

Wesley Mission Queensland

Interpreting Services



nabs

National Auslan Interpreter
Booking & Payment Service

micss

*National Interpreting &
Communication Services*

Conditions of Engagement for Interpreters

The information in this Guideline is regularly updated to reflect current policies relevant for NABS interpreters. To remain up to date, NABS interpreters are advised to check the Interpreter Resources page on the NABS Website at www.nabs.org.au/interpreter-resources.html



CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT FOR INTERPRETERS

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CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT FOR INTERPRETERS

Recruitment of Interpreters

NABS employs NAATI certified and accredited interpreters. Interpreters wishing to be considered for employment by the service are required to register their interest by completing the Application for Registration form available on the NABS website - www.nabs.org.au.

Upon approval and registration with the service, interpreter details will be recorded on a confidential national database.

Mandatory - NAATI Qualification

It is mandatory that all interpreters engaged by NABS be NAATI appropriately certified or accredited. Evidence of qualifications needs to be provided i.e. copies of either your NAATI Certificate, ID card or a letter from NAATI.

Mandatory - NDIS Worker Screening Clearance

Being a registered NDIS provider, interpreters are required to have a current NDIS Worker Screening Clearance. Interpreters can email communications@nabs.org.au for more information.

Mandatory - NDIS Worker Orientation Module Training

The training takes approximately 90 minutes and can be found at this link: www.ndiscommission.gov.au/workers/training-course

Once completed, a copy of your Certificate of Completion to be sent to communications@nabs.org.au for noting.

Mandatory for working with children

While it is not compulsory in all States and Territories to hold a Working with Children Check or equivalent, it is recommended that interpreters obtain one. Please email communications@nabs.org.au to advise if you hold a current Working with Children check (along with a copy of Card or letter showing these details from the department). The relevant registration is required for assignments with persons under 18 years.



CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT FOR INTERPRETERS

Hours of Engagement

The Contact Centre operates nationally between the hours of 8:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday excluding national public holidays.

Interpreters will be invited to undertake assignments across a range of dates and hours depending on client needs. Assignments are not limited to Contact Centre operating hours.

Assignment and Subcontracting

Under no circumstances is any interpreter to subcontract any NABS or NICSS assignment to another interpreter. Should your availability change after you have accepted a NABS or NICSS assignment, you are obliged to notify NABS/NICSS immediately. NABS/NICSS will then allocate another interpreter according to the wishes of the client.

Subcontracting is a serious matter that can result in removal from the NABS register.

Confirmation of Assignment

Once an interpreter accepts an assignment, written confirmation (SMS or email) will be sent. Only upon receipt of this confirmation, with the full job number, is an interpreter officially 'booked'.

Dress Code

Interpreters are expected to dress appropriately for their role. Dress should be appropriate to the occasion and respectful of the individual or group for whom you are interpreting. Refer to the Wesley Mission Queensland Uniform and Dress Standards Policy for further guidance or contact NABS management.

ID Badges

Name badges must be worn during your interpreting assignment to assist all parties to identify the interpreter. A name badge will be mailed to you following confirmation of employment. These badges are not photo ID, they are name only.

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Standard Appointments – 1.5 Hour

Regardless of whether the actual appointment lasts for less than the time you are booked, there is often a waiting period to see the service provider or even an unexpected extension of the 'standard' appointment period.

Guaranteeing your availability for the full 1.5 hour duration will ensure our Deaf clients have full access to the service they/service provider requested. If you are the preferred interpreter for a client's booking but your previous booking or a following booking overlaps with the time of this new request, NABS/NICSS will let the client know you are unavailable and ask them for other options.

Short Appointments – 1 Hour

Interpreters are normally booked for a minimum of 1.5 hours. Occasionally you will be booked for a 1 hour job. The most common reason for booking an interpreter for one hour will be appointments where return travel exceeds 200kms. For any booking where NABS/NICSS requires an interpreter to travel over 200km return, the rate of pay reverts to a flat hourly rate. The hours to be paid will comprise of the actual interpreting time plus the return travel time (refer to Page 5 – Pay Rates).

