

French-language Services Plan

2021–2022

Labour and Advanced Education

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French-language Services Plan
Department of Labour and Advanced Education
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Department of Labour and Advanced Education

Message from the Deputy Minister

I am pleased to present the 2021-22 French-language Service Plan for the Department of Labour and Advanced Education (LAE). Our mission is to work as a trusted partner to help all Nova Scotians live, learn and work to their highest potential. It is our department's top priority to foster a workforce that is inclusive and representative of our diverse communities, which in turn creates an innovative and thriving economy for all. This incorporates fostering responsive and sustainable learning systems, enabling safe, fair, diverse and productive workplaces and creating opportunities for growth.

As a department, we remain committed to providing a variety of French-language services to our clients. We recognize the importance of providing French services to Nova Scotians and are focused on preserving and promoting the province's Acadian and Francophone culture and heritage.

This year, we will continue to support the Provincial Strategic Plan for French-language services for 2018-2023. Over the next year we will focus on increasing internal awareness, expanding department capacity by providing more French language training and work opportunities for staff, and maintaining an open dialogue with our Acadian and Francophone communities.

*Duff Montgomerie, Deputy Minister
Labour and Advanced Education*

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

LAE recognizes 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 services in French, and this plan demonstrates our commitment to ensuring our programs, policies and services address the priorities expressed by the Acadian and francophone community. To achieve this, 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 in French. We also encourage Acadians and francophones to have their voices heard by participating on LAE agencies, boards and commissions, which 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.

French-language Services Coordinator:

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How we communicate with the public in French

LAE / Travail et Éducation postsecondaire, through the implementation of the French-language Services Policy, in April 2019, outlined the regulatory obligations to be met and best practice guidelines to be followed by the department. It also provides direction and guidance to LAE staff to support compliance with the requirements of the Nova Scotia [French-language Services Act and Regulations](#).

The policy directives and guidelines provide details to staff on written correspondence received in French, oral communication in French, communication with the public, Acadian and Francophone Service Providers, Committees and Working Groups and Public Consultations.

LAE continues to encourage and enhance communications to promote and advance the use of French and to provide French programs and services for all Nova Scotians who request it. Some examples are:

- The Bonjour! Sign is displayed to let internal staff know this division continues to offer French-language Services to the best of their ability.
- Distribution of the annually updated volunteer resource list of French speaking staff in the department. The list helps English speaking employees with responses to requests (via face to face, phone, letters, or emails) that come into LAE in French; and
- Supporting staff to participate in French-language services training.

In January 2020, French-language resources and information were added to the department's intranet, LAE Connected, to provide support, information, and guidance to employees.

What we did to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2020–21

LAE continued to build on the overall objective identified in the Government of Nova Scotia (NS) Strategic Plan for French-language Services 2018-2023, to incrementally offer more information and services in French to the general public, which enhances the vitality of the Acadian and francophone community and contributes to its development. The progress achieved by LAE, for 2020-2021, is shown below, and is focussed around the three strategic objectives of leadership and policy direction, availability and accessibility of French-language services and community engagement and outreach.

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

Increase internal awareness of the department's commitment and obligations under the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations and enhance the department's capacity to deliver French-language training and work opportunities to staff.

The French-language Services Coordinator (FLSC):

- Prepared and published the LAE 2021-2022 French-language Services Plan and contribute to Government's annual progress report on French-language Services.
- Continued efforts to bring awareness of FLS to LAE staff through orientation sessions, distribution of the annual staff resource list and departmental newsletter updates.
- Hosted an FLS focused Lunch and Learn **March 24th, 2021** (in association with International Francophonie Day, March 20th) to provide an overview of the FLS Coordinator's role and for LAE colleagues with Acadian/Francophonie heritage to speak about their heritage.
- Launched the annual FLS department-wide capacity survey, **January 25th, 2021** to update the volunteer staff resource list.
- Continued providing all staff with ongoing visibility and access to all French-language Services resources, plans, the LAE French-language Services Policy, revised FLS Committee Terms of Reference (TOR), and any other required resources on the department's intranet site, LAE Connected.
- Provided access to other French resources (such as information on procuring French language courses, informal translation services through the volunteer resource list for message content) to help staff integrate French into their programs and services.
- Assisted LAE staff with translation requests.
- Encouraged all staff to consider French-language training through ongoing communication of available sessions.
- Assisted the Higher Education and Safety Branches with informal translation of the Université Sainte-Anne's COVID-19 return to campus plan to English.,

Higher Education Branch

- The Student Assistance Office received a handful of email enquiries in French in 2020-21. These were generally referred to a bilingual employee who translated the request and drafted appropriate responses.
- The Student Assistance Office had three staff members who volunteered to be included on the list of staff resources in 2020-21.
- The Student Assistance Office had two staff on French language training in 2020-21.

