

The Irish Sign Language Act and other relevant issues

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The Irish Sign Language Act 2017

“The achievement of getting any Bill passed by an opposition Senator is shown by the fact that only 6 Bills have been passed by an opposition senator in 80 years.”

The Act



Number 40 of 2017

1. Interpretation
2. Regulations
3. Recognition of Irish Sign Language
4. Use of Irish Sign Language in legal proceedings
5. Educational supports for deaf children
6. Duty of public bodies
7. Engagement of verified competent Irish Sign Language interpreters.
8. Broadcasting principles
9. Support for access to events, services and activities for users of Irish Sign Language
10. Report of operation of Act
11. Short title and commencement

Irish Sign Language Act 2017

3. Recognition of ISL

- The Act recognises the right of users to use Irish Sign Language
- Users have the right to develop and preserve ISL



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2. “Public body”



- Government departments
- County Councils
- Health Service Executive (HSE)
- University or institute of technology
- Education and Training Boards
- INTREO / SOLAS
- many others

Public
bodies or
public
services

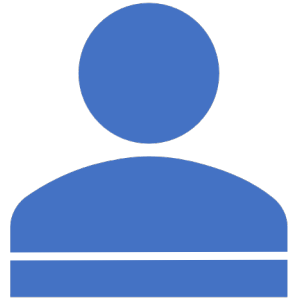
Legal advice: there
could be a legal
difference between

“public bodies” and
“public services”

4. Use of Irish Sign Language in legal proceedings



An tSeirbhís Chúirteanna
Courts Service



Users can use ISL in any court of law



Obligation on the Court Services to provide an interpreter when required

- Public bodies are legally obliged to provide interpretation to those users who seek access to public services

6. Duty of public bodies





7. Engagement of verified competent Irish Sign Language interpreters

The Register has been established listing only qualified and competent interpreters to provide interpreting services.

All public bodies are obliged to source interpreters from the Register (www.risli.ie)

There are 90 plus interpreters on the Register

9. Support for access to events, services and activities for users of Irish Sign Language



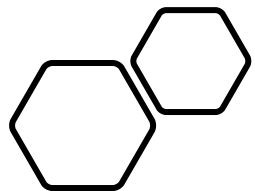
- This Article gives effect to the scheme which subsidises interpreting costs to any organisation that is deemed as not a public body, within social, cultural, medical and educational contexts.
- The scheme is now undergoing a pilot period which ceases at the end of September 2021

10. Report of operation of Act

The Act shall be reviewed three years after the commencement date and review every five years.

The first review was carried out recently and may be publicized once the Minister approves it.





5. Educational supports for deaf children

- establish a scheme for the provision of Irish Sign Language classes to the parents, siblings and grandparents of a child who is deaf, and guardians
 - Depends on the outcome of review on SNAs, a scheme can be organised for deaf children.
 - To make sure teaching training colleges to have enough spaces for teachers in recognised schools to learn ISL
 - minimum qualifications of teachers of those children.



Other relevant issues

Convention On Rights of Persons with Disability (CPRD)

- Five clauses referring to sign languages
- Article 4 (3) interpreted

IHREC Act 2014

- Public Duty obligations on all public bodies

Equality legislations

- Prohibit discrimination on nine grounds

Thank You!