At times situations may arise requiring NABS/NICSS to negotiate an alternative outcome. Such situations and outcomes are at the discretion of NABS/NICSS.

Arriving at Assignments

As a courtesy to the Deaf client and the service provider, we request that interpreters arrive 5 to 10 minutes prior to the appointment start time. This allows time for greetings/introductions and an opportunity for the interpreter to get to know the nuances of the sign language user. Interpreters will not be considered for an assignment, irrespective of familiarity with the client, if their combined travel and greet time is insufficient for such preliminaries. On arrival, introduce yourself to the client or in the event that the client is not present make your presence known to the reception staff.

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Client Does Not Arrive at Appointment

If the client does not arrive for their allotted appointment time, please check with reception to ensure:

- they are not in another waiting area
- they haven't already been seen by the Doctor/health care professional
- they haven't already been seen by the service provider (non-health care assignments)

If the client is not on site at appointment start time, after you have checked as outlined above, please contact NABS immediately (and within 10 minutes of appointment start time). NABS/NICSS will contact the client/service provider on your behalf and advise you what you should do.

Do not leave appointment location until advised to do so by NABS (business hours) or the service provider (after hours/weekends only).

If you are given permission to leave by the service provider (after hours/weekends), please SMS NABS immediately with details, for confirmation on next business day.

If a client contacts you directly to advise they will not be attending their appointment, you must advise NABS immediately if you have not received a booking cancellation. Also advise the client that all cancellations must be advised to NABS. You must still attend the appointment unless you have been advised by NABS/NICSS that you are no longer required. If NABS/NICSS does not advise you that you are no longer required, and you do not attend, you will not be paid for the job.

Late Arrival at Assignments

Reliability is an important component of interpreter ethics. It is NABS and NICSS policy to adjust payments to interpreters to reflect late arrival at assignments. This means that, as per normal workplace practices, interpreters who arrive late at an assignment will have that amount of time (in quarter hours) deducted from their payment. Three occurrences of late arrival at assignments will result in NABS/NICSS discussing the matter with the interpreter. If, after all best efforts, you are going to be late for an assignment, please advise the Contact Centre staff by SMS or phone so that we can inform all parties.

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Appointments Running Overtime

Any appointment that goes over the allocated time an interpreter is booked for should be communicated to NABS/NICSS immediately and no later than 24 hours after completing the assignment. NABS/NICSS requests that interpreters either SMS or phone on completion of an assignment that goes overtime. Failure to report assignments that go overtime will reduce our ability to make payments for any additional time claimed.

Mobile Phone Usage During Assignments

It is a requirement for all interpreters that mobile phones must be in silent mode during assignments and not in plain sight. It is recommended that your phone remains turned on and in silent mode to be readily accessible should an emergency situation occur. At no other time should a mobile phone be answered, nor text messages sent, while on assignment. You are required to give your full attention to the Deaf client and service provider for the 1.5 hours or more duration of the assignment. Emergency situations are the only exception.

Leaving an Assignment to feed Parking Meter

It is never appropriate for interpreters to temporarily excuse themselves from an assignment to feed a parking meter. You are required to give your full attention to the Deaf client and service provider for the duration of the assignment.

Penalty Rates

If an interpreter is booked for a weekend assignment, the rate of pay will be the normal call out rate plus a 20% loading on the call out rate only. This loading also applies for public holidays where an interpreter is required to work on a public holiday in their area.

Cancellations

If you are notified that your assignment has been cancelled, under the 24 hour period, you will be paid the call out fee only – travel will not be paid. If however you arrive at an assignment, or you are in transit to an assignment, and you are advised by NABS/NICSS that the appointment is cancelled, you will be paid the standard call out fee and travel as per usual. Note: "In transit" is evaluated on time/distance to appointment from your home location or immediate prior NABS/NICSS assignment, if applicable.

