

# Guide to Telephone Foreign Language Interpreter Procedures

Most callers who have limited English skills expect to experience some communication difficulty, and often know at least a few key English words. Follow these procedures to connect a limited-English caller with an interpreter who speaks their native language.

## Telephone Interpreter Procedures – Phone System with Conferencing Ability

1. Get the caller's phone number from the Caller ID screen on your phone.
2. If you don't recognize the language they are speaking, try to discover the language they need. One way is to say the names of languages. The five most common languages in Maryland are:

- Spanish: Español – **Es-pan-yol?**
- Chinese: **Poo-tong-whaa?**
- Korean: **Han-goo-gin?** (note: hard G, not J)
- Vietnamese: **Tin Vee-et?**
- French: Langue française – **Long Fran-sez?**

3. Try to communicate "One moment. I'll call an interpreter." Many limited-English speakers will recognize the word "interpreter" and expect some delay in the conversation while you make arrangements.

If you recognize they are speaking Spanish and you took Spanish in school or are feeling brave: "Un momento. Llamaré a un intérprete."

PHONETICALLY: **Oon mo-men-to. Ya-mar-ay a oon in-ter-pre-tay.**

4. Follow your phone system's three-way conferencing instructions to connect with the telephone interpreter service, **Language Line**, while the caller is on the line.
5. Use Conference Hold on your phone to place the limited-English speaker on hold.
6. Dial **Language Line: 1-866-874-3972**.
7. Type on your telephone keypad or tell the live representative our 6-digit Client ID:  
**5 3 0 2 9 8.**
8. For **Spanish**: Press **1**.
9. For **all other languages**: Press **2** and say the name of the language you need at the prompt (e.g., "Chinese"). The appropriate Interpreter will be connected to the call.
10. Brief the Interpreter, summarizing what the call is about and giving any special instructions.
11. Release the limited-English speaker from Hold and add them to the call.
12. Talk directly to the caller, not the Interpreter. Speak in first person ("I" and "you").
13. Pause frequently to allow the Interpreter to interpret.
14. When the call is completed: Say "**End of Call**" to the Interpreter.

**Important:** Maintain a log of all telephone interpreting services, including date, consumer, counselor, type, and length of service. Forward to the appropriate Program Manager.

## Guide to Telephone Foreign Language Interpreter Services

Most callers who have limited English skills expect to experience some communication difficulty, and often know at least a few key English words. Follow these procedures to connect a limited-English caller with an interpreter who speaks their native language.

### Telephone Interpreter Procedures – Phone System without Conferencing Ability or Calling a Consumer Directly

1. Get the caller's phone number from the Caller ID screen on your phone.
2. If you don't recognize the language they are speaking, try to discover the language they need. One way is to say the names of languages. The five most common languages in Maryland are:
  - Spanish: Español – **Es-pan-yol?**
  - Chinese: **Poo-tong-whaa?**
  - Korean: **Han-goo-gin?** (note: hard G, not J)
  - Vietnamese: **Tin Vee-et?**
  - French: Langue française – **Long Fran-sez?**

3. Try to communicate "The interpreter will call you back in a few minutes." Many limited-English speakers will recognize the word "interpreter" and expect some delay in the conversation while you make arrangements.

If you recognize they are speaking Spanish and you took Spanish in school or are feeling brave: "Un intérprete llamará en unos minutos."

PHONETICALLY: **Oon in-ter-pre-tay ya-mar-ay en oo-nos min-oo-toes.**

4. Hang up with the caller.
5. Immediately dial **Language Line: 1-866-874-3972** – remember, the caller is waiting by the phone for them to call right back.
6. Type on your telephone keypad or tell the live representative our 6-digit Client ID:  
**5 3 0 2 9 8.**
7. For **Spanish**: Press **1**.
8. For **all other languages**: Press **2** and say the name of the language you need at the prompt (e.g., "Chinese"). The appropriate Interpreter will be connected to the call.
9. Brief the Interpreter, summarizing what the call is about and giving any special instructions, including the caller's phone number.
10. The Interpreter will initiate the Conference Call and add the limited-English speaker to the call.
11. Talk directly to the caller, not the Interpreter. Speak in first person ("I" and "you").
12. Pause frequently to allow the Interpreter to interpret.
13. When the call is completed: Say "**End of Call**" to the Interpreter.

**Important:** Maintain a log of all telephone interpreting services, including date, consumer, counselor, type, and length of service. Forward to the appropriate Program Manager.