

Integrated Managed Care (IMC) and Interpreter Service

Frequently asked Question

Who is Universal Language Service?

Universal Language Service (Universal) is the contractor for the HCA Interpreter Services program which 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](#).

How do I request interpreters?

You must [register](#) with Universal's online scheduling platform in order to request interpreter services.

You will need to register an HCA account even if you already have an account with Universal.

Once you are registered, Universal will email your login information and a link to their [Customer User Guide](#) that will help you navigate their site.

What if Universal cannot provide an interpreter?

If Universal is unable to fill your interpreter 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?"

HCA will not reimburse for requests that were:

- Not requested first through Universal
- Last minute provider or client cancellation
- Client no-show appointments

The provider is responsible for these services.

Does Universal provide 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 submit your request in advance to allow interpreters the opportunity to review their schedule. Universal cannot guarantee a last minute request will be filled.

What is the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)?

In 2011, The CBA was established between spoken interpreters and the Governor of Washington to ensure equal access for pay, professional development, union management, meetings and grievances.

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

ASL interpreters are not part of the union and are not covered by the CBA.

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

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](#)
4. W-9 form

HCA will not issue reimbursements that exceed the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) agreed rate of \$41.00 per hour or ASL rates that exceed the approved [Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing \(ODHH\)](#) rate.

If a private contracted sign 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 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 services
- Nursing facility services
- Public health agencies and public health hospitals (certified public expenditures)

What is considered medically necessary?

Medically necessary situations where a specific interpreter may be requested 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

What regions are considered a part of the IMC?

Accountable Community of Health (ACH) regions that are a part of the IMC:

- As of January 1, 2019:
 - South West WA, North Central WA, Greater Columbia, King, Pierce, and Spokane
- Beginning July 1, 2019:
 - North Sound
- Beginning January 1, 2020:
 - Thurston-Mason, Great Rivers, and Salish

For additional information, check out our [IMC plans available in each region](#) on our [IMC webpage](#).