

Annual Report of the French Language Services Commissioner 2019-2020 Highlights

By the numbers – cases received

431 cases received, May 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020

- 321 cases received, May 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020
- 110 cases received, April 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020

Jurisdiction of complaints

Within jurisdiction: 52% Outside jurisdiction: 35% Under analysis: 13%

Top 5 organizations most complained about

Cabinet Office: 29%

Ministry of Health: 13%

Ministry of the Solicitor General: 12%

Ministry of the Attorney General: 12%

Ministry of Transportation: 10%

For more complaint statistics, see pages 18-19

Commissioner Burke's recommendations: See Appendix, page 45

Highlights of complaints and individual cases - how the intervention of the French Language Services Unit helped:

- Our efforts contributed to the implementation, on April 16, of simultaneous translation of the government's pandemic-related daily media briefings (p. 23).
- The *Health Workforce Matching Portal*, launched on April 7 by the Ministry of Health, was only available in English, but a few days after our intervention, it was also available in French (p. 23).
- The North Bay Regional Health Centre's website posted notices about COVID-19 in English only, but as a result of our discussions, the Centre hired external translation services to provide these in French (p. 24).
- On September 30, the government released its plan entitled *Keeping Ontarians Safe: Preparing for Future Waves of COVID-19* in English only. We raised it with the ministry and the plan was made available in French the next day (p. 24).
- After we contacted the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, he issued a memo to all local public health units to encourage them to offer services in French (p. 24).

- The transfer of 911 calls to bilingual agents or to the nearest Central Ambulance Communications Centre with predominantly bilingual agents has been fine-tuned and improved as a result of our intervention (p. 28).
- The Ministry of the Solicitor General made a number of enhancements to the Provincial Emergency Alerts and Amber Alerts to ensure the provision of French language services for these alerts (p. 30).
- Cabinet Office committed to using bilingual signage on lecterns for all announcements made by ministers (p. 31).
- Electronic signs on the province's highways are being upgraded to make them bilingual (p. 32).
- New bilingual signs at fish farm sites in designated areas have replaced unilingual English signs (p. 32).
- At some ServiceOntario points of service, our interventions resulted in a commitment to review policies and procedures to ensure the uninterrupted presence of bilingual staff (p. 33).
- The LCBO committed to strengthening the training of seasonal employees and the provision of French language services in selected branches (p. 34).
- Some DriveTest centers committed to ensuring that services are available in French, even in the absence of a bilingual employee (p. 34).
- Our efforts contributed to the government's announcement that driver's licences and photo cards will now include French language characters (p. 36).
- Metrolinx reminded its service employees of the policies and procedures in place for offering services in French, such as the use of its simultaneous interpretation system (p. 37).
- Our interventions contributed to the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services' making all Ontario Public Service teleconference lines bilingual (p. 38).
- After our intervention, the Landlord and Tenant Board ensured the presence of a bilingual member, a bilingual mediator and interpretation services for the parties in attendance during a telephone hearing (p. 39).
- Tribunals Ontario put in place a policy to ensure the active offer of services in French for all tribunals under its jurisdiction, and committed to standardizing processes to appoint bilingual members to several tribunals and to recruit new bilingual members (p. 40).