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Payment

Interpreters are auto-paid for completed jobs (no job sheets or payment request is required). Interpreters can find pay dates under “Interpreters Resources” on the NABS website to know when to expect payment for completed jobs.

Please email all queries to pays@nabs.org.au for prompt response and record of enquiry.

Parking and Tolls

Parking and toll reimbursement will be paid for assignments where receipts are supplied.

Submission of Interpreter Claimable Expenses Form is required for all claimable expenses.

1. Email expense incurred within 24 hours of appointment start date/time

Interpreters must email pays@nabs.org.au within 24 hours of appointment if claimable expenses apply.

Notification to include job number, expense type (e.g. tolls, parking), \$ amount.

Do not attach receipt or toll extract to your email.

2. Submit Interpreter Claimable Expense Form within five (5) days of appointment

Interpreters must then submit a Claimable Expenses Form within five (5) calendar days of appointment. Ensure each proof of expense (receipt) clearly indicates relevant job number.

You can submit up to three (3) individual claimable expenses on each Form.

The Claimable Expense Form can be found as first option under “Interpreters” on the NABS website.

****IMPORTANT**:** Any tolls not recorded on your Claimable Expenses Form will not be considered for payment. NOTE: You may like to speak with your Accountant about the possibility of claiming your travel expenses in your Tax return instead of claiming on your Claimable Expenses Form.

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Private Vehicles

It is the responsibility of the contracted interpreter to appropriately insure their own vehicle when undertaking NABS/NICSS assignments. NABS accepts no responsibility for damage to private vehicles, breakdowns, or any traffic infringements, such as speeding and parking fines.

It is the responsibility of the interpreter to ensure that their private vehicles are serviced at manufacturers recommended intervals. Proof of service records may be requested as spot checks. If not current the interpreter may be asked to cease driving for NABS until the recommended service is undertaken.

Transporting Clients Using the Interpreter's or Client's Vehicle is NOT PERMITTED

As soon as a Deaf client gets into the interpreter's vehicle or the interpreter into the client's vehicle, it becomes a workplace. Wesley Mission Queensland/NABS is then vicariously liable. This applies even if an interpreter claims to be transporting the client as a friend.

If an interpreter deviates from their regular route to the assignment i.e. to collect a client, they void their WorkCover!

It is not worth the risk!

Professional Insurances

Interpreters will be covered by the insurances of Wesley Mission Queensland in relation to Professional Indemnity and Public Liability. This applies only when undertaking NABS/NICSS assignments.

Professional Conduct

It is considered unethical behaviour for any interpreter to solicit for preferential treatment by clients of NABS/NICSS services.

Please refer to:

- AUSIT & ASLIA Code of Ethics for Translators and Interpreters for comprehensive information. Visit www.ausit.org and www.aslia.com.au
- Wesley Mission Queensland Code of Conduct for Employees

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT FOR INTERPRETERS

Confidentiality Agreement

All interpreters will be required to complete and sign a Confidentiality Agreement prior to commencement of engagement.

Workplace Health and Safety

NABS/NICSS takes every care to ensure that interpreters are not expected to work alone for extended periods of time. When bookings are received at the Contact Centre, specific questions are asked to determine the nature and duration of appointments. Despite our best efforts, NABS/NICSS is not always fully informed of the details. Each booking is assessed on a case by case basis at the time of processing and two interpreters will be booked as deemed necessary based on the information given.

Due to the shortage of interpreters there are times when two interpreters are just not available. If this happens, our office may offer an interpreter an assignment with certain provisos that we have negotiated with the other parties, such as regular breaks.

