

Interpreter Procedures

Section 61.032 of the Code provides that voters who cannot speak English, or who communicate only with sign language, may use an interpreter to help them communicate with election officials, regardless of whether the election official(s) attending to the voter can speak the same language as the voter.

Section 61.033 of the Code provides that the voter may select as an interpreter any person other than the voter's employer, an agent of the voter's employer, or an officer or agent of a labor union to which the voter belongs.

Before serving as an interpreter, the person selected as an interpreter must take an oath administered by an election officer under Section 61.035 of the Code. An interpreter may interpret for any number of voters, but must take a separate oath for each voter for whom the interpreter is providing interpretation. Our office has prescribed a form for the Oath of Interpreter, which is available in the [Election Forms Manual](#) on the Secretary of State's website.

If the voter cannot read the languages on the ballot, the interpreter may also act as an assistant for the voter, but the person must follow the procedures for an assistant outlined above.

If the voter is deaf and does not have a sign language interpreter who can accompany the voter to help communicate with the poll worker or read the ballot, the voter should contact his or her local election officials before the election and request assistance.

The interpreter may be a person provided by the authority conducting the election. However, even if an interpreter is provided, a voter may use an interpreter of his or her own choosing. Under Section 272.009 of the Code, if no interpreter is available at the polling place, the authority responsible for appointing the election judges may have appointed an interpreter to serve at a central location to provide assistance for Spanish-speaking voters and voters speaking any other languages required by the federal government based on the most recent federal census.

Under Section 61.033(2) of the Code, if a person is appointed to serve as an interpreter by an election officer, the interpreter must be a registered voter of the county in which the voter needing the interpreter resides or a registered voter of an adjacent county.