

Interpreters and You

The Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities recognises there are languages spoken by people other than English. This includes sign language.

It is important for the Department to make sure you understand the information you are given. Any information given to you is to help you make a decision about services the Department provides. It also helps the Department understand what you need.

Department staff will use interpreters to deliver appropriate and informed services to its clients.

What is an interpreter?

An interpreter is a person who listens and converts messages from one language to another. Interpreters help people who speak different languages to communicate.

Interpreters can also help avoid misunderstandings. Interpreters allow you to speak in your own language. This makes it easier for you to say what you mean and helps the Department understand what you need.

Interpreters are independent, and their services are confidential.

Interpreting services are available in person and over the phone. Trained interpreters are available across all major Aboriginal languages of the Northern Territory and for most foreign languages.

When can I use an interpreter?

You can use an interpreter at any time you speak to the Department over the phone. Telephone interpreting services are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by calling 131 450.

You can also request for an on-site interpreter to be at any appointment you have with the Department. You need to tell the Department as soon as possible if you would like an interpreter at your appointment. This will give the Department time to organise an interpreter.

Why do I need an interpreter?

Information from the Department can be confusing and complicated. It is important for you to understand the information the Department is giving. It is also important for the Department to make sure you understand this information, and that we understand your needs.

The Department prefers using trained interpreters and will organise this for you. This includes rescheduling appointments to make sure an interpreter is available. It will not cost you anything to use an interpreter.

Where can I find more information?

For more information on interpreting services, you can call the following:

Interpreting and Translating Service NT **1800 676 254**

Aboriginal Interpreter Service **1800 334 944**

Translating and Interpreting Service National **131 450**

Or contact your local Housing office or visit tfhc.nt.gov.au.

Greater Darwin (08) 8999 8814

Arnhem (08) 8987 0533

Central Australia (08) 8951 5344

Big Rivers (08) 8973 8513

Barkly (08) 8962 4497

Top End (08) 8995 5122