



French-language Services Plan

2024–2025

*Department of
Public Works*

© Crown copyright, Province of Nova Scotia, 2024
French-language Services Plan
Department of Public Works
April 2024

ISBN: 978-1-77448-603-0

French-language Services Plan 2024 - 2025

Department of Public Works (DPW)

Ce document est également disponible en français sous le titre : « Plan de services en français 2024-2025 »

Message from the Deputy

Bonjour!

This is the Department of Public Works French-language Services Plan for 2024-2025.

The Department of Public Works is steadfast in its responsibility to provide services and resources in French to meet the needs of our Acadian and francophone communities. We currently deliver key media releases and road safety materials in French, and we will continue to deliver these services to ensure that those who speak French and are part of Nova Scotia's Acadian and francophone communities are provided with information on road safety, road conditions, and other services that the department is responsible for.

We will continue to support and encourage our staff to attend courses in French for their personal and professional development.

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

Cordialement,
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 to Nova Scotia and to Canada, and we work to fulfil our responsibilities under the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations. Nova Scotians should have access to quality government services in French, and this plan demonstrates our continuing commitment to ensuring our programmes, policies and services address the priorities expressed by the Acadian and francophone community. 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 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. We continue to provide and are always seeking to 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.

Should a formal complaint regarding French-language services need to be made, please contact the Office of the Ombudsman.

French-language Services Coordinator:

The French-language Services Coordinator for the Department of Public Works is Nicole Donohue, Traffic Collision Analyst.

Nicole Donohue can be reached via email at Nicole.Donohue@novascotia.ca.

Services we offer in French

- DPW continues to promote French language training for its 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, as well as for personal and professional development.
- 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 French and English including a French online system that includes highway cameras, French through telephone, website, and for mobile devices; Plow Tracker – French version of online system.
- Sammy Snowplow safety activity book is offered in French.
- Numerous safety documents have been translated to French and posted on our website.
- Awareness and Hiring Campaigns including online and radio media spots are offered in French, together with information brochures also in French.
- 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 at locations where there are French-speaking members of staff. DPW maintains 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 2023-2024

- Continued staff awareness of the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations.
 - Made staff aware of our obligations under the French-language Services Act and Regulations.
- Continued staff awareness of the Acadian and francophone culture, and opportunities to participate in French-language training.
 - Publicised opportunities to gain experience about the Acadian and francophone culture and participate in French-language training.
- Provided 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 its 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.

- DPW requested Communications Nova Scotia to issue advertising for the Argyle Interchange project public information session in French. This was done using a French radio station and French newspaper.
- We erected signage for federally cost-shared infrastructure projects with project related information in English and French in areas of the province where French is the predominant second language. This is a requirement of the federal funding programs.
- Continued to make services available in French, such as 511, our highway webcams, Sammy Snowplow, and French or bilingual community road signs.
 - Traffic Signs Regulations, made under the *Motor Vehicle Act*, were amended in 2021, which contained the inclusion of bilingual stop signs as an official traffic sign.
 - DPW continued to partner 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.
 - Bilingual stop signs were installed in the following areas: Clare, Argyle, Pomquet, Isle Madame, Chéticamp, Richmond County, Victoria, and Northern Inverness areas.
- Kept 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.
- Continued 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.
- Continued to provide opportunities for Acadian and francophone communities 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 2024–2025

Congrès Mondial acadien 2024 - Acadian World Congress 10 -18 August 2024

Staff is currently conducting a review of the road signage in the municipalities of Clare and Argyle to potentially provide more French/bilingual road name signage prior to the upcoming Acadian World Congress. DPW is working in collaboration with the two municipalities on this initiative.

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

- Continue the promotion to staff of the French-language Services Act and Regulations.
- Continue to increase staff awareness of the opportunity to participate in French-language training. Continue the promotion of Acadian and francophone culture, and cultural events taking place across the province.
- 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.
- Continuing to explore the feasibility of updating our website to be fully bilingual.
- Link to Bonjour! Services en Français with numerous French electronic documents for information purposes. DPW will 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.
- Continue the implementation of bilingual stop signs in Acadian communities across the province.
- Continue discussions with HRM on signage around CSAP schools.
- 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 is continuing its engagement with stakeholders in the Acadian community to promote bilingual stop signs and other community boundary sign. 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.
- The province 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 by DPW in those areas.