

# Plain English Guidelines

Many Australians have difficulty reading a standard printed document. This may be for a variety of reasons. Universal Access means making information, services, events and venues accessible to as many people as possible. Part of this concept of being more inclusive may be to provide Plain English or Easy English versions of printed documents. NILS can convert your documents into Plain English.

The aim of writing a document in Plain English is to make it:

- Clearer
- More inclusive
- Uncluttered
- User-friendly

A Plain English version of a document should be easier to read and understand. The aim is to:

- Use simpler words
- Use short sentences and paragraphs
- Use point-form for main meanings
- Prioritise key points on a need-to-know basis
- Be specific and direct
- Avoid jargon
- Use examples where helpful
- Use a larger font, use space

A Plain English document should be easier to read or discuss for a person who might have:

- A learning difficulty eg dyslexia
- Difficulty with visual processing
- English as their second language
- Age-related reading difficulty eg early dementia
- Minimal formal education
- A mild intellectual disability
- Personal preference for a shorter/simpler document

A Plain English Summary Version of a complex document can be a useful alternative to offer people.

## More Information

For more information about this service please contact

Tony Clark

Telephone (03) 9864 9702

or email: [tony.clark@nils.org.au](mailto:tony.clark@nils.org.au)

Jacky Davidson

Telephone (02) 9334 3556

or email: [jacky.davidson@nils.org.au](mailto:jacky.davidson@nils.org.au)

National  
Information  
Library  
Service

\* The National Information and Library Service (NILS) has been established to improve access to published information for Australians with a print disability. Services available from NILS include a lending library of audio and Braille books, an accessible format production capability and consulting in both web accessibility and accessibility of published information. NILS is a joint venture of Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind, Royal Blind Society of NSW and Vision Australia Foundation.