intranet links.

Process Summary

This image provides a summary of the steps involved to access an Indigenous interpreter.

Note: [a text based version of the following process summary image is available.](#)

IMS - Interpreter Management System



Process

On this page:

[Indigenous interpreting services](#)

[Creating a booked appointment in Interpreter Management System.\(IMS\)](#)

Indigenous interpreting services

Table 1: This table describes when and how a Service Officer can access Indigenous interpreting services.

Step	Action
1	<p>Identify and record customer's preferred spoken language + Read more ...</p> <p>Advise the customer (on-site or on the telephone) an Indigenous interpreter will be used, ask them for their preferred spoken language.</p> <p>Check if the customer's need for an interpreter and their preferred language has been recorded:</p> <p>Centrelink customers:</p> <p>Check the Other Contact Details (OCD) screen, in the Interpreter Language field.</p> <p>If the language is not recorded, select OTH (Other) and annotate the Display on Access (DOA) DOC with the language/dialect spoken by the customer.</p> <p>Child Support customers</p> <p>Check the Client Profile Window.</p> <p>If the language is not recorded, select OTH in the language drop down menu and select Yes in the Interpreter required drop down menu. Document in the 'Special Contact Detail' the customer's preferred language.</p> <p>Medicare customers</p> <p>For programs that use CDMS, record the details in the Comments tab.</p> <p>Programs that use CDMS include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicare Public • Australia Immunisation Register • Incentives Program • Australian Organ Donor Register • Medicare Levy Exemption • Medicare Provider Services: claims and assessing • Medicare Enrolments <p>For programs that do not use CDMS (or have view only access), the customer's language does not need to be recorded.</p> <p>Go to Step 2</p>
2	<p>Establish customer's current location + Read more ...</p> <p>Customers located near the Broome, Kununurra or Halls Creek service centres in Western Australia (WA) can access on-site Indigenous interpreters.</p> <p>Can the customer attend the Broome, Kununurra or Halls Creek service centres?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, go to Step 3 • No, go to Step 4
3	<p>Rostered on-site Indigenous interpreters located in Broome, Kununurra and Halls Creek Service Centres +</p>

Read more ...

Appointments are not required, walk-in customers can access rostered on-site interpreters in:

- Broome, WA on Monday and Tuesday from 8 am to 12 noon (AWST) and can interpret:
 - Kimberley Kriol
 - Walmajarri
 - Warlpiri
- Kununurra, WA on Monday and Tuesday from 8 am to 12 noon (AWST) and can interpret:
 - Balangarri
 - Gija
 - Gurindji
 - Jaru
 - Kimberley Kriol
 - Miriwoong
 - Murrinh Patha
- Halls Creek, WA on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 10.30 am to 12.30 pm (AWST) and can interpret:
 - Djaru
 - Gooniyandi
 - Kija
 - Kukatja
 - Kimberley Kriol
 - Walmajarri

Procedure ends here

4

On-demand telephone interpreting service + Read more ...

The on-demand telephone interpreting service provides immediate access to Indigenous interpreters in languages that include:

- Anmatyerr (pronounced An-mat-ear)
- Arrernte (Eastern Central) (pronounced A-rundaurarra)
- Burarra (pronounced Bur-rad-da)
- Kriol (Top End) (pronounced Cre-ole)
- Pitjantjatjara (pronounced Pit-junt-jara)
- Pintupi-Luritja (pronounced Pin-tupée- La-rich-a)
- Warlpiri (pronounced Wall-pree)
- Yolngu Matha (pronounced Yol-new Ma-tha) including Djambarrpuyngu (pronounced Jom-ba-poyng-oo)
- Torres Strait Creole, also known as Yumpla Tok
- Meriam Mir
- Kala Lagaw Ya
- Kala Kawaw Ya

To access an immediate Indigenous interpreter over the telephone:

- for on-site customers, [go to Step 5](#)
- for customers on the telephone, [go to Step 6](#)
- If unsure, [go to Step 8](#)

5

Onsite Customer requires an immediate indigenous telephone interpreter + Read more ...

Advise the on-site customer a telephone interpreter will be used, ask them for their:

- Indigenous language required
- name, skin name, gender
- community name
- subject/topic of discussion

See [Language codes](#) and [Office ID](#). These are needed to contact an interpreter.

