

August 2025

Template letter to download (or copy/paste) and send to **your MP**

You can download and use the template letter/email on the next page to ask your MP to support NRPSI's call for proper recognition for qualified and experienced interpreters in the form of pay and terms and conditions that are commensurate with their professional expertise.

To find the contact details of your MP, visit:

<https://members.parliament.uk/members/Commons>

Please feel free to amend and personalise the letter. You may wish to add some relevant personal experiences.

We would also be delighted to hear about any response you receive to your letter/email. If you are happy to share this, please email a copy to mike@nrpsi.org.uk.

Dear _____,

Re: Securing the future of high-quality court interpreting UK-wide

On 9 September 2025, the House of Lords will debate the Public Services Committee report '*Lost in translation? Interpreting services in the courts*' (HL Paper 87). The debate will be introduced in Grand Committee by Baroness Morris of Yardley.

This presents a timely opportunity for Members of the House of Commons to raise their own questions on the matter, ensuring that the concerns of professional court interpreters are heard in both Houses. The issues raised in the Lords report, and in the National Register of Public Service Interpreters' (NRPSI) recent letter to the Minister for Courts and Legal Services, are of vital importance to the quality, consistency and fairness of justice in the UK.

As a Registrant of NRPSI, I welcome the constructive steps the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has taken in moving towards the professional standards that have underpinned NRPSI since it was launched in 1994 following the Royal Runciman Report. In particular, the introduction of a default Level 6 qualification and 200 hours' experience for spoken-word interpreters, due to take effect in October 2026, is a major step in the right direction.

However, I share NRPSI's concern that the MoJ will be unable to achieve its target of using Level 6 qualified interpreters with 200 hours' experience in court without addressing two key issues:

1. The shortage of qualified interpreters currently available
2. The inadequacy of existing remuneration rates, terms and conditions, which risk worsening this shortage

Current remuneration rates and contractual terms offered via the MoJ's contracted language services agencies are widely seen as inadequate and have already led to many qualified interpreters refusing such work. From my own experience, I have seen skilled colleagues leave the profession entirely because they cannot earn a sustainable living from court interpreting.

At present, only around half of the interpreters on the MoJ's list hold a Level 6 qualification. Without improving pay, conditions and professional recognition for public service interpreters – including protection of title for qualified interpreters – it is difficult to see how the MoJ will attract and retain enough suitably qualified professionals to meet its commitments.

The outsourcing of language services has not delivered the quality or sustainability intended and has led to a lesser system than existed when they were sourced directly from the National Register of interpreters that is managed by NRPSI – the only independent regulator of public service interpreters in the UK. The National Register contains the details of almost 1,700 Level 6 qualified interpreters (most with double the experience required under the MoJ's framework).

NRPSI, and the wider profession, is committed to engage constructively with the MoJ to design a system that works for everyone – the courts, interpreters and, most importantly, the public who rely on fair trials.

I therefore urge you to support this cause and raise the following questions in the House of Commons:

Parliamentary Questions

1. What measures is the MoJ taking to ensure there will be sufficient Level 6 qualified interpreters to meet its October 2026 target, given the current shortage on its contracted list?
2. How will the MoJ attract and retain Level 6 interpreters if it does not respond to calls – including from the House of Lords Public Services Committee – for a collaborative review of language professionals' pay and conditions?
3. Will the MoJ commit to agree a remuneration and conditions framework in time for October 2026 which will attract and retain professional practitioners?

Your support will help secure a court interpreting system that is fair, sustainable and fit for purpose – ensuring justice is truly accessible to all.

Yours sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Registration Number]
[Your Contact Details]

References and further information for ease of access

- **PSC report: 'Lost in translation? Interpreting services in the courts' (24 March 2025)**
<https://committees.parliament.uk/work/8493/interpreting-and-translation-services-in-the-courts/publications/>
 - **NRPSI's letter to the PSC (26 March 2025) and Professional Interpreters for Justice's (PI4J) letter to the PSC (28 April 2025) about the report: Collated by NRPSI**
<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Click-here-to-read-the-letters-sent-to-the-House-of-Lords-Public-Services-Committee-Inquiry-from-NRPSI-and-from-PI4J.html>
 - **MoJ's response to the PSC report (27 May 2025)**
<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/48172/documents/252233/default/>
 - **NRPSI's letter to the Minister for Courts and Legal Services about the MoJ's response to the PSC report (23 June 2025)**
<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/NRPSI-letter-to-Sarah-Sackman-KC-MP-Minister-for-Courts-and-Legal-Services-at-the-Ministry-of-Justice-click-here-to-see-more.html>
 - **NRPSI to the PSC (1 July 2025)**
<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Sustainable-progress-is-only-possible-if-the-MoJ-is-prepared-to-address-interpreter-pay-and-conditions-through-formal-and-constructive-dialogue-with-the-profession-and-key-stakeholders-click-here-to-read-more.html>
 - **About NRPSI** – the independent regulator and national register of public service interpreters:
<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk>
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