

## Questions and Answers

### RFP for Interpretation and Translation Services

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Q: Who are the incumbent contractors?

**A: A list of prospective vendors is provided in the RFP document on Tab 3**

Q: What are the current rates?

**A: AHS chooses not to share their current rates at this RFP stage. Prospective vendors are encouraged to propose their most competitive rates for consideration.**

Q: What is the estimated value of this contract?

**A: \$650,000 per year.**

Q. One vendor provides only written translation services. Can they bid for only that part/services of the RFP?

**A: AHS requires both interpretation and translation services. Vendors providing only translation services need not apply.**

Q. Is AHS looking for only one vendor to provide all services or will this be a la carte?

**A: Both.**

Q. Currently, does AHS's existing vendor provide ALL services that AHS has asked for in the RFP? Or does AHS have multiple vendors?

**A: AHS has multiple vendors.**

Q: For the document translation pricing, can vendors break down the LOTS (languages other than Spanish) individually rather than as one price?

**A: Yes**

Q: What has been the biggest challenge for fulfilling services under this contract, or if this is a new contract, are there any challenges that AHS anticipates?

**A: Meeting AHS's need for top demand languages/emerging languages upon request by AHS.**

Q: Is there any historical data for telephone and video interpretation services?

**A: Yes, historical data for telephone only.**

Q: What is the anticipated volume for Onsite Interpretation, and document Translation?

**A: On site interpretation for specific languages- Korean, Russian, Mien,-random need vacation coverage. Document translation for Arabic, Tagalog and French- For Spanish and Chinese translation provided by AHS Interpreter/Translator; occasionally send rush request to vendor**

Q: When asking the prospective vendor for how many active interpreters do they currently employ, is this question for only interpreters or does this include translators as well?

**A: Interpreters.**

Q: How often does AHS come across the need of providing a tactile interpreter for a blind and deaf client?

**A: A few times a month.**

Q: Is this a multiple source award contract?

**A: AHS does not intend to for this be a multiple source award.**

Q: All interpretation companies use sub-contractors to support languages of lesser diffusion. Is AHS open to alternative solutions?

**A: Yes.**

Q: If a vendor does not provide equipment, is AHS open to alternative solutions?

**A: AHS is currently using its video equipment- web portal/ other compatible flat form (Cisco) is preferred.**

Q: For the RFP question: "Identify Interpreters assigned to this contract, including languages and qualifications and their availability. Provide resumes that include information on the individual's particular skills related to this project, education, experience, significant accomplishments and any other pertinent information. This information may be provided as an attachment. Given that services requested here are far reaching in terms of languages and the sheer number of interpreters needed to staff 24 hours per day would be a logistical challenge. Is AHS open to alternative solutions?"

**A: Yes.**

Q: For on-site - How many on-site interpreter requests total in 2018, by month, did AHS get? Can AHS provide historical annual written translation volume and average length of written translation?

**A: 3-5 requests per month for both on-site interpreter requests and for written translation volume, the average length of written translation varies between \$50-\$250.**

Q: For on-site interpretation - do the locations requiring on-site interpretation service have similar number of requests/language mix? If not, please provide expected number of requests per location.

**A: Korean, Mien, and Russian mainly at AHS's Highland hospital. For American sign language Highland/John George/San Leandro/Alameda/all wellness clinics.**

Q: For on-site & Over-the-phone - Are there high volume timeframes of day/year that prospective vendors should know about?

**A: During the summer, AHS's peak hours are 8:00 am-10:00 am and 1:00pm - 3:00 pm**

Q: For on-site interpretation - What is the language mix of requests (i.e. 50% Spanish, etc.)?

A: **Korean, Russian, Mien.**

Q: For on-site interpretation - What percentage of requests are on weekends and during the evening?

A: **American Sign Language only random 1%**

Q: Does AHS utilize internal resources for interpreter services? If so, for what languages?

