



Office of the Ombudsman

French Languages Service Plan 2008-2009

February 29, 2008



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Office of the Ombudsman

Introduction to the Office of the Ombudsman

The Ombudsman is established as an Officer of the House of Assembly, a commissioner for investigations. The Office of the Ombudsman investigates complaints arising from the administration of provincial or municipal laws within Nova Scotia. The Office of the Ombudsman may also initiate investigations of administrative activities and practices, referred to as “Own Motion Investigations” or matters referred to it by a “committee of the House.” The Ombudsman has focused responsibility with respect to youth, seniors, adult offenders, and Disclosure of Wrongdoing.

Mission

Fostering confidence in the public service by promoting the principles of fairness, integrity and good governance.

Message from the Ombudsman

On behalf of the Office of the Ombudsman, I am pleased to present our initial French Languages Services Plan for 2008-2009. This plan outlines our priorities and initiatives for improving our capacity to provide French language services. The plan will be updated on an annual basis.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dwight Bishop". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and 'B'.

Dwight Bishop
Ombudsman

Office of the Ombudsman response to verbal and written requests to communicate in French

This Office will respond to verbal and written requests to communicate in French from the public in a timely manner in French. We will accomplish this by utilizing staff of the Office of the Ombudsman who are proficient in French and/or through a translation service. We will enhance our capacity to provide French- language services over the long term.

French Languages Services/Activities currently offered

With the assistance of the Nova Scotia Office of Acadian Affairs, this Office is able to provide the following documents in English and French:

- ▶ Office of the Ombudsman Annual Reports for 2004-2005, 2005-2006, and 2006-2007
- ▶ Brochure - *Do you Have Concerns about the Provincial and Municipal Government?*
- ▶ Youth Brochure and Poster - *We have Time to Talk* . (The Poster is also available in Mi'kmaq).

The youth material is distributed province wide to all residential child caring facilities, secure care, correctional/detention facilities, probation offices, all youth designated police holding cells (municipal & RCMP), and to various Child and Youth Advocates across the country. In addition, all of our communication is distributed to the public during community outreach visits, presentations, conferences and youth care staff. Information is also available online.

An internal survey revealed we currently have four permanent staff members with the capacity to provide verbal French-language service and two have indicated they have some capacity to provide written French-language service.

How the Plan Will Contribute to the Preservation or Growth of the Acadian and Francophone Communities

The ability of the Office of the Ombudsman to provide French languages services will allow Acadian and Francophone individuals to bring forward concerns about the public service in their language of choice. In addition, the increased number of staff from outside the Acadian and Francophone community who can communicate in French will enhance the understanding of Acadian and Francophone language and culture.

Goals and Objectives for 2008-2009

Objectives	Goals	Planned Actions/Activities
<p>1. Strengthening the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the French Language Services Act.</p>	<p>1.1 Fulfill obligations determined in the French-language Services Act.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Participate on the French-language Services Coordinating Committee and in Awareness Training on French-language Services.
	<p>1.2 Increase capacity for government to support departments/offices in the delivery of French-language services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create internal policy on expanding information and initiatives available in French. ▶ French-language Service will be identified as a priority in our Business Plan.
<p>2. Consulting with the Acadian and francophone communities</p>	<p>2.1 Establish and prioritize the French-language services to be offered, and the strategies or approaches for service delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop a five year plan to enhance our capacity to provide French-language services. ▶ Ensure outreach information is available in French i.e. Office of the Ombudsman kiosk
<p>3. Communicating, sharing information, and promoting services available in French</p>	<p>3.1 Key public information is available in both languages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Continue to publish annual reports and brochures in French. ▶ Develop plan to expand French translation of documents, media releases, and website.
	<p>3.2 Increase employee and public awareness of the approach by government to provide French-language</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Publish French-language Services Plan for 2008-2009 in both languages on the Office of the Ombudsman website.

<p>4. Supporting French-language services development , planning and delivery in priority areas</p>	<p>4.1 Develop and adapt plans and strategies for French-language service delivery as part of annual planning process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Actively support the government’s French language services initiative. ▶ Develop linkages and partnerships within government that address the French-language services needs.
	<p>4.2 Apply a coordinated approach to deal with human resource issues related to the delivery of French-language services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Continue to provide staff with opportunities and resources for French-language skill development, maintenance and growth. ▶ Increase and maintain a capacity to provide French-languages services within the Office of the Ombudsman. ▶ Work with Human Resources to have French- language requirements included in appropriate job postings.
	<p>4.3 Support community, cultural and economic initiatives to meet the needs of the Acadian and francophone community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Continue including Acadian communities in our community outreach initiatives.