

## 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, LTC does track these rates separately.

Internally, we tag cancelled ("unfulfilled") appointments with the reason for unfulfillment. For example, if an interpreter returns an appointment last-minute, that unfulfillment would be tagged differently than if the state cancelled the need for an interpreter. This tagging system allows us to track exactly how many appointments are affected by interpreter give-backs. We include these tags in quarterly reports, which we have been providing to the State of Indiana since December 2014. We would be happy to continue providing those rates in the report and to review them with the contract administrator in detail during our quarterly meetings.

From August 2018 through August 2020, our unfulfillment rate due to interpreter cancellation for the State of Indiana has been 0.19%.

Unfulfillment is more commonly attributed to other reasons. Sometimes interpreting appointments are requested in areas with a shallow pool of interpreter resources. However, from August 2018 through August 2020, unfulfillment due to location only occurred for 0.85% of all requested State of Indiana jobs. In an effort to eliminate this percentage altogether, LTC has resolved to only propose services for state regions in which we have the deepest resource pools (Regions 2 and 3).

One other reason for unfulfillment is last-minute changes by appointment requestors. When appointment times, locations or methods (i.e. face-to-face or virtual) are changed after LTC already has an interpreter assigned to an appointment, the interpreter may not be able to keep that appointment assignment. In that case, even though the appointment was "filled" until the detail change, the appointment is changed to "unfilled" until our scheduling staff assign a new interpreter to the appointment. The closer to the appointment time the details are changed, the harder it is to find a new interpreter.

LTC always works hard to fulfill last-minute requests, which is demonstrated in our 94.5% overall fulfillment rate.

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

From August 2018 through August 2020, our fill rate has been 94.5%. This includes all regions of Indiana, whereas we would only be supplying services for Regions 2 and 3, where the majority of interpreters live and work, going forward.

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

From August 2018 through August 2020, our unfulfillment rate has been 5.5%.

- 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)?

To calculate our fill rate, we start with the total number of billable appointments and remove those tagged "unfulfilled". This group makes up the filled group. Filled group divided by total number of appointments constitutes the fill rate.

To calculate our unfulfilled rate, we total up all appointments marked unfulfilled. This comprises the unfulfilled group. Unfulfilled group divided by total number of appointments constitutes the unfulfilled rate.

As for the second question posed, because these situations, where an interpretation method is substituted and thus different from the client's original request, have been infrequent, we have not tracked this. However, going forward, LTC would be happy to track these situations and provide these metrics to the State of Indiana as requested.

When interpretation method is substituted, LTC communicates with the requestor about the options and the nature of the assignment to ensure that all parties are in agreement that the substituted mode will be sufficient for the request.

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

To maintain a high fill rate, LTC constantly recruits, vets, and onboards local, highly qualified interpreters.

To boost fill rate even more, LTC is making a purposeful decision to only bid for regions where we have our best interpreters and largest resource pools.

To maintain a low cancellation rate, LTC educates our interpreters on the importance of only taking jobs they are sure they can fill. Because of this, in the past two years, LTC has had to unfulfill a job due to a last-minute give back for only 0.19% of all appointments.

If last-minute changes cause an interpreter to give back an appointment, a team of schedulers work together to contract every possible interpreter who could take over the appointment. At the same time, we assess the nature of the appointment with the State requestor and determine all possible modes that could fill the assignment appropriately. It is due to strategic communication, internally and with the State, that we are able to keep our unfulfillment rates so low.

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

Since March 2019, LTC's fill rate has increased and our unfulfilled rate has decreased.

LTC's fulfillment rate from March – August 2020 is 98.2%.

LTC's unfulfilled rate from March – August 2020 is 1.8%.

LTC continuously seeks to increase our fulfillment rate. We were pleased to see that our solutions during COVID made it possible to reach these percentages.

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

During the first couple weeks of the pandemic, LTC's account manager for the State of Indiana worked diligently with the IDOA Contract Administrator to put together an action plan that included communicating with state agencies about switching the majority of appointments to virtual settings in alignment with the

Governor's stay-at-home order. The State Commissioner was included in this decision.

In addition to that communication, LTC reached out to the top requesting agencies to personally touch base with them about these changes and to ensure that all needs were being met, while also maintaining the safety of all parties involved. For a few DCS appointments that were unable to switch to virtual settings due to the nature of the assignment, LTC was able to provide interpreters wearing masks. If the assignment was ongoing in nature, LTC made sure to provide the same interpreter each time both for consistency and also to minimize exposure. For every appointment that requested in-person interpreting, LTC sent the request to the IDOA Contract Administrator for approval, per their request. This helped both LTC and IDOA to track the types and frequency of appointments that were still needing the in-person interpreter during that precarious time.

LTC's interpreting team communicated with interpreters regularly about the expectations and the platforms that were deemed "preferred" by the state requestors or individual sites (WebEx, Zoom, Teams, etc.). This gave interpreters an opportunity to practice and educate themselves on each platform, using our top-notch interpreting team as resources to support this effort.

LTC utilized staff interpreters for every possible appointment to maintain consistency and quality through this transition to virtual appointments. We regularly received positive feedback from state personnel on the professionalism, quality and smoothness of the interpretation services on virtual platforms.

It was our pleasure to make these adjustments on our end and to provide a seamless transition for state appointments. LTC appreciated the easy communication and planning we were able to do with the support of IDOA, especially the Contract Administrator.