THE SAI BUYER'S GUIDE TO LANGUAGE SERVICES

Not sure where to start? Start here.

The buyer's guide to interpreting, translation, and American Sign Language services: what each one does, which fits your situation, and how to request it.



On-site · Video Remote · Over-the-Phone · American Sign Language · AI Interpreter · Translation · Transcription

WELCOME

Where do I start?

If your organization serves people who speak other languages, or who are Deaf or hard of hearing, you need a language partner you can rely on. This guide walks you through the choices in plain language, so you can pick the right service for each conversation and get it booked.

INTERPRETING

Spoken or signed language, delivered live.

In person, by video, or by phone.

TRANSLATION

Written content, in another language.

Documents, websites, software, and recorded media.

Answer five questions first

01 **Spoken, signed, or written?**
A live conversation needs an interpreter. Documents, websites, and recordings need translation or transcription.

02 **In the room, or remote?**
On-site for in-person needs. Video or phone when a remote connection works.

03 **Scheduled, or right now?**
Book ahead for planned meetings. Connect on demand when a conversation can't wait.

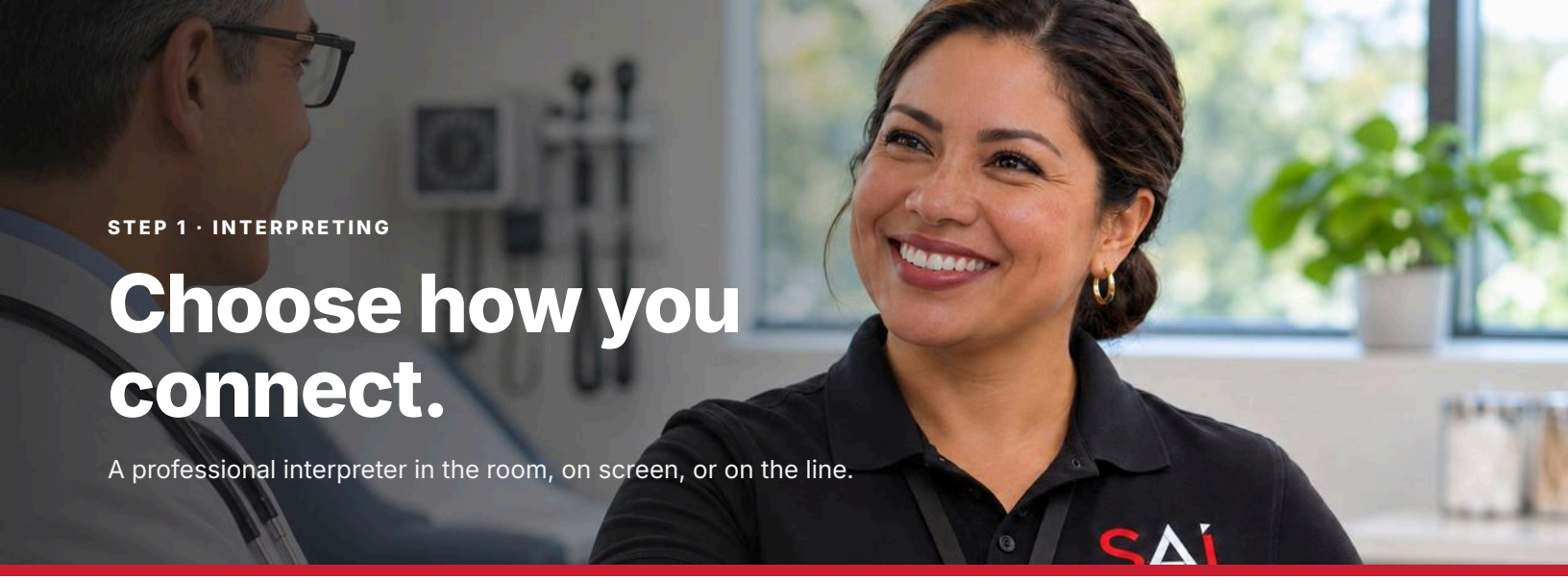
04 **How high are the stakes?**
Medical, legal, financial, or emotional conversations call for a qualified human interpreter.

