



HCA Medical Over-the-Phone Interpretation

During Washington's state of emergency, HCA will allow in-person interpreters to provide over-the-phone interpretation (OPI) through Universal Language. This is the preferred method of interpretation during the COVID-19 pandemic and providers are encouraged to request OPI whenever possible.

Video remote interpretation (VRI) is not available through HCA's contract with Universal Language; however, providers can use their own video-based technology and in-person interpreters can participate remotely.

HCA will also allow interpreters to go on-site to provide in-person interpretation when the healthcare provider determines it is necessary to support the client's care. The healthcare provider is expected to provide personal protective equipment (PPE) and infection control measures for the interpreter.

For more information on providing video-based or in-person interpretation during the state of emergency, please see the Alternate Types of Service section on page 5.

These guidelines are valid only for HCA Medicaid Appointment requests during Washington's State of Emergency. Current information and resources regarding OPI during the COVID-19 pandemic can be found on Universal Language's [Interpreter HCA OPI webpage](#).

Service Overview & HCA OPI Process

Interpreters who are qualified to accept HCA Jobs and meet the prerequisite requirements for providing OPI services (see Prerequisite Requirements section below for details) will have the option of accepting HCA OPI Jobs.

As soon as an Interpreter has accepted the OPI Job, the Requester will receive a confirmation to let them know their request has been filled. At the Scheduled Start Time of the appointment, the Requester will call Universal Language using an assigned OPI phone number to be connected to the Interpreter. If a third party, such as a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Client, needs to be conferenced into the call, the Universal Language Agent will connect all parties, then remove themselves from the call so the interpretation session can begin.

Prerequisites

In an effort to help local in-person interpreters, the same pool of interpreters that are already qualified to accept HCA jobs for in-person services will be used for HCA pre-scheduled OPI jobs. In addition, interpreters who do not meet HCA's immunization requirements but are otherwise fully qualified for HCA Medical Jobs (i.e. have all documents necessary on file and have proper certification) will also be eligible for HCA-Medical OPI Jobs.



To provide Pre-scheduled OPI for HCA jobs, interpreters will need the following:

Quiet, Secure Location

OPI Interpreters need a dedicated space reserved for taking OPI calls that is free from distractions as well as any noises that may be heard by other parties on the OPI call. The space must also be secure, so there is no chance an outside party may overhear a client’s confidential information.

Reliable Phone Connection

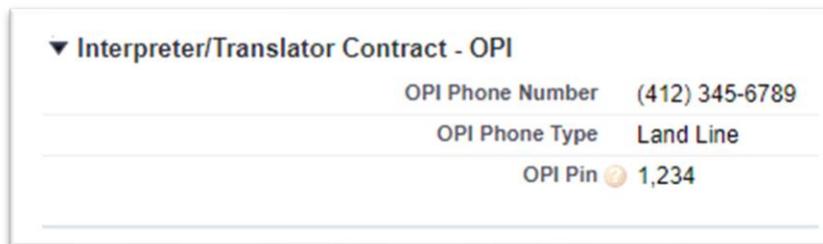
For call clarity and dependability, OPI interpreters must answer all OPI calls using a land line, whenever possible. It is critical that interpreters have a reliable phone connection that will not drop calls or result in choppy audio. Technical assistance is not supported for interpreters’ personal devices.

Interpreter Profile Setup

Interpreters providing OPI services need to update their Profile on the Scheduling Portal so it lists the phone number that is to be used to contact them for HCA Pre-scheduled OPI Jobs, the type of phone they will be using (land line or mobile) and the PIN number they will use to verify their identity prior to each OPI call.

Interpreters must update this section of their profile as follows:

1. Login to Scheduling Portal
2. Click on *Contacts* tab
3. Select “My Contact Info” view and click “Go!”
4. Click on name to open the *Contact Detail* page
5. Scroll down to *Interpreter/Translator Contract – OPI* section



OPI Phone Number

In order to be included in OPI Job offers, interpreters must enter the phone number Universal Language should dial to reach them for OPI calls into the *OPI Phone Number* field on their profile. Once the OPI Phone Number has been saved on an interpreter’s profile, the field will be “locked”. Interpreters may update the phone number listed by contacting Universal Language’s Interpreter Accounts Department at interpreter@ulsonline.net or 425-450-7022.



OPI Phone Type

Interpreters indicate the type of phone line being used to provide OPI services – land line or mobile phone. Reminder – for call clarity and dependability, land lines are highly recommended, whenever possible. It is critical that interpreters have a reliable phone connection that will not drop calls or result in choppy audio.

