

INTERPRETER PAYMENTS | OCTOBER 2016

Domestic Violence Provider Update: Interpreter payments for domestic violence programmes

What do providers need to do to ensure payment for Interpreter Services for assessments and programme delivery?

Nga mihi nui ki a koutou katoa to our programme facilitators, managers and administrators

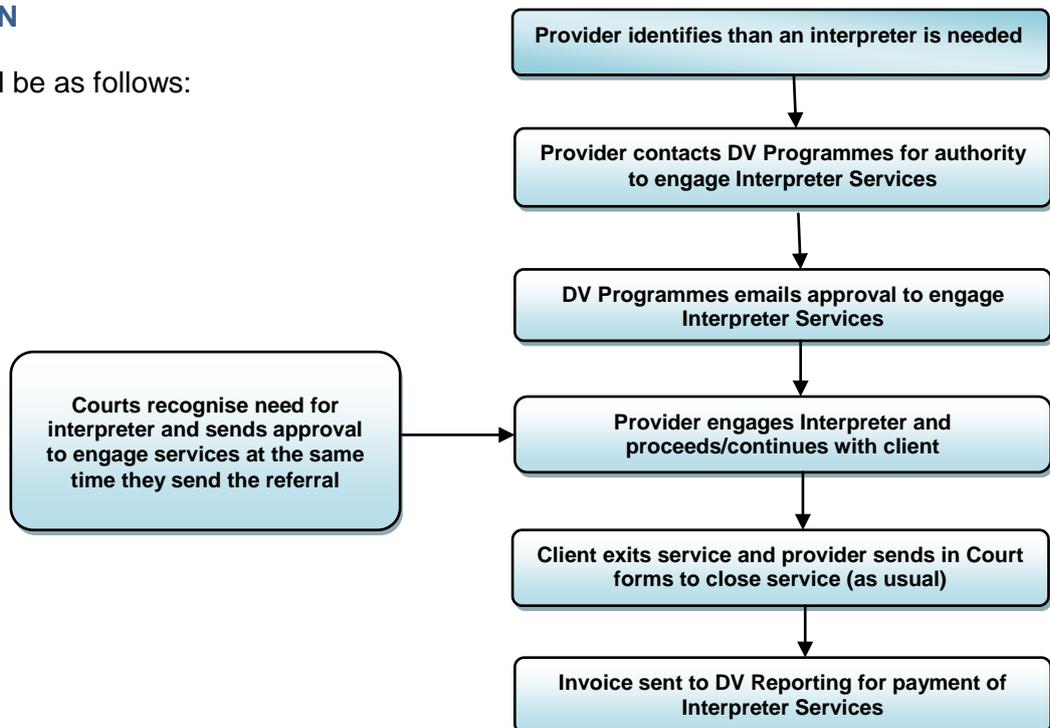
Paying for Interpreters from 01 October 2016

From time to time, you are required to work with clients referred by the Courts and there are language and/or hearing barriers. Where the Courts have known of these barriers, the referral has been accompanied by an approval to engage an interpreter. Sometimes you are the first to identify the barrier and have had to rely on various arrangements agreed with your local Courts for paying interpreters. On occasions, these arrangements have caused delays in paying interpreters and have created supply problems.

From 01 October 2016, we have introduced a new process and Provider and Community Services will take over responsibility for the payment of interpreters used in the delivery of assessments and domestic violence programmes in accordance with the Outcome Agreements with approved providers.

AGREED SOLUTION

The new process will be as follows:



IDENTIFYING A NEED FOR INTERPRETER SERVICES

With the increased reliance on electronic transactions, the Courts very rarely have face-to-face contact with the parties named on a Protection Order. Court staff are reliant on the completion of a questionnaire to know if language or hearing difficulties will be a barrier and often, the information is not received and therefore cannot be given to a provider. The need for interpreter services is usually more evident when a defendant appears in criminal proceedings. It is highly probable therefore that the existence of the need for an interpreter will not be obvious until you first meet with the client.

Where the need for an interpreter is identified by you, but has not yet been approved, you need to contact DVProgrammes@justice.govt.nz.

The responsibility for making a referral lies with a Registrar, in this case the DVProgrammes Team. Where there is a need for an interpreter identified, the Registrar needs to confirm that the referral is to the appropriate provider and approve the use of an interpreter. A Provider will not be reimbursed if prior approval is not obtained from DVProgrammes.

The Provider must email the request to DVProgrammes@justice.govt.nz using the heading “Urgent Request to Use an Interpreter” - followed by the client name and reference number.

ENGAGING AN INTERPRETER

When you receive written approval from DVProgrammes, you can then engage the services of an interpreter. The Ministry maintains a list of interpreters for in Court proceedings but does not have a list of approved interpreters for external services. You can either contact Interpreting New Zealand or you may have your own contacts.

When selecting an interpreter you need to be mindful of the nature of the communications that will occur during assessments and programme delivery. Confidentiality must be guaranteed. Availability for all planned sessions over sometimes a lengthy period is also critical. The interpreter needs to understand the skills and commitment required. It would be inappropriate to rely on a family member of the person referred by the Courts to fulfil the interpreting responsibilities.

Providers need to carefully consider whether it is even possible to deliver a meaningful assessment and/or programme using an interpreter. In some cases it might be more appropriate for you to redirect the referral back to Courts recommending that a programme under the constraints of an interpreter is inappropriate. Where a suitable interpreter cannot be found Providers should submit a DVPP03, DVPP08 or DVPP13 as appropriate for the type of programme.

At this stage the Ministry has not stipulated maximum rates for interpreters. However where the rate is more than **\$65.00 (GST exclusive) an hour** you must first check with your Relationship Manager before engaging the interpreter.

INVOICING

It is advisable to arrange for the interpreter to address their invoice to the Ministry directly. This avoids you having to pay the interpreter direct and then claiming this back from the Ministry. **The invoice however needs to be sent by you to DVReporting@justice.govt.nz. The invoice needs to incorporate the client name, reference number and dates and locations on which the interpreting services were delivered.**

The Ministry will not authorise an invoice from an interpreter unless it is countersigned by you confirming that the services as invoiced actually occurred and the rate is correct as agreed prior to commencement. The Ministry will have a copy of the written approval given by DVProgrammes and will therefore not normally need to ask you to produce evidence of Court's prior approval. Where prior written approval was not obtained the Ministry is under no obligation to pay.

Payment of an approved invoice can be expected within 7 days directly to the interpreter. Where an interpreter has not previously received payment from the Ministry it may be necessary to postpone payment while the interpreter is assigned a creditor number.

As always please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Nga mihi nui

Jo-Ann and the Safety Services team