05 **Any special requirements?**
Legal or medical credentials, a Certified Deaf Interpreter, certified translation, or event equipment.

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Interpreting: on-site, video, phone	3
ASL & AI Interpreter	4
Translation & media	5
Events, equipment & workforce	6
Which service fits?	7
What to have ready & how to request	8
The Client Center	9
Industries we serve	10
Why SAI	11

Still unsure? Tell us the setting, language, and date. We'll recommend the right option, often a mix of on-site and remote.



STEP 1 · INTERPRETING

Choose how you connect.

A professional interpreter in the room, on screen, or on the line.

IN PERSON · SCHEDULED

On-site interpreting

A professional interpreter joins you in person, scheduled in advance. Share the language, subject, setting, and timing, and we match an interpreter to the assignment.

BEST FOR

- Complex, critical, or sensitive conversations
- Meetings with several participants
- Young children, or people who communicate best in person
- People for whom remote technology is a barrier
- Trainings, board meetings, and planned sessions



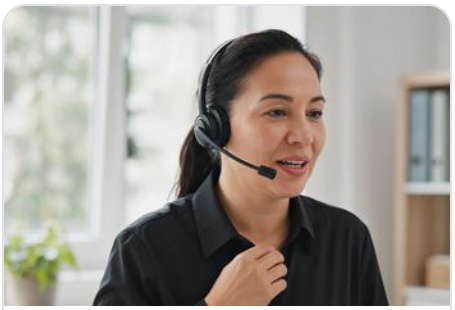
ON SCREEN · ON DEMAND

Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)

See and hear the interpreter through the SAI client portal or the SAI App. Video adds visual cues, and on-demand ASL is provided by video.

BEST FOR

- Walk-ins, front desks, and intake
- Telehealth visits
- Deaf and hard of hearing communication



ON THE LINE · ON DEMAND

Over-the-Phone Interpreting (OPI)

Call in with the access details we provide, or connect by audio from a computer through the client portal. No camera needed.

BEST FOR

- Quick calls and customer service
- Intake and scheduling
- Work in the field

ALSO AVAILABLE

Scheduled virtual interpreting

Book an interpreter ahead of time to join a planned video meeting or remote appointment.

MODE

Consecutive

The speaker pauses and the interpreter relays each thought. Best for one-on-one and small-group conversations.

MODE

Simultaneous

The interpreter speaks at nearly the same time as the speaker. Used for conferences and events, usually with equipment (page 6).



DEAF & HARD OF HEARING ACCESS

American Sign Language interpreting

- On-site ASL interpreting, one-time or recurring
- Scheduled ASL interpreting for virtual meetings
- On-demand ASL by video
- Legal-certified ASL and Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDI), by request

Credentials and availability are confirmed for each assignment.



Pay per use

AI Interpreter is billed separately from on-demand subscription plans. Ask us for current rates.

TECHNOLOGY, WITH A PERSON ONE TAP AWAY

AI Interpreter

Real-time, speech-to-speech AI interpreting in the SAI App and client portal. Start in AI for routine moments, and roll over to a live SAI interpreter in the same session. Add Meeting Transcripts & Summaries for meetings and calls.

A good fit for AI

- Front-desk check-ins and scheduling
- Simple wayfinding questions
- Staff meetings and client calls that need notes

Choose a human interpreter

- Medical, legal, and financial conversations
- Emotional or high-stakes situations
- ASL, and any legal proceeding

