

Victorian Public Service Language Allowance Guidelines 2014-15

1. Eligibility Criteria

1.1 To receive the Language Allowance, staff will be required to meet all of the following criteria:

- a) Be:
 - Employed under Part 3 of the *Public Administration Act 2004*, which covers departmental employees and employees of certain statutory bodies; or
 - A member of the Victoria police pursuant to the *Police Regulation Act 1958*; or
 - Employed by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade under the *Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958*; or
 - Employed by the Country Fire Authority or State Emergency Services under the *Country Fire Act 1958*; or
 - Employed as non-teaching staff by the Adult Multicultural Education Service which operates under the *Adult, Community and Further Education Act 1991*; and
- b) Undertake work involving direct contact with speakers of the language other than English (LOTE) spoken by the staff member, including Auslan. Examples of these positions include receptionists, telephonists, information officers, field officers and social workers. Part-time and temporary staff will be eligible on a pro-rata basis; and
- c) Have passed the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) Language Aide test, Paraprofessional Interpreter or Professional Interpreter test.

1.2 The following staff will not be eligible:

- a) Staff employed as interpreters or translators;
- b) Staff employed in positions in which language skills are an integral part of the job profile and the remuneration of such staff already reflects their language ability; and
- c) Public sector workers who are not covered by Part 3 of the *Public Administration Act 2004*, with the exceptions outlined above at 1.1 (a). While certain provisions of the *Public Administration Act 2004* apply to teachers, teachers will not be eligible for the Allowance.

2. NAATI Qualifications

2.1 The Language Allowance offers three levels of payment, tied to different NAATI credentials and accreditations. They are:

- Language Aide
- Paraprofessional Interpreter Accreditation
- Professional Interpreter Accreditation

Language Aide is suitable for people who require minimal knowledge of a language for the purposes of simple communication. Tasks may involve counter work, answering general enquiries, assisting people with limited English proficiency to complete simple forms in English or assisting people from non- English-speaking backgrounds by giving instructions in the other language.

Paraprofessional Interpreter accreditation represents a level of competence in interpreting appropriate for general conversations, generally in the form of non-specialist dialogue. Tasks include interpreting conversations, interpreting in situations where specialised terminology or more sophisticated conceptual information is not required, or interpreting in situations where depth of linguistic ability is not required.

Professional Interpreter accreditation is regarded as the Australian professional standard for interpreters. People with this qualification are capable of interpreting across a wide range of subjects including dialogues at specialist consultations. They are also able to interpret presentations in the consecutive mode. Tasks may include interpreting across a wide range of subject areas usually involving specialist consultations with other professionals (doctors, solicitors, in court), or interpreting in situations where some depth of linguistic ability in both languages is necessary.

See the attached list of languages offered at the Language Aide, Paraprofessional Interpreter and Professional Interpreter levels.

3. Payment Levels

The Employee will be paid an annual allowance based on the below rates which are reviewed at six monthly intervals. The Allowance amount is payable in fortnightly instalments.

For example: an Employee receiving a Language Allowance at a Language Aide level from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015 (12 months) will receive an annual amount as follows:

$(\$951/2) + (\$965/2) = \$475.50 + \$482.50 = \text{total } \$958 \text{ for 12 months.}$

NAATI Level	Annual Rate, at Date of Effect		
	1 July 2014	1 January 2015	1 July 2015
Language Aide	\$935	\$951	\$965
Paraprofessional Interpreter	\$1,285	\$1,308	\$1,328
Professional Interpreter	\$1,752	\$1,783	\$1,810

4. Testing

4.1 NAATI **Language Aide** tests are available at any time throughout the year. Departments and agencies are to contact NAATI directly (see below) to arrange times for testing of applicants. Accreditation tests may be arranged throughout the year at the mutual convenience of the candidate and the NAATI testing venue. Candidates who decide to apply for an accreditation test need to complete the Form A 'Application for Accreditation by Testing', available from NAATI at www.naati.com.au/forms.html

Compulsory pre-testing workshops

Language Aide pre-test workshops are available throughout the year. Contact the NAATI Victorian office directly to obtain a copy of the workshop program and scheduled dates. Departments and agencies should arrange workshop times directly with NAATI.

Paraprofessional Interpreter and **Professional Interpreter** pre-test workshops and workshop schedules are available at www.naati.com.au/workshops.html or directly from the Victorian NAATI office.

4.2 Test Formats

Language Aide Test

The test comprises two sections, one examining the candidate's Oral/Aural Comprehension and a second, optional, Written Comprehension section.

Paraprofessional Interpreter Tests

The test comprises three sections. The first examines the candidate's knowledge of cultural and social factors and socio-political issues that affect situations where an interpreter would typically be used. The second tests a candidate's knowledge of the Code of Ethics and the third section tests proficiency in dialogue interpreting using two dialogues.

Professional Interpreter Tests

The test comprises two sections, the first involving a dialogue interpreting test (using two dialogues), questions on social and cultural awareness and ethics and sight translation tasks. The second section involves consecutive (monologue) interpreting of two passages.

Staff must meet the NAATI eligibility criteria requirements in order to sit a test. Further information on all of the tests is available from NAATI.

4.3 The pass mark for all tests is 70 per cent with hurdle requirements for certain sections. For further details please visit www.naati.com.au/testing.html.

4.4 NAATI will provide advice to Departments and agencies about pre-test workshops.

5. Fees

5.1 Pre-test workshops are compulsory for all applicants for the Allowance.

The cost of **Language Aide** workshops is \$92 per applicant, and the fee for the sample test is \$24.