Labour Services Branch

- Labour Services staff were encouraged and supported to take French-language training and managers supported requests from staff to attend training.

NS Apprenticeship Agency

- NS Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA) uses the supports of Office of Acadian Affairs (OAA) and Communications Nova Scotia (CNS) when translation needs are required.

Safety Branch

- The Safety Branch received a few inquiries in French on the 1-800 information line. The Information Specialists sent these requests to the person on the French language Resource list. The contact person contacted the client to discuss their question and did the research to find the proper answer. The contact person wrote the answer in French and the Information specialists sent the response to the client.

Skills and Learning Branch

Adult Education Division:

- We received proposals for International Qualifications Recognition (IQR) funding in French from two francophone organizations, and we used DeepL (<https://www.deepl.com/en/translator>) to translate the document.
- We also received three applications in French for family literacy funding from francophone organizations, which we also used DeepL to translate the documents.
- Responses to the organizations were in English.

Employment Nova Scotia (ENS) Division:

- Responds to clients/citizens across the province who contact the division through two primary entry points:
 - Phone - a toll free line
 - Funding applications submitted via the Labour Market Programs Support System (LaMPSS).
- Email is not offered as a main means of initial communication/client entry to ENS, however at certain times and certain occasional reasons an email address may be a citizen's first point of contact with ENS.
- When an individual asks for service in French, whether through their first interaction with the division or later, they are served in French.
- ENS' requests for service in French via phone are not tracked corporately. ENS' requests for services in French via LaMPSS are tracked as during a funding application process the client application asks for the client's preferred language of correspondence and service.

Youth Initiatives Division:

Youth Employment Programs (YEP) continued to offer support in French as requested by employers. An additional Francophone staff member was added to the team in late 2020.

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

- a. Enhance and expand departmental capacity to offer French-language services to the public.
- b. Promote the department French-language services and programs available to the public.

Corporate Policy Services Branch

Released *Career Success in Nova Scotia: Training and Education (Une carrière réussie en Nouvelle-Écosse Formation et études)* in October in PDF format. Released *Career Success in Nova Scotia: Getting Hired (Une carrière réussie en Nouvelle-Écosse Trouver un emploi)*, *Career Success in Nova Scotia: Change and Growth (Une carrière réussie en Nouvelle-Écosse Changement et épanouissement personnel)*, and *Career Success in Nova Scotia: Planning with a Young Adult (Une carrière réussie en Nouvelle-Écosse Planification avec un jeune adulte)* in March 2021.

Labour Services Branch

- Labour Services continue to offer translation services to parties and clients as required.

NS Apprenticeship Agency

- All our Red Seal Exams are translated in both French and English including the code books.
- Our NSAA website has the functionality for google translate which can be read in French.

Safety Branch

- The Safety Branch produced a new Homeowner brochure in French that was distributed at the Real Home Show 2020.
- Two Safety bulletins about Heat Stress (Bulletin sur la sécurité Le Stress Thermique) and Reinforcing bars (Le pliage des barres d'armature) were translated into French. These bulletins were sent to specific stakeholders, posted on the Safety Branch web page, and posted on social medias i.e. Twitter (Bulletin sur la sécurité)

Skills and Learning Branch

Adult Education Division:

- French versions of the International Qualifications Recognition (IQR) and Labour Mobility (LM) guidelines are available on the website: <https://novascotia.ca/lae/RplLabourMobility/IQR.asp>.
- Three curriculum and program documents were translated into French:
 - Learning Plan Template (Plan d'apprentissage)
 - Learning Plan Requirements (Exigences Concernant les Plans D'apprentissage)
 - E3 Curriculum Framework (Le cadre de curriculum ECA: Éducation, Compétences essentielles, Autonomisation)(E3 underpins essential skills programming and provides a common reference point for program development, instructional planning, and learner assessment. The E3 competencies outline the knowledge, skills, and abilities that learners work towards. The E3 levels, which are consistent with the Government of Canada's essential skills levels 1 to 3, offer a performance continuum for describing learners' abilities and achievements.)

Employment Nova Scotia Division:

- ENS also helps support access to French resources through their third-party employment service providers.
- NS Works employment service centres provide 'active offers' to citizens across the province to let them know they can be served in French; several centre locations are designated as bilingual centres, meaning staff 'on-site or connected to this centre' are directly and immediately available to serve in French.

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

- a. Encourage participation of the Acadian and francophone communities to ensure representation in consultations and collaborative opportunities.
- b. Create and promote a mechanism for these communities to provide continual feedback on the department's French-language services to facilitate continuous improvement.

