

French-language Services Plan 2022–23

Department of Public Works (DPW)

Ce document est également disponible en français sous le titre : « Plan de services en français 2022-2023 »

Message from the Deputy

Bonjour!

On behalf of Nova Scotia Department of Public Works, I am pleased to present our French-language Services Plan for 2022-23.

The Department of Public Works is committed to providing services and resources in French to meet the needs of our Acadian and francophone community. To date, we've successfully delivered key media releases and road safety materials in French and will continue to deliver these services to ensure that those who are part of Nova Scotia's Acadian and francophone communities are both safe, and informed. We will also continue to support our staff to attend courses in French.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with the Acadian and francophone communities, the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie and other government departments and agencies as we continue to improve our service delivery to Acadians and francophones across the province.

Merci,

Peter Hackett
Deputy Minister
Department of Public Works

What we're doing to contribute to the growth of the Acadian and francophone community

We recognize the importance of French-language services and we endeavour to fulfil our responsibilities under the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations. We believe Nova Scotians should have access to quality government services in French, and this plan demonstrates our commitment to ensuring our programmes, policies and services address the priorities expressed by the Acadian and francophone community. To achieve this aim, we collaborate with other designated public institutions across government – including the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie – through the French-language Services Coordinating Committee. We greatly value this partnership, which ensures a continued understanding of the unique needs of our province's Acadian and francophone community.

We encourage Nova Scotians to request services from government in French. We also encourage Acadians and francophones to have their voices heard by participating on agencies, boards, and commissions, that are regularly advertised by the Executive Council Office. As we continue to maintain and improve our French-language services, we welcome feedback on our progress, and we invite you to share your comments or questions by contacting our French-language services coordinator. If you wish to make a formal complaint regarding French-language services, please contact the Office of the Ombudsman.

French-language services coordinator:

The French-language Services Coordinator for the Department of Public Works is Sébastien Fournier, Signals and Lighting Officer.

He can be reached by phone (902) 424-7535 or email sebastien.fournier@novascotia.ca

Services we offer in French

- DPW continues to promote French language training for staff at all levels. DPW strives to assist staff in professional French language training to serve Acadian and francophone Nova Scotians in their first language.
- DPW offers a wide variety of French language services on our website, including but not limited to; Our Road Conditions (511) service is offered in English and French through telephone, website, and for mobile devices. Also, numerous safety documentations have been translated to French and posted on our website.
- Some public consultations with DPW's Senior staff have been offered entirely in French.

How we communicate with the public in French

Most inquiries received in French at the Department are in locations where there are French-speaking staff. DPW keeps an up-to-date list of Department employees willing and able to respond to phone and in-person inquiries in French. DPW's website has a link "Bonjour! Services en français" which lists numerous French electronic documents for information purposes. This is an ongoing effort in providing additional documentation in French through our web portal.

DPW's Highway Engineering and Construction division provides bilingual services when dealing with the public and private.

What we did to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2021-22

- Increase staff awareness of the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations.
 - Made staff aware of our obligations under the French-language Services Act and Regulations.
- Increase staff awareness of the Acadian and francophone culture, and opportunities to participate in French-language training.
 - Made staff aware of opportunities to gain experience about the Acadian and francophone culture and participate in French-language training.
- Provide print and electronic information materials, as well as communications materials, such as news releases, in French.
 - DPW provides print and electronic information materials and continues to add to the variety of French language services materials on the website.
 - DPW has issued a bilingual media release for Operation Christmas which is to reduce impaired driving and encourage motorists to practice safe winter driving.

- Continue to make services available in French, such as 511, our highway webcams, Sammy Snowplow, and French or bilingual community road signs.
 - DPW has partnered with some French and Acadian communities to have a more personal style of community boundary sign. Currently the Department has a French/Gaelic Affairs sign policy which allows for bilingual community boundary signs and road name signs within the community or region.
- Keep an up-to-date list of Department employees willing and able to respond to phone and in-person inquiries in French.
 - DPW continues to update a list of employees willing and able to respond to phone and in-person inquiries in French.
- Continue to deliver services in French.
 - DPW promotes French language training for staff at all levels.
 - DPW's Highway Engineering and Construction division provides bilingual services when dealing with the public and private.
 - DPW senior staff engages in public presentations with the CSAP school board in various regions within Nova Scotia.
- Continue to provide opportunities for Acadian and francophone community to participate in French during province-wide consultations.
 - DPW is committed to promoting the French language by working with Acadian and francophone Nova Scotians and stakeholders in their first language.
 - DPW staff conducted high school career days specifically for Acadian and francophone French language students. This was for those French language students interested in pursuing a career in engineering. This career day program is conducted annually by the department.

How we plan to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2022–23

Objective 1: Strengthen internal operational structures including policy, legislative and administrative frameworks

- Increase staff awareness of the French-language Services Act and Regulations.
- Increase staff awareness of the Acadian and francophone culture, and opportunities to participate in French-language training.
- Provide staff with opportunity to attend 'Seven Things you Need to Know' presentation.

Objective 2: Develop and deliver quality French-language services and programmes to the public

- Provide print and electronic information materials as well as communications materials, such as news releases, in French.
- Look into updating our website to be fully bilingual.
- Link to Bonjour! Services en Français with numerous French electronic documents for information purposes. DPW to continue to upload electronic French documentation for the public safety.
- Continue to make services available in French, such as 511, our highway webcams, Sammy Snowplow, and French or bilingual community road signs.
- Keep an up-to-date list of Department employees willing and able to respond to phone and in-person inquiries in French.

Objective 3: Maintain ongoing dialogue and consultation with the Acadian and francophone community

- DPW has engaged with stakeholders in the Acadian community to promote bilingual stop signs for the Municipality of Clare. All current stop signs on provincial roads in that Municipality will be replaced with new bilingual stop signs.
- Government will continue to consult with Acadian and francophone communities that have landmark or historical sites with significant social, linguistic, and cultural interest to those communities to enable the placement of bilingual signs in those areas.
- The new signs will be installed ahead of Congres Mondial Acadien, an international gathering scheduled to be held in Southwest Nova Scotia that showcases the culture of Acadian communities, in 2024.
- Many other Acadian communities have expressed interest in having bilingual stop signs installed within their communities.