A: **Yes- for Amharic, Cantonese, Cambodian/Khmer, Croatian, Bosnian, Burmese, Dari, Farsi, Hindi, Karen, Lao, Mandarin, Mam, Mien, Nepali, Pashtu, Punjabi, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Thai, Tigrinya, Russian, Vietnamese, Urdu.**

Q: What % of interpretation is Over-the-phone vs On-site?

A: **98% telephone, 2% on site.**

Q: For document translation – what types of documents require translation?

A: **Brochures, health education pamphlets, and signs/signage.**

Q: For document translation - Do documents contain PHI?

A: **No.**

Q: For document translation – How many document translation projects were requested in 2018? And what was the language breakdown.

A: **5 total. Chinese, Spanish.**

Q: For document translation – What were the file formats that require document translation.

A: **MS Word File**

Q: Please indicate if Contractor has the capability to read MD handwriting for the purposes of translation? If so, please describe and indicate if an experienced RN is on staff to verify translation. This question really depends on the handwriting of the physician. Would you consider a clause that states MD handwriting (when legible)?

A: **This is not required as of now for AHS.**

Q: Is AHS looking for Interpreter Training Services as an additional scope of work under this RFP?

A: **Prospective vendor should have an interpreter assessment tool/evaluator to provide oral/written assessment as needed. Interpreter training services is not required.**

Q: Contractor will repair or replace any Contractor provided equipment at the sole expense of Contractor. Is this for VRI only?

A: **Both for VRI (video remote interpreting) and Video.**

Q: Please indicate what, if any, hardware upgrades the Contractor can provide to AHS at no cost to AHS to facilitate interpretation. Is this for VRI only?

A: **Both VRI and Video.**

Q: Please indicate if Contractor allows the usage of existing hospital-owned equipment for use with interpretation services provided by Contractor. Should AHS decide to utilize existing equipment with Contractor's proposed services please indicate that the devices are supported and the minimum requirements each device type must meet: Is this for VRI only?

**A: Both VRI and Video.**

Q: Please indicate any other software available for use by AHS. Please describe it's functionality, whether or not it is necessary or optional, and any costs associated with it's use and implementation. Please note that Contractors that provide required or optional software free of charge to AHS will receive additional consideration. Is this for VRI only?

**A: Both VRI and Video.**

Q: If audio and visual recordings are available, please indicate the length of time they are retained by Contractor. Is this for VRI only?

**A: Both VRI and Video.**

Q: Contractor shall ensure all Interpreters providing service under this contract are certified, authorized, or qualified; receive the appropriate training or education; meet state and AHS safety requirements (TB Screening, Airborne Pathogens orientation, etc.); and comply with any applicable Code of Professional Conduct set forth by AHS or Contractor. Is this is for Onsite / Face-to-Face only? On-site interpreters will be the only ones to have contact with AHS providers and patients? Translation Services and OPI services are done remotely. Also, can we get a copy of the Code of Professional Conduct set forth by AHS?

**A: This is for both on-site face to face and remote. The safety requirements are only for onsite services. The policy of expectations of the AHS Code of Conduct is attached. This is applicable to AHS employees, but we expect that its spirit is respected and upheld by AHS vendors while providing services to AHS. Attached.**

Q: Identify Interpreters assigned to this contract, including languages and qualifications and their availability. Provide resumes that include information on the individual's particular skills related to this project, education, experience, significant accomplishments and any other pertinent information. This information may be provided as an attachment. Is this is for Onsite /Face-to-Face only? Because we fill these request on a case-by-case basis depending on location and availability of our interpreters and we have a pool of 8,500 interpreters and translators, would you consider one or two resumes upfront to show due diligence?

**A: This is not just for on-site and face to face. A demographic summary of the interpreters would be acceptable.**

Q: Briefly, please describe the information that needs to be provided to the Contractor (e.g., language required, data of service, gender preference) that is required to schedule service. Is this is for Onsite / Face-to-Face only?