NS Apprenticeship Agency

- When NS Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA) has French speaking apprentice clients, NSAA has provided accommodations through the use of a French speaking readers during the exams.

Safety Branch

- The Safety Branch conducted two stakeholders engagements and included French components:
First Aid regulations engagement: The Safety Branch created a bilingual invitation letter and a French web page which included the engagement document and the online survey. They also organized an engagement session in both English and French in the Clare region, July 2019 and January 2020.

Engagements with Firefighters: The Safety Branch conducted an engagement with Firefighters across Nova Scotia. For this engagement, only the invitation letter and the web page were available in French. The web page included the engagement document and the online survey. These engagements sessions took place in person and online. There was no session in French for this engagements however French speaking firefighters could complete the online survey in French, which was available on the web page.

- Organized an engagement session in both English and French in collaboration with Le Conseil de développement économique de Nouvelle-Écosse (CDENE) to review the recommendations for the amendments of First Aid regulations and to gather additional feedback.
- The Information Specialists will continue to contact a person on the French Language Resource list when they receive inquiries in French either by phone or by email.

Skills and Learning Branch

Adult Education Division:

- We have been working with Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FANE) and Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse (CENE), who submitted an International Qualifications Recognition (IQR) project proposal each, which were approved, and the projects are underway.

Employment Nova Scotia Division:

- ENS is investing funds in several service providers for them to hire additional French-speaking Career Practitioners to build the French-service capacity with the employment services system

(2021-22 hires); development of training by the NSCDA and CEI began in 2020; progress on Community of Practice was slowed by the pandemic and the shifting priorities of service providers.

How we plan to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2021–22

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

Increase internal awareness of the department's commitment and obligations under the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations and enhance the department's capacity to deliver French-language training and work opportunities to staff.

- Representatives from the all Branches / Agency will continue to sit on the French language Services Committee for LAE.

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

- a. Enhance and expand departmental capacity to offer French-language services to the public.
- b. Promote the department French-language services and programs available to the public.

Corporate Policy Services Branch

- *Nova Scotia Careers in Demand 2019-2021* guide is being considered for 2021-2022.

Higher Education Branch

- The Student Assistance (SA) Office will continue to rely on its bilingual staff to assist in responding to French correspondence. SA management will also encourage all interested staff to undertake French language training, appropriately accounting for operational demands.

NS Apprenticeship Agency

The new NSAA's Apprenticeship Management System (AMS) is anticipated to be implemented in Summer 2021. The system design of the AMS ensures that all end users (i.e. apprentices, employers, NSAA staff) can be served in either English or French, according to their preference.

Safety Branch

- The Information Specialists will continue to consult a person from the French language Resources list for assistance when they receive inquiries in French either by email or by phone. The inquiries will be responded in French.
- The Safety Branch will continue to translate the Safety notifications in French when the topics will impact all Nova Scotians. i.e. Heat Stress, Cold stress etc.
- The Safety Branch is presently reviewing their publications. When they will reprint a brochure or produce new publications, they will consider producing in French, depending on the purpose of the publication and the targeted clientele.
- The Safety Branch will review translating the inspection reports and orders this fiscal.

Skills and Learning Branch

Adult Education Division (AED):

- AED will be translating the following curriculum documents for our French service delivery providers of which will support their instructions to learners:
 - Adult Learning Program Level 4 Curriculum Documents
 - E3 Curriculum Resources

Employment Nova Scotia (ENS) Division:

- Continue to collaborate with the CDENE, Centre for Employment Innovation (CEI), Nova Scotia Career Development Association (NSCDA) and Le Conseil de développement économique De La Nouvelle-Ecosse (CDENE) and other stakeholders to:
 - enhance the practice of Active Offer in Nova Scotia Works designated bilingual centres;
 - develop and implement a community of practice and professional development activities; focusing on building cultural competence of the Acadian Francophone community; and
 - develop and implement an internship program with financial resources and training support, to hire and develop French language speaking Career Practitioners.

Youth Employment Program (YEP):

- Additional assignment of Francophone organization contracts to French-speaking employees. Continued commitment to translating all program documentation as new programs are developed.

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

- a. Encourage participation of the Acadian and francophone communities to ensure representation in consultations and collaborative opportunities.
- b. Create and promote a mechanism for these communities to provide continual feedback on the department's French-language services to facilitate continuous improvement.

Safety Branch

The Safety Branch will continue to include a French component in stakeholder's engagements. The French component will depend on the nature of the consultation. If the consultation involves all Nova Scotians, there will be at least one session offered in French. Other consultations might only have a French component such as a web page including the engagement document and the online survey. The invitation will also be sent in both English and French.