How AI Interpreter works

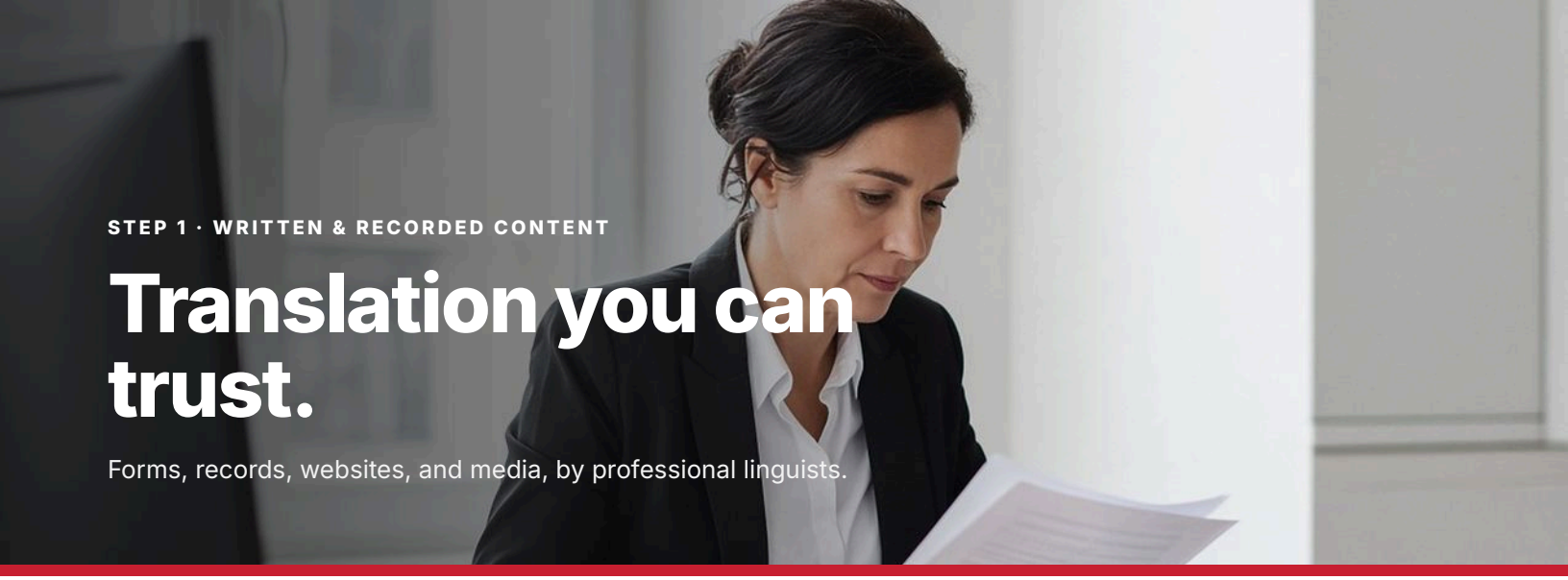
1
Open the SAI App or client portal

2
Detect the speaker's language

3
Start interpreting with AI

4
Roll over to a human interpreter if needed

5
Get meeting transcripts and summaries



STEP 1 · WRITTEN & RECORDED CONTENT

Translation you can trust.

Forms, records, websites, and media, by professional linguists.

TRANSLATION

Document translation

Professional human translation for business, technical, legal, and marketing content, matched to translators with relevant subject experience. Forms, notices, policies, enrollment materials, claims, outreach, and online content.

OFFICIAL USE

Certified & notarized translation

- For courts, immigration, and other official use
- Delivered digitally by default
- Hard copies available for an additional fee
- Rush service available

LOCALIZATION

Websites, software & e-learning

Adapt language, visuals, layout, and cultural details so content feels natural to each audience, with desktop publishing so files come back in their original format.

MEDIA & ACCESSIBILITY

Transcription, subtitles & voiceover

Transcription of audio and video, translated transcripts, subtitling, and voiceover or dubbing. Accessible formats include Section 508 remediation, Braille, large print, and audio.

How a translation project works

1

Review & quote

Send your final files, audience, and language variety. We confirm scope, timeline, and cost.

2

Translate

A professional translator works from your source, matched to the subject.

3

Edit

A second linguist checks the translation for accuracy.

