

Interpretation Services

A trafficked person who cannot speak the local language is likely to be more vulnerable to control by a trafficker.

By finding an interpreter, or providing translated materials, you remove the language barrier and break one of the many invisible chains traffickers use to control and manipulate people.

Remember that difficulties with language are not restricted to those who have been trafficked into Canada from another country: there are many areas of Canada where people speak only one or the other of our official languages, and there are a number of Canadian citizens or permanent residents who do not speak either. In addition, a person who is hearing impaired may need a sign-language interpreter.

Special Considerations

Even if you have no immediate access to an interpreter, do not ask anyone accompanying the person to interpret: he or she could be the trafficker.

While they may be hard to find in some communities, professional accredited interpreters are a better option than volunteers. Accredited interpreters are trained in the issues of confidentiality. As members of a professional association, they adhere to a code of conduct and have reached an acceptable standard of quality and skill in their work.

With volunteers, there is no way to assess the quality and accuracy of their interpretation skills, and they may not be aware of the importance of confidentiality, neutrality, or sensitivity, or of their own cultural, religious, ethnic, or gender-based biases. Volunteers may also be connected to the trafficker's ring, which could re-traumatize the trafficked person and derail your intervention.

Also, be aware of dialects. Many regions of the world share the same language but have different dialects, and these dialects may be associated with opposing sides in ethnic, religious, and national conflicts. If the interpreter speaks a different dialect, the trafficked person may feel uncomfortable with, or unable to trust, that person.

Where to Look

The accrediting bodies for translation and interpretation are a good place to start — most provinces have one. You can also try a telephone interpretation service, such as Telanguage Canada or LanguageLine. Crisis lines, victim services lines, and other phone support lines may also provide assistance in different languages.



Multilingual Resources

The following documents are available in several languages and intended to assist trafficked persons. These were originally developed for B.C. and can be adapted to reflect any city or region.

[We Can Help](#) provides questions for potentially trafficked persons and space to insert local contact information if a person wants support. [Chinese](#), [Korean](#), [Malay](#), and [Vietnamese](#) versions of this form are also available.

The [OCTIP pocket card](#) describes what human trafficking is and the forms exploitation can take, as well as the supports available to a trafficked person. It is available in 14 languages.

A publication called [Modern Day Slavery](#), published by MOSAIC and West Coast Domestic Workers Association, raises awareness about human trafficking with a particular focus on vulnerable foreign workers. It is available in English, Punjabi, Filipino, and Spanish.



Translated Materials

Having print materials available in various languages is another way to bridge the language gap and provide a trafficked person with information about important topics.

Many provinces in Canada have a wealth of translated information materials available in print and online. You might want to look for booklets or brochures that cover:

- human and legal rights in Canada
- legal options for someone involved in a criminal case
- immigration and refugee matters
- what constitutes a crime in Canada and the role of police, the courts, and other institutions in a criminal case
- support services and compensation programs available for victims of crime
- community agencies providing services in different languages