OPI PIN

Prior to each OPI Job, interpreters must provide their 4-digit PIN. This PIN will be used to authenticate the Interpreter, ensuring that the appropriate interpreter has been reached and not another family member.

- Interpreters choose their own 4-digit OPI PIN
- OPI PINs cannot start with a zero (first digit must be 1-9 only)
- Once the OPI PIN has been saved on the interpreter's profile, the field will be "locked".
Interpreters may update the OPI PIN listed by contacting Universal Language's Interpreter Accounts Department at interpreter@ulsonline.net or 425-450-7022.

Interpreter PIN Validation Phone Number: Interpreter's OPI Phone Number and PIN will update from Salesforce into the Phone System nightly. The day AFTER you have set your OPI Phone Number and PIN in Salesforce you can test entering your PIN by calling this phone number **425-365-0071**

OPI PINs are to be kept confidential; OPI PINs should not be shared with outside parties or other interpreters under any circumstances.

HCA Medical OPI Process

Interpreters accept/reject HCA OPI Job offers via Universal Language's online Scheduling Portal. Interpreters that are not familiar with the Scheduling Portal may access instructions in Universal Language's [Interpreter Platform User Guide](#).

When an interpreter accepts an HCA OPI Job, they will receive a call from a Universal Language Agent at the scheduled start time. The Agent will create a conference call between the Requester, Interpreter and LEP Client, if applicable. Once all parties are connected, Universal Language's agent will remove themselves from the call and the interpretation session will begin



How To Accept / Reject Available Pre-Scheduled OPI Jobs

Interpreters can accept Pre-Scheduled OPI jobs via the online Scheduling Portal, text message or email. **Prior to accepting a job, interpreters should review the "Type of Service" field on each job to determine if it is an In-person job or a Pre-scheduled OPI job;** the "Type of Job" for Pre-scheduled OPI jobs will be listed as "Phone Pre-Scheduled".

		Type of Service	Start	Job Id
Accept	Reject	In-Person	Thu, 4/16/2020 2:30 PM - 1 hr 0 min	J-1663866
Accept	Reject	In-Person	Thu, 5/7/2020 4:30 PM - 1 hr 0 min	J-1663864
Accept	Reject	Phone Pre-Scheduled	Wed, 6/3/2020 2:45 PM - 1 hr 0 min	J-1663865

For detailed information about how to accept jobs via any of these methods, please refer to the Job Management section of Universal Language’s [Interpreter Platform User Guide](#).

Call Flow

Interpreters who have accepted an HCA OPI Job need to be in a quiet place, ready and waiting to answer a phone call from Universal Language at the Job’s scheduled start time. Universal Language will only call interpreters on the OPI Phone Number the interpreter provides on their online Profile.

1. At the designated service start time, the Requester will call Universal Language and provide the Job Number. The Universal Language Agent will then place the Requester on hold and call the Interpreter assigned to the Job.
2. Interpreter will answer the phone by saying “Hello” to trigger the phone system
3. Once the phone system has detected the interpreter’s voice, they will be prompted to enter their OPI PIN, and then press #
4. A “Start [language] interpretation” message will play as the interpreter is connected to let them know the language they will be interpreting in and that the session is beginning
5. Depending on the situation, the Interpreter will be connected in one of the following ways:



- a. Interpreter is immediately put on hold while the Agent finishes collecting Job details from the Requester
 - b. Interpreter is connected to an Agent who will greet them and provide any special instructions for the call prior to conferencing the Interpreter with the Requester
 - c. Interpreter may be immediately connected to the Requester to begin the interpretation session right away if there is no data collection required
6. If the LEP client needs to be conferenced into the call as well, the Agent will briefly put the call on hold, dial the 3rd party's phone number and then connect all lines to the conference
 7. Once the session is ready to begin, the Agent will announce they are dropping off the conference call
 8. The Interpreter will begin the session by delivering "Pre-Session" script (see Call Scripts section below for details)
 9. Interpreter provides service
 10. Interpreter ends session by delivering "Post-Session" script (see Call Scripts section below for details)
 11. Interpreters should stay on the conference until the Requester hangs up. As soon as the Requester hangs up, the call will be disconnected.

Call Scripts

For consistency and quality assurance, all interpreters are to follow the scripts provided below. These scripts should be delivered verbatim on every OPI call. Scripts vary slightly based on whether the Client is already on the line at the time the interpreter is conferenced in, or not.

Pre-Session

Pre-sessions are used at the beginning of each session as a way to establish expectations for the other party as to what interpretation protocols will be used and to provide the interpreter's ID Number.

