

French-language Services Plan

2016-2017

Department of
Community Services



Message from the Deputy Minister

Bonjour!

On behalf of Nova Scotia's Department of Community Services, Housing Nova Scotia and the local Housing Authorities (DCS/HNS), I am pleased to present our department's French-language Services (FLS) Plan for 2016-2017.

In addition to Child, Youth and Family Supports, Employment Support and Income Assistance, Disabilities Support and Housing Program this FLS Plan will also report on the Voluntary and Non-Profit Sector Division, Disabled Persons Commission and the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

In collaboration with other designated public institutions, we are committed to enhancing French-language Services to all Nova Scotians. Our hope is to make it easier for the Acadian and francophone community to access our services in their own language. We plan to continue to focus on actively offering French services in those areas where it will have the most impact. Offices and staff with the capacity to offer services in French are indicating this through visual and oral cues- please look for their *Bonjour!* signs when accessing our programs and services. Offices without this capacity have the ability to access francophone staff through our internal online directory. This coordinated approach to service delivery enhances our capacity to offer services in one's language of choice.

We recognize that the Acadian and francophone community plays a vital role in the cultural richness of our province. It is our commitment to share in its growth by making measurable and sustainable progress for this and future generations. This plan sets out our goals for the upcoming year and also identifies the advances achieved over the past year. In addition to the targets identified in this plan, we will also have opportunities over the year to deliver services like printed materials and consultations in French as part of our transformation work.

We invite you to visit our website for program information and services available in French at <http://gov.ns.ca/coms/fr/index.html>.

Also, feel free to contact our bilingual French-language Services Coordinator who can also help you access some of our programs and services. His contact information is:
Brian Doucet- tel: (902) 742-6211 or email: Brian.Doucet@novascotia.ca .

Merci beaucoup
Lynn Hartwell
Deputy Minister
Department of Community Services, Housing Nova Scotia and Housing Authorities

Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2015-2016

Strategic Objective 1 – Leadership and policy direction

Champion and support the planning, administration, and policy development frameworks for the implementation of the French-language Services Act and its regulations.

Goals and Objectives 2015-2016

1.1-To help support the development of Nova Scotia's French-language services within the DCS/HNS.

1.2-To help raise awareness of DCS/HNS's commitment to the French-language Services Act and Regulations.

Planned Measures for 2015-2016

1.1- - Deputy Minister and Senior Management Team will support FLS Coordinator's continued participation on Provincial FLS Coordinators Committee and its applicable sub-committees. They will also facilitate staff engagement in FLS initiatives and planning process. FLS Plan shall be published on our internet and intranet sites in English and French.

- Workplace Initiative's Provincial Advisory Committee will continue having FLS as a standing agenda item to all their meetings. FLS Coordinator will vet new initiatives through committee for endorsement and will update committee accordingly.

1.2- - Will assure DCS/HNS representation at Acadian and francophone community organizations and 3rd party service providers' AGMs ie. Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FANE), Réseau Santé, etc.

- French-language Services will figure more prominently within our organization and foster staff engagement now that it is an integral part of DCS/HNS's Workplace Initiatives section.
- DCS/HNS will continue to be represented on Réseau Santé along with Acadian Affairs, Department of Health and Wellness and numerous groups representing Acadian and francophone organizations.

Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2015-2016

1.1- The Department of Community Services and Housing Nova Scotia (DCS/HNS) was represented on the French-Language Services (FLS) Coordinating Committee and on three of its sub-committees; 1-Human Resources, 2-FL Training and 3-Active Offer.

- DCS/HNS's FLS Plan contributed to the Government's annual progress report on FLS.
- Deputy Minister memos and videos went out to all staff inviting them to participate in our

very own National Acadian Day celebrations and Acadian Star Recognition program held across the province. Her messages also highlighted the importance of actively offering FLS.

1.2- DCS/HNS is an active member of Réseau Santé Nouvelle-Écosse. Updates are provided to Senior Management annually. We were also represented at Réseau Santé's Forum Santé and AGM where Minister Bernard delivered the opening remarks. DCS/HNS was also represented at Acadian Federation of NS's annual general meetings.