To connect to a telephone interpreter, use either:

- **Interpreter telephony kit** that has been thoroughly cleaned and quarantined for 72 hours, or
- **Cisco handset**

Call the on-demand telephone interpreting service:

- if using a **Cisco handset**
 - press the Conference button, key in the number for [Language Services](#)
- if using Services Australia Workspace (**Softphone**)
 - **Centrelink customers:** select the consultation button, key in the number for Language Services via [Language Services](#), press the telephone icon
 - **Medicare customers:** key in the number for [Language Services](#)

When a Language Service Booking Officer answers:

- ask for an on-demand interpreter in the requested language
- provide the requesting officers logon ID and the customer's details (name, skin name, community name)

The Booking Officer will place the call on hold while they manually attempt to locate an interpreter.

If the Booking Officer:

- locates an interpreter, [go to Step 7](#)
- cannot locate an interpreter, [go to Step 8](#)

6 **Customer on the telephone requires an immediate Indigenous telephone interpreter** + Read more ...

With the customer on the call, advise a telephone interpreter will be used, ask them for their:

- Indigenous language required
- name, skin name, gender
- community name
- subject/ topic of discussion

See [Language codes](#) and [Office ID](#). These are needed to contact an interpreter.

Call the on-demand telephone interpreting service:

- if using Services Australia Workspace (Softphone), with the customer on the call:
 - **Centrelink Customers:** select the consultation button, key in the number for Language Services via [Language Services](#), then press the telephone icon
 - **Child Support customers:** select 'Start a Consultation', key in the number for Language Services via [Language Services](#), then press the telephone icon
 - **Medicare customers:** key in the number for [Language Services](#)
- if using a Cisco handset, with the customer on the call:
 - press the Conference button, key in the number for [Language Services](#)

When a Language Services Booking Officer answers:

- ask for an on-demand interpreter in the requested language
- provide the requesting officers logon ID and the customer's details (name, skin name, community name)

The Booking Officer will place the call on hold, while they manually attempt to locate an interpreter.

If the Booking Officer:

- locates an interpreter, [go to Step 7](#)
- cannot locate an interpreter, [go to Step 8](#)

7 **On-demand Indigenous telephone interpreter is available** + Read more ...

After locating an interpreter, the Booking Officer checks the customer's information with the interpreter to establish if a cultural conflict of interest is present. Delays may be experienced due to this process.

If a conflict is identified, the Booking Officer will attempt to source an alternate interpreter. If no conflicts are identified, the Booking Officer advises an interpreter is available and the call will be placed on hold while they connect the interpreter to the call.

Once connected to the interpreter:

- the Booking Officer leaves the call (staff member and interpreter remain on the line)
- introduce yourself to the interpreter
- ask for the interpreter's name

When ready, join the customer to the call:

- if using Services Australia Workspace (**Softphone**), and the customer is on the telephone, select the Call Conference icon (double telephones)
- if using a **Cisco** handset, and the customer is **on-site**, conference the customer's mobile telephone number (if available). To do this:
 - press the Conference button
 - enter 0 for an outside line
 - key in the customer's mobile number, it will automatically dial
 - when the customer answers, press the Conference button again
 - if using a telephone interpreter kit with an on-site customer, provide the customer with a clean, quarantined headset

Commence the 3-way conversation (staff member, interpreter and customer).

If the call disconnects, call Language Services and explain what happened. Provide the customer and interpreter's name. The Booking Officer will attempt to reconnect the call.

At the completion of the call, record an Indigenous interpreter was used including their name:

- **Centrelink customers:** on a **DOC** on the customer's record
- **Child Support customers:** in the communication window
- **Medicare customers:** under Personal Comments in the CDMS system, for the following programs:
 - Medicare Public
 - Australia Immunisation Register
 - Incentives Program
 - Australian Organ Donor Register
 - Medicare Levy Exemption
 - Medicare Provider Services: claims and assessing
 - Medicare Enrolments
 - for programs that do not use CDMS (or have view only access), the vendor number is not required to be recorded

To provide **feedback**, [go to Step 9](#)

8

Indigenous language interpreter is not available + Read more ...

