

# French-language Services Plan

2016-2017

Department of Labour and  
Advanced Education



## 2016-2017 French-language Services Plan

### Message from the *Deputy Minister*



I am pleased to present the 2016-2017 French-language Services Plan for the Department of Labour and Advanced Education (LAE). This plan supports the overall goals of the department as well as our responsibilities under the *French-language Services Act and Regulations*.

Our department covers several important areas that directly impact the lives of Nova Scotians. The department works to protect the public and maintain and grow a safe, fair and prosperous workforce in Nova Scotia with a strong focus on safety, skill development, regulation, education, and building partnerships.

This plan outlines our efforts to make our department's services and programs more accessible to Nova Scotia's Acadian and francophone community. We will continue to look for opportunities to make our public consultations more accessible to the Acadian and francophone community. We will also continue to provide staff with learning tools and resources to enhance their own French-language skills. Supporting lifelong learning is a priority for our department. Many of our Adult Education programs are offered in French and we are looking to expand our efforts further. Information and services in French will continue to be available in employment programs directed towards job seekers, employers, and organizations. In addition, we will continue to work directly with the Acadian and francophone community to provide opportunities to support sustainable workforce participation, workplace safety, improved access to apprenticeship, and retention of youth and immigrants in Nova Scotian communities.

Our department has a key role to play in keeping our workers safe, providing fair work environments, and providing access to training and skill development programs to individuals across the province. This plan helps us ensure that these programs and services are available for all Nova Scotians.

Duff Montgomerie, Deputy Minister  
Labour and Advanced Education

## Responses to French Requests

The Department of Labour and Advanced Education (LAE) is committed to respecting its obligations, as stipulated by the *French-language Services (FLS) Act*, in responding to verbal and written requests in French.

Verbal requests to communicate in French are, wherever possible, handled by bilingual staff. We have bilingual staff throughout the province who are able to provide service in French, and a number of staff provide services in French on a regular basis. Where no bilingual staff is available to respond to a verbal request, the request is logged and responded to in as timely a manner as possible. Written correspondence that is received in French is responded to in French. Documents, guidelines and website materials can be translated to French upon the request of the originating division.

In the 2016-17 fiscal year, the department plans to develop a policy on written and verbal communications in French, as well as develop a list of staff who speak French to help support this policy.

## French-language Services Inventory

Provided below is a partial inventory of programs, services, and publications from LAE which are available in French:

- The *Bonjour!* program identifies bilingual staff in LAE offices around the province who are willing and able to serve clients in French.
- Some Chairs and Deputy Chairs of LAE boards can conduct hearings in French.
- The Conciliation and Labour Tribunals Division has an agreement with New Brunswick for conciliation in French where workplace parties make a request.
- The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Division provides inspection reports and orders in French upon request.
- The Labour Market Programs Support System (LaMPSS) supports the delivery of programs and services in both languages where applicable.
- Employment Nova Scotia (ENS) programs descriptions and guidelines are available in French and English on the web site.
- Adults can obtain their High School Diploma in French, as well as participate in other programs which aim to improve literacy skills and prepare adults for employment in French. French-language curricula is being developed to support programs for Acadian and francophone community.
- Families in Acadian and francophone regions can access high-quality family literacy programs and resources in French.
- A number of bilingual staff in LAE provide services in French on a regular basis. The Acadian and francophone community is served by a designated bilingual Adult Education Coordinator.
- French-language training is available to all staff members. All LAE staff directly involved with Acadian and francophone community are encouraged to seek out French-language training as part of their annual training plan.
- Some announcements and press releases are published in French.
- Many publications have been translated into French, including labour market reports and information, the Guide to the Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code, sections 72-76 of the Occupational Health and Safety General Regulations, and Terms of Reference for the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee.

- Publication of guidelines and materials for the ENS programs, Fast Forward and START, are available in French.
- Applications, report forms, and funding guidelines for LaMPSS users for the Nova Scotia School of Adult Learning (NSSAL) are available in French.