- Having the FL Coordinator as a member of Workplace Initiatives' Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC) has proven beneficial to our organization. FLS is now an integral part of all departmental programs and considered as new initiatives are developed or consultations are conducted. FLS updates were presented at all PAC meetings. The committee's involvement was also vital in development of all FL initiatives.

***Strategic Objective 2 – Availability and accessibility of French-language services
Increase the prevalence and awareness of French-language services through active offer, communications, printed and electronic materials, and by increasing the capacity of the public service to offer services in French.***

Goals and Objectives 2015-2016

2.1-DCS/HNS continuously strives to actively offer French-language services and communications in French to the Acadian and francophone community.

2.2- DCS/HNS ensures relevant information and material are made available in French.

2.3- DCS/HNS will help raise awareness of the Acadian and francophone community cultural identity and our commitment to the FLS Act and Regulations. Also make staff aware of training opportunities.

Planned Measures for 2015-2016

2.1- The Employment Support and Income Assistance (ESIA) program is in the process of translating its program forms to be able to provide the option to Francophone clients of having their application, Release of Information Consent form and the Understanding of Participation form completed in French. These are mandatory forms that ESIA clients must complete as part of the eligibility determination process for benefits. As such, it is important to ensure clients fully understand the content. Also, the program will now have the ability to track maternal language of those utilizing our services.

2.2 - The Minister's Advisory Panel Report on Accessibility Legislation will be translated to French and posted to the <http://novascotia.ca/coms/accessibility/default-fr.asp> web-site.

- Non-Profit Sector Program will produce four one-page fact sheets on the non-profit sector in bilingual format.

- Disabled Persons Commission will be creating a series of statistical fact sheets and an Annual Report in both English and French.

- NS Advisory Council on the Status of Women plans the following FLS activities:

- French translation of

- Status of Women's publication, *Making Changes*

- An Atlantic publication entitled "*Guide for Gender Equitable Employment*" from the Atlantic Forum of Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women

- Status of Women also operates in bilingual Atlantic and national meetings, where meeting material and press releases will be made available in both French and English.
- Status of Women will reach out to the Government of Nova Scotia's French Language Coordinators, and introduce their publications that are available in French to assist with its further dissemination and use.

2.3- DCS/HNS- FLS Coordinator will work with each departmental program and region to identify FL initiatives and strategic plans that are based on Acadian community needs. All management teams will be engaged in the FLS planning process. Each team will also be responsible to indicate planned initiatives and report accordingly annually.

- Having the FL Coordinator as an active member of the Workplace Initiatives- Provincial Advisory Committee proves to be a valuable asset for both FLS and Workplace Initiatives. This partnership greatly increases the amount of FLS being considered as our organization develops departmental programs and conducts consultations. The Coordinator will continue to update and promote FLS initiatives and engage our Provincial Advisory Committee.
- FLS Coordinator is responsible to promote and assist employees wishing to participate in French language training, Acadie at a glance, French Lunch & Learns, Consortium national de formation en santé, etc. Attendees will be tracked and reported on annually. All FLS training information shall be disseminated through managers/directors and also posted on FLS intranet site. Coordinator will assist programs and regions identify gaps in service and develop strategic plans to address service needs.
- Workplace Initiatives and FLS coordinator will expand National Acadian Day celebrations to DCS/HA offices located in areas with high francophone concentration. Will continue to encourage participation from our partnering departments and agencies.
- French-language Services will be included in our organization's staff orientation initiative Phase 2.

Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2015-2016

2.1 - Our organization continues to utilize and update our internal directory/data base of employees capable and willing of offering French services therefore enhancing our ability to actively offer French services throughout the province. Nineteen new names were brought forward to be added to the directory this past year.

- Child Welfare and Residential Services considers cultural identity when matching Acadian and francophone children with foster and adopting families who share the same linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds.

2.2- Examples of the DCS/HNS publications that were translated and made available to the public in the past year.