If an Indigenous language interpreter cannot be found, tell the customer there are currently no interpreters available.

Ask the customer if they would like to:

- arrange a booked telephone interpreter request for a future time/date, for:
 - on-site and telephone booked appointments, see [Booking an interpreter for an appointment](#)
 - remote servicing appointments, go to [Table 2](#)
- speak another language available via the on-demand service
- continue with the interview in English - without the help of an interpreter, if they are comfortable to do so. Service Officers are responsible for evaluating if it is appropriate to continue the interview

If the customer wishes to continue in English, record all attempts to access an interpreter:

- **Centrelink customers:** on a **DOC** on the customer's record
- **Child Support customers:** in the communication window
- **Medicare customers:** under Personal Comments in the CDMS system, for the following programs:
 - Medicare Public
 - Australia Immunisation Register
 - Incentives Program
 - Australian Organ Donor Register
 - Medicare Levy Exemption
 - Medicare Provider Services: claims and assessing
 - Medicare Enrolments
- for programs that do not use CDMS (or have view only access), the vendor number is not required to be recorded

	Procedure ends here.
9	<p>Provide feedback + Read more ...</p> <p>Staff can provide feedback about their interpreting experience to help identify how services can be improved. Feedback can include items such as interpreter performance, system issues, complaints or compliments.</p> <p>To provide feedback, email Language Services and include the following information if known:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Officer name • Office ID or Office name • date of telephone call • duration requested • time connected and disconnected to interpreter • language • interpreters name • interpreter gender • compliment, complaint or system issue <p>Procedure ends here.</p>

Creating a booked appointment in Interpreter Management System (IMS)

Table 2: This table describes how to book appointments for an Indigenous language interpreter in IMS.

Step	Action
1	<p>Identify the booked Indigenous interpreter appointment + Read more ...</p> <p>Booked Indigenous interpreters are requested for future customer appointments (telephone, on-site or remote)</p> <p>If the customer requires a booked interpreter for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on-site or telephone appointments, go to Booking an interpreter for an appointment • remote servicing appointments, go to Step 2
2	<p>Record the customer's preferred spoken language + Read more ...</p> <p>Prior to arranging a booked remote servicing appointment, check if the customer's need for an interpreter and their preferred spoken language has been recorded:</p> <p>Centrelink customers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check the Other Contact Details (OCD) screen, in the Interpreter Language field • if the language is not recorded, choose OTH (Other) and annotate the Display on Access (DOA) DOC with the language/dialect spoken by the customer <p>Child Support customers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check the Client Profile Window. • if the language is not recorded, choose OTH in the language drop down menu and select Yes in the Interpreter required drop down menu. Document in the 'Special Contact Detail' the customer's preferred language <p>Medicare customers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for programs that use CDMS, select the language from the Language Spoken At Home (other than English) menu under the Personal Details tab within the Personal records of CDMS. Record the details in the Comments tab. • programs that use CDMS include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Medicare Public ◦ Australia Immunisation Register ◦ Incentives Program ◦ Australian Organ Donor Register ◦ Medicare Levy Exemption

- Medicare Provider Services: claims and assessing
- Medicare Enrolments
- for programs that do not use CDMS (or have view only access), the customer's language does not need to be recorded

[Go to Step 3](#)

3

Booking a remote appointment with an Indigenous interpreter + Read more ...

Booked remote appointments are generally used by the Remote Servicing team as it requires travelling to remote/extremely remote Indigenous communities.

To book a remote appointment:

