

PREFERRED METHOD OF COMMUNICATION OPERATIONAL POLICY



POLICY TITLE:	PREFERRED METHOD OF COMMUNICATION POLICY		
VERSION:	002	DATE EFFECTIVE:	09/07/2020
AUTHORISED BY:	Chief Executive Officer	DATE REVIEWED:	12/02/2024

SUMMARY

We prioritise understanding and respecting your communication preferences. Our staff are trained to accommodate individual needs, including the use of interpreters, translators, and Easy Read materials.

PURPOSE

At ARC Disability Services Inc. (ARC), we understand that communication needs vary from person to person. We are committed to supporting all participants, including those for whom English is not their primary language and those who communicate in different ways.

This policy is designed to guide our staff in recognising and adapting to each participant's preferred method of communication, ensuring this approach is incorporated into the support and services we provide.

SCOPE

At all stages of service provision, staff must understand the participant's preferred method of communication and put that preference into practice wherever possible. The service coordinator of each Participant will inform their support team of the participant's communication requirements and will always endeavour to place staff that can communicate effectively with the participant.

DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Interpreter	A person who interprets and translates speech orally or in sign language. An interpreter translates the spoken words based on whatever grammatical knowledge of the language they interpret, and their interpretation is based on their expertise in the subject.
Translator	A translator is a professional person who translates one language into another language. A translator must be equipped with excellent linguistic skills. They must have a sound knowledge of <u>grammar</u> and express the thoughts presented in the language to a participant.
Mode of communication	This term is an expressive medium or channel of communicative intent expression - natural speech, facial expression, and gesture. Exceptional communication modes include the use of graphic symbols or synthetic speech.
Easy Read documents	Easy Read documents simplify information, so it is easy to understand by the participant. It uses simple text and pictures to explain text and has lots of white space.

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IMPLEMENTATION

The participant's best means of communicating is determined at the initial contact and recorded and used from that point forward. Staff are required to treat all participants with respect and use their preferred mode of communication wherever possible. Variations in the mode of communication may include:

- written documents with no adjustments
- verbal explanations
- demonstration
- Easy Read documents – explanations and forms
- interpreters (oral)
- translators (written).

Participants may use their interpreters and access their advocate to assist them.

INTERPRETER OR TRANSLATION SERVICE

ARC ensures participants' individual values and beliefs are maintained and always respected. This might mean we use translation services to make sure information is shared in a way that's easiest for the participant to understand, whether it's through their language, the way they communicate, or the terms they're most familiar with. By doing this, we support each participant's ability to make choices and have control, making sure they can easily access and understand the information.

Advantages of an accredited interpreter

- They are guided by a code of ethics and respect the confidentiality of the person
- They are impartial and accountable for their accuracy
- Stakeholders can fully participate in meetings rather than having to aid in communication

ARC has an obligation to maintain:

- At the direction of the Participant, their culture, diversity, values, and beliefs are identified and sensitively responded to.
- Each Participant's rights to practice their culture, values and beliefs whilst accessing services is supported.

If a Participant or their decision maker requires an interpreter whilst accessing ARC services for the purpose of organising service provision; ARC will ensure that one is available – this may be in person or over the via electronic means.

An Interpreter/translator will be organised if:

- A Participant requests one
- A person speaks little or no English and/or is deaf/hard of hearing
- ARC deems that it is necessary – in this instance ARC will approach the Participant with the suggestion of having an interpreter/translator present.

In the above circumstances ARC will look to organise a translator/interpreter for the meeting. If a Participant's family member/friend is bilingual and can translate, ARC will still offer the use of an accredited translation service.

In instances where a Participant or Stakeholder requires documentation physically or digitally this will be provided in the language that they are most likely to understand.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Participant Handbook
- Easy Read – Communicating with you

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REFERENCES

- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*
- NDIS Code of Conduct Rules 2018
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2021
- NDIS Workforce Capability Framework
- NDIS Act 2013 (Commonwealth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Commonwealth)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

AUTHORISATION

This Policy is approved and issued by:



BENJAMIN KEAST

Chief Executive Officer

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