

## **GUIDE TO WORKING WITH OUT-OF-STATE AND OUT-OF-COUNTRY WORKERS**

Review this guide for important considerations vocational rehabilitation counselors (VRCs) can use when assisting workers who reside or have relocated out of state or out of country (OOS/C). This guide provides useful tips and links to information that help mitigate challenges and reduce delays in providing services to workers outside of Washington State.

### **Table of Contents**

How to Help a Worker Who Has Relocated Out of Washington.....	2
Limited English Proficiency Communication and Cultural Competency Resources for VRCs .....	4
Resources for Helping Non-Medical Providers Obtain a Provider Number and Bill for Services .....	8
Medical Resources for Out-of-State and Out-of-Country Referrals.....	10

## How to Help a Worker Who Has Relocated Out of Washington

As soon as the VRC learns that a worker will be moving out of Washington State, but **within the U.S.**, the VRC should take the following actions to reduce delays, prevent confusion, and facilitate communication:

- Contact the claim manager (CM) as soon as possible to report that the worker is relocating. Discuss with the CM how to support the worker during relocation. This may include discussing challenges associated with relocating and finding medical providers.
- Assist the worker in notifying L&I, in writing, of their change of address using the [Change of Address Form](#) (F242-388-000). This can be expedited through the Claim and AccountCenter.
- Contact the vocational services specialist (VSS) to discuss moving the referral to the firm's OOS/C referral hub.
- Help the worker find a new provider in their state.
- Explain to new medical providers how to apply for a provider number through [ProviderOne](#), if they are not already a registered provider with L&I. If providers have issues with enrollment, they can send an email to [ProviderSupport@LNI.WA.GOV](mailto:ProviderSupport@LNI.WA.GOV)
- Contact the applicable employer and assist with any return-to-work or light-duty job offers.

When a worker relocates from Washington to a **different country**, the VRC should proactively assist in managing the complexities associated with receiving time-loss payments, finding a medical provider, and maintaining regular communication:

- Contact the CM as soon as possible to report that the worker is relocating. Discuss with CM how to support the worker during relocation. This may include discussing challenges associated with relocating and finding medical providers.
- Identify how the VRC will communicate with the worker *before* they leave. For out-of-country workers, texting apps such as WhatsApp Messenger or email may allow for easier communication. You can download the app to your phone, tablet, or desktop.
- Assist the worker in notifying L&I, in writing, of their change of address using the [Change of Address Form](#) (F242-388-000). This can be expedited through the Claim and AccountCenter.
- Contact the VSS to discuss moving the referral to the firm's OOS/C referral hub.



- A worker may be eligible to receive a debit card to facilitate receipt of time-loss payments. The CM can advise on the ability for a worker to obtain a debit card in a particular country. If eligible, assist the worker in filling out the [Payment Method Authorization Form \(F120-211-000\) \(wa.gov\)](#) to set up a debit card. The form is available in 15 languages, including [Spanish](#). For other languages, use [the Forms & Publications Search \(wa.gov\)](#) and select from the list of languages.
- It may be possible for the worker to have time-loss payments sent to an alternate recipient in the U.S. Contact the CM to discuss.
- Contact the employer and assist with any return-to-work or light-duty job offers.

To assist out-of-country workers with coordination of medical treatment:

- Contact the CM to discuss the worker's current medical treatment plan *before* contacting an out-of-country medical provider. The CM may have already initiated the process to coordinate care with an out-of-country medical provider.
- In some cases, a worker may find an out-of-country medical provider that will need assistance obtaining an L&I provider number. Out-of-country medical providers are exempt from ProviderOne. To assist with obtaining a provider number, send an email to [ForeignProviders@lni.wa.gov](mailto:ForeignProviders@lni.wa.gov) and include the medical provider's email address and phone number. For any other medical barriers or claim specific questions, contact the CM.
- Understand and set expectations with out-of-country workers and medical providers about the potential for delays in medical treatment, reimbursement, and payment for services rendered. Common delays are the result of:
  - Limited access to treatment within the workers' geographic location.
  - Obtaining treatment authorization.
  - Limited number of providers or specialty provided.
  - Misunderstanding billing and payment policies associated with [MARFS](#).