- navigate to the desktop
- select the **Front of House (FoH)** desktop app > **Home** page > **Interpreting Management Service (IMS) tile** > **Interpreting jobs** > **Interpreter Request**
- when the **1. Interpreter Request** information screen is displayed, select **Step 2** button to display the **General Details** information screen, complete all fields:
 - **Organisation**, select Remote Servicing
 - **Service Reason**, select General
 - **Appointment Type**, select **OTH (Other)**
- select the **Step 3** button to display the **Request Details** screen, complete all fields:
 - **Language**, select the Indigenous language
 - **Interpreting Format**, select **Seminar** booking
for a booked telephone appointment, select **Phone**
for a booked on-site appointment, select **On-site**
 - **State Date and Time**, select the date and time (24 hour time). For multiple days and/or sessions, create separate bookings for each day and/or session
 - **Duration**, the length of time must be calculated and keyed in minutes
 - **Site:**
enter the service centre where the requesting officer is located.
'Use Alternate Address', select **'Yes'** and enter the address where the appointment will be conducted. Select the site based on the time zone of the community. For example, a community based in the Northern Territory uses Western Australia time, select the site located in the Western Australian zone where the appointment will be conducted.
See the [Resources](#) page for site name guidance
- select **Step 4** to display the **Customer Details** screen, complete all fields:
 - **Customer Details**, enter Customer's CRN, full name and gender preference
 - in the **Additional Comments** box, key the Community name (if known)
- select the **Step 5** button, to display the **Contact Officer Details** screen
- complete all fields of the **Trip Leader** of the booking:
name, logon, phone, email. The Language Services Booking Officer will notify the Trip Leader of the result of the request
- select **Submit**

[Go to Step 4](#)

4

Confirmation of booked appointment + Read more ...

A message will appear confirming the booked remote appointment has been created. A Job confirmation number is provided.

Record the Job confirmation number:

- **Centrelink customers:** on a **DOC** on the customer's record
- **Child Support customers:** in the communication window
- **Medicare customers:** under Personal Comments in the CDMS system, for the following programs:
 - Medicare Public
 - Australia Immunisation Register
 - Incentives Program
 - Australian Organ Donor Register
 - Medicare Levy Exemption
 - Medicare Provider Services: claims and assessing
 - Medicare Enrolments
 - for programs that do not use CDMS (or have view only access), the vendor number is not required to be recorded

Resources

Indigenous sites and time zones

Site Name	Description
Remote Servicing Central Australia - Northern Territory (NT) locations	<p>ROC: COP</p> <p>Location: Alice Springs</p> <p>Use this site for Central Australia (NT) bookings</p>
Remote Servicing Central Australia - Western Australia (WA) locations	<p>ROC: RMCAWA</p> <p>Location: Alice Springs</p> <p>Use this site for Central Australia (WA) bookings</p>
Remote Servicing Central Australia – South Australia (SA) locations	<p>ROC: RMCASA</p> <p>Location: Alice Springs</p> <p>Use this site for Central Australia (SA) bookings</p>
Remote Servicing - Kimberley	<p>ROC: RMKIMB</p> <p>Location: Broome</p> <p>Use this site for Kimberley bookings</p>
Remote Servicing - Top End	<p>ROC: RMTOP</p> <p>Location: Darwin</p> <p>Use this site for Top End bookings</p>

Contact details

[Language Services](#)

Interpreter Connect codes and IDs

Do not share these attachments externally. See [Freedom of Information.- Information Publication Scheme](#).



[Office ID List](#)



[Language Codes List](#)



[COVID 19 Vaccination Office ID List](#)

User guides



[Tips for working with interpreters: telephone soft skills](#)



[Tips for working with interpreters: seminar interpreting](#)



[Child Support user guide for Interpreter Connect](#)



[Service Centre user guide for Interpreter Connect using the customer's mobile phone](#)



[Service Centre user guide for Interpreter Connect using an interpreter telephony kit](#)



[Smart Centre user guide for Interpreter Connect: inbound calls](#)



[Smart Centre user guide for Interpreter Connect: outbound calls](#)

Do not share this attachment externally. See [Freedom of Information - Information Publication Scheme](#).



[Language ID Guide](#)

Services Australia website

[Information in your language](#)

Forms (staff)

[Interpreter feedback form](#)



[Interpreter Telephony Kit Ordering Guide \(task card\)](#)



[Interpreter Telephony Kit Connection Guide \(task card\)](#)



[Interpreter Telephony Kit Reporting Guide \(task card\)](#)



[Record of Services Supplied form](#)

External websites

[Code of Ethics | AUSIT | Translators and Interpreters](#) (AUSIT - Code of Ethics)

Training & Support

Add the course number to the **Search** field in the [Learning Portal \(LMS\)](#) in ESSentials:

- **POR00351** - Indigenous Interpreters (web based training)
- **POR00333** - Working with Indigenous Interpreters (facilitated or virtual training)