

Robert R. Redfield, M.D.  
Director  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road  
Atlanta, GA 30329

December 17, 2020

Dear Dr. Redfield,

The undersigned organizations, representing spoken and signed language interpreters, language service companies, and language access advocates, write to urge the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to explicitly include on-site medical interpreters among the listed examples of health care personnel (HCP) eligible for Phase 1 vaccinations, and to include on-site interpreters in other settings (community interpreting, educational interpreting, state and local government offices, court and interpreters in legal or administrative law settings) among “other essential workers” per the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA). We note that these front-line personnel are not included in either the CDC guidance or the CISA guidance. There are encouraging signs that states are including interpreters in HCP, from Massachusetts, Minnesota, and North Carolina; we urge that these positive steps be reinforced with messaging from the CDC.

On-site medical interpreters perform lifesaving and essential work, in direct contact with patients and other health care professionals. As you are aware, the Bureau of the Census indicates that more than 65 million American citizens and residents speak a language other than English at home, and more than 13 million are Limited English Proficient, speaking minimal English, or not at all. Under §1557 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, as well as EO 13166, individuals who do not speak English are entitled to language access services when receiving medical care. Medical interpreters save lives and improve medical outcomes for some of America’s most vulnerable patients.

If you or your staff should have further questions, they may be directed to Mr. Ted Wozniak, President, American Translators Association, [president@atanet.org](mailto:president@atanet.org), and to William P. Rivers, Ph.D, Principal, WP Rivers & Associates, [Bill@wpriversassociates.com](mailto:Bill@wpriversassociates.com). Additionally, please feel free to contact the organizations joining this letter.

Sincerely,



Ted Wozniak, President  
American Translators Association

**American Association on Health and Disability**

E. Clarke Ross, Public Policy Director, [clarkross10@comcast.net](mailto:clarkross10@comcast.net)

**Association of Language Companies**

Susan Amarino, President, [susan@emultilingual.com](mailto:susan@emultilingual.com)

**Autistic Self Advocacy Network**

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**Center for Public Representation**

Erin Shea, Policy Associate, [shea@cpr-us.org](mailto:shea@cpr-us.org)

**Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters**

Natalya Mytareva, Managing Director, [managing.director@cchicertification.org](mailto:managing.director@cchicertification.org)

**Coalition of Practicing Translators and Interpreters of California**

Lorena Ortiz Schneider, Chair, [info@coalitionptic.org](mailto:info@coalitionptic.org)

**International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) USA**

David Violet, Chair and AIIC Advisory Board Representative, [d.violet@aiic.net](mailto:d.violet@aiic.net)

**International Federation of Translators**

Kevin Quirk, President, [Kevin.Quirk@fit-ift.org](mailto:Kevin.Quirk@fit-ift.org)

**International Medical Interpreters Association**

David Carmona, President, [president@imiaweb.org](mailto:president@imiaweb.org)

**InterpretAmerica**

Katharine Allen, Co-President, [k.allen@interpretamerica.com](mailto:k.allen@interpretamerica.com)

**Joint National Committee for Languages**

Rita Oleksak, President, [OleksakR@glastonburyus.org](mailto:OleksakR@glastonburyus.org)

**Justice in Aging**

Denny Chan, Senior Staff Attorney, [dchan@justiceinaging.org](mailto:dchan@justiceinaging.org)

**Lakeshore Foundation**

E. Clark Ross, Washington Representative, [clarkross10@comcast.net](mailto:clarkross10@comcast.net)

**National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators**

Aimee Benavides, Chair, [chair@najit.org](mailto:chair@najit.org)

**National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters**

Xiomara Armas, Chair, [nbcmichair@certifiedmedicalinterpreters.org](mailto:nbcmichair@certifiedmedicalinterpreters.org)

**National Council for Languages and International Studies**

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**National Council on Interpreting in Health Care**

Rosanna Balistreri, President, [Rosanna.Balistreri@ncihc.org](mailto:Rosanna.Balistreri@ncihc.org)

**National Health Law Program**

Mara Youdelman, Managing Attorney, [youdelman@healthlaw.org](mailto:youdelman@healthlaw.org)

**Registry for Interpreters of the Deaf**

Jonathan Webb, President, [president@RID.org](mailto:president@RID.org)

**TAALS – The American Association of Language Specialists**

Pascale Ledeur Kraus, President, [taalspresident@gmail.com](mailto:taalspresident@gmail.com)