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Participants from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds may need interpreting assistance to communicate with providers.

The NDIA has partnered with the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) to make sure information about the NDIS can be shared in a way participants can understand.

Services available with TIS National

TIS National is an interpreting service provided by the Department of Home Affairs for people who prefer a language other than English, and for agencies and businesses that need to communicate with linguistically diverse people.

Services available for NDIS participants to use with registered providers include:

- immediate phone interpreting
- pre-booked phone interpreting
- on-site interpreting.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update

The NDIA is recommending registered providers reduce use of on-site interpreting. If possible, we would encourage you to use phone-based interpreting services temporarily to limit social interactions.

For some participants face-to-face interaction is essential. Where essential face-to-face interaction is required, a provider representative must be present in person at the location of all on-site bookings.

Interpreters have been instructed not to enter a site without a provider representative, particularly if it is the non-English speaking person's place of residence.

Where a provider representative does not attend, TIS National will cancel the assignment, and the NDIA will be charged the full amount.

The phone- based services available are:

- immediate phone interpreting (131 450)
- pre-booked phone interpreting ([pre-booked phone interpreter form](#))
- Automated Telephone Interpreting Service (1800 131 450).

Automated Telephone Interpreting Service

Automated Telephone Interpreting Service (ATIS) is now available as an NDIA- funded service.

ATIS allows you to connect to a phone interpreter without having to phone the TIS National Contact Centre and will save time when requesting a phone interpreter. ATIS offers over 50 languages.

Registered providers can use their current NDIA funded Client Code (set up with the registration instructions on this page) to fill out the [ATIS application form](#) to access ATIS.

For more information, refer to the [ATIS website](#) .

Registering for funded TIS National services

You will need to be a registered NDIS provider to access funded interpreting services. You will also need to register with TIS National for a Client Code.

Unregistered providers can still use TIS National services, however they will be expected to fund the cost of the service and will be forwarded a bill directly.

To access NDIA funded interpreting services, registered providers need to register for a client code through the [TIS National website](#) using these details (if you already have a TIS National client code, you still need to register as follows, so NDIA receives invoices for NDIS participants):

1. Category - Commonwealth Government Agency
2. Subcategory - National Disability Insurance Agency
3. Name of agency - your organisation name
4. NDIS Provider Registration Number - your unique provider number supplied by the NDIA
5. Section name - NDIS
6. Add provider details - while requesting your email address, please note that invoices will be sent directly to the NDIA.

TIS National will issue an activation email with your client code, requesting you log into TIS online to activate your account. Do not use this code to book until you have received a welcome email from TIS National confirming your client code and details on how to book TIS National services including using the participant's NDIS number.

You should receive this email within two working days. For further details please phone TIS National on 1300 655 820.

Accessing TIS National services

Once you become registered with TIS National you can access immediate phone interpreting, pre-booked phone interpreting and on-site interpreting on behalf of an NDIS participant implementing the funded supports in a plan.

Whenever you request an interpreter, you will need to provide your TIS National Client Code, the language you need, the participants' NDIS number and postcode and the relevant NDIS support category, such as improved daily living.

You must also request an interpreter with an NDIS Worker Screening Check.

The TIS Online booking system automatically requests an interpreter with an NDIS Working Screening Check when someone makes a booking for an NDIS participant.

Interpreter bookings can be accepted up to 90 days in advance for both pre-booked phone and on-site interpreting jobs. TIS National suggests booking at least one week in advance to ensure the availability of interpreters.

Immediate phone interpreting

NDIS participants and providers can access immediate phone interpreting services by calling TIS National's operator assisted service on 131 450 (within Australia). This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, however not all languages are available during all time periods.

Please consider using immediate phone interpreting services for the most popular languages. You do not have to book and there are no cancellation fees. For details of popular languages, view the [TIS National website](#).

Pre-booked phone interpreting

TIS no longer takes pre-booked assignments over the phone. All pre-booked phone assignments must now be made using TIS Online.

TIS National recommends pre-booking a telephone interpreter for less common languages or if you have a set time for your appointment.

Providers must consider the needs of the participant when booking a phone interpreter. If you are unsure if you need to pre-book an interpreter you can call TIS National's Client Liaison team on 1300 655 820.

On-site interpreting

When you need a face-to-face interpreter, you can [book on-site interpreting via TIS online](#) . This is an automated booking tool to request and manage on-site interpreter bookings online.