If you find yourself in a situation where it becomes apparent that the appointment will extend past the time indicated and you deem it unsafe for yourself, it is important that you manage the situation. You may need to do the following:

- Advise the parties that the proceedings require more than one interpreter which may mean a delay or postponement of the appointment.
- Negotiate regular breaks if the appointment cannot be delayed or postponed.
- You must advise NABS/NICSS of the situation as soon as possible.

You may feel that duty of care dictates that you stay at the assignment. It is important that you manage the situation professionally and as safely as you can. This will require you to exercise your professional judgement and interpersonal skills while maintaining ethical standards.

If you identify a hazard and are concerned for your wellbeing you must firstly remove yourself from the hazardous environment as soon as possible and contact NABS. **Contact Emergency Services immediately if you are in danger.**

- AUSIT Code of Ethics – www.ausit.org
- ASLIA Code of Ethics – www.aslia.com.au

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Reporting of Hazards and Incidents

Reporting a hazard is important as it allows us to manage risk before the incident occurs. Reporting an incident is important as it can allow us to investigate and prevent further incidents occurring. We rely on you to communicate any hazards and when you have been involved in an incident.

Examples of hazards include:

- Signs that a client is acting out of character
- An environment where you do not feel safe
- Poor mobile phone service
- Physical hazards such as at a work site or factory; on the road (flood waters, landslides)

Examples of incidents include:

- Aggression toward yourself or another person present
- Vehicle damage including accident or infringement
- Any injury sustained

Hazards or incidents should be reported immediately to the NABS Contact Centre who will refer the matter to the appropriate manager or OH&S representative.

Contact Emergency Services immediately if you are in danger.

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Debriefing and Counselling

Debriefing and counselling services are available to interpreters. This service is available via Wesley Mission Queensland through an organisation called Benestar. This is an external service to Wesley Mission Queensland and is available to all interpreters who work for NABS.

- Access to free, confidential, 24/7 counselling service. This service is also available to your partner, children or partner's children.
- Available to assist individuals who have experienced a major traumatic incident, to process the emotional stresses generated by such incidents.
- No charge to interpreters for access to this service through Wesley Mission Queensland however there may be a limit to the number of free appointments.
- Your name or anything you discuss is strictly confidential and cannot be revealed to any source or any person(s) without your written consent.

For further information on Benestar Employee Assistance Program, please visit www.benestar.com or phone 1300 360 364.

Feedback

NABS is committed to communicating regularly with interpreters as this enables discussion around management of risk and provides a valuable platform for feedback.

NABS aim is to contact all interpreters by email annually to seek feedback on risk and safety issues for interpreters to assist us in reviewing safety practices in the workplace.

While NABS will schedule formal feedback, your feedback is welcome at any time.

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NAATI

It is the responsibility of the interpreter to ensure that their status is maintained and that they communicate changes, updates and recertification to NABS.

Recertification

NABS is required to keep current proof of NAATI status of all employee interpreters. Interpreters who have opted into or certified under the recertification scheme are required to provide proof of NAATI recertification prior to expiry.

If notification of recertification is not received by the expiry date, NABS will be unable to book the interpreter for future bookings.

If notification of recertification is not received at least 48 hours/2 business days prior to a previously confirmed booking, the interpreter will be cancelled off that booking.

Change of Status

Interpreters who change their NAATI status must notify NABS within 4 weeks of confirmation of any changes. This includes interpreters who move to a different qualification. Change in NAATI status will be amended from the date NABS receives notification.

The onus of proof shall be upon the employee to supply copies of attainment. Interpreters will receive confirmation of change in status and amendments to pay structure within two weeks of proof being provided.

Use of Social Media

The NABS Social Media Policy and NICSS Social Media Policy contains important information for those who are employees of NABS and use social media. It provides guidance on NABS and NICSS expectations where social media are used and outlines appropriate standards aligning with NABS overarching objectives. All interpreters must read and adhere to the requirements of these policies.

- NABS Guidelines – www.nabs.org.au
- NICSS Guidelines – www.nicss.org.au