

French-language Services Plan

2021–2022

Communications Nova Scotia



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Communications Nova Scotia
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Ce document est également disponible en français sous le titre : « Plan de services en français 2020-2021 »

Message from the Associate Deputy Minister

Communications Nova Scotia (CNS) is committed to providing information on government programs and services to the people they are designed to serve, including our Acadian and francophone community.

Our team of professional and certified translators works with various teams throughout CNS and government to ensure information in French is available through various platforms, including government's growing digital presence. The COVID-19 pandemic was the main priority for CNS in 2020-21. Approximately 400,000 words were translated into French, including on the web, social media, advertisements, posters and signage, etc. ensuring public health and safety messages were appropriately delivered to our Acadian and francophone community.

In 2021-22, we will continue to lead key information and communications commitments outlined in government's accessibility plan and will do so while also considering accessibility of information in other languages, as needed.

Donna MacDonald
Associate Deputy Minister

Supporting the growth of the Acadian and francophone community

CNS recognizes the importance of French-language services and we endeavour to fulfil our responsibilities under the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations. 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 (FLSCC). We greatly value this partnership, which ensures a continued understanding of the unique needs of our province's Acadian and francophone community.

We will continue to promote internal awareness about the legislated translation requirements as well as opportunities to translate other materials when it would benefit Acadian and francophone citizens.

French-language services coordinator

Kim Kennedy (Kimberly.Kennedy@novascotia.ca)

Services we offer in French

Communications Nova Scotia provides the following French language services:

- English-to-French translation services
- News releases in French, per the French-language Communications Guidelines
- Production and placement of advertising in French, per the French-language Communications Guidelines
- Web content development in French, per the French-language Communications Guidelines
- Media relations, as required

Communicating with the public

French-speaking staff are asked to respond to verbal and written requests from the public in the language of the citizen's or client's choice. Whenever possible, French media are connected with bilingual communications or program staff. Likewise, bilingual office employees communicate in French when that is the preferred language of clients, partners or the public.

Additionally, government's new website will continue to consistently present specific information in French, as per the French-language Communications Guidelines.

What we did in 2020-21

Strategic Objective 1. Strengthen internal operational structures including policy, legislative and administration frameworks.

- Continue development of a recruitment strategy for the Translation Program to fill vacant positions
 - Work in consultation with partners like OAAF, EECD, Immigration and Population Growth, PSC recruitment, and universities.
 - 2020-21: Where the COVID-19 pandemic response was the priority for 2020-21, this work will continue, and become a priority in 2021-22, when we expect a vacancy due to retirement.
- Ensure the French-language Communications Guidelines are up-to-date and remain relevant.
 - Conduct annual review of the French-language Communications Guidelines with OAAF, update and revise as necessary.
 - 2020-21: While the COVID-19 pandemic response was the priority in 2020-21, there are best practices and lessons learned from the response that will be considered and applied to this work going forward.
- Develop guidelines and recommendations for gender-neutral and inclusive writing in French to ensure greater inclusion when addressing the public
 - A jurisdictional scan of best practices has been completed. Recommendations and guidelines will be drafted for consideration and approval.
 - 2020-21: Where the COVID-19 pandemic response was the priority for 2020-21, this work will resume in 2021-22.

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

- Promote the availability of French-language training to staff within the department, increasing capacity within the organization
 - 2020-21: Where the COVID-19 pandemic response was the priority for 2020-21, no CNS staff participated in French-language training through Université Sainte-Anne. Training will continue to be shared and supported corporately.
 - Ability to provide services in French was included as an asset in competitions.

- Lead key information and communications commitments outlined in government’s accessibility plan and do so while also considering accessibility of information in other languages
 - Translation Program Manager is an active member of the CNS Accessibility Working Group and will continue to provide input and recommendations for information accessibility in French or other languages.
 - 2020-21: Government’s COVID-19 response has been the most significant and sustained communications response in CNS history. In 2020-21, CNS worked hard to ensure Nova Scotians received information in ways that are most accessible to them. This includes reaching people in the languages they understand best.
 - The CNS team of certified French translators translated approximately 450,000 words during the pandemic, which included web content, social posts, fact sheets, as well as the slides that appeared before each COVID-19 briefing. In November 2020, the team was recognized by the Association des juristes d’expression française de Nouvelle-Écosse, an association of French-speaking jurists in Nova Scotia, with the association’s annual award for their excellent work in translating the COVID-19 website.
 - The CNS Translation team has also received praise from various francophone organizations such as the Réseau Santé and the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FANE) for ensuring that COVID-19 information is readily available to all Nova Scotians in both English and French.
 - CNS has also arranged translation of public health guidelines into languages including Mi’kmaq, Arabic, simplified Chinese, Oromo, Somali and Tigrinya. CNS consulted, and worked closely, with ISANS to identify the specific languages and translators. Before being translated and shared, CNS’s in-house plain language editor reviewed and revised the information to ensure it was clear for the broadest possible audience.
- Develop an annual operational plan for the Translation Services unit for 2020-21
 - The operational plan for the unit is reflected in development planning for its employees.
 - 2020-21: development plans complete
- Ensure availability and professional delivery of translation services to all government departments and offices, and designated entities, as necessary under the French-language Services Act and Regulations, in support of their goals and objectives around on-going dialogue and consultation.
 - The Translation Program Manager will ensure that professional French-language translation services are available to all government in support of goals and objectives around on-going dialogue and consultation.
 - 2020-21: While the COVID-19 pandemic response was the priority in 2020-21, the CNS translation team was able to assist some departments in meeting their obligations under the FLS Act and Regulations, and relied on a network of freelancers to support that work.
 - Number of words translated in 2020-21: about 1.55 million words in total, including almost 760,000 words specifically by the in-house team. A comparison between fiscal year 2019-20 and 2020-21 saw an increase of about 300,000 words translated by the Translation Program at CNS, due to the work related to the government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic . The volume of projects supported by funds from the Canada–Nova Scotia Agreement on French-language Services (50% cost-share) has slightly decreased by about 60,000 words compared to 2019-20, however the overall volume of translation work sent

to freelancers (paid for by departments) has increased by almost 50,000 words compared to 2019-20.