4

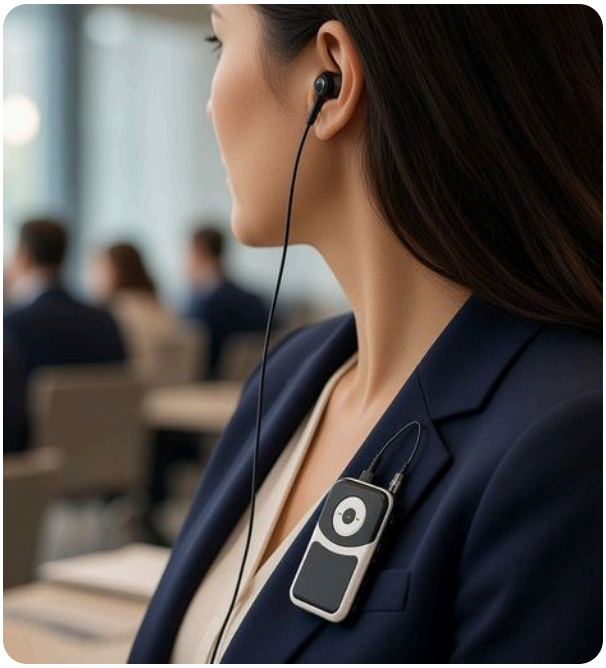
Proofread

A final pass for fluency, consistency, and cultural fit.

Get a quote: send your files at sailanguage.com/translation/. Tell us your deadline when you ask.

STEP 1 · EVENTS, EQUIPMENT & WORKFORCE

Beyond the single conversation.



Conferences & multilingual events

Conference interpreters deliver the message in real time while the presenter speaks, and attendees listen through wireless headsets. We help plan interpreter scheduling, languages, and equipment.

Equipment rental

- Interpreting booths, fixed or portable
- Transmitters, receivers, and microphones
- Wireless headsets for audiences
- Portable systems for tours

Language access devices

- Dual-handset phones for front desks and counters
- Tablet rolling carts for video interpreting in exam rooms and service areas

Rent a complete system or only the pieces you need, with or without SAI interpreters. AI captions and translation are also available for webinars and meetings.

Workforce language services

Build language skills and accessibility into your own team.

STAFFING

Bilingual staffing

Vetted bilingual professionals for temporary, temp-to-hire, or direct-hire roles, with help on screening, language testing, and onboarding.

TESTING

Proficiency & fluency testing

Oral assessments for bilingual employees, interpreters, and candidates, online or by phone, with a report on each result.

WORKPLACE SUPPORT

Job coaching & Deaf support

Bilingual and ASL-fluent job coaches help employees build skills, identify accommodations, and resolve communication issues.

TRAINING

Deaf awareness & interpreter training

Deaf awareness training, the Deaf Soar self-advocacy program, and SAI Interpreter Academy for medical interpreters.

STEP 2 · DECIDE

Which service fits?

Find your situation, then follow the row.

	IF YOU NEED...	CHOOSE	HOW IT'S DELIVERED
1	**A planned, complex, or sensitive conversation in person**	**On-site interpreting**	Scheduled in advance
2	**An interpreter for a planned video meeting**	**Scheduled virtual interpreting**	Booked ahead, joins your meeting
3	**Help with a walk-in, intake, or telehealth visit that can't wait**	**Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)**	On demand, by video
4	**Help with a quick call or customer conversation**	**Over-the-Phone Interpreting (OPI)**	On demand, by phone or computer audio
5	**Communication with a Deaf or hard of hearing person**	**ASL interpreting** CDI or legal-certified ASL when needed	On-site, scheduled, or on demand by video
6	**A routine check-in, scheduling, or wayfinding question**	**AI Interpreter** Roll over to a live interpreter anytime	In the SAI App or client portal
7	**Forms, notices, records, or official documents**	**Document translation** Certified or notarized when required	Quoted from your files; delivered digitally
8	**Websites, software, e-learning, or video content**	**Localization & media** Transcription, subtitles, voiceover	Quoted per project
9	**Content in Braille, large print, audio, or accessible digital formats**	**Accessible formats** Including Section 508 remediation	Quoted per project
10	**A conference, training, or tour with a multilingual audience**	**Simultaneous interpreting & equipment** Or AI event captioning	Quoted per event
11	**Bilingual hiring or workplace accessibility**	**Staffing, testing, coaching & training**	Scoped for your organization

USING ON-DEMAND OFTEN?

