



Child and Family Support System

Working with Interpreters and Translators: Practice Guide



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Government of
South Australia

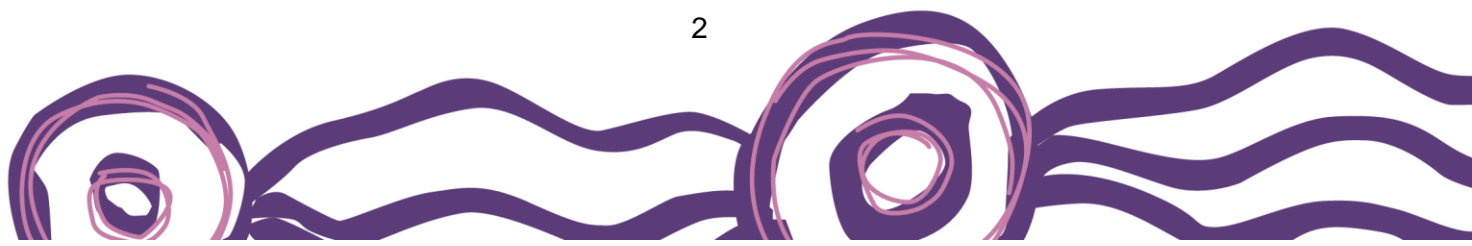


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Acknowledgement

The Department of Human Services (DHS) recognises and respects the historical and cultural significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. We acknowledge and value the diversity of these cultures and the contribution they make to enriching Australian society.





Overview

This Practice Guide provides advice to practitioners working within the Safer Family Services on the use of interpreting and translating services to aid communication with children and families to support their access to information and services. It requires practitioners to consider:

- when and how they will engage interpreters and translating services
- the preferred models of interpreting services, and
- when they can utilise bilingual staff, family and friends for interpreting assistance.

This guidance applies to all SFS practitioners working within the Child and Family Support System (CFSS). Non-government CFSS services funded by DHS are strongly encouraged to develop their own interpreting and translating policies and procedures consistent with this guidance.

This guidance is adapted from a range of interpreting and translating resources developed by Multicultural Affairs, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.


Purpose

South Australia has a culturally diverse population. The 2016 Census showed that almost 400,000 South Australians were born overseas and about 270,000 speak a language other than English at home. Of these, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are spoken by more than 3355 people and non-verbal (sign) languages are used by almost 3,200 people.

SFS is committed to ensuring individuals are able to engage with services regardless of their proficiency in English language. Effective communication between people who have different language needs is an important element of an inclusive, accessible and responsive child and family support services.

SFS services must engage professional interpreting services (used to assist with oral communication) when proficiency in English language is a barrier to effective communication and understanding between a practitioner and a client, or when requested by a client.

A professional translating service (used to assist with written documentation) must be engaged to provide written documents to client groups where practicable. This is particularly critical where there may be a decision made or an action taken that may impact on the life, care, safety and wellbeing of children. For SFS practitioners, this would apply when developing Safety Plans.



If a practitioner assesses that a client does not need the assistance of an interpreter, a practitioner must be satisfied that the client's language skills are sufficient to manage the range of complex information that will be discussed throughout case management. This is critical to ensure that there is clarity in all discussions, with the child and family views are heard and understood, and decisions and processes are made clear.

Allyship Accountability

Applying an Aboriginal cultural lens

At the time of colonisation, it is estimated that there were at least 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages spoken across Australia. These were distinct languages (not dialects), each with its own extensive vocabulary and complex grammar.¹ Past and current government policies have affected the practice and continuation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. The 2016 Census reported that 159 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are still in use. Most of these languages are considered severely or critically endangered.² However, in some community's language is still strong and is being revitalised and revived. This is an important act of reconciliation and can help with connections to culture, Country, and community.


