



Australian Government



Providing Interpreter Services Guidelines

V 1.2

Disclaimer

This document is not a stand-alone document and does not contain the entirety of Disability Employment Services Providers' obligations. It should be read in conjunction with the Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement and any relevant guidelines or reference material issued by the Department of Social Services under or in connection with the Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement.

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Providing Interpreter Services Guidelines

Document Change History

| Version | Effective Date | End Date | Change & Location |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| 1.2 | 09 March 2020 | | Remove DHS or Department of Human Services and replace with Services Australia |
| 1.1 | 3 December 2018 | | Addition of note in relation to the responsibility of paying costs associated with using interpreter services. |
| 1.0 | 1 July 2018 | 2 December 2018 | Original version of document |

Background

DES Providers must provide access to an interpreter where one is required (Grant Agreement Clause 76 and Annexure C2 - Service Guarantee).

This Guideline provides information to DES Providers to assist them in the delivery of interpreter services for Participants.

Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement Clauses:

Clause 76 – Use of interpreters

Annexure C2 – Service Guarantee

Explanatory Note:

All capitalised terms have the same meaning as in Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement. In this document, “must” means that compliance is mandatory and “should” means that compliance represents best practice.

Providing Interpreter Services

| Who is Responsible: | What is Required: |
|--|---|
| <p>1. The Provider DES Provider identifies when an interpreter is required</p> <p><i>Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement Clause Reference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 76 | <p>The DES Provider must use an interpreter for Contacts with a Participant in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where Services Australia has indicated an interpreter is required; • when a Participant requests an interpreter; or • where the DES Provider assesses that an interpreter is necessary to communicate effectively with the Participant. <p>In most cases Services Australia will record on its IT System when an interpreter is required. There may be occasions when Services Australia has not indicated that an interpreter is required and the Participant subsequently requests an interpreter, or the DES Provider determines that an interpreter is required. In these situations it is the responsibility of the DES Provider to provide an appropriate interpreter.</p> |
| <p>2. The Provider Who can use an interpreter</p> <p><i>Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement Clause Reference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 76 | <p>Where possible a qualified interpreter should be used. A DES Provider may use interpreters employed by their own organisation or source them from interpreter services such as Translation and Interpreter Services (TIS). DES Providers must be aware of the risks of using a staff member to fulfil the role of both government decision-maker and interpreter. These risks include a real conflict of interest or the perception of one—which may affect the client’s participation or disclosure. The use of family or friends to provide interpreting services is discouraged.</p> <p>Note: The cost associated with the use of an interpreter is the responsibility of the DES Provider.</p> <p>The DES Provider may need to change the initial interview time that has been scheduled for an appointment to allow time to arrange access to an interpreter. In these circumstances the DES Provider must contact the Participant to arrange a new appointment time.</p> <p>The DES Provider may access translators through TIS. All the information required to use this service can be found on the Department of Home Affairs website.</p> <p>For a Participant requiring Auslan interpreter services, DES Providers should check with the Participant first as they will often have their own preferred interpreter; however, in these circumstances, you will need to ensure the Participant’s preferred interpreter has been accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI). NAATTI can be contacted through their website or on 02 6260 3035. NAATTI also provides a search for interpreter facilities.</p> <p>Other organisations that can provide assistance with locating/booking Auslan interpreting services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auslan Connection who can be contacted on 1300 010 877 or at the Auslan Connection website; • Deaf Accessible Business Network; |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the JobAccess team at WorkFocus Australia on 1800 464 800 (TTY and voice); • The Auslan Interpreter section of the JobAccess website; or • The National Auslan Interpreter Booking and Payment Service. <p>DES Providers may use the Employment Assistance Fund for the cost of Auslan interpreter services only when it is to assist a Participant to obtain employment or to maintain existing employment – for example it is of benefit specifically to the individual and their employer. It can include job interviews, Ongoing Support Assessment interviews and Supported Wage System assessments. It should not be used for DES Contacts. Auslan interpreters should be booked at least two weeks in advance where possible, to avoid a request not being met.</p> <p>In the Northern Territory, the Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS) provides an Aboriginal Language Interpreter Service. In Western Australia, the Kimberley Interpreting Service (KIS) provides a similar service. Links to these organisations are listed below under Additional Information. In areas where there is no coverage by an Indigenous interpreting service, the DES Provider should make use of local service networks to source an interpreter.</p> |
| <p>3. The Provider Record keeping</p> <p><i>Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement Clause Reference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 76 | <p>To ensure accountability and the provision of effective interpreter services, the DES Provider should record on the Participant’s individual file:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Participant’s interpreter requirements, including language, dialect and preference for any particular gender; • the date a DES Provider uses an interpreter for the Participant and which services are engaged, including oral and/or written communication; • when an interpreter service is offered by the DES Provider but declined by the Participant; and • decisions made with reasons regarding the use of an interpreter, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when a Participant’s request for an interpreter is declined by the DES Provider; or • where an interpreter service is offered by the DES Provider but declined by the Participant. |
| <p>4. The Provider Complaint handling</p> <p><i>Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement Clause Reference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 76 • Clause 32 | <p>It is important to ensure Participants are aware of their rights to complain about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpreter services provided to them by the DES Provider; • any failure by the DES Provider to arrange for an interpreter upon request; or • the context in which the interpreted information was applied in their particular circumstances. |

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| | Participants can contact the National Customer Service Line on 1800 805 260 to lodge a complaint. The Customer Service Line will organise for an interpreter through TIS to assist a Participant with any complaint. |
| <p>5. The Provider</p> <p>Additional information sources</p> <p><i>Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement Clause Reference:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 76 | <p>Indigenous interpreter services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Territory Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS) • Kimberley Interpreting Service (KIS) |