The cost of **Paraprofessional Interpreter** and **Professional Interpreter** workshops depends on the workshop being undertaken. Further details can be obtained from NAATI.

5.2 Test fees

An application fee of \$121 applies for all tests.

The **Language Aide** test fee is \$278.

The **Paraprofessional Interpreter** test fee is \$510.

The **Professional Interpreter** test fee is \$637.

5.3 Funding

Departments and agencies are responsible for funding all costs associated with the NAATI testing process.

6. Application Process

6.1 Departments and agencies are required to provide information to all staff about the Language Allowance, and managers should specifically inform members of staff who have relevant language skills. Staff should discuss with their supervisor the possibility of applying for the Allowance.

6.2 If the supervisor agrees that there is a continuing need in the workplace for the officer's language skills, they will recommend the staff member to a person who has been nominated in the Department or agency to handle applications for the Allowance (usually in the Human Resources area). When assessing the need for a particular language in the workplace, Departments and agencies should have regard to the frequency of demand, the average amount of time spent using the language and the importance of providing language services.

6.3 Payment of the Allowance to staff who have passed a NAATI test should commence as soon as practicable.

6.4 Candidates will receive a Language Aide sample test in the language in which they are being tested from NAATI following their application. Paraprofessional Interpreter and Professional Interpreter sample tests are available for purchase separately from the NAATI office.

6.5 Departments and agencies are to obtain copies of the test application forms directly from NAATI.

6.6 Each Department or agency is to co-ordinate applications and deliver them to NAATI. NAATI will invoice Departments and agencies directly.

7. Administration of Allowance

7.1 Departments and agencies will pay the Allowance fortnightly to staff in addition to salary. The Allowance is payable during paid sick leave, recreation leave, long service leave and maternity leave (pro rata, where appropriate). Once a staff member has passed a NAATI accreditation test the Allowance is to be back-paid from the date of accreditation by NAATI.

7.2 Payment of the Allowance is to be reviewed by the manager of each recipient of the Allowance, annually and whenever the employment status or work requirements of staff receiving the Allowance change (for example, on promotion, transfer or temporary transfer). Reviews should address whether there is a continuing need for communication in the particular language. The Allowance is not automatically transferable when staff members move to new positions.

7.3 Staff members receiving the Allowance who have not used their language skills regularly in the past year may have their Allowance entitlements removed. Managers are required to verify annually that there is need for the language skills in the recipient's workplace to the extent that payment of the Allowance is warranted.

7.4 Departments and agencies will be required to report annually to OMAC on the Allowance, indicating expenditure on the Allowance, the number of people receiving the Allowance, and in which languages.

7.5 Managers are required to ensure that members of staff receiving the Allowance are readily identifiable to all staff in the office by identifying such officers on staff telephone lists or a central register.

To obtain information on accreditation testing and pre-test workshops, please see the NAATI website – www.naati.com.au, or contact the Victorian NAATI Office on (03) 9642 3301.

For further information about the Language Allowance, contact the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship on (03) 9651 1101.

Languages offered at each level of NAATI testing

	Paraprofessional Translator	Paraprofessional Interpreter	Professional Translator	Professional Interpreter	Advanced Translator		Paraprofessional Translator	Paraprofessional Interpreter	Professional Translator	Professional Interpreter	Advanced Translator
Albanian		☐	●	■		Lao		☐	●	■	
Amharic		☐	●	■		Macedonian		☐	●	■	
Arabic		☐	●	■	❖	Malay		☐	●	■	
Armenian	○	☐				Mandarin#		☐		■	
Assyrian*	○	☐				Maltese*		☐	●	■	
Auslan		☐		■		Nepali		☐			
Bangla		☐	●	■		Nuer	○	☐			
Bosnian		☐	●	■		Oromo	○	☐			
Bulgarian		☐	●	■		Persian		☐	●	■	
Burmese		☐	●	■		Polish		☐	●	■	
Cantonese		☐		■		Portuguese		☐	●	■	
Chinese#			●		❖	Punjabi		☐	●	■	
Croatian		☐	●	■		Pushto	○	☐			
Czech		☐	●			Romanian		☐	●	■	
Dari		☐	●	■		Russian		☐	●	■	❖
Dinka	○	☐				Samoan		☐	●	■	
Dutch		☐	●	■		Serbian		☐	●	■	
Filipino		☐	●	■		Sinhalese		☐	●	■	
Finnish		☐	●	■		Slovak*		☐	●	■	
French		☐	●	■	❖	Somali		☐	●	■	
German		☐	●	■	❖	Spanish		☐	●	■	❖
Greek		☐	●	■	❖	Swahili	○	☐			
Hakka (Chinese)*		☐				Tamil		☐	●	■	
Hazaragi		☐				Tetum		☐			
Hindi		☐	●	■		Thai		☐	●	■	
Hungarian		☐	●	■		Tigrinya	○	☐			
Indonesian		☐	●	■		Tongan		☐	●	■	
Italian		☐	●	■	❖	Turkish		☐	●	■	
Japanese		☐	●	■	❖	Ukrainian		☐	●	■	
Khmer		☐	●	■		Urdu		☐	●	■	
Korean		☐	●	■		Vietnamese		☐	●	■	

NOTE: Testing for these languages is not always available. Please contact the NAATI Office for more information on 1300 557 470.

* Accreditation testing for this language is currently unavailable. Please contact the NAATI Office for more information.