

Annual Report of the French Language Services Commissioner 2020-2021 – Highlights

By the numbers – cases received

351 cases received, **October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021** (15% increase over the same period in 2019-2020)

Top 5 organizations by case volume

Designated agencies – Universities (27.4%)
Ministry of Health (15.4%)
Ministry of Government and Consumer Services (12%)
Ministry of the Attorney General (7.3%)
Designated agencies – Hospitals (4.7%)

Disposition of closed cases

Organizations subject to the *French Language Services Act (FLSA)*: 60%
Federal, private, outside Ontario: 14%
Provincial public sector not subject to *FLSA*: 25%
Information submissions: 1%

For more complaint statistics, see pages 18-19, 47 and 49

Commissioner's recommendation (p. 46):

That Ontario government services in French be evaluated using the French Language Services Commissioner's linguistic Compass (FLSC Compass).

About the FLSC Compass: See pages 24-25 and case studies on pages 26, 29, 35 and 39

List of all recommendations since 2020: Appendix, page 48

How we helped: Highlights of individual cases resolved by the French Language Services Unit:

- The Ontario Animal Protection Call Centre (Ministry of the Solicitor General) implemented a new automated phone system that redirects calls in French directly to bilingual agents, after a woman complained to us that she was unable to report a case of animal abuse in French by phone or in writing (p. 26).
- The Ministry of Education closed a web portal for scheduling COVID-19 tests for asymptomatic teachers and students, after we alerted them to complaints that it was only in English (p. 29).

- The Ministry of Health collaborated with federal officials to communicate with Franco-Ontarian travellers about COVID-19 quarantine requirements in their language, after a Francophone traveller complained to us that she was contacted only in English (p. 29).
- Ontario Health ensured the website for booking appointments at a regional COVID-19 testing centre was translated into French, after we informed them of a complaint by a Francophone mother who was unable to schedule a test for her daughter (p. 30).
- A hospital added information in French to its website to help patients use its unilingual “My Chart” mobile app to get COVID-19 test results; this solution was achieved in response to a woman’s complaint to us, even though neither the testing centre nor the app were subject to the *French Language Services Act* (p. 30).
- A public health unit in a designated region added information about vaccine clinics in French to its website and Ontario Health provided telephone support in French, after we worked with the Chief Medical Officer to address a complaint – even though public health units are not subject to the *French Language Services Act* (p. 31).
- The Ministry of the Solicitor General and the OPP implemented a new system to ensure Amber Alerts are now issued in French and English at the same time, as called for by the Commissioner last year, in light of numerous complaints (p. 34).
- The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services reviewed its procedures, committed to increasing its bilingual workforce and provided a missing document in French to a woman who complained to us that an agency sent her organization an important document in English only (p. 35).
- ServiceOntario identified issues with its planning and staff training after we flagged the case of a man who could not be served in French – despite making an appointment for this service – because no French-speaking staff could handle the task of issuing a fishing permit (p. 38).
- The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board reminded staff of its procedures for handling medical assessments for Francophone clients, after a man complained to us that it communicated with him only in English and required him to undergo a medical assessment with a doctor who could not speak French (p. 39).
- The Ministry of the Attorney General reminded staff at a Northern Ontario courthouse of procedures to ensure bilingual hearings are available, after a man complained to us that the judge assigned to his hearing could only speak English (p. 40).
- The Treasury Board ensured translation errors were corrected in a consultation questionnaire on the government’s digital ID project, after we alerted them to a complaint about the poor-quality French (p. 42).

- The Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries ensured that planning for the 2021 Trillium Awards included services in French, after we received a complaint that the 2020 award for Francophone artists was delivered in English only during its virtual ceremony (p. 42).
- Metrolinx hired more bilingual agents and reminded staff of procedures after a woman complained to us that she was served by an Anglophone and asked to speak English after calling the agency's French phone line (p. 43).