

Important notice for interpreters and Language Service Providers regarding the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out

Vaccine eligibility for interpreters

The Australian Government has determined which priority groups are eligible for early access to the vaccine. Interpreters providing face-to-face services in work environments that have been identified as a priority will be eligible to receive the vaccine at the same time as other professionals working in that environment.

For example, interpreters will be eligible to receive the vaccine in Phase 1a if they are working in settings of high-risk exposure to COVID-19 also considered in Phase 1a, such as:

- Direct contact with people who have tested positive to COVID-19
- Quarantine workers
- Emergency Departments and Intensive Care Units
- Residential aged-care and disability facilities.

For further information about when people and priority professions will be eligible to receive the vaccine use the Australian Government's COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Checker: <https://covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au/eligibility>. In the Eligibility Checker, interpreters should identify as having the same work environment or profession as the people they work alongside while they are interpreting.

Once you are eligible, the Eligibility Checker will provide contact details of approved providers for you to book your vaccination appointment. If your place of work is in a public hospital or other public health setting you will be contacted by the Hospital and Health Service with information about how to arrange an appointment.

Role of interpreters in vaccination roll-out

Interpreters have an important role in the delivery of COVID-19 vaccines to people who do not speak English or have a low level of English language proficiency.

Many people with low English language proficiency are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and may request an interpreter for questions about the vaccine or for assistance with providing their informed consent to receiving the vaccine.

It is important that interpreters remain impartial when communicating to clients about COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccines in line with the [AUSIT Code of Ethics](#). This includes not discussing personal beliefs or sharing information about the vaccine that would undermine official messaging and lead to people not taking the vaccine. Other staff associated with the coordination of language services, including providers, should also remain impartial to clients and colleagues.



When providing information about COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccines interpreters **must** use messaging and resources that have been approved by the Australian Government Department of Health or Queensland Health. Up to date resources are available online:

<https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines>

<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19>

Role of Language Service Providers

Language Service Providers funded through the Queensland Government Standing Offer Arrangement (HSQ81638) should share this fact sheet with their staff/contractors who are interpreters.

While having the vaccine is encouraged, it is not mandatory.

Interpreters who go for a vaccination might need evidence of the work environment they provide interpreting services in. Queensland Health requests that funded Language Service Providers provide interpreters who wish to have the vaccine with a letter as proof that they undertake face-to-face interpreting in particular work environments. The letter should be on their company letterhead. Example text for a letter is provided **overpage**.

Contact

If you have any questions about COVID-19 vaccine roll-out or have questions about the vaccine contact the Australian Government COVID-19 vaccine helpline on 1800 020 080 or call Queensland Health on 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).



Date: [enter date]

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter confirms that [enter title first name surname] is an interpreter contracted by our company, and provides face-to-face interpreting services in one or more of the following settings:

- [list work environments that face to face interpreting is provided – for example hospital and health environment (general); hospital emergency department; hospital intensive care units; aged care facilities; disability accommodation service settings, other disability support settings, emergency services (police, corrective services, fire and rescue)].

Our company has been requested by Queensland Health to provide this advice as evidence of this person's eligibility for COVID-19 vaccination in the appropriate phase for these environments. Should you wish to confirm these details, please contact us on [enter phone / email address for contact].

Yours sincerely

[enter signatory name]
[enter position title]