In the Commonwealth Ombudsman's 2011 Report 'Talking in Language: Indigenous language interpreters and government communication', the Ombudsman found that: "[w]hile the linguistic needs of the majority of Australia's established migrant communities can be largely met by interpreter services, the same cannot be said for Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. There is often a lack of awareness of the significant barrier that language poses for communication between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Ignorance of, or failure to address that barrier can lead to gaps in service delivery to Indigenous Australians by all levels of government."³

To help bridge the language and cultural barriers experienced by Aboriginal peoples when accessing services, the South Australian Government has developed the South Australian Policy Framework: Aboriginal Languages Interpreters and Translators. This Policy Framework has been designed to ensure a coordinated policy approach across South Australian Government agencies and services for the effective provision and use of Aboriginal languages interpreting and translating services. Where interpreting and

¹ Reconciliation Australia, 'Let's talk... Languages' 2019

² Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and Australian National University (ANU), National Indigenous Languages Report, 2020

³ Commonwealth Ombudsman, Canberra, Talking in Language: Indigenous language interpreters and government communication, 2011



translating services are needed to communicate between English and Aboriginal languages, refer to the South Australian Aboriginal Languages Interpreters and Translators Guide for additional guidance and a list of providers of specific languages.

The Aboriginal Language Interpreting Service (ALIS) will be one of several interpreting services that will be operating within South Australia from December 2021. ALIS will provide interpreters in a number of Aboriginal languages including Arrernte, Luritja, Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara, Warlpiri and others.

The DPC website (the SA Aboriginal languages guide) has relevant information on this service, see link:

<https://www.dpc.sa.gov.au/responsibilities/aboriginal-affairs-and-reconciliation/resources-and-publications/south-australian-aboriginal-languages-interpreters-and-translators-guide>

When communicating with Aboriginal peoples, the importance of non-verbal communication should also not be underestimated. Practitioners should be aware of non-verbal cues, body language and the message it sends about how a person is feeling.

Applying a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse lens

When working with families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, there are a range of cultural and language factors that need to be considered when booking an interpreter. When having sensitive conversations about child safety and risk, it is important to consider the interpreter's suitability and any preferences expressed by the client. This may include the interpreter's gender, ethnicity, or whether they are sourced from outside of the local community (an interstate interpreting agency may be used). The use of a preferred interpreter can help to aid the communication process as the client is more comfortable with and has confidence in the interpreter. These issues are considered in more detail throughout this guidance.



Responsibilities

Managers, Supervisors and Senior Staff are responsible for:

- Supporting staff to engage approved interpreters and translators using preferred provider
- Providing local level orientation and training on the need for, and use of, Interpreters and translators
- Providing advice and guidance when concerns are raised about engaging an interpreter and translator
- Ensuring cultural consultations are available and regularly utilised by practitioners to ensure that cultural protocols are observed while working with families.

Practitioners are responsible for:

- Assessing when an interpreter or translator is required
- Engaging approved interpreters and translators using preferred providers
- Obtaining approval of expenditure
- Recording language, interpreter need, outcomes of meetings and service cost on C3MS
- Completing the DHS Interpreting and Translating Register
- Participating in cultural consultations to support engagement with families in ways that are appropriate and respectful of culture

Practice Strategies- Using an interpreting service

Prior to booking an interpreter

Assess the need for an interpreter

Deciding how well a person speaks English (assessing their English proficiency) is a complex task.

In some cases, it is obvious that an interpreter is needed for effective communication. However, in many cases you will need to think carefully to identify when a client can communicate in English about everyday familiar situations but needs the assistance of a credentialed interpreter to communicate in unfamiliar situations with technical language.

An interpreter should be engaged when:

- requested by the child, carer or family member
- the client cannot comprehend or respond to basic questions in English
- understanding and responding between you and the client is difficult or limited
- the client relies on the child, other family members, friends or carers to communicate
- the client prefers to speak in his/her own language
- English is the client's second language, and the situation is stressful or complex.

Talk to the client about the need for an interpreter

Practitioners are responsible for ensuring that a client is made aware that:

- they have a right to communicate in their preferred language
- the provision of an interpreter is at no cost to the client
- interpreters are professionals and confidentiality is part of their code of conduct
- interpreters are also there to assist practitioners.

It is important to raise the topic of working with an interpreter in a sensitive manner.


There may be many reasons a client might not want to work with an interpreter:

- they might not know what an interpreter does
- they might have had a negative experience with an interpreter in the past
- they might not want other people knowing about their business
- they might think they have to pay for an interpreter
- they may feel shame or anger because you are indicating their English isn't 'good enough'.