On-site (face-to-face) interpreters are recommended where communication involves:

- sensitive, complex, or time-consuming issues
- group meetings or interviews planned in advance
- situations where, for practical reasons, phone interpreting is not appropriate; for example, reliance on mobile phones in rural and remote locations or when working with participants with a hearing impairment.

Video Remote Interpreting

Video remote interpreting is now available. This option allows you to connect with an interpreter via a video conferencing platform such as Microsoft Teams, Webex or Zoom rather than on-site or via the phone. Booking a video remote interpreting service can be done through the [TIS online booking system](#) .

How to request interpreters with an NDIS Worker Screening Check

The NDIS Worker Screening Check (WSC) is one way to reduce risk of harm to people with disability.

This clears a person to work in certain roles.

Registered NDIS providers must ensure that workers in certain roles have had this check or hold a [valid acceptable check](#) .

When you request an interpreter through TIS National, you can request the interpreter has a WSC when using the online booking system:

- Under the 'Nature of appointment' section, select 'Yes' to the question 'Do you have any other specific requirements for the job?'

- Further questions and a free text box will appear.
- Select 'Yes' for the 'Working with Children Check or equivalent' section.
- Select the state/territory where the NDIS participant will be located.
- In the free text box next to 'Specific requirements for appointment' enter 'Allocate interpreter holding WSC or WWCC for this request'.

You can also make the request when making a phone booking.

This is an interim solution while TIS National updates its system to allow users to select either Working with Children Check (WWCC) or Worker Screening Check (WSC).

Cancelling a TIS National service

The full fee applies for TIS interpreter appointments cancelled with less than 24hrs notice or when there is a failure to attend.

To reduce cancellation charges, we encourage you to:

- Inform the participant about the 24hr cancellation policy at the time of the booking.
- Remind the participant of the meeting 48hrs prior to the meeting. TIS National will send an email notification to the contact person 48hrs prior to the appointment.
- Inform TIS of any cancellations as soon as possible.

More details on [TIS National's cancellation policy on their website](#) .

What to remember when using TIS National services

An NDIS provider is responsible for service quality and ensuring that regulatory responsibilities are met.

TIS National interpreters cannot translate documents or complete forms on behalf of you or the participant; they can only interpret what is being communicated verbally between the two parties.

Find out more about [TIS Online or visit the TIS Online login page](#) to get started.

Costs for interpreter travel to remote areas

When an on-site interpreting job is in a regional or rural area, an interpreter may not be available. In certain circumstances, the NDIA may pay for travel costs where the one-way distance is greater than 100km.

These jobs require pre-approval by the NDIA and should be submitted via TIS Online. Find out more about extended travel for on-site jobs on the [TIS National website](#) .

Requesting a specific interpreter

TIS National may agree to a participant's request for a specific interpreter where the NDIS provider can demonstrate evidence of continuity of care. A specific interpreter request is more likely to be successful if you can demonstrate that allocating the nominated interpreter:

- is essential to maintaining the quality and continuity of care or service
- is of clear benefit to the non-English speaking participant
- has interacted with the non-English speaking participant previously, either with your agency or another agency delivering services to the participant.

More details about accessing TIS National services are available from the [TIS National website](#) .

If you have any further questions regarding specific interpreter requests for participants, please phone 1300 655 820 and ask to speak with your Account Manager.

Services not provided by TIS National

Indigenous languages are not available through TIS National and will need to be sourced from state-based interpreting services.

Disability-related interpreting supports (such as hearing or vision interpreting) are not available through TIS National. NDIS providers are encouraged to source assisting communication services locally or by following the participant's preference, as these supports are included in a participant's plan.

TIS National does not provide document translations. To enquire about translated information for a participant contact the NDIA on 1800 800 110.

Aboriginal interpreting services for Northern Territory participants

The NDIA has an agreement with Northern Territory Aboriginal Interpreting Services (AIS).

Registered providers can access NDIA funded aboriginal interpreting services when providing services and supports to participants who need an aboriginal interpreter.

AIS services should only be used when an aboriginal interpreter is needed by the participant. Participants do not have to be living in the Northern Territory to use this service.

The cost of aboriginal interpreting services will be billed directly to the NDIA and will not be charged to an NDIS participant's plan budget.

For information on how to book an AIS interpreter, please [visit the AIS website](#).

For information on how to complete a booking for payment by the NDIA, please email corporate.contracts@ndis.gov.au

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