**A: For all services.**

Q: Does Contractor offer live web chat as an option for customer service support? If so, please describe. Is this for all services requested by AHS?

**A: All services.**

Q: Please indicate if customization options such that AHS can modify the "look and feel" to best fit AHS's workflow and branding are available. Would you please elaborate a bit on this, as it is unclear?

**A: This is in relation to any patient/client facing interfaces and equipment. AHS would like clarification on whether any equipment or interfaces along the translation workflow can be customized upon request by AHS.**

Q: What role would AHS play in the implementation of proposed software and/or web portal solutions? How many full-time and/or part-time employees are needed for the implementation? What skill sets will AHS need to provide? Would you consider separating software from web portal solutions, as they are two different areas to be addressed?

**A: Implementation would mainly be done from the contractor/vendor side. AHS can provide overview and understanding of the needs and requirements but AHS IT does not provide any support or maintenance for any applications, vendor will have to provide it. Web portal solutions are acceptable but Cisco platform is preferred as this is what AHS is currently using. Any web portal which does not require additional applications is acceptable.**

Q: Please indicate if there are any limit to the number of users that can be assigned a username and password for Contractor's web portal. This answer will vary depending on the service that is provide. Would you consider categorizing the question into the different areas of each services AHS is asking in this RFP.

**A: Unlimited licenses for equipment/users, please answer the best way you can when responding.**

Q: Should a particular interpretation session's length fall outside the normal call length, Contractor shall be able to automatically flag anomalous sessions for review. If call length was deemed excessive due to technical issues (failure to end call after call is complete, connection issues, etc.), Contractor shall have a mechanism to credit AHS for time billed but not utilized for interpretation. If so, please describe. Please clarify what you mean by normal call length. Would you consider putting a disclaimer that states: if the Contractor is not at fault, then there will be no credit to AHS? Or something similar.

**A: If the calls are found to be dropped/not completed due to quality issues such as competency of the interpreter, audio problem, calls dropped/disconnected by interpreters on the vendor's end, AHS should not be charged for that session/call.**

Q: Can AHS provide a breakdown of their language access spend (VRI, OPI, On-site, Translation)

**A: At this time AHS only has OPI. On-site utilization varies. American Sign Language (ASL) is 30 requests a month.**

Q: Can AHS provide total number of hours for on-site interpretation?

**A: Once or twice a month for about one hour.**

Q: What is the minimum appointment time per assignment for in-person (spoken and ASL) assignments?

**A: 20 minutes.**

Q: What percentage of in-person assignments are requested more than 48 hours' notice?

**A: In-person for other language usually within 48 hours- ASL 50% is less than 24 hours.**

Q: Can AHS provide a breakdown of its current devices used for VRI in terms of PCs, Android devices, iPads and smart phones?

**A: 50% PCs, 50% Surface Pro.**

Q: Does AHS manage or own their own VRI devices?

**A: AHS owns the current aging fleet of devices.**

Q: What is the AHS's current percentage of spoken language video calls that are answered by video interpreters versus what percentage are rolling over to be answered by audio-only interpreters?

**A: 70% AHS interpreter and 30% roll out.**

Q: Is a contract with Vizient mandatory?

**A: No.**

Q: Is AHS currently using staff to handle video calls. If so, what platform are you using?

**A: Yes, video/audio, the overflow is rolled out to the vendor. Cisco.**

Q: Can AHS provide historical written translation volume by language, and by location?

**A: Languages: Arabic Chinese, French,  
Location: AHS's Highland Hospital and the ambulatory clinic  
Volume: One or two requests per month**

Q: Is AHS looking for vendors to provide their standard client agreement with terms and conditions or if AHS would like vendors to sign the RFP response.

**A: AHS prefers our own template for the agreement. The clauses of the agreement are already provided in the RFP document under the Terms and Conditions tab. At the RFP stage, AHS is looking for a confirmation from proposers that they will be able to accept the clauses of the agreement. Any exceptions should be noted in the proposal.**

Q: In addition to completing the excel file AHS provided, is it necessary/preferred to provide a formal proposal with RFP questions & answers provided within.