- Sexual Violence Strategy material made available in French :
 - Document – *Rompre le silence: Une intervention coordonnée en matière de violence sexuelle en Nouvelle-Écosse* <http://novascotia.ca/coms/svs/docs/Sexual-Violence-Strategy-FR.pdf>
 - Nova Scotia Prevention Innovation Fund for a Coordinated Response to Sexual Violence in Nova Scotia- forms and guidelines made available in French. Applicants could, and did, apply in French.
 - One of the Sexual Violence Strategy's Prevention Innovation Grant recipients was the Federation des Femmes Acadiennes du Nouvelle-Écosse (FFANE). *The Many Faces of Violence*- FFANE will develop a theatre production with students from the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) schools that will focus on healthy relationships and consent.
- Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority (MRHA) translated its Landlord Rules
- DCS assisted Yarmouth's Juniper House with its website translation
- Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women is in the process of translating *Making Changes- a book for women experiencing intimate partner abuse*
- Employment Support and Income Assistance Program Application forms were translated
- Volunteerism and the Non-Profit Sector Division translated its nomination forms for the Youth Volunteer award and Family Volunteer Award. Award certificates are also available in French.
- Four DCS press releases were issued simultaneously in English and French in the past year
- Some staff business cards were made available in bilingual format
- Minister's Advisory Panel Report on Accessibility Legislation was translated and posted to DCS website: <http://novascotia.ca/coms/accessibility/default-fr.asp>

2.3- Information on FL Training, Acadie at a Glance, the Consortium national de formation en

santé and French Lunch & Learns was disseminated via managers and directors as well as posted on DCS/HNS Intranet site. DCS/HNS participants are tracked and reported on annually to Senior Management Team.

- A National Acadian Day observance was held in DCS/HNS locations throughout the province with 150 staff attending. This year's participating sites were Port Hawkesbury, Quinpool, Middleton and Yarmouth Districts Offices. Other departments were invited and joined our organization in this cultural celebration.

- DCS/HA continues to recognize individuals or teams that go above and beyond to provide services to the Acadian and francophone Community with the French-language Services Recognition Initiative called the *Acadian Star*.

- French-language Services was included in the development our organization's new intranet site and the web-based Orientation Program.

Strategic Objective 3 – Community engagement and outreach

Encourage the participation of the Acadian and Francophone community in the development of government policies with a view to improving the delivery of services in French.

Goals and Objectives 2015-2016

3.1- DCS/HNS will provide opportunities for French speaking Nova Scotians to be engaged in their language of choice.

3.2- DCS/HNS will help the Acadian and francophone community be aware of any opportunities to participate on Agencies, Boards or Commissions under the responsibility of the Department as opportunities arise.

3.3- DCS/HNS will help raise the Acadian and francophone community's awareness of our department's complaints process.

3.4- DCS/HNS will promote the development and vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community by enhancing the delivery of French-language services.

Planned Measures for 2015-2016

3.1- DCS/HNS will respond in French to all correspondence received in French. DCS/HNS will participate on French-language Services Coordinating subcommittees. These include Human Resources, FL Training and Active Offer. Our organization will incorporate all FL Training recommendations brought forward by the FLS Coordinating sub committees. FLS Coordinator will engage DCS/HA's Human Resources in introducing revised FLS-HR Guidelines.

- DCS/HA will adhere to revised Communication Nova Scotia's FLS guidelines and tools. These include; Communications Guidelines/ Translation Service Guidelines/ Consultation Guidelines/ Consultation Toolkit/ Web Guidelines.

3.2 - DCS/HA shall continue to work with the Executive Council Office, who has the primary responsibility for recruiting members of the public to government agencies, boards and commissions, and regularly advertises opportunities in both French and English. For more information please visit www.gov.ns.ca/exec_council/abc .

Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2015-2016

3.1- In accordance to the *FLS Act* and Regulations, as well as our own internal Communication Protocol, all written correspondence received in French were responded to in French with the help of CNS Translation Services and/or our FLS Coordinator.

- Our Deputy Ministers circulated revised FLS- HR Guidelines to Executive Team for distribution to respective managers.

