



19 September 2023

## **DSACR CELEBRATES SOUTH AFRICAN SIGN LANGUAGE BILL**

On the 19th of July 2023 during a ceremony held at the Union Buildings in Pretoria, President Cyril Ramaphosa signed into law the South African Sign Language (SASL) Bill. SASL being the 12th official language is a huge milestone for the deaf community as it is going to ensure their full participation in society, build social cohesion and promote multilingualism in the country.

The Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation, through its Language Services and Special Programmes Sub-Directorates will host a celebratory event on sign language being declared as the twelfth official language of South Africa. The celebration will be through an interactive colloquium with relevant stakeholders discussing challenges and success stories mainly from the deaf community, and mapping a way forward in ensuring the sustainability and development of South African Sign Language (SASL). The event is scheduled to take place as follows:

**Date:** Friday, 22 September 2023  
**Venue:** Bon Hotel, Central CBD, Bloemfontein  
**Time:** 09h00 for 10h00

This event will be an investment in the future as it will increase the awareness, understanding and respect for the deaf community amongst hearing people. Recognizing SASL as an official language will lay the groundwork for more inclusive policies and programs, ensuring that the deaf community has a voice in the country's future.

SASL being the 12th official language will reduce communication barriers and bridge the gap between the hearing and deaf communities. This momentous occasion will help the public recognize the unique linguistic and cultural heritage of deaf people in South Africa, and it will also open up employment opportunities for them.



As a way of contributing towards the redress on past linguistic imbalances, the Department commits strongly to interpreting services which form part of the core mandate for easy communication and access to information for all.

**Issued by the Free State Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation (DSACR)**

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