Monthly on-demand plans (Flex, Essential, Premier, and Enterprise) are available. See sailanguage.com/interpreting/plans/.

GOOD TO KNOW

Availability depends on the language and interpreter availability. On-demand interpreting is not a substitute for 911 or other emergency services.

STEP 3 · PREPARE

What to have ready.

A few details up front help us match the right interpreter or translator the first time.

For an interpreter

- The language, and the dialect or variety if you know it
- Service type: on-site, video, phone, or ASL
- Date, start time, and expected length
- The address and an on-site contact, or the meeting link
- The setting and subject, such as a medical visit, IEP meeting, or deposition
- How many people will take part
- Any credentials required: medical, legal-certified, or CDI

For a translation

- Final source files (not drafts)
- The target language and variety
- Who will read it
- Whether you need certification or notarization
- Your deadline, and whether you need rush service
- The format you need back

STEP 4 · REQUEST

Three ways to request.

ONLINE

Request an Interpreter

Share the language, setting, and time.

sailanguage.com/request-interpreter/

PHONE · 24/7

210-960-4560

A live team answers around the clock.

EXISTING CLIENTS

Client portal & SAI App

Schedule appointments, connect on demand, and view invoices.

SAI portal
sailanguage.com/resources/

What happens next

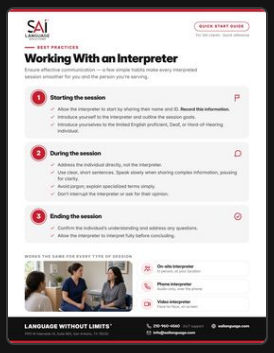
1. **Tell us what you need.** Language, service, date, setting, subject, and any credentials.
2. **Get a recommendation.** We suggest the right service and provide a quote or plan details.
3. **We set it up.** We schedule your interpreter, start your project, or set up your access.

FREE FOR EVERY CLIENT

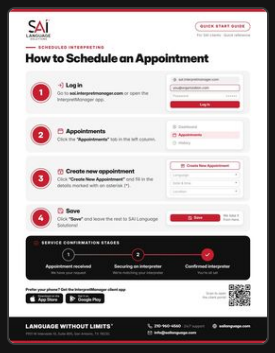
The Client Center

Everything you need to get started with SAI and make the most of your interpreters, in one place on our website.

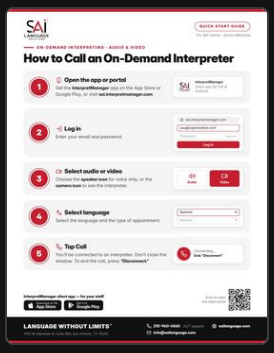
sailanguage.com/resources/



Working With an Interpreter



Schedule an Appointment



Call an On-Demand Interpreter



Over-the-Phone Interpreting



Language ID Poster

01 · GETTING STARTED

Client portal & SAI App

Schedule appointments, connect on demand, and view invoices from any browser. Or use the SAI client app on a phone or tablet. Get the app from the SAI Client Center.

02 · HOW-TO VIDEOS

Short walkthroughs

How to schedule an appointment, and how to call an on-demand interpreter. Watch once, book with confidence.

03 · QUICK START GUIDES

Free one-page guides

Working With an Interpreter, Schedule an Appointment, Call an On-Demand Interpreter, Over-the-Phone Interpreting, and Find Your Unique PIN. Print them, post them, share them. Pocket-size postcards too.