One way you could raise this issue of using an interpreter is by saying:

"Before we start talking, I want to ask you about what language we should use today. Maybe we can talk in English, or maybe it's better if we talk in your language. I don't speak your language, so if we think it's better to talk in your language, I will ask an interpreter to help me."

Wherever possible, you should explain the interpreter's role before you directly ask the client what they think about having an interpreter present, so that they can make an informed decision.



Ask the client about their preferences

When having sensitive conversations about child safety and risk, the use of a preferred interpreter can help to aid the communication process.

Ask the client about any preferences they may have for the interpreter such as the interpreter's gender, ethnicity, or whether they are sourced from outside of the local community (an interstate interpreting agency may be used).

When a series of appointments are required, ask the client if they would like to use a different interpreter for each appointment to safeguard impartiality, or the same interpreter for each appointment to support continuity of care.

Record preferences the client has for an interpreter in their case file.

Identify the preferred language and dialect

A client's preferred language and dialect cannot be determined reliably from country of birth information. The following steps may help to determine their preferred language:

If a client speaks sufficient English, it may be possible to ask for their preferred language and dialect, especially if they have used interpreters previously.

Use visual aids that list languages and dialects (see Language list by country and place). The client may be able to point to the language they speak.

Contact a language service provider, which may be able to assist you to identify the language through a telephone interpreter.


Choose the mode of interpreting

There are three ways of providing interpreting services:

Face-to-face interpreting should be used in situations when complex or lengthy matters will be discussed, including where documents such as Safety Plans are involved.

Telephone interpreting is limited to verbal communication (i.e. excluding non-verbal cues). It is a cost-effective option that is appropriate for simple communications that are not lengthy, and may provide more immediate access to interpreters (e.g. in circumstances where pre-booking is not an option). Telephone interpreting is often used to communicate with clients in regional areas.

Video conference interpreting provides both verbal and non-verbal communication channels and is an alternative to telephone interpreting where agencies have access to video conferencing facilities. Video conference interpreting provides a practical option when sign language interpreters are not available locally.



Understand the role of family and friends

There may be instances where, for practical reasons, a client's family member, friend or carer may be asked to interpret simple messages, such as where and when an appointment has been scheduled.

Where information is complex, technical or sensitive, it is strongly discouraged to rely on a child, family or friend to provide interpreting for the child's parent/ carer. This can create a range of ethical and practical issues as they may have poor language skills or act without impartiality. Their involvement may pose unintended risks to the child when discussing child protection concerns. In situations of suspected or actual family violence, perpetrators or any other family members should never be used as interpreters. A child or young person under 18 years of age should not be asked to interpret in any context.

Understand the role of bilingual staff

Provision of interpreting and translating by bilingual workers is only recommended where simple, non-sensitive interpreting is required. A qualified interpreter should be called on to interpret complex, detailed or sensitive information.

Bilingual workers do not replace interpreters. Conflicts of interest may also bring into question a bilingual worker's impartiality.

SFS staff who are required to use their language skills in their employment may seek reimbursement in accordance with the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment's Determination 3.2 Employment Conditions: Remuneration - Allowances and Reimbursements.



Booking an interpreting service

Identify the appropriate provider of interpreting services

Where interpreting services are needed to communicate between English and non-Aboriginal languages (including Auslan), DHS staff are required to contact the **Interpreting and Translating Centre** in the first instance to engage interpreting services.

A National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI)-accredited interpreter should be engaged whenever available and, in their absence, a NAATI-recognised interpreter. An interpreting services other than the preferred providers may be engaged if:

- a NAATI-accredited or NAATI-recognised interpreter is not available through the preferred provider but is available through another provider;
- the client expresses a desire to engage a particular interpreter, for example, whose service has been satisfactory on another occasion or who has experience in the subject matter or specialised terminology required;
- the client expresses a desire to engage an interpreter outside of their local community, to protect their anonymity or confidentiality (i.e. an interstate interpreting and translating service may be engaged); or
- another interpreting service otherwise better meets the client's needs (e.g. can provide an interpreter of preferred gender).