- Number of departments and other institutions served: almost all government departments and offices, as well as additional designated entities, including but not limited to: Justice, Health and Wellness, Nova Scotia Health Authority, Immigration and Population Growth, Speaker's Office, Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services, Labour and Advanced Education, Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie, Agriculture/Fisheries and Aquaculture, Education and Early Childhood Development, Communities, Culture and Heritage, Legal Aid, Executive Council Office, NSBI, Municipal Affairs and Housing, Energy and Mines, Environment and Climate Change, Lands and Forestry, Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Public Service Commission, Transportation and Active Transit, Emergency Management Office, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, African Nova Scotian Affairs, Provincial Libraries, IWK, Communications Nova Scotia, Seniors, House of Assembly, Community Services, etc.

Strategic Objective 3. Maintain on-going dialogue and consultation with the Acadian and francophone community.

- Develop crisis communications guidelines in association with the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie
 - The guidelines will complement the French-language Communications Guidelines.
 - 2020-21: Draft guidelines were developed, however due to the COVID-19 pandemic response, this work will continue in 2021-22.
- Ensure consistent application of French content on CNS-managed digital platforms.
 - Transition the @gouvNE Twitter account to the CNS Digital team and create a dedicated Twitter account for OAAF.
 - 2020-21: Where the COVID-19 pandemic response was the priority in 2020-21, this work will resume in 2021-22. During the pandemic response, the CNS Digital team worked closely with OAAF and the CNS translation team to ensure all translated public health and safety messages were shared on the @gouvNE Twitter account.
 - Digital team will create a new French Facebook government page.
 - 2020-21: Where the COVID-19 pandemic response was the priority in 2020-21, this work will resume in 2021-22. During the pandemic response, the CNS Digital team shared all public health and safety messages in English and French on the main government Facebook page.
 - Support the CNS digital team in managing French-language digital platforms for government.
 - 2020-21: The translation team has supported the CNS digital team in managing the French-language digital platforms for government throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Offer advice and support to government departments conducting province-wide public consultations with Nova Scotians
 - 2020-21: CNS provided advice on public consultations (budget, forest management, protected areas, and adoption records) in relation to French-language requirements, and provided the required resources, either in-house or through external suppliers.
- Support the Executive Council in the development, translation and promotion of their annual recruitment campaigns for agencies, boards and commissions (ABC) members
 - 2020-21: CNS continued to support recruitment campaigns for ABC members, through provision of translation, production and marketing strategy services. CNS worked with the Executive Council Office in planning and placing print ads in Le Courrier in an effort to promote positions available on

agencies, boards and commissions. Ads did not appear in the spring of 2020 because Le Courrier stopped publishing due to COVID-19. They resumed in October and November 2020.

Plans for 2021-22

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

- Continue development of a recruitment strategy for the Translation Program to fill vacant positions
 - Work in consultation with partners like OAAF, EECD, Immigration and Population Growth, PSC recruitment, and universities.
- Ensure the French-language Communications Guidelines are up-to-date and remain relevant.
 - Conduct annual review of the French-language Communications Guidelines with OAAF, update and revise as necessary.
- Develop guidelines and recommendations for gender-neutral and inclusive writing in French to ensure greater inclusion when addressing the public
 - A jurisdictional scan of best practices has been completed. Recommendations and guidelines will be drafted for consideration.

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

- Promote the availability of French-language training to staff within the department, increasing capacity within the organization
 - Maintain consistent enrolment by CNS staff in the French-language training program
- Lead key information and communications commitments outlined in government's accessibility plan and do so while also considering accessibility of information in other languages
 - Translation Program Manager is an active member of the CNS Accessibility Working Group and will continue to provide input and recommendations for information accessibility in French or other languages.
- Develop an annual operational plan for the Translation Services unit for 2020-21
 - The Translation Manager will ensure an operational plan is developed and implemented.
- Ensure availability and professional delivery of translation services to all government departments and offices, and designated entities, as necessary under the French-language Services Act and Regulations
 - The Translation Program Manager will ensure that professional French-language translation services are available to government in support of goals and objectives.

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

- Develop crisis communications guidelines in association with the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie
 - The guidelines will complement the French-language Communications Guidelines and will consider best practice and lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic response.
- Ensure consistent application of French content on CNS-managed digital platforms.
 - Transition the @gouvNE Twitter account to the CNS Digital team and create a dedicated Twitter account for OAAF.
 - Digital team will create a new French Facebook government page.
 - Support the CNS digital team in managing French-language digital platforms for government.

- Offer advice and support to government departments conducting province-wide public consultations with Nova Scotians
 - CNS will provide advice on public consultation in relation to French-language requirements, and will provide the required resources, either in-house or through external suppliers.

- Support the Executive Council in the development, translation and promotion of their annual recruitment campaigns for agencies, boards and commissions (ABC) members
 - CNS will continue to support recruitment campaigns for ABC members, through provision of translation, production and marketing strategy services.