Skills and Learning Branch

Youth Employment Program (YEP):

Promote the use of Youth Employment Programs with Le Conseil de développement économique De La Nouvelle-Ecosse (CDENE) and other Francophone business support entities. Schedule presentations from the YEP Outreach Coordinator as required.

Publications and Services we offer in French

Services, translations, website content, reports, publications, hiring, training, advertising, promotional campaigns, policies, guidelines, procedures, initiatives (internal or external), surveys, in-person consultations, focus groups, or communications plans, etc. your Branch/Agency/Division/Unit made available for **2021–2022** with respect to French-language services.

Corporate Policy Services Branch

Career Success in Nova Scotia : Training and Education (*Une carrière réussie en Nouvelle-Écosse Formation et études*)

Career Success in Nova Scotia: Getting Hired (Une carrière réussie en Nouvelle-Écosse Trouver un emploi)

Career Success in Nova Scotia: Change and Growth (Une carrière réussie en Nouvelle-Écosse Changement et épanouissement personnel)

Career Success in Nova Scotia: Planning with a Young Adult (Une carrière réussie en Nouvelle-Écosse Planification avec un jeune adulte)

High Opportunity Career Options (*Options de carrières très en demande en Nouvelle-Écosse, 2016-2017*)

Higher Education Branch

Private Career Colleges (PCC) includes French language service options. All private career college operators now have reporting access to LaMPSS, which has some French Language supports.

Labour Services Branch

Guide to the Labour Standards Code (*Guide du code des normes de travail*), which was updated to include changes to the legislation and regulations that came into effect in 2020.

Minimum Wage Review Committee report (*Guide du code des normes de travail de la Nouvelle-Écosse*) The 2020 report was posted in January 2021.

Worker's Advisory Program (WAP) has two Worker's Advisers with varying levels of French speaking/writing proficiency. In October 2019, WAP hired a bilingual receptionist allowing clients immediate access to services in French.

NS Apprenticeship Agency

NB is involved in the development of our Apprenticeship Management System and it will have increased functionality in French.

All Red Seal certification exams are bilingual.

Apprenticeship technical training (level exams) in French are arranged with New Brunswick Community College (NBCC).

Safety Branch

The Safety Branch published tweets about Carbone monoxide in French as part of a social media campaign.

Skills and Learning Branch

Adult Education Division:

- AED will be translating the following curriculum documents for our French service delivery providers of which will support their instructions to learners:
 - Adult Learning Program Level 4 Curriculum Documents (in 4 subject areas)
 - E3 Curriculum Resources
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Funding Guidelines (Reconnaissance des acquis (RDA) Lignes directrices du programme de financement, were updated in December 2020.
- International Qualification Recognition (IQR) Funding Guidelines (Reconnaissance des qualifications obtenues à l'étranger (RQOE) Lignes directrices du programme de financement), were updated in December 2020.
- Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) Funding Guidelines (École de formation des adultes de la Nouvelle-Écosse Lignes directrices relatives au financement du programme).
- Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) Learning Plan Template (École de formation des adultes de la Nouvelle-Écosse Plan d'apprentissage)
- Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) Learning Plan Guidelines (École de formation des adultes de la Nouvelle-Écosse Exigences Concernant les Plans D'apprentissage)
- Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) E3 Curriculum Framework (École de formation des adultes de la Nouvelle-Écosse Le cadre de curriculum ECA: Éducation, Compétences essentielles, Autonomisation)
- Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund Guidelines (FLIEF) (Le Fonds de dotation pour l'initiative d'alphabétisation familiale (FDIAF))
- The RPL and Labour Mobility Unit administers two funding programs (RPL) and International Qualification Recognition (IQR), for which forms for application and reporting are available in both French and English.

Employment Nova Scotia Division:

- Designated bilingual Nova Scotia Work Centres (with bilingual signage and bilingual staff) have been established in geographic areas of high demand for labor market services in French, including Argyle, Yarmouth, Clare, Antigonish, Halifax, Cheticamp and Port Hawkesbury.
- NS Works Centres Case Managers provides services and promotional material in French for employer and job seekers, usually available at career fairs and offices across the province.

Youth Employment Program (YEP):

- Recent hires will allow Youth Employment Services to fully support clients in French with inquiries and agreement management.
- Information about the Graduate to Opportunity (Le programme Graduate to Opportunity (GTO))
- Student Summer Skills Incentive (Le programme SKILL)
- Cooperative Education Incentive (Co-op) (L'Incitatif à la formation par l'enseignement coopératif (Coop))
- Innovate to Opportunity (Le Programme Innovate to Opportunity (ITO))