

RFP 20-1311 Interpretation Services

Clarification Questions

1. In the past, the State has experienced issues with filling requests and unexpected cancellations for requests that have been filled.

- a. Do you track your fill rate and cancellation rate separately?

Yes, the fill rate and cancellation rate are tracked separately.

- b. What is your fill rate over the past 2 years?

LUNA's average fill rate for the past two years has met or exceeded 99%.

- c. What is your cancellation rate over the past 2 years?

LUNA's average cancellation rate over the past two years has remained at or below 1% for the past 2 years.

- d. Please describe your methodology for calculating your fill rate and cancellation rate. For your fill rate, does this figure include situations where an interpretation method is substituted and thus different from the client's request (for example, if a client requests an in-person interpreter and you provide a VRI interpreter)?

Fill rates are calculated by dividing the number of successfully scheduled appointments by the total number of requested appointments and then multiplying by 100.

Cancellation rates are calculated by dividing the number of cancelled appointments by the total number of requested appointments and then multiplying by 100.

A **filled appointment** is any assignment where language services are provided. When an interpretation method is substituted (for example, a virtual appointment is substituted for an in-person appointment) with the consent of the client, it is counted as a filled.

A **cancelled appointment** is any appointment where the client/agency decides they no longer want services that were previously requested.

On the rare occasion that LUNA is unable to fill an assignment, it is considered **unfilled** and client is not charged for the assignment.

- e. What strategies do you employ to maintain a high fill rate and a low cancellation rate?

LUNA employs a number of different strategies to maintain a high fill rate and low cancellation rate:

Dedicated Staff Interpreters: LUNA utilizes a large group of certified ASL and spoken language interpreters. The dedicated availability of these interpreters allows LUNA to fill jobs that contractors either do not want, are not qualified for, or live too far away to fill.

Knowledgeable Coordinators: LUNA employs an experienced group of ASL and spoken language coordinators who have direct connections to either the Deaf community, the ASL interpreting community, or local immigrant communities. Most of our coordinators are highly trained credentialed interpreters or have vast knowledge of the industry. This allows them to determine the best fit when scheduling the ASL interpreter for a language appointment.

Robust Agency Network: LUNA has developed close non-competitive partnerships with several well-established Indiana interpreting agencies with a willingness to meet our strict compliance and qualification standards. These working partnerships increase the quality and quantity of available interpreters for language appointments.

Experience serving the State: LUNA's six year history of working with DHHS at the State of Indiana and a multitude of other Indiana agencies for over 15 years has allowed LUNA to the opportunity to optimize our scheduling and recruiting processes to best meet the State's needs, resulting in a high fill rate and low cancellation rate.

Risk Mitigation Efforts: LUNA has proactively provided our interpreters with COVID-19 safety information and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) on a regular basis to reduce the risk of interpreters becoming ill. Interpreters are also expected to follow strict safety protocols while on-site, which were implemented using guidance from our large healthcare clients. This allows our interpreters to stay healthy and available to fill interpreting assignments, as needed.

- f. How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your fill rate and cancellation rate?

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an improvement to our fill rates across all clients. This is attributable to the increased use of virtual services, which negate the need for travel costs and make it easier to quickly fill appointments with the most qualified interpreters.

Due to the type of virtual services that clients need during the pandemic, **the fill rate and the time to connect to an interpreter improved.** Interpreters can provide services virtually within minutes rather than travel in person to an on-site location. This also further reduced the cancellation rate.

- g. How have you tried to mitigate the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic?

With an ASL interpreter on assignment in China as the COVID-19 news broke, LUNA was in a unique position to be in the earliest wave of mitigation planning. As well, the LUNA staff members, as first responders, are trained to service emergencies and accompany clients during trauma and under duress. Nearly 20 years of experience serving on emergency medicine teams provided confidence working in the face of infectious disease. Because of these and the measures below, LUNA adapted to the challenges of COVID without disruption of services and with a fully intact staff.

Mitigation planning involved the formation of a COVID response team with representation across the company. The team held a daily virtual meeting to assess risks, create policy to keep our staff, contractors, and clients safe, and adapted service lines. The company closed its office before the Governor's Stay at Home order was issued with teams of at-home staff, virtual language providers, and on-site interpreters determined by risk, experience, and family needs. Clients were surveyed to assess barriers to language access and offered alternative services.

Virtual and remote interpreting utilizing multiple platforms was critical to maintaining continuity of care between consumers and interpreters, and between interpreters and care providers. Many clients opted to use new service lines such as phone interpreting,

document translation, and captioning services, and, as mentioned, virtual interpreting.

With diligent adherence to safety precautions, LUNA's staff has remained healthy and fully operational. With the assistance of a PPP loan, the company avoided any layoffs or furloughs. In fact, COVID-19 activated new service lines for clients resulting in a more diverse client-vendor relationship with the confidence we can adjust to changes in clients' operations. Finally, all stakeholders benefit from increased dedication among our staff who face the daily challenges of COVID-19 with the confidence that job security allows.

Servicing the State of Indiana in the coming period will demand continued diligence, agility, and innovative communication to train and support State users. While many factors remain unknown about how the pandemic will play out, the State can have full assurance in LUNA's ability to provide service, every day, without disruption.