### **French-language Services Coordinator**

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### **Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2015-2016**

LAE's 2015-16 French Language Services Plan contained the following three objectives and their associated goals:

- Objective 1: Leadership and Policy Direction
- Objective 2: Availability and Accessibility of French-Language Services
- Objective 3: Community Engagement and Outreach

This section of the report contains a progress update of the measures planned for each of the three objectives.

#### ***Corporate Objective 1 – Leadership and Policy Direction***

*Champion and support the policy development, planning, and administrative framework for the implementation of the French-language Services Act and Regulations.*

#### **Goals and Objectives 2015-2016**

To support planning and the development of policy for implementation of the *French-language Services Act and Regulations*.

To enhance FLS in line with departmental and governmental priorities. Priority areas for partnership and service this year include: employment, skill development, and safety.

#### **Planned Measures for 2015-2016**

The following is a summary of the work planned by LAE for 2015-2016:

The 2015-2016 FLS Plan is published in a bilingual format and posted on the LAE website. Steps will be taken to develop the plan for 2016-17.

The FLS Coordinator will organize an LAE French Language Services Committee (FLSC).

Members of the LAE FLSC will create awareness of French Language Services by providing an update to members of the Executive Management Team.

The department will develop a Communications Policy document, to provide direction and guidance to LAE staff in the area of communications in French (verbal, written, news releases, web sites, information documents, public consultations, etc.) as required under the *French-language Services Act and Regulations*.

The Deputy Minister, along with LAE's senior management team, are aware of the obligations relating to FLS and champion FLS within the department.

The Deputy Minister is committed to engaging the department in promoting and enhancing FLS.

The FLS coordinator provides active representation of LAE on the FLSCC.

The Deputy Minister champions the FLS subcommittee to assist the FLS coordinator in developing and supporting implementation of the plan.

### **Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2015-2016**

A LAE French Language Committee was formed with a representative from each branch in the department.

- **Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency**

The Interprovincial (IP) and Harmonized level examinations for the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency are now available in both official languages. The French is printed on the left page and English on the right page.

- **Skills and Learning Branch**

The guidelines for two Youth programs, Student Summer Skills Incentive Program and Graduate to Opportunity Program, were published in French.

Student Employment Programs, part of Employment Nova Scotia, presented information on the program "Graduate to Opportunity" at the Le Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse (CDÉNE) event that was held in March 2016.

The appeal process package for Employment Nova Scotia (ENS) clients who want to appeal a decision made by ENS was made available in French on the LAE web site.

A START presentation in French to the Forum of French women entrepreneurs was delivered by a bilingual program officer. The presentation for this Forum was about Self Employment and other Employment Nova Scotia programs.

The following ENS forms are now available in French:

- Case manager statement for returning student.
- Criminal record guidelines and procedures for LaMPSS.
- LaMPSS direct deposit procedures which are used by ENS staff and clients with regards to tuition.
- LaMPSS procedures for unique individual reporting and daily input.

Fast Forward, START, Skills Development Programs were updated on the ENS website.

Nova Scotia Careers Centre new portal: French documents are included on the portal.

Consultation - Working sessions for Nova Scotia Careers Centres (November 2015) – the invitation, registration form and Powerpoint presentation were available in French for French Careers Centers.

New policies, guidelines, procedures, or initiatives (internal or external)

- How to use Service Registration in LaMPSS – training and procedures

Service Registration training was offered in French for Acadian organizations (March 2016).

Early in 2016, Adult Education engaged its service delivery partners in a consultation process in order to review the adult learning programs funded through the Nova Scotia School of Adult Learning (NSSAL). The consultation consisted of an online survey in February, followed by a two-day meeting in March (9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>). French-language service components consisted of the following: all email communications were available in French and English; the online survey was available in French and English; at the face to face meeting, francophone stakeholders participated in one facilitated round-table discussion in French. Stakeholders also had the opportunity to provide written feedback after the meeting in French.