Notes:

- If the client's name, the interpreter has listed for the appointment, does not match the Requester's records, the interpreter should not provide services; interpreters should only provide services for the client listed under the associated Job Number on the scheduling portal. If this situation arises, interpreters should politely refer the customer to Universal Language for assistance (888-462-0500) and may provide documentation in the "Start & End Time Dispute Explanation" field when Approving/Disputing the job times for the appointment.
- Part of the pre-session involves the interpreter introducing themselves to the Client. If the Requester does not want the interpreter to introduce themselves to the client, they should discontinue the remainder of pre-session script and allow the Requester to lead the introduction.



Connection to Third Party Needed

When the Requester needs Universal Language's OPI Agent to contact their client (for telehealth appointments), the Agent will first call the Interpreter, so they are on the line with the Requester. Then, the Agent will call the LEP Client. When they answer the call, the Interpreter will assist with asking for the Client and will give a short Pre-Session introduction, so the Client is aware an interpreter on the line assist them. From there, the Requester will begin the session.

It is important that the interpreter looks up the Job information in advance for job information and client's name, so they have that information ready during the Pre-Session.

Pre-Session Script

To Requester (English):

"Hello, this is [language] interpreter ID Number [your ID Number]. I will interpret everything you say and keep it confidential. May I introduce myself to the client?"

Requester: "Yes"

"And their name is [client first and last name]?"

Requester: "Correct"

To LEP Client (Target Language): [when client answers phone]

"Hello, may I please speak with [client first and last name]?"

Client: "Yes, this is [client's name]"

"Hello, [client first name] I will be your English interpreter today. I will interpret everything you say and keep it confidential."

To Requester (English):

"Please begin the session when you are ready"



Please click on the link to listen to a sample recording of OPI call setup (with connection to a 3rd party) from the Interpreter's perspective: [SampleInterpreterOPICall](#)



Client Already Connected

If the Client is already on the line with the Requester, a similar Pre-Session script is followed to allow the Interpreter to quickly introduce themselves to all other parties before beginning the session.

Pre-Session Script

To Requester (English):

*“Hello, this is **[language]** interpreter ID Number **[your ID Number]**. I will interpret everything you say and keep it confidential. May I introduce myself to the client?”*

Requester: “Yes”

To LEP Client (Target Language):

“Hello, [client first name] I will be your English interpreter today. I will interpret everything you say and keep it confidential.”

To Requester (English):

“Please begin the session when you are ready”

Post-Session Script

Post-sessions are used at the end of each session as a way to indicate to the English speaker that the interpreter believes the session has concluded. This allows for a consistent, professional sign-off and helps avoid the possibility of ending the session prematurely. It also allows the Requester the opportunity to continue the session, if needed, as well as record the interpreter’s ID number.

To Requester (English):

“Is further interpretation needed?”

*“Thank you very much. The interpreter’s ID Number is **[your ID Number]**. When you are ready to end the session, please hang up and all parties will be disconnected.”*

*****Notes:** *If the Requester gives a clear indication that the session is over, the interpreter does not need to ask “Is further interpretation needed?”. Clear indications include statements such as “Thank you, we are done” or “That’s all I need interpreted, thank you”.*

The post-session should be completed, even if the interpreter believes the Requester has already disconnected from the call.



Questions/Concerns

Should a requester have questions / concerns, or ask to speak to a customer service representative, the interpreter should always instruct the requester to contact Universal Language for assistance; interpreters should not attempt to answer questions or record feedback.

To Requester (English):

“Please contact Universal Language Service with any questions and they will be happy to assist you. They can be reached at 888-462-0500.”

Approving / Disputing Start and End Times

Interpreters will be Checked In/Out online for HCA OPI Jobs, just as they are for HCA In-person jobs. Interpreters will need to log into the scheduling portal to Approve / Dispute the service start time and service end time for each Job. For detailed instructions on this process please refer to the [Interpreter Platform User Guide](#).

Alternate Types of Service

Although OPI is the preferred method of interpretation during the state of emergency, HCA will allow interpreters to provide video-based or in-person interpretation for HCA Medicaid appointments.

Video-Based Interpretation

Interpreters may accept Jobs for video-based appointments that have been scheduled by healthcare providers. Video-based appointments are accepted through Universal Language’s scheduling portal as “In-Person” appointments. Requesters will provide video conferencing information in “Notes to Interpreter” section on the Job along with any other information the interpreter will need to successfully connect to the video-based appointment. If technical assistance is needed, the Requester is responsible for providing that to the Interpreter.