Where interpreting services are needed to communicate between English and Aboriginal languages, refer to the **South Australian Policy Framework: Aboriginal Languages Interpreters and Translators** for a list of providers of specific languages. Professionally accredited Aboriginal languages interpreters should always be used, where possible.

Book an interpreting service

To book an interpreter, the practitioner should provide the following information to the interpreting service:

- the client's name
- the language and dialect
- any preference for the interpreter (e.g. a particular interpreter who has previously provided satisfactory service or an interpreter of a particular gender or ethnicity)
- date, time and exact location the interpreter is required (include some time prior to the interview to brief the interpreter)
- approximate duration of the meeting
- type of meeting and nature of matter to be discussed
- name and telephone contact details of person to whom the interpreter reports
- the telephone system that will be used, if applicable (e.g. speaker phone), the agency contact, address and/or email for invoicing.



Consider conflicts of interests

Determine any real or perceived conflicts of interest with the proposed interpreting method and plan to avoid them.

Consult with your Supervisor for conflict-of-interest concerns. A real conflict of interest is one where there is an actual conflict between an interpreter's duties and responsibilities, and their private interests. A perceived conflict can exist where a third party forms the view that an interpreter's private interest could improperly influence the performance of their duties, now or in the future.

Additional considerations for family conference

If you are facilitating interpreting services for a family conference, consider:

- using both male and female interpreters and/or holding separate forums for males and females, as the issues being discussed may be gender sensitive
- holding forums in individual community languages (consider audience composition, issues being discussed and number of people who speak language)
- whether written material should be available in relevant community languages.



During the session

Prepare for the home visit

Be prepared by:

- planning for extra time over the usual duration of a meeting
- ensuring the venue is easy to access and is not intimidating or threatening
- sighting the interpreter's NAATI ID card when meeting them
- briefing the interpreter about the context, likely discussion and/or any sensitivities
- ensuring the client and interpreter understand and are comfortable with each other
- obtaining suitable information products in the client's preferred language, if available

During the home visit

When you begin the visit, ensure you:

- introduce the interpreter to the child and family
- sit opposite the client and speak directly to them, not to the interpreter
- explain the purpose of the visit and how it will proceed
- explain that the interpreter's role is only to interpret what is being said, that they must be completely impartial, that they are bound by a code of ethics and are required to keep the discussion confidential
- explain to the client that any questions or concerns can be raised at any time
- ask the client to repeat key concepts back to you, to confirm they understand

If you believe at any point that the client does not understand, it is your responsibility (not the interpreter's) to clarify and re-explain more simply.



Home visit etiquette with interpreters

To help the home visit flow smoothly and facilitate accurate and full interpretation:

- speak in a normal tone of voice and at a manageable pace for the interpreter
- communicate using short sentences whenever possible
- pause after about two or three sentences to give the interpreter a chance to interpret
- speak clearly and concisely, without using jargon or slang
- be aware it may take more words than you have spoken to convey the message
- stop speaking when the interpreter signals by raising a hand, or starts to interpret
- show any key information such as dates or numbers visually
- avoid lengthy discussions with the interpreter, always tell the client what you are discussing and why
- ensure that the client has the necessary time to understand discussions
- provide parties with the opportunity for regular breaks.

Conclude the meeting

Before you conclude the visit, ensure you:

- summarise with the client the meeting outcomes and the next steps
- check that the client has understood this information

After the meeting:

- record any issues or complaints regarding interpreting
- provide any feedback to the interpreting service, if applicable.

Practice Strategies- Using a translation service

Using translation services for written materials

Assess the need to translate written materials into other languages

Translated information is another tool for communicating with children and their families, providing them with information that they can refer to later. Translated material does not replace the need for interpreting services.

Professional translating services (used to assist with written documentation) must be engaged to provide written documents to client groups where practicable. This is particularly important where there is potential for a decision or action to impact upon a child's safety and wellbeing.