One of the outcomes of this meeting was the formation of an external stakeholder NSSAL advisory committee, which includes two representatives from the Acadian/francophone community. All email communications related to this committee are provided in French and English. A francophone working group will be created subsequently.

The advisory committee and francophone working group are significant steps forward towards ensuring that the needs and concerns of the Acadian francophone community continue to be taken into consideration in the development of NSSAL and its programs, and that this community is supported by adult learning programs and services in French.



The Bonjour! program is used to indicate where FLS are available. The Bonjour! sign as well as the bilingual provincial logo are posted at the front entrance on offices indicating where French services are offered. Several divisions use the Bonjour! logo on their websites to direct users to French-language content.

The FLS coordinator distributed *Bonjour!* materials to French-speaking staff as well as contacted employees who have taken French-language training. French-speaking staff are increasingly utilized for service delivery in French.

An increasing number of programs are available for application in French in Labour Market Programs Support System (LaMPSS). The new program Fast Forward was developed and translated into French including the operational guidelines and the training presentation which are available online. Policy and guidelines updates to existing programs such as START have been translated into French as well. Information about changes for LaMPSS users have been translated into French.

Staff members who provide FLS delivered presentations in French and met with stakeholders and partners in the Acadian and francophone community to discuss and provide information in French about the department's programs and services.

Nova Scotia Works (Nouvelle-Écosse au travail) is the new branding for former Careers Nova Scotia Centres. The Nova Scotia Works model was created to utilize an inclusive model of service delivery.

French language employment services with Nova Scotia Works includes:

- Assessment tools, policy documents, agreement activities, assessment training documents and Nova Scotia Works launch materials were published in both English and French.
- Delivery of labour market programs and services through the new inclusive model for

meets the requirements of the Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA), Job Fund Agreement (JFA) and the *French Language Services Act*. These agreements do not require service provision through a French language-specific organization or structure, but rather that services are available in either official language in areas of high demand. Nova Scotia Works meets this stipulation; organizations are mandated to offer French-language services in areas of high demand, and will be monitored against this requirement.

- A conference call with federal colleagues of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour validated the team's approach with regard to French services delivery: analyzing areas of significant demand according to the criteria under the LMDA, and ensuring services, signage, web sites, tools and resources are available in French (client experience is key).

Six career planning and labour market information guides were published in print and on the web in French. These guides were distributed to points of service delivery (employment services, adult education) in Acadian regions.

A rack brochure for the START Program was printed in French and distributed to Regional ENS offices. The START web site content was updated in French.

A new web site page and updated guidelines are now available in French for the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers (TIOW) Program.

- **Department**

The department website has significant French-language content. Several divisions have bilingual sites with links to programs, documents/ guidelines, tools and resources, and contact information for bilingual staff.

Four press releases were issued in French by LAE and posted on the provincial government website.

The FLS coordinator, along with other staff, promoted staff awareness of the Acadian and francophone cultural identity and our obligations under the *French-language Services Act and Regulations*. Information was distributed on workshops such as *Acadie at a Glance* and films and other events in French around the province.

The FLS coordinator notified staff of French-language training available to provincial government employees. Senior management and the Deputy Minister were supportive of language training requests.

In 2015-2016, a total of 10 employees of LAE were registered in French classes. At least half of the employees enrolled in two or more consecutive courses, and half of the employees were registered in classes at a Beginner 4, intermediate or advanced level.

## **Goals, Objectives, and Planned Measures for 2016-2017**

### **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.*

#### **Department's Goals and Objectives 2016-2017**

To support planning and the development of policy for implementation of the *French-language Services Act and Regulations*.

To enhance FLS in line with departmental and governmental priorities. Priority areas for partnership and service this year include: employment, skill development, and safety.

#### **Department's Planned Measures for 2016-2017**

The 2016-2017 FLS Plan is published in a bilingual format and posted on the LAE website. Steps will be taken this year to develop the plan for 2017-18.