**NOTE:** Washington State WACs, RCWs, and payment policies apply for vocational services regardless of where the worker resides.

## Limited English Proficiency Communication and Cultural Competency Resources for VRCs

The [Vocational Firm Provider Agreement](#) requires vocational providers to abide by all applicable federal and Washington State statutes, rules, and policies. These include, but are not limited to:

- [Title 51 RCW](#) (Industrial Insurance Act)
- [Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964](#)
  - Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity that receives federal funds or other federal financial assistance. This includes discrimination based on limited English proficiency (LEP).
  - Recipients and sub-recipients of federal financial assistance are responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access by LEP persons to the recipients' and sub-recipients' programs or activities, including the use of an interpreter. Failure to do so constitutes illegal discrimination and is a violation of an individual's civil rights. Since L&I is the recipient of federal funding, vocational providers and others whom L&I pays are **sub-recipients** of federal funding and are required to provide language access services.
- [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#): Providers are required to ensure spoken and sign language access.

### Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Service Standards

Vocational providers are required to ensure the provision of quality service that is respectful, equitable, and responsive to diverse cultural health beliefs, practices, preferred languages, and communication needs in accordance with the **National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS)** in Health and Health Care.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has outlined [15 action steps, or CLAS Standards](#), intended to advance health equity, improve quality, and help eliminate health care disparities.

CLAS Standards are about respect and responsiveness:

- Respect the whole individual; and
- Respond to the individual's health needs and preferences.

[The CLAS Standards website](#) features information, continuing education opportunities, resources, and more for health and health care professionals to learn about culturally and linguistically appropriate services. A few online courses and resources that vocational counselors may find most informative include:

- [Cultural Competency Deployment Refresher](#)

- [Improving Cultural Competency for Behavioral Health Professionals](#)
- [The How To Guide for Communication Styles](#)

## Interpreter Services

Managing out-of-state and out-of-country referrals may include working with workers with language access needs.

- For sign language interpreters, use the [Sign Language Interpreter Lookup Tool](#)
- For telephonic interpretation services, use [CTS Language Link](#) (scroll to Option 3)
- To schedule in-person spoken language appointments, use the Interpreter Scheduling System, [InterpretingWorks](#).
- For additional tips on using the Interpreter Scheduling System, click on the following links:
  - [Tip Sheet for Interpreter Scheduling System, in English](#)
  - [Tip Sheet for Interpreter Scheduling System, in Spanish](#)
- To schedule video remote interpreting (VRI), use [CTS Language Link](#) (scroll to Option 4).
- For questions on how to set up VRI, contact [ClientRelations@Language.Link](mailto:ClientRelations@Language.Link).

## Interpreter Rules and Policies

Only L&I-authorized interpreters can be paid by L&I for services provided to the worker ([RCW 39.26.300](#)). If an LEP worker chooses to use a friend or family member that is their choice. However, the family member will not be compensated for providing interpretation and L&I strongly discourages their use.

The only situation where a family member may be excluded from providing interpretation services is during an independent medical exam (IME). In this situation, the worker can only have one person present at the **physical examination**: ([WAC 296-23-362](#))

- The companion must be at least **18 years old** and unobtrusive during the examination.
- The companion **cannot** be the worker's legal representative, an employee of the legal representative, the attending provider, or an employee of the attending provider.
- For the **psychiatric examination**, no companions are allowed. If an interpreter is needed, L&I will schedule the interpreter.

L&I-authorized interpreters are compensated according to [MARFS Chapter 14](#). When helping independent interpreters apply for an L&I provider ID, they should be aware of the following payment policies:

- Interpreters will not be paid for scheduling or confirming appointments.
- Interpreters will not be paid for translation of documents and correspondence. L&I approved in-language forms are available on L&I's website. The CM can also provide some in-language form letters, if requested.
- Mileage is bundled into interpreter-services fees and is not separately reimbursable.
- Credentialed employees of providers who interpret for workers will not be paid by L&I. This prevents an in-language vocational counselor from receiving compensation for providing both vocational services and interpretation services to LEP workers.