Prepare the material for translation

When preparing material for translation, you should:

- consider your key messages or information to give to the target group
- identify the literacy levels of the clients you are targeting and tailor the message accordingly. Is the client group literate in their first language? Is written text the best mode of communication? Would the message be better received if presented using pictures or in video format?
- consider how to present the information as clearly as possible:
- not use lengthy or complex text
- avoid using jargon and slang
- consider maps and diagrams
- explain unfamiliar concepts
- spell out acronyms
- be aware of tone and type of language used to present sensitive issues.
- identify the appropriate medium for translation information e.g. fact sheets, brochures, website content, video, CDs or DVDs
- be aware of copyright laws and liabilities and seek written approval for use and translation of material
- assess whether the material is sensitive or unfamiliar to the target audience - you may wish to consult with community members
- be aware of cultural sensitivities and the reaction from your audience, how will the information be handled or perceived in the client's culture? Seek advice from cultural consultants where possible.



Identifying languages for translation

Consider the following questions to identify appropriate languages for translation:

- Who is your target audience? This may reflect the South Australian population, your particular client group, or groups you are not currently reaching.
- What language/s do they speak, and what level of English proficiency? The largest groups may already have good English proficiency and may not need a translated resource. To meet the biggest need, translate materials into the most common languages spoken by your target group in which there are low levels of English proficiency.
- What else do you know about your target audience? Characteristics such as birthplace, time in Australia, age, gender, visa type or religion, may be helpful to identify service and information needs and, in turn, identify languages for translation.

Booking a translating service

DHS staff are required to contact the **Interpreting and Translating Centre** in the first instance to engage a translating service.

Provide the translator with any material that will assist an accurate translation, such as background material or a glossary of terms.

You will also need to negotiate the terms of translation, including:

- which parts of the material are to be translated, e.g. text, layout, graphics and tables
- any software or other requirements
- final format e.g. electronics/soft copy, hard copy, CD, video
- delivery address and method, e.g. post or email
- time frame, including turnaround time for any corrections or amendments
- inclusions and exclusions in the cost such as: word count, turnaround time and administration, cancellation, correction, proofreading and editing fees.

Final translated product

To assist with an accurate final translation, you should:

- ensure that the final copy is proofread by a translator - check for misspellings, that the source document layout matches the final product including fonts, consistent headers and footers, correctly spelt names and page numbers
- translate the document back into English for quality assurance purposes, and/or field test the document with relevant organisations
- consider asking a bilingual community member to read through the document in both languages to check for accurate literal and cultural translation, noting that there may be an associated fee
- ensure that each version of the document can be identified by a version number and that changes are clearly marked on each version for the translator
- reference the document title and name of the translated language in English, to help staff identify it for distribution and information purposes.



Record Keeping

Practitioners should record accurate and timely case notes of their engagement with a family in their case file and or C3MS, including a record of the client's preferred contact style and any specific considerations (such as that an interpreter was required, the relevant language, and any other information that may help meet the client's needs in future (e.g. preference for a male or female interpreter).

DHS staff have a responsibility to log all occasions when interpreting or translating services are required, including:

- when an interpreter was engaged
- when an interpreter was required, but client refused
- when an interpreter was required, but not provided
- when a translator was engaged

Records must be logged on the DHS Interpreting and Translating Register. The purpose of the register is to assist in departmental planning and budgeting for interpreting and translating services, and to identify and respond to any issues in not providing interpreting services when required.

References

Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and Australian National University (ANU), National Indigenous Languages Report, 2020

Department of the Premier and Cabinet, South Australian Policy Framework: Aboriginal Languages Interpreters and Translators, Government of South Australia, 2014

Department of the Premier and Cabinet, South Australian Interpreting and Translating Policy for Migrant and NonVerbal (Sign) Languages, Government of South Australia, 2020

Commonwealth Ombudsman, Canberra April 2011. Talking in Language: Indigenous language interpreters and government communication

Reconciliation Australia, 'Let's talk...Languages' 2019, [online resource] https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/ra-letstalk-factsheet-languages_final.pdf

