

## Spoken language interpreter reimbursement FAQ

### What interpreter requests are eligible for reimbursement?

The Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) will reimburse for privately obtained in-person (IPI), over the phone (OPI), and video remote (VRI) spoken language interpreter services for behavioral health (BH) appointments. BH services include mental health (MH) and substance use disorder (SUD). If no interpreter has been assigned through the HCA Universal Language Service (UniversalLanguage) contract, you may use the reimbursement process.

### Reimbursement criteria

HCA will only provide reimbursement for requests that are submitted through [UniversalLanguage](#), have an unfilled job number, and are:

- An eligible BH service.
- An eligible Apple Health (Medicaid) client.
- An eligible Apple Health enrolled provider.
- An eligible pre-scheduled appointment.
- Services provided within the past 90 days.

### Can I use the HCA Interpreter Services reimbursement program for any Apple Health covered health care appointment?

No. HCA will not reimburse interpreter services when:

- The request is for an appointment other than BH, SUD, or MH services.
- The interpreter is a member of the family.
- It is for an inpatient or hospital service.
- It is for nursing facility services, BH, SUD, or MH facility.
- It is for public health agencies, hospitals, or a Behavioral Health Organization.
- The client is enrolled in Apple Health Expansion.
- It is administrative services such as, but not limited to:
  - Scheduling appointments.
  - Making reminder calls.
  - Miscellaneous office or bookkeeping tasks.

### Will the reimbursement cover all my expenses in getting my own interpreter?

No. Any costs that exceed the currently established collective bargaining agreement (CBA) interpreter rates will not be covered. You are responsible for paying the difference.

### How much will I get reimbursed?

Hourly interpreter rates are reimbursed at the current rate established in [the CBA](#).

### Is there a time limit for submitting a claim for reimbursement?

Yes. Claims must be submitted within 90 days from the date of the appointment. To ensure timely processing you must submit a reimbursement voucher and supporting documents with

the claim. Claims submitted after 90 days will be denied. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your claim, **email [Universal Billing Department](#)** or **call Universal Billing at 425-450-7021**.

## How do I request reimbursement?

You must submit your request through UniversalLanguage scheduling platform. If no interpreter has been assigned and you cancel the request and seek reimbursement you must:

1. Cancel your request in the UniversalLanguage platform and include the "Interpreter not found in time" as the cancelation reason.
2. Independently secure an interpreter.
3. Pay for your independently secured interpreter and receive proof of payment such as a receipt or invoice.
4. Complete a [reimbursement voucher](#) and send via secure email to [Universal Billing](#) with:
  - a. Proof of payment
  - b. The UniversalLanguage job number that was canceled
  - c. One-time W-9 form

## Are mileage, parking, ferry and toll expenses reimbursable?

No. Only the currently established CBA interpreter rate is reimbursable.

## Can I be reimbursed for an interpreter if the client is a no show?

No. HCA is unable to reimburse for interpreter services when a client was not present.

## Can I be reimbursed for last-minute requests?

Yes. As long as the request is submitted through UniversalLanguage and all other reimbursement criteria are met.

## Can I be reimbursed when I cancel a request that already had an interpreter assigned?

No. Reimbursements are only available when an interpreter has not already been assigned.

## Where can I find more information about how to request a spoken language interpreter?

Visit the [HCA Interpreter services webpage](#).

## Can I sign up for email notifications to receive updates and more information?

Yes. Sign up for the [GovDelivery](#) to share updates about the Interpreter Services Program including webinars and other changes.

## Resources

- [Universal Language Services](#)
- [HCA Universal downloads](#)
- [Collective bargaining agreement](#)
- [HCA Interpreter Services Program](#)

## Contact

**Email:** [Interpreter services at HCA](#)

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