The department will strive to prepare a Communications Policy document, to provide direction and guidance to LAE staff in the area of communications in French (verbal, written, news releases, web sites, information documents, public consultations, etc.) as required under the *French-language Services Act and Regulations*.

The Deputy Minister along with LAE's senior management team are aware of our obligations relating to FLS and champion FLS within our department. Members of the LAE FLSC will create awareness of French Language Services by providing an update to members of the Executive Management Team.

The Deputy Minister is committed to engaging the department in promoting and enhancing FLS. The FLS coordinator provides active representation of LAE on the FLSCC and there is an active FLS subcommittee, with representatives of branches and divisions of LAE, to assist the FLS coordinator in developing and supporting implementation of the plan.

The 2016/2017 edition of High Opportunity Career Options for Nova Scotians will be published in French.

### **Strategic Objective 2 – Availability and Accessibility of French-language Services**

*Increase the prevalence and awareness of French-language Services (FLS) through active offer, communications, printed and electronic materials, and by increasing the capacity of the public service to offer services in French.*

#### **Department's Goals and Objectives 2016-2017**

To promote active offer of FLS and visibly promote the use of the *Bonjour!* program.

To enhance programs, services and communications in French which are offered to the Acadian and francophone community.

To enhance the capacity of staff to offer services in French.



### ***Department's Planned Measures for 2016-2017***

The FLS coordinator distributes *Bonjour!* materials to French-speaking staff as well contacts employees who have taken French-language training. French-speaking staff are identified and are utilized for service delivery in French.

The Communications Policy, to provide direction and guidance to LAE employees in the area of communications in French, is developed and implemented.

The department strives to enhance the quantity, the availability and the visibility of information available in French, in print and on the LAE website and intranet site. Branches and divisions are encouraged to seek out translation services to ensure that information is accessible in French. Particular areas of focus are employment, skill development and safety.

The FLS coordinator continues to make staff aware of French-language training opportunities. The department will continue to support training requests where operational requirements support this.

### ***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.*

- Under the Labour Market Development Agreement and the Canada-Nova Scotia Job Fund Agreement, Careers Nova Scotia must deliver services in either official language in areas of significant demand (as determined by the Official Languages Regulations pursuant to Canada's *Official Languages Act*). The areas of 'significant demand', as determined in January 2016, based on the 2011 census information, are as follows: Argyle, Yarmouth, Clare, Antigonish, Inverness, Richmond, and Halifax.
- For the most part, these are the areas which have historically been deemed areas of significant demand, and areas where employment services have been offered in both official languages. The exception to this is Antigonish, which has not been historically seen as an area of high demand, however now meets the minimum 5% threshold for 'significant demand'

### ***Department's Goals and Objectives 2016-2017***

To develop and maintain relationships with Acadian and francophone community stakeholders.

To increase the availability of FLS during consultations. Consultations in person were held with the Acadian and francophone community which impacted French employment services in designated regions of the province. The Office of Acadian Affairs has been consulted in the development of the framework and is represented on the Careers NS Senior Officials Committee.

### ***Department's Planned Measures for 2016-2017***

LAE staff will work closely with a range of service delivery partners in the Acadian and francophone community. These collaborations around service delivery provide ongoing opportunities for feedback and consultation on funding, policies, programs and services that are of interest to the Acadian and francophone community.

Divisions will seek to ensure that French-language services (communications, reports, bilingual staff, and ability to provide oral and written feedback in French) are increasingly available for consultations.

**Priorities of the Acadian and Francophone Community**

The department consults regularly in areas that relate to its mandate with stakeholders in the Acadian and francophone community. As community concerns or priorities are made known, these are reviewed and discussed with the relevant division or branch, and an appropriate plan of action is developed.

**Contribution to the Preservation and Growth of the Acadian and Francophone Community**

Continue to fund initiatives and programs that enhance literacy and skills leading to employment of Acadian and francophone adults, thereby contributing to community and economic development and growth in the Acadian and francophone community.

Promote collaboration between government, business, education and community stakeholders to improve the quality and range of academic upgrading and skill development programs in French.