Attachment 1 Language list by country and place

Country	Language
Afghanistan	Pashtu, Farsi, Dari, Hazaragi, other Turkic and minor languages
Albania	Albanian (Tosk is the official dialect), Greek
Algeria	Arabic, French, Berber dialects
Andorra	Catalán, French, Castilian, Portuguese
Angola	Portuguese, Bantu and other African languages
Antigua and Barbuda	English, local dialects
Argentina	Spanish, English, Italian, German, French
Armenia	Armenian, Russian
Australia	English and Indigenous languages (the main Indigenous languages spoken in South Australia are Pitjantjatjara, Ngarrindjeri, Yankunytjatjara and Adnymathanha).
Austria	German, Slovene, Croatian, Hungarian
Azerbaijan	Azerbaijani Turkic, Russian, Armenian, other
Bahamas	English, Creole
Bahrain	Arabic, English, Farsi, Urdu
Bangladesh	Bangla, English
Barbados	English
Belarus	Belorussian, Russian, other
Belgium	Flemish, French, Dutch, German
Belize	English, Spanish, Mayan, Garifuna (Carib), Creole
Benin	French, Fon, Yoruba, tribal languages
Bermuda	English
Bhutan	Dzongkha, Tibetan and Nepalese dialects
Bolivia	Spanish, Quechua, Aymara
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian (all formerly known as Serbo-Croatian); written languages use Latin and Cyrillic script
Botswana	English, Setswana
Brazil	Portuguese, Spanish, English, French
British Virgin Islands	English
Brunei Darussalam	Malay, English, Chinese
Bulgaria	Bulgarian; secondary ethnic languages

Country	Language
Burkina Faso	French, Indigenous African (Sudanic) languages
Burundi	Kirundi, French, Swahili, Kinyarwanda
Cambodia	Khmer, French, English
Cameroon	French, English; 24 major African language groups
Canada	English, French; Indigenous languages
Cape Verde	Portuguese, Criuolo
Central African Republic	French, Sangho, Arabic, Hansa, Swahili
Chad	French, Arabic, Sara, more than 120 languages and dialects
Channel Islands	Norman French, English
Chile	Spanish, Native American Indian languages
China (PRC)	Cantonese, Mandarin (Putonghua), and dialects (Daur, Kalmyk-Oirat, Lu, Peripheral Mongolian, Central Tibetan, Uyghur, Xibe, Zhuang)
Christmas Islands	Malay, English
Colombia	Spanish, Native American Indian languages
Comoros	Arabic and French, Shikomoro, (Swahili/Arabic blend)
Congo, Republic of	French, Lingala, Monokutuba, Kikongo, and local languages/dialects
Congo (DRC)	French, Lingala, Kingwana, Kikongo, Tshiluba
Cook Islands	Cook Islands Maori, English
Costa Rica	Spanish, Creole, English
Côte d'Ivoire	French, African languages (Dialula esp.)
Croatia	Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian (all formerly known as Serbo-Croatian), Italian, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak, German, and other languages
Cuba	Spanish
Cyprus	Greek, Turkish, English
Czech Republic	Czech, Slovak, German
Denmark	Danish, Faeroese, Greenlandic (Inuit dialect), German, English
Djibouti	French, Arabic, Somali, Afar
Dominica	English, French, Patois





Country	Language
Dominican Republic	Spanish
East Timor	Tetum, Portuguese, Bahasa Indonesian, English, other Indigenous languages, including Tetum, Galole, Mambae, and Kemak
Ecuador	Spanish, Quechua, other Amerindian languages
Egypt	Arabic, English, Armenian, French
El Salvador	Spanish, Nahua (among some Amerindians)
Equatorial Guinea	Spanish, French, pidgin English, Fang, Bubi, Ibo
Eritrea	Afar, Arabic, Tigre and Kunama, Tigrinya, other Cushitic languages
Estonia	Estonian, Russian, Ukrainian, Finnish, other
Ethiopia	Amharic, Tigrigna, Orominga, Guaragigna, Somali, Arabic, English, Afar and 70 others
Faroe Islands	Faroese, Danish
Fiji	English, Fijian, Hindustani
Finland	Finnish, Swedish, small Sami (Lapp), Russian
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Albanian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Macedonian, Romanian, Slovene, Slovak, Turkish, other, (uses the Cyrillic alphabet),
Former Yugoslavia	Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Macedonian, Slovene, Slovak
France	French regional dialects (Provençal, Breton, Alsatian, Corsican, Catalan, Basque, Flemish)
Gabon	French, Fang, Myene, Bateke, Bapounou/Eschira, Bandjabi
Gambia	Mandinka, Wolof, Fula, Serer-Sine, Sarahole, Pulaar, Maninkakan, Mandjaque, Mandingo, Jola-Fonyi, Creole
Georgia	Georgian, Russian, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Abkhaz
Germany	German
Ghana	English, Indigenous languages (Brong Ahafo, Twi, Fanti, Ga, Ewe, Dagbani)
Greece	Greek, English, French
Grenada	English, French patois