**A: AHS is simply looking for responses to questions asked in the RFP document. This format will be accepted as the formal proposal.**

Q: can the proposal be submitted by Fedex or does it have to be only by certified mail?

**A: Fedex and certified mail are both acceptable.**

Q: Can AHS provide a breakdown of what services are currently being provided by each selected vendor?

**A: The scope of work/ services required from the incumbent vendor is already provided in the RFP document. The services requested for in the RFP document are what AHS currently has and needs.**

Q: Can AHS provide additional breakdown by location, language, total remote interpretation telephone calls, and average talk time (Min) per call for OPI?

A: See below for 2018:

Language	Total Calls	Avg. Talk Time (sec)
Afghan Farsi	42	1,047.79
Akan	1	658.00
Albanian	4	885.75
Amharic	845	858.26
Arabic	3,187	918.41
Armenian	8	776.50
Bengali/Bangla	47	1,108.17
Bosnian	244	856.80
Brazilian Portuguese	2	272.00
Bulgarian	2	782.50
Burmese	151	938.52
Cambodian	803	650.92
Cantonese	7,484	641.37
Chinese Shanghaiese	3	876.33
Chinese Taiwanese	2	553.50
Chinese Toisanese	172	555.14
Croatian	30	593.03
Dari	906	1,181.56
European Portuguese	2	726.00
Farsi	545	889.17
Finnish	2	99.00
French	411	830.97
French Creole	11	1,049.91
German	9	498.89
Greek	2	453.00
Gujarati	5	1,660.00
Haitian Creole	29	1,137.45
Hebrew	5	1,240.20
Hindi	285	682.42
Hmong	33	122.24
Hungarian	21	1,278.05
Ibo	41	694.93
Igbo	6	1,718.83
Ilocano (Filipino)	15	1,257.00
Indonesian	2	1,909.50
Iranian Farsi	11	1,339.64
Italian	5	271.20
Japanese	44	643.95
Kanjobal	1	118.00
Karen	119	690.08
Karenni	6	961.67



Korean	869	770.55
Kurdish	1	75.00
Lao	342	707.43
Lingala	1	3,693.00
Lithuanian	14	318.64
Luganda	2	613.00
Malayalam	4	469.50
Malaysian	8	441.75
Mam [Myam]	458	819.55
Mandarin	2,526	667.17
Mandingo	1	218.00
Mien	752	584.69
Mongolian	822	815.83
Nepali	459	949.37
Oromo	12	949.67
Pashtu	725	1,141.92
Polish	11	1,366.09
Popti	1	3.00
Portuguese	182	844.11
Punjabi	868	759.83
Quiche	1	8.00
Romanian	197	840.15
Russian	328	770.44
Samoan	8	484.38
Serbian	10	985.30
Somali	3	292.00
Spanish	57,420	539.04
Sudanese Arabic	5	1,055.40
Swahili	155	1,035.29
Tagalog	787	774.07
Taiwanese	6	471.67
Tamil	283	816.93
Telugu	15	738.60
Thai	152	805.70
Tibetan	29	703.79
Tigrinya	2,607	895.36
Tongan	309	769.72
Turkish	25	1,049.24
Twi	1	200.00
Ukrainian	2	470.50
Urdu	47	903.15
Uzbek	1	884.00
Video Spanish	2	376.50
Vietnamese	4,665	718.90
Wolof	10	511.80
Yoruba	30	549.87

Q: Can AHS provide additional breakdown by location, language, total remote interpretation telephone calls, and average talk time (Min) per call for VRI (video vs. audio)?

A: No.



Q: Can AHS provide a revised spreadsheet to include Video Remote Interpreting and Video Remote Audio Interpreting? Or can the vendor add these columns to the existing RFP excel spreadsheet?

**A: Please feel free to add/provide whatever additional information you would like to give.**