



South Australian Interpreting and Translating Policy for Migrant and Non-Verbal (Sign) Languages

Scope

This policy applies to all South Australian Government agencies, including statutory bodies, as defined in Section 3(1) of the *Public Sector Act (2009)*. Government-funded organisations are encouraged to adopt this policy.

Policy Overview

Credentialed interpreting services (used to assist with oral communication) must be provided when requested by a client, and must be offered to a client when it is suspected that proficiency in English language is a barrier to effective communication between a member of the public and South Australian Government staff.

Credentialed translating services (used to assist with written documentation) must be engaged to provide written documents to client groups where practicable. This is particularly important where informed consent is required and/or where there is potential for a decision or action to impact upon a person's life.

Interpreting and translating costs must be met by South Australian Government agencies.

Quality of Interpreting and Translating

The National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) is the national standards body for interpreters and translators in Australia. It is the only agency that provides credentialing for interpreters and translators in Australia, and does so in 60 languages.

When engaging interpreters and translators, South Australian Government agencies must strive to engage **NAATI-accredited** professionals at all times.

Where a **NAATI-accredited** interpreter or translator is not available, a **NAATI-recognised** interpreter or translator may be engaged.

Where NAATI accreditation is not available, NAATI provides recognition to interpreters and translators who have recent and regular experience of providing interpreting or translating services.

Policy Principles

Members of the public have a basic **right** to understand and be understood in their communication with government agencies.

Government agencies have a **commitment and responsibility** to provide access to interpreting and translating services, based on fairness, equity and mutual respect.



Policy Context

This policy ensures that speakers of languages other than English are not disadvantaged when accessing or receiving South Australian Government services and information.

The South Australian population is dynamic, and its ever-growing diversity gives vibrancy to South Australian life. We come from over 200 countries and speak over 200 languages. About 250,000* South Australians speak a language other than English, including 860 people who speak non-verbal (sign) languages.

* Estimate only. Calculated by applying 2011 Australian Census responses about language spoken at home to South Australian population projections (medium) for 2016. Range: 239,000 to 307,000

Bilingual staff

Staff who are required to use their language skills in their employment may seek reimbursement in accordance with the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment's *Determination 3.2 Employment Conditions: Remuneration – Allowances and Reimbursements*.

Aboriginal languages

This policy complements the *South Australian Policy Framework: Aboriginal Languages Interpreters and Translators and the associated Guide*.

Agency Interpreting and Translating Policies

Each South Australian Government agency must have an Interpreting and Translating Policy in place, addressing:

- when to engage an interpreter
- how to procure interpreting and translating services
- any preferred providers
- preferred mode/s of interpreting (in-person, telephone or video)
- when/if to engage bilingual staff members
- whether family and friends may be used to provide interpreting assistance and, if so, in what circumstances
- whether the policy applies to organisations funded by the government agency.

Supporting documents

The following Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI) documents may be used as templates by other South Australian Government agencies when developing their interpreting and translating policies:

- DCSI Interpreting and Translating Policy
- Using interpreting services to communicate with people
- Using translating services for written materials
- Language list by country and place
- How to decide whether to use an interpreting service
- Role of bilingual staff
- Can family and friends provide interpreting services?
- Using interpreting services: conflict of interest
- Interpreting services: your rights and responsibilities.

Monitoring and reporting

Agencies must log all occasions on which interpreting or translating services are required, whether provided or not.

This register should be used to assist in planning and budgeting for interpreting and translating services, and to identify and respond to any issues in not providing services when required.

For further information and assistance

For assistance or information about your agency's Interpreting or Translating Policy, contact your agency's Policy Register or Corporate Services Division.



Supporting documents can be found at www.multicultural.sa.gov.au

For general assistance or information about interpreting and translating, contact Multicultural SA:



Email: DCSIMulticulturalSA@sa.gov.au



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