Notes To Interpreter (e.g. department, clinic, field of services; directions; contact info for social service appointments)

Video based appointment info:

Meeting Link: <https://example.us02web.eDBOY2Nnejh1VmJRTGY2N>

Meeting ID: 987 654 321

Password: 123456

Note: If the interpreter is experiencing technical difficulty for video-based appointments only, they may contact the requester directly to troubleshoot. Direct communication with an authorized requestor/provider for troubleshooting of a video-based appointment will be allowed by the interpreter and will not create an incident under the IRP process. Interpreters should contact jobs@ulsonline.com for all other communication regarding OPI or in-person appointments.



In-Person Interpretation

In-person interpreter services should only be requested when the healthcare provider has used their clinical judgement to determine it is medically necessary to support the client’s care needs. When choosing to use an in-person interpreter, providers are expected to provide the same level of personal protective equipment (PPE) and infection control measures used by medical professionals in their facility.

Examples of situations that may determine an in-person interpreter is medically necessary to support the client’s care needs include:

- Communicating nuances of body language so that messaging would be complicated without in-person interpretation, such as unusually complex assessments, occupational therapy, or behavioral health.
- When phone interpretation could be disruptive to therapeutic care and services, such as Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA).
- Procedures and care require the patient to move room to room in which the interpreter phone cannot follow the patient, such as radiology
- End of life care

When an Interpreter provides services in-person, the Requester is expected to provide the Interpreter with the same level of personal protective equipment (PPE) and infection control measures used by medical professionals in the facility.

When accepting new Jobs, Interpreters will find a list of PPE they will be provided with at the appointment and infection control measures in “Notes to Interpreter” section on the Job.



Providers must comply with the [PROCLAMATION BY THE GOVERNOR: AMENDING AND EXTENDING PROCLAMATIONS 20-05 AND 20-24](#) and the DOH [COVID-19 Infection Control Guidance for In-Person Interpretation Services](#), which apply to in-person interpreters.

Note: Interpreters are not required to accept in-person appointments if PPE/safety precautions are not offered during the appointment.

Interpreters should manage their jobs by reviewing the interpreter notes field and giving back any jobs they do not want to complete. This includes in-person requests that do not have any comments in the interpreter notes field. If the interpreter accepts a job with no comments, the interpreter is expected to complete the job. It is the interpreter’s responsibility to review the notes and give back any job they are unwilling to complete.

Effective July 1, 2020 at midnight, HCA will require the Incident Resolution Process (IRP) to resume for all givebacks.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What if the interpreter is disconnected prior to the conference being completed?

A: The Requester will need to call back in to Universal Language and we will attempt to connect the same interpreter one time to continue the OPI call, however, if we are unable to reach you we will attempt to connect the requester with another interpreter who is available instead.

Q: What is the correct way to disconnect from a call?

A: The Interpreters should wait on the line and will be automatically disconnected from the call when the Requester hangs up.

Q: If the interpreter does not receive a call at the Service Start Time, how long should they wait?

A: Interpreters should wait and be available for a minimum of 30 minutes, after which the Job will be considered a Last-Minute Cancellation.

Q: What if the LEP Client does not answer the phone when contacted?

A: Depending on the Requester's preference, the Agent may immediately redial the client's phone number in a second attempt to reach them. If the client still does not answer the call, the **requester** may ask the interpreter to leave a voicemail indicating the time they will try contacting the client again for the appointment, if that is an option. The interpreter is to remain available for the call-back for a 30-minute window, after which the Job will be considered a last-minute cancellation. During this 30-minute window, the Requester may call Universal Language up to 3 times to request that additional attempts to reach the client are made. (Recommended intervals are at the scheduled start time, 10 minutes after the start time and 25 minutes after the start time).

Q: How are interpreters paid for HCA OPI Jobs?

A: OPI Jobs under the emergency HCA contract amendment during COVID-19, will be reimbursed according to the in-person rates, to include the minimums, client no-shows and last-minute cancellations.

Q: What happens if I am still on a previous call when my next job is about to start?

A: The policy for OPI will remain the same as in-person. The interpreter should be available at the start of the next job. Kindly inform the requester that you do not have time to continue if the job goes over the scheduled end time.

Q: For Family Member appointments, will I get a separate call for each Job Number?

A: No, you will only be called once for all family members, however, when approving / disputing start times online, it is important that each Job Number has separate start and end times (that do not overlap).

Q: If the provider is running behind, and they ask you give them your phone number so they can call you when they are ready, can you provide it?

A: No, Requesters are not able to contact Interpreters directly. Services that do not begin within 30 minutes of the scheduled start time will be considered last minute cancellations.

Q: What happens if I get to a job and there is no PPE?

A: Interpreters should come fully prepared with their own PPE, in the event PPE is not provided by the Medicaid provider.