### **Assisting Medical Providers with Interpretation Services**

Vocational counselors may also need to help medical providers with access to interpretation services to communicate information to workers regarding medical treatment:

- Help the medical provider select the correct interpreter service based on the zip code of the medical provider.
- For sign language interpreters, use the [Sign Language Interpreter Lookup Tool](#).
- For telephonic interpretation services, use [CTS Language Link](#) (scroll to Option 3).
- To schedule in-person spoken language appointments, use the Interpreter Scheduling System, [InterpretingWorks](#).
- For additional tips on using the Interpreter Scheduling System, click on the following links:
  - [Tip Sheet for Interpreter Scheduling System, English](#)
  - [Tip Sheet for Interpreter Scheduling System, Spanish](#)
- To schedule video remote interpreting (VRI), use [CTS Language Link](#) (scroll to Option 4).
- For questions on how to setup VRI, contact [ClientRelations@Language.Link](mailto:ClientRelations@Language.Link)

**Tips:**

- When using an interpreter, speak directly to the worker or provider.
- Speak in short sentences or ask concise questions. Pause for the interpreter to relay the information.
- Be aware of any potential silent pauses, as that could imply confusion or uncertainty and may need rephrasing.
- Avoid using jargon or acronyms.

## Resources for Helping Non-Medical Providers Obtain a Provider Number and Bill for Services

Vocational Counselors can help new providers obtain an L&I provider number. To help new providers obtain an L&I provider number, vocational counselors should direct a provider to the [ProviderOne](#) website where they can start their application to obtain a L&I provider number. See the below resources for assistance.

All providers must have an active L&I provider number to be paid. Let the provider know that L&I functions like a third party biller and bills cannot be paid up front.

Note: Washington State WACs, RCWs, and payment policies apply for services regardless of where the worker resides.

VRCs can help schools if they:

- **Aren't sure if they already have an active L&I provider number?** Go to [Vendor Services Lookup: Active Providers](#). In the "Service" dropdown, click on "Retraining Services" and filter by State, City and/or county. For out of country schools, select "All" under State.
- **Need an L&I provider number?** Go to [Become a Training Provider \(wa.gov\)](#) and use the step-by-step instructions in the [Enrollment Guide for Training Providers](#). This will direct them to [ProviderOne](#) website where the provider can start their application. For question about ProviderOne applications, email [LNIProviderOne@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:LNIProviderOne@Lni.wa.gov).

### For Out of Country training providers

- Go to [Become an Out of Country Provider](#)
- Email your application and questions to [SchoolOversightProgram@lni.wa.gov](mailto:SchoolOversightProgram@lni.wa.gov).
- L&I will send you information about your new account if your school is approved

**Note:** For any other questions related to applications for Provider One, email [LNIProviderOne@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:LNIProviderOne@Lni.wa.gov).

### Resources for Helping Non-Medical Providers Bill L&I

Once a vendor becomes a provider, they may need assistance submitting bills for payment. Vocational counselors can prevent delays and denied bills by sharing the following information:

- There is no automatic payment. To be paid, the provider has to submit a bill to L&I.
- Remind the provider they have up to a year to bill from the date of service.
- Payments require pre-authorization. L&I will need adequate time to process the bill.
- Use [MARFS](#) to check that the procedure codes are correct



Verify the dates of service fall within the dates of the retraining plan.

- Confirm the request includes the correct EIN for the retraining site, the L&I provider number, and the worker's claim number.
- Share the referral ID number with the provider to complete the [Statement for Retraining and Job Modification Services Form](#) (F245-030-000).
- If using either the [Statement for Miscellaneous Services form](#) (F245-072-000) or the [Statement for Retraining and Job Modification Services form](#) (F245-030-000), please mail the form with attached bill to Department of Labor and Industries, P.O. Box 44269 Olympia, WA 98504-4269. (Do not fax the bill or form to the claim file.)
- Refer to the Claim and Account Center (*under claim payments > medical bills and payments*) to confirm payments are being processed by L&I. Share the status of the payment, as needed, with the provider.
- Refer to the Resources for Training Providers tip page on L&I's website for resources you can provide to the training school for billing assistance: [Resources for Training Providers \(wa.gov\)](#)

**Note:** Washington State WACs, RCWs, and payment policies apply for services regardless of where the worker resides.

#### **L&I's School Oversight Program can help:**

- Answer questions about the training provider application process.
- Confirm training provider or school status

**Note:** For any questions specific to retraining school vendors, email the School Oversight Program at [SchoolOversightProgram@lni.wa.gov](mailto:SchoolOversightProgram@lni.wa.gov).