Country	Language
Guatemala	Spanish, Amerindian languages (23 Amerindian languages, including Quiche, Cakchiquel, Kekchi, Mam, Garifuna, and Xinca)
Guinea	French, Indigenous languages (Malinké, Susu, Fulani)
Guinea-Bissau	Portuguese, Criolo, African languages
Guyana	English, Amerindian dialects, Creole, Hindi, Urdu
Haiti	Creole, French
Honduras	Honduras: Spanish, Amerindian dialects, English
Hong Kong	Cantonese, Mandarin
Hungary	Magyar (Hungarian), other
Iceland	Icelandic, English, Nordic languages, German
India	Hindi, English, Bengali, Gujarati, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Kannada, Assamese, Sanskrit, Sindhi, and 1600+dialects
Indonesia	Bahasa Indonesia, English, Dutch, Javanese, and 580+ languages/dialects
Iran	Farsi (Persian), Armenian, Azari, Kurdish (Ardalani, Falie, Kurmanji, Sorani), Arabic
Iraq	Arabic, Kurdish (Ardalani, Falie, Kurmanji, Sorani) Assyrian Neo Aramaic
Ireland	English, Irish Gaelic
Israel	Hebrew, Yiddish, Arabic, English, Russian
Italy	Italian, German, French, Slovene
Jamaica	English, Jamaican Creole
Japan	Japanese
Jordan	Arabic, English
Kazakhstan	Kazak (Qazaq), Russian
Kenya	English, Swahili, 25 ethnic group languages
Kiribati	English, I-Kiribati (Gilbertese), local Micronesian languages
Korea, North	Korean
Korea, South	Korean
Kuwait	Arabic, English
Kyrgyzstan	Kyrgyz, Russian





Country	Language
Laos	Lao, French, English
Latvia	Latvian, Russian
Lebanon	Arabic, French, English
Lesotho	English, Sesotho, Zulu, Xhosa
Liberia	English, tribal dialects
Libya	Arabic, Italian, English
Liechtenstein	German, Alemmanic dialect
Lithuania	Lithuanian, Russian, Polish
Luxembourg	Luxembourgish, French, German
Macedonia	See Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Madagascar	Malagasy, French
Malawi	English, Chichewa, Tombuka
Malaysia	Malay, Chinese/Mandarin, Cantonese, Tamil, English
Maldives	Dhivehi, Arabic, Hindi, English
Mali	French, African languages
Malta	Maltese, English
Marshall Islands	Marshallese, English
Mauritania	Arabic, Wolof, French
Mauritius	English, French, Creole, Hindi, Urdu, Hakka, Bojpoori
Mexico	Spanish, American Indian languages
Micronesia	English, French, Chukese, Pohnpeian, Yapase, Kosrean
Moldova	Moldovan (similar to Romanian), Russian, Gagauz (Turkish dialect)
Monaco	French, English, Italian, Monégasque
Mongolia	Mongolian, Turkic, Russian, Chinese
Morocco	Arabic, French, Berber dialects, Spanish
Mozambique	Portuguese, Bantu languages
Myanmar	The Myanmar language (formerly Burmese), Karen, Chin, Rohingya
Namibia	Afrikaans, German, English, several Indigenous languages
Nauru	Nauruan, English
Nepal	Nepali, Newari, Maithali, Bhojpuri, Bhutia, Tharu, Tamang, and others
The Netherlands	Dutch, Frisian
New Caledonia	French, Melanesians languages, Tahitian,

