

Information Sheet on Interpretation Services

The Office of the Commissioner of Review Tribunals (OCRT) has been notified that interpretation services are required at your hearing. This information sheet explains the OCRT's policies on interpretation services and what to expect at the hearing.

Policy on Interpretation at Review Tribunal Hearings

Our policy requires interpretation at a Review Tribunal hearing to be conducted by a professionally-accredited interpreter provided and paid for by the OCRT. We believe this is the best way to ensure competent, impartial and accurate interpretation.

Can I bring my own interpreter? Can my representative or friend interpret for me?

No. Interpretation must be performed by someone who is impartial. That means the interpreter must not have a personal or business relationship with you or your witnesses.

What if I know the interpreter who has been provided by the OCRT?

If you have a personal or business relationship with the interpreter provided by the OCRT, you should immediately bring this to the attention of the Chairperson of the Review Tribunal.

Frequently Asked Questions about Using Professional Interpretation at a Review Tribunal Hearing

How do I know that the interpreter is competent in my language/dialect?

At the beginning of the hearing, the Chairperson will ask the interpreter to speak with you to confirm that she/he can interpret in the language or dialect required. If you have any doubts about the interpreter's ability to do so, please tell the Chairperson immediately.

How will the interpretation be done?

Usually, the OCRT arranges for consecutive interpretation. This means that interpretation will be provided immediately after someone speaks, rather than while she/he is talking. Everyone should try to speak in short, simple statements and not speak too fast, so the interpreter can do her/his job well.

What is the interpreter's role?

The interpreter's role is to be as unobtrusive or 'invisible' as possible in the hearing process. Her/his job is to make it possible for you to speak directly to the members of the Review Tribunal and for them to speak directly to you, as if the interpreter wasn't even there.

How can the interpreter be unobtrusive?

The interpreter will use the first person or same person mode of communication because it is the best way to be accurate and complete. This means that if you say "I went to the doctor last week", then the interpreter will say "I went to the doctor last week". The interpreter will not say "He/she went to the doctor last week". It helps if everyone speaks directly to each other rather than to the interpreter. It also helps if everyone looks at the person she/he is speaking to rather than the interpreter.

Can the interpreter help to explain my situation?

No. The interpreter must interpret only what is said - no more and no less. She/he cannot give you advice about what to do during the hearing or how to answer questions. Nor can the interpreter paraphrase or edit statements to make them more understandable. That's why everyone should try to speak clearly and say one thing at a time.

What if I think the interpreter has misinterpreted what was said?

Please feel free to bring to the Chairperson's attention any error that you think was made by the interpreter. It's best to do this right away when the error occurs.

