

12th November 2024 Withdrawal of Services

Please note below a message received by NRPSI on 12th November 2024

Dear Colleagues,

Further to our First and Second Withdrawal of Services, we would like to announce our Third Withdrawal of Services on 25th and 26th November 2024. This would be a full withdrawal of services and we shall not accept court work through any channels, including other agencies and off contract bookings.

We strongly feel that more actions are needed to bring back fair terms and conditions as well as standards and quality into court interpreting.

We have all been following developments in relation to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the current contract and the issues affecting the provision of interpreting and translation services within the court settings.

As we all witnessed on 30th October 2024, although the MOJ is planning to spend the next 2 years in preparation for the new tender, they have no intentions to further remunerate us for our travel time. The exact words of Julie Howkins, Deputy Director, Commercial for HM Courts and Tribunal Service at Ministry of Justice were, "No, we are not making changes to travel. It is about the 2-hour minimum booking but that was done after consultation with a number of stakeholders about what would meet the need for them" to the surprise of Baroness Morris. It seems someone's needs are being met and that, as we know, is neither the public's needs nor the interpreters' needs.

Quite conveniently that tender was started just before the launch of the Inquiry. The MOJ "cannot disclose figures" as to what they pay TBW, which would then evidently show what TBW keeps as profit from the public purse, whilst failing to secure qualified interpreters or what TBW pays as penalties to that effect. Is the profit of TBW 75% indeed? We already heard confirmation from Philip Stott, Co- Chair, Legal Services Committee at Bar Council, that an adjourned hearing costs the taxpayers £10,000.

It is quite a disturbing trend that TBW has started to ask qualified interpreters whether they wish to be removed from their list, as soon as such qualified and frustrated interpreters put their views across. Such intimidation openly contradicts TBW's statement in the news outlets of having an "open dialogue" with their interpreters. Their approach is obviously not aimed at providing qualified interpreters to HMCTS. In addition, TBW continues to ignore payment or technical glitches related e-mails from their interpreters where often replies are sent months later, if at all, which is not acceptable behaviour from an MOJ supplier of services.

We have sent a letter to Baroness Morris, asking for interpreters to be invited and give evidence as those who are the essence of this industry.

Fair terms and conditions are a must! Accountability has been avoided for the past 12 years and this can no longer be the case.

Join us on 25th and 26th November 2024!

ENDS