04 · LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION

Language ID Poster & Guide

Let people point to their language, and we connect the right interpreter. A poster for front desks, lobbies, and waiting rooms, plus a folded guide.

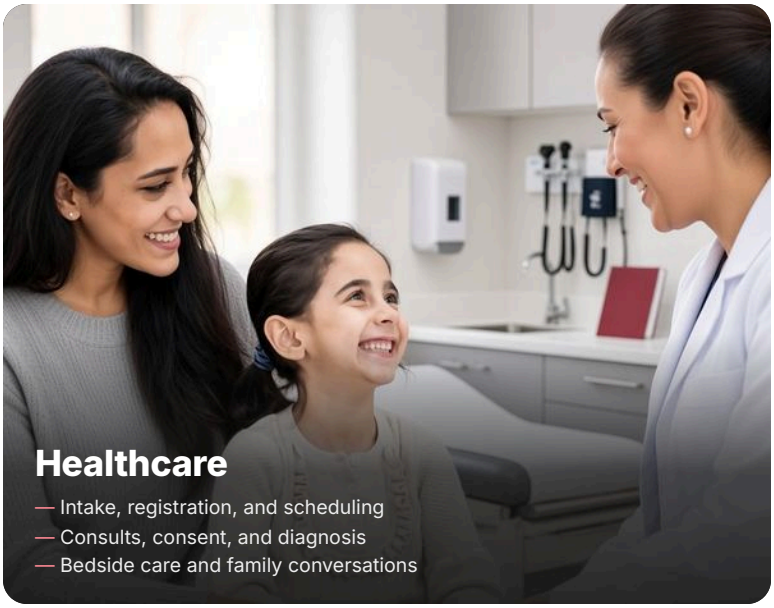
05 · News, insights & in-depth guides

Short reads on choosing AI or a human interpreter, phone vs. video vs. on-site, certified translation, and event interpreting, plus free guides: Working With a Medical Interpreter, How to Request an Interpreter, and ADA and American Sign Language Access Basics.

INDUSTRIES

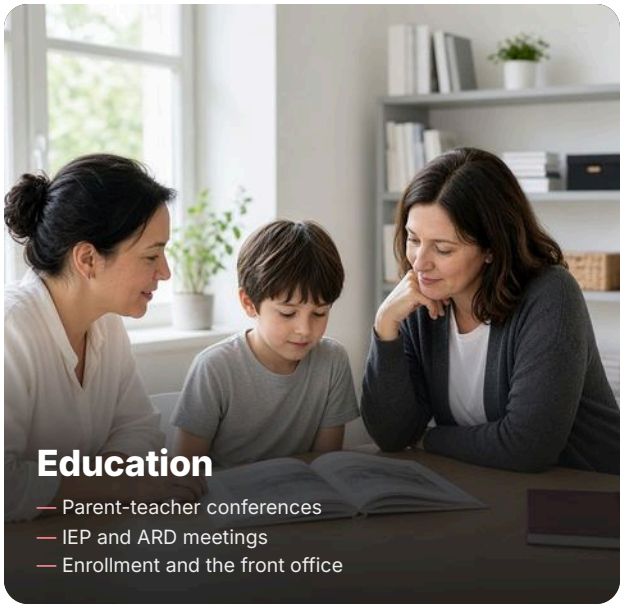
Built for the work you do.

Language access that fits healthcare, schools, courts, business, and social services.



Healthcare

— Intake, registration, and scheduling
— Consults, consent, and diagnosis
— Bedside care and family conversations



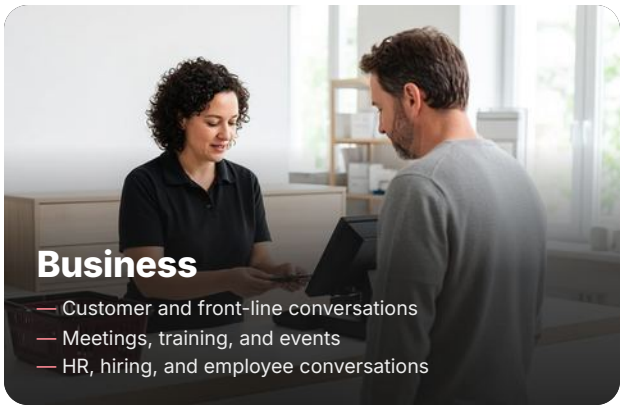
Education

— Parent-teacher conferences
— IEP and ARD meetings
— Enrollment and the front office