Country	Language
New Zealand	English, Maori Nicaragua: Spanish
Niger	French, Hausa, Songhai, Arabic
Nigeria	English, Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo, 200+ others
Norway	Bokmål, Nynorsk (forms of Norwegian)
Oman	Arabic, English, Indian languages
Pakistan	Punjabi, Sindhi, Siraiki (Punjabi variant), Pashtu, Urdu, Balochi, Hindko, Brahui, English, Burushaski, and others
Palau	Palau Micronesian, English
Palestinian territories	Arabic, Hebrew, English, French
Papua New Guinea	English, Tok Pisin, Hiri Motu, and 717 distinct Indigenous languages
Paraguay	Spanish, Guaraní
Peru	Spanish, Quéchua, Aymara, and other Indigenous languages
The Philippines	Filipino (based on Tagalog), English, regional languages: Tagalog, Ilocano, Cebuano, others
Poland	Polish
Portugal	Portuguese
Qatar	Arabic, English
Romania	Romanian, Serbian, Hungarian, German
Russia	Russian, others
Rwanda	Kinyarwanda, French, English
St. Kitts and Nevis	English
St. Lucia	English, Patois
St. Vincent / Grenadines	English, French patois
Samoa	Samoan, English
San Marino	Italian
São Tomé And Príncipe	Portuguese
Saudi Arabia	Arabic, English widely spoken
Senegal	French, Wolof, Serer, other ethnic dialects
Serbia and Montenegro	Serbian; written language uses Latin and Cyrillic script
Seychelles	English, French, Seselwa (a creole)
Sierra Leone	English, Mende, Temne, Krio



Country	Language
Singapore	Malay, Chinese (Mandarin), Tamil, English
Slovakia	Slovak, Czech, Hungarian
Slovenia	Slovenian, Serbo-Croatian
Solomon Islands	English, Solomon Pijin (English pidgin), 60 Melanesian languages
Somalia	Somali, Arabic, English, Italian
South Africa	Afrikaans, English, Xhosa, Zulu, Ndebele, North Sotho, Sotho, Swazi, Tswana, Tsonga, Venda
South Sudan	English, Arabic, Dinka, Nuer, Zande
Spain	Castilian Spanish, Catalan, Galician, Basque
Sri Lanka	Sinhala, Tamil, English
Sudan	Arabic, English, Dinka, tribal dialects
Suriname	Dutch, Surinamese (lingua franca), English widely spoken
Swaziland	English, Swazi
Sweden	Swedish
Switzerland	German, French, Italian, Romansch
Syria	Arabic, Armenian, Assyrian, Kurdish, French/English widely spoken
Taiwan	Chinese (Mandarin), Chinese dialects
Tajikistan	Tajik, Russian, Uzbek
Tanzania	Swahili, English, local languages
Thailand	Thai (Siamese), Chinese (Mandarin), English, Teo-Chiew, Laotian, Khmer
Togo	French, Ewé, Mina (south), Kabyé, Cotocoli (north), and many dialects
Tonga	Tongan (an Austronesian language), English
Trinidad and Tobago	English, Hindi, French, Spanish

Country	Language
Tunisia	Arabic, French
Turkey	Turkish, Armenian, Kurdish (Ardalani, Falie, Kurmanji and Sorani)
Turkmenistan	Turkmani, Russian, Uzbek
Tuvalu	Tuvaluan, Ikiribati, English
Uganda	English, Swahili, Luganda, Ateso, Luo
Ukraine	Ukrainian, Russian, Romanian, Polish
United Arab Emirates	Arabic, Farsi (Persian), English as a second language
United Kingdom	English, Welsh, Scots Gaelic
United States	English, sizable Spanish-speaking minority
Uruguay	Spanish
Uzbekistan	Uzbek, Russian, Tajik, other
Vanuatu	Bislama (a Melanesian pidgin English), English, French
Vatican City	Latin, Italian, and various other languages
Venezuela	Spanish, various Indigenous languages in the remote interior
Vietnam	Vietnamese, French, English, Khmer, Chinese
Western Sahara region	Hassaniya Arabic, Moroccan Arabic
Yemen	Arabic
Zambia	English, local dialects
Zimbabwe	English, Shone, and local African dialects

This list of languages spoken in countries around the world is adapted from improving the use of translation and interpreting services: Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs, A guide to Victorian Government policy and procedures. It was developed as part of a series of resources available to other South Australian Government agencies when developing their interpreting and translating policies. South Australian Interpreting and Translating Policy for Migrant and Non-Verbal (Sign) Language aims to ensure that speakers of languages other than English are not disadvantaged when accessing or receiving South Australian Government services and information.



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