

To whom it may concern

Chartered Institute of Linguists members who are public service interpreters work in a variety of settings, which are likely to have a high risk of Covid-19 exposure; including workplaces for key services such as court and police and across the healthcare sector.

Most members of the profession are self-employed and/or work for interpreting and translation agencies, who in turn hold contracts for interpreting services with other public services. Most language professionals do not generally work directly for the organisations requesting interpretation so they will not automatically be captured by their policies and human resource systems.

Interpreters may work in a variety of settings on a daily basis, moving between locations regularly and therefore carrying a high risk of coronavirus exposure, as they have to move between settings from one booking to another. For this reason we would like to see the inclusion of public service interpreters in the COVID-19 Vaccination Priority Groups alongside police, teachers and other front-line public service workers.

Interpreters have worked to adapt their practices to rapidly changing circumstances and to continue to deliver the best possible service to public service clients, including working remotely, where feasible, and continuing to offer face to face interpreting where required.

Given the importance of language support for service users, victims of crime, clients, patients and the public, delays in vaccination could result in continued disruption and delay to vital services. Public service organisations may refuse interpreter/translator involvement to minimise risk, and thereby create additional risks for service users due to a lack of information and access to services.

Should any public service wish to verify the credentials of a Chartered Institute of Linguists member we offer a free search capability via '[Find a Linguist](#)', using the 'Member check' option, on the CIOL website <https://www.ciol.org.uk/>

We believe it is vital to include interpreters and translators in the early stages of local vaccination programmes, and we urge you to provide a speedy and effective way for our interpreter colleagues to register this priority with the relevant authorities and offer your support in order to undertake vital public service assignments.

Chartered Institute of Linguists



**Supporting and developing language professionals worldwide**

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