

## WHY DID L&I CHANGE THE WAY INTERPRETER SERVICES ARE SCHEDULED?

In 2018, the Washington State Legislature passed [Senate Bill 6245](#) to improve state programs for interpreter services and grant freelance interpreters the right to unionize.

Read for the first time on January 10, 2018, the [original bill](#) (page 3, line 31-39) added a new chapter to [RCW 39.26](#) requiring DSHS, HCA, and L&I to purchase in-person spoken language interpreter services:

1. directly from language access providers, or
2. through contracts with scheduling and coordinating delivery organizations, or
3. both. (aka **dual system**)

On March 1, 2018, an amendment was introduced reinforcing option #1 of the original bill that allowed L&I to purchase interpreter services directly from language access providers.

[Amendment](#) (page 3, line 16-28, additions in bold and underlined)  
(3) *No later than September 1, 2020, the department of social and health services, the department of children, youth, and families, the health care authority, and the department of labor and industries must purchase in-person spoken language interpreter services directly from language access providers **as defined in RCW 74.04.025**, or through **limited** contracts with scheduling and coordinating delivery organizations, or both. Each state agency must have at least one contract with an entity that provides interpreter services through telephonic and video remote technologies. **Nothing in this section precludes the department of labor and industries from purchasing in person spoken language interpreter services directly from language access providers or from directly reimbursing language access providers.***

The amendment also allowed owners of language access agencies or brokers to be considered "language access providers" provided they were independent contractors and DSHS certified, authorized, or qualified as stipulated in RCW 74.04.025.

[Original](#) (page 10, line 12-28)  
(10)(a) *"Language access provider" means any independent contractor who provides spoken language interpreter services, whether paid by a broker, language access agency, or the respective department:*

*(b) "Language access provider" does not mean an **owner**, manager, or employee of a broker or a language access agency.*

[Amendment](#) (page 10, line 6-23)

*(10)(a) "Language access provider" means any independent contractor who provides spoken language interpreter services, whether paid by a broker, language access agency, or the respective department:*

*(b) "Language access provider" does not mean a manager or employee of a broker or a language access agency. **(deleted owner)***