

From: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services <uscis@public.govdelivery.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 3:23 PM

To:

Subject: USCIS to Provide Contract Interpreters for Asylum Interviews - Temporary Rule to Help Reduce Spread of COVID-19

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services today announced a temporary final rule to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) by using government-contracted telephonic interpreters for affirmative asylum interviews at no cost to the applicant.

This temporary final rule changes for the next 180 days the requirement that asylum applicants who do not speak English must bring an interpreter to their affirmative asylum interview. Under the modified regulation, USCIS will temporarily require applicants to proceed with a USCIS contract interpreter, provided the applicant is fluent in one of the 47 different languages available.

The government-contracted interpreters will be provided at no cost to asylum applicants. The interpreters are carefully vetted and tested and must pass rigorous background checks as well as meet a high standard of competency. The contract interpreters already regularly serve as interpreters for border screening interviews and act as interpreter monitors or occasionally serve as the primary interpreter during affirmative asylum interviews.

Asylum applicants who are unable to proceed with the interview in English or any of the [available languages](#) listed must continue to provide their own interpreter.

The temporary rule will amend existing Department of Homeland Security regulations for 180 days and goes into effect on Sept. 23. On March 23, 2021, asylum applicants unable to proceed with the interview in English will again be required to provide their own interpreter.

For more information, read the [temporary final rule](#) published in the Federal Register on Sept. 23.

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