



**NEWS RELEASE**

**MAY 30TH 2007**

**Brennan - Irish Scheme Commences In Department**

**Social & Family Affairs Plan For Provision Of Services In Irish Under  
Official Languages Act**

The Minister for Social Affairs, Seamus Brennan TD, today announced the commencement of a scheme for the provision of services in Irish in his Department from June 1<sup>st</sup> this year.

The scheme, which is required under the Official Languages Act of 2003, is designed to ensure a better availability and a higher standard of service provision in Irish throughout the Department. The present scheme will apply for the next three years and will allow Irish speakers to access their language of choice in the same manner as English speakers do at present.

Minister Brennan said: "Preparations for the implementation of the scheme have been in train for some time. These include specialized training of front-line staff - those dealing directly with the public - in the use of Irish. In addition, there has been increased use of Irish signage and availability in Irish of forms and leaflets in regular use in the Department over the past number of years."

The content of the scheme takes account of the level of direct contact between staff and the general public. The main emphasis of service provision is on those sections dealing on a face-to-face basis with customers. The following provisions are included in the scheme:



## **Department of Social and Family Affairs**

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- Availability of the main application forms and information leaflets/booklets in Irish.
- Secondary forms will be available in Irish on request.
- An Irish version of the Department's website will be introduced.
- Continuing provision of specialized training for staff.
- Upgrading of computer systems to take account of the legislation.

The scheme may be viewed on the Department's website -

[http://www.welfare.ie/topics/legis/officiallang\\_03.html](http://www.welfare.ie/topics/legis/officiallang_03.html)

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