



BONJOUR

ENGLISH • FRANÇAIS

THE BONJOUR PROGRAM'S GUIDE TO THE *FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES ACT*



Introduction

What is the *French Language Services Act*?

The *French Language Services Act* (FLSA) came into effect in Prince Edward Island on December 14, 2013.

Its objective is to align the service priorities of the Island's Acadian and Francophone community with the service capacity of government through the designation of services. Designated services must be provided in English and French with comparable quality and an active offer. These services are provided by provincial government departments and agencies.

Implementation and stakeholders

Who is involved in the conception and development of the Act?

The Act is the result of significant collaboration and consultations with the Island's Acadian and Francophone community.

The Acadian and Francophone Community Advisory Committee (AFCAC) was founded in 1977 and is established under the *French Language Services Act*.

What is the role of the AFCAC?

The AFCAC plays a vital role in the implementation of the *French Language Services Act*. The AFCAC:

- ensures that the Government is informed of the service priorities of the Acadian and Francophone community;
- advises the Government on the designation of services and the provision of designated services in French;
- advises the Government on any other matter related to the Acadian and Francophone community.

What does the AFCAC do to perform its duties?

The AFCAC does many things to ensure that it can perform its duties, including:

- hold consultations with the public or with targeted groups to identify the service priorities of the Acadian and Francophone community;
- participate, as an observer, in activities that are of interest for the Acadian and Francophone community;
- meet with key stakeholders on matters related to the Acadian and Francophone community to stay informed;
- review government services to identify possibilities for designation under the *French Language Services Act*.

What services must be provided in French according to the *French Language Services Act*?

Written correspondence – The *Act* states that any written correspondence received in French must be responded to, in writing, in French.

Public consultations – The *Act* states that when public consultations are conducted through written or electronic means, the public must be provided with an opportunity to participate in the consultations in French and in English, and that when public consultations are conducted through public meetings, the public must be provided with an opportunity to participate in at least one of the public meetings in French and English.

Designated services – The *Act* states that designated services must be provided in a person's choice of French or English, and that they must be provided with comparable quality in French and English. The *Act* also states that the measures established by the regulations must be taken to make it known to the public that a designated service is provided in a person's choice of French or English.

What services are currently designated services, and so, offered in French?

For an up-to-date list of currently designated services, please visit the Government of PEI's [website](#) or refer to the [French Language Services Act General Regulations](#).

How is the government improving the availability of French-language services to support the Acadian and Francophone community?

Today, and in the future, government is and will continue its efforts to support the Acadian and Francophone community and maintain the French language for future generations. This is being done by:

- designating new services under the *Act*;
- working in collaboration with the Acadian and Francophone Community Advisory Committee to identify community priorities;
- funding and implementing French language services initiatives in areas such as health, social services, justice, culture, and Francophone immigration;
- increasing the availability of online services, web content and news releases in French;
- increasing the French language capacity of the provincial public service through French language training.

Outline on the Complaints Process

When can a complaint be made?

- when a designated service is not provided in French;
- when the quality of a designated service provided in French was not comparable to the quality of that service in English;
- when a government institution did not take the measures set out in the *French Language Services Act General Regulations* to make it known to the public that a designated service was available in a person's choice of English or French;
- when a government institution did not respond in French to a written correspondence in French;
- when a government institution did not provide the public with an opportunity to participate in a public consultation in French.

How is a complaint made?

To be valid, a complaint **must be made within sixty calendar days following the incident using the [online complaints form](#) or contacting** French Language Services Co-ordinator for the government institution concerned by the complaint.

What happens once a complaint is made?

Once a complaint is received, an acknowledgement of receipt is sent within 15 days. The goal is to address the complaint within 60 days.

How Do I Find Out More Information?

- For more information regarding the *French Language Services Act*, please contact bonjour@gov.pe.ca.