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Increasing Language Access In Oregon: Learning Modules



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Chapter 4: The Oregon Health Care Interpreter Registry

Chapter 4

Introduces the Oregon Health Care Interpreter Central Registry

Chapter 4. What is the Oregon Health Care Interpreter Central Registry?

This chapter focuses on what the OHA health care interpreter central registry is, why it exists and how to use it.

What is the central registry?

The [health care interpreter central registry](#) is Oregon's legislatively mandated database of credentialed (i.e., certified or qualified) health care interpreters. It is maintained by OHA and is the official source to verify health care interpreters who meet the state's training and competency standards. A health care interpreter "listed in the registry" refers to interpreters who have the necessary credentials to work as health care interpreters in Oregon.

Why does the central registry exist?

Oregon law requires that any provider who receives public funds² work with health care interpreters who are listed in the central registry when providing services to patients who communicate in a language other than English, or who use sign language. This requirement applies broadly, which means that if a provider receives any public funds, even for a single

Interpreter Credentialing Requirements

Only interpreters who meet OHA's training and competency requirements appear in the central registry. As highlighted in Chapter 2, these include:

- Demonstrating language proficiency in both English and the target language.
- Completing at least 60 hours of OHA-approved training.
- Applying for and receiving a certification or qualification letter and registry identification number from OHA.

² The term "public funds" is not limited to just Medicaid. It includes reimbursement from Medicaid/the Oregon Health Plan, Medicare, the Veteran's Administration, and medical assistance program administered by OHA, the Oregon Department of Human Services, or any of Oregon's counties or cities, or Indian Health Services. See [OAR 950-050-0010](#) and the [OHA Health Care Interpreter FAQ](#) for additional detail.

Chapter 4 Details

- Introduces the Oregon Health Care Interpreter Central Registry
 - Explains what the registry is and why it exists.
 - Describes information included in the registry (e.g., interpreter name, registry number, credential type).
- Highlights how and why to use the registry
 - Explains providers' responsibility to prioritize registry-listed interpreters.
 - Emphasizes using credentialed interpreters ensure quality, trust, and compliance.

The Central Registry: Overview

- Oregon's legislatively mandated database of credentialed health care interpreters
- Maintained by OHA to ensure interpreters meet state standards for training and competency
- Official source to verify health care interpreters who meet state's training and competency standards

The Central Registry: Why it Exists

Oregon law requires providers who receive public funds to work with interpreters listed in the Health Care Interpreter Central Registry.

This requirement applies broadly—if a provider receives any public funds, even for one patient, all patients seen in that office must receive care that meets health care interpreter requirements.

The law helps ensure patients receive interpretation at no cost from professionals who have:

- Completed OHA-approved training
- Demonstrated language proficiency
- Met all OHA credentialing standards.

Information Included in Central Registry

Each interpreter listing shows:

- Name of the interpreter
- Registry number
- Language(s) offered
- Credential type (i.e., Certified Health Care Interpreter, Qualified Health Care Interpreter)
- Counties served
- Contact information
- Schedule availability

Providers can use this information to confirm that interpreters meet OHA standards before scheduling them for patient encounters.

Why Use the Central Registry?

Working with interpreters listed in the central registry is both a compliance requirement and a best practice for providing equitable care.

- Working with registry-listed interpreters ensures quality, trust, and patient safety.
- The registry helps providers verify interpreter credentials and maintain accurate documentation.
- Working with credentialed interpreters supports compliance with Oregon law and demonstrates a commitment to equitable care.
- Builds confidence among patients that interpreters are trained, professional, and impartial.

Working With a Credentialed Interpreter – What You Need to Know.

- ✓ It's the law
- ✓ It builds trust
- ✓ It ensures quality
- ✓ It supports performance

Always try to schedule a credentialed interpreter first. Once scheduled, document the interpreter's name and registry number in the patient's record.

Thank You!

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer free of charge. Contact Questions.LanguageAccess@oha.oregon.gov or 503-979-6980. We accept all relay calls.

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