#### **Tips to Motivate a Non-Medical Provider to Register with L&I**

- Offer to help provide support with application and billing.
- Let the provider know that L&I will facilitate payment in a timely manner in accordance with the [Washington State fee schedule](#).

**Note:** To be paid, all providers must have an L&I provider number. Let the provider know L&I functions like a third party biller and bills cannot be paid up front. However, L&I will pay them for bills submitted through the proper process.

## Medical Resources for Out-of-State and Out-of-Country Referrals

### How to Look for Out-of-State or Out-of-Country Medical Providers

Workers may need assistance finding an authorized L&I medical provider when they reside or move outside of Washington State. The [Find a Doctor](#) directory lists providers who are able to treat workers and bill L&I for their services. However, listed providers are not required to accept any patient requesting services.

**Note:** If you are looking for a doctor outside of the U.S., try the [alternate list of out-of-country providers](#).

### Helping *Out-of-State* Medical Providers Obtain a Provider Number

Out-of-state medical providers must have an active L&I provider number to be paid for their services. To obtain a provider number, medical providers must apply through the online portal. Please direct medical providers to [ProviderOne](#).

Vocational counselors can become familiar with the ProviderOne registration process by reviewing the [ProviderOne Guides and Resources](#). Contact the [L&I ProviderOne team](#) with questions.

### Helping *Out-of-Country* Medical Providers Obtain a Provider Number

Out-of-country medical providers are exempt from using ProviderOne. Out-of-country medical provider applications are handled by specific staff who have been trained to match L&I requirements with other countries' legal requirements for doctors.

If you are working with a medical provider who is out of country and needs assistance in obtaining an L&I provider number, contact the Foreign Provider Liaison at [ForeignProviders@lni.wa.gov](mailto:ForeignProviders@lni.wa.gov) and include the medical provider's email address and phone number.

### Providing Important Medical Resources to Out-of-Country Medical Providers

Out-of-country claims can be complex and come with their own unique set of medical barriers. VRCs can assist out of country medical providers by understanding and sharing the guides below:

- Essential guides, available in English and Spanish:
  - English: [Guide for Out of Country Providers \(wa.gov\)](#) (F245-430-00)
  - Spanish: [Guía para proveedores fuera del país](#) (F245-430-999)

### Out-of-State and Out-of-Country Care Coordination

**Claim managers** (CM) can consult with resources at L&I, such as an Occupational Nurse Consultant (ONC) and Nurse Case Manager (NCM), to address complex medical barriers on out-of-state and out-of-country claims. If you think an ONC or NCM would be appropriate or would like to discuss claim-specific medical barriers or issues, please contact the claim manager.

- **Occupational Nurse Consultants (ONCs)**

The ONCs are a valuable resource on a claim and can provide expert medical advice. ONCs can assist with onsite nurse case manager coordination of complex medical issues, help with quality of care issues/concerns, and are involved in the assignment and monitoring of NCMs.

- **Nurse Case Managers (NCMs)**

Claim Managers can use NCMs to coordinate care for Washington injured workers residing out of state or out of country. Criteria for assignment of an NCM needs to be flexible to allow for unique claim issues. An NCM can be assigned whenever an ONC and a CM agree that more intensive, on site, services are needed.

**Examples of when it may be appropriate to staff with the CM for ONC support:**

- Multiple diagnoses, related or unrelated, that are complicating recovery.
- Stalled recovery with no progress and no clear treatment plan.
- Proposed treatment that does not appear to be curative or rehabilitative.
- Coordination of specialty consultants and care.
- Coordination of return to work with attending physician, worker, and employer.
- Worker has moved out of state or region and needs assistance finding a new attending physician.