3.2 & 3.3- Appeal board vacancies continue to be filled and some of the board members do have the capacity to hear Employment Support and Income Assistance appeals in French. Bilingual appeal board members indicate they are willing to hear appeals in French wherever needed in the province. Recruitment efforts for new appeal board members included Le Courier and French community radio stations.

- Sexual Violence Strategy held Community Support Network Workshops in 9 regions of the province throughout September and October. Members of the Acadian community were invited. It also expanded its outreach to ensure participation from the Acadian community on the Sexual Violence Strategy provincial committees.

3.4- DCS's Prevention & Early Intervention provided funding for Parenting Journey, a family support, and home visitation program in partnership with the Centre provincial de ressources préscolaires.

2015-16

2016-17

Goals, Objectives, and Planned Measures for 2016-2017

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Department's Goals and Objectives 2016-2017

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Department's Planned Measures for 2016-2017

1.1- - Deputy Minister and Senior Management Team will support FLS Coordinator's continued participation on Provincial FLS Coordinators Committee and its applicable sub-committees. They will also facilitate staff engagement in FLS initiatives and planning process. FLS Plan shall be published on our internet and intranet sites in English and French.

- Workplace Initiative's Provincial Advisory Committee will continue having FLS as a standing agenda item in all their meetings. FLS Coordinator will vet new initiatives through the committee for endorsement and will update committee accordingly.
- FLS will be included in the development of DCS/HA's new intranet site.

1.2- - Will assure DCS/HNS representation at Acadian and francophone community organizations and 3rd party service providers' AGMs ie. Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FANE), Réseau Santé, etc.

- DCS/HNS will continue to be represented on Réseau Santé along with Acadian Affairs, Department of Health and Wellness and numerous groups representing Acadian and francophone organizations.

Strategic Objective 2 – Availability and accessibility of French-language services

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- 2.2- DCS/HNS ensures relevant information and material are made available in French.
- 2.3- DCS/HNS will help raise awareness of the Acadian and francophone community cultural identity and our commitment to the FLS Act and Regulations. Also make staff aware of training opportunities.

Department's Planned Measures for 2016-2017

2.1- DCS/HA will continue to increase the number of its offices and employees that actively offer FLS. This is being realized through FL Training, adoption of revised FLS-HR Guidelines, FL Directory, cultural awareness initiatives and improved internal communication strategies.

2.2- The translation of the Employment Support and Income Assistance (ESIA) has translated its application form and it will now be made available to the public. ESIA will also translate more of its forms as well as their Appeals brochure. There will also be more translation of its website material, brochures and forms, as current English versions are being updated through Transformation Initiatives.

Strategic Objective 3 – Community engagement and outreach

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Department's Goals and Objectives 2016-2017

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Department's Planned Measures for 2016-2017

- 3.1- DCS/HNS will respond in French to all correspondence received in French.
- DCS/HNS will participate on French-language Services Coordinating subcommittees. These include Human Resources, FL Training and Active Offer. Our organization will incorporate all FL Training recommendations brought forward by the FLS Coordinating sub committees. FLS Coordinator will engage DCS/HA's Human Resources in introducing revised FLS-HR Guidelines.
 - The Acadian and francophone community will be consulted as work begins on the revisions to the Child protection Services Manual to align with the amendments to the Children and Family Services Act.

3.2 - DCS/HA shall continue to work with the Executive Council Office, who has the primary responsibility for recruiting members of the public to government agencies, boards and commissions, and regularly advertises opportunities in both French and English. For more information please visit www.gov.ns.ca/exec_council/abc .

3.3- ESIA program will translate their Appeals brochures and make these available to the public. FLS Coordinator's contact information is prominently available on website for those needing assistance accessing our programs.

3.4- DCS/HA's Acadian Day celebrations will be expanded to include Community Centres this year as a means of building on relations with our 3rd party service providers and the citizens we serve.

- DCS's Prevention & Early Intervention will further develop the culturally specific Parenting Journey program located at the Centre provincial de ressources préscolaires in Church Point. They will also increase resources made available for community-based service providers working with vulnerable children, youth and families. Will also increase professional development opportunities for community based service providers that are offered in French.