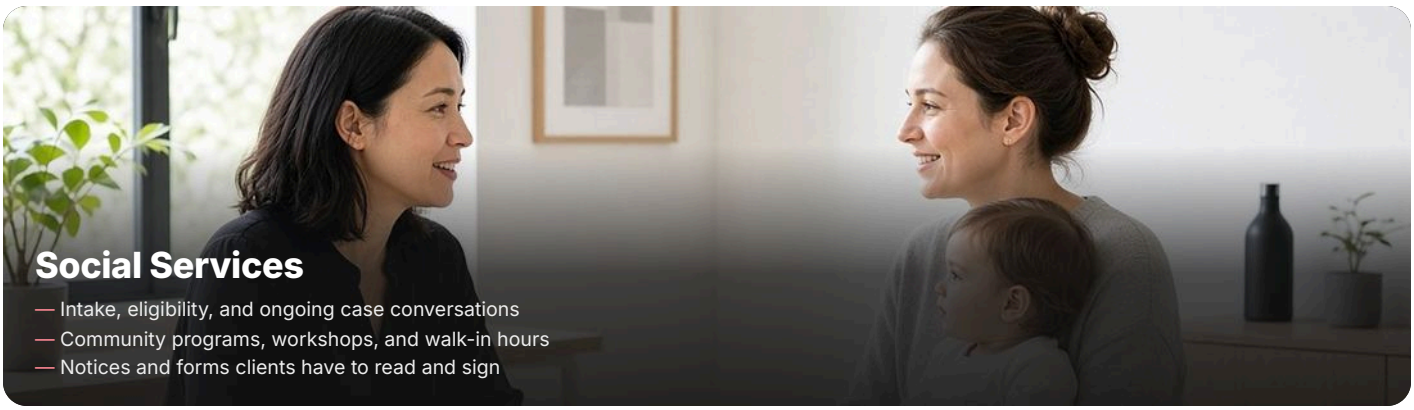
Legal & Government

— Court hearings and appearances
— Depositions, intakes, and attorney meetings
— Certified translations of official documents



Business

— Customer and front-line conversations
— Meetings, training, and events
— HR, hiring, and employee conversations



Social Services

— Intake, eligibility, and ongoing case conversations
— Community programs, workshops, and walk-in hours
— Notices and forms clients have to read and sign

WHY SAI

One partner for every conversation.



2008

In business since 2008

17,000+

Interpreters network-wide

San Antonio Express-News
Top Workplaces 2025

HUMAN-FIRST

Qualified people for the conversations that matter most, with technology where it helps.

RIGHT FIT

We match the service, language, and interpreter skills to your setting and subject.

ONE PARTNER

Spoken, signed, and written language support, coordinated through one team.

Getting set up

Support is tailored to each account and may include:

- Account setup based on your preferences
- A kickoff call to align on needs and timelines
- Access details and quick-start materials for staff
- Staff training on how and when to request services
- Ongoing check-ins as your needs change

> **"SAI has been a strategic asset to our business."**
>
> TEXAS GROCERY RETAILER



LET'S GET STARTED

Ready when you are.

CALL 24/7	REQUEST ONLINE	EXISTING CLIENTS
210-960-4560	**sailanguage.com/request-interpreter/**	**Log in to the client portal**

Website **sailanguage.com**
Email **info@sailanguage.com**
Client portal **sailanguage.com/resources/**
Client Center **sailanguage.com/resources/**

REQUEST ONLINE

SAI® LANGUAGE SOLUTIONS

Language Without Limits®

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