



Guide Regarding the Obligation to Consult or Inform the English or French Linguistic Minority Population:

Official Languages (Communications with and Services to the Public) Regulations

Summary

Paragraphs 5(1)(b), (c), (g), (i), (m) and (p) of the [Official Languages \(Communications with and Services to the Public\) Regulations](#) (hereinafter the “Regulations”) and section 6.1.6 of the [Directive on the Implementation of the Official Languages \(Communications with and Services to the Public\) Regulations](#) (hereinafter the “Directive”) establish the obligation to factor in the opinions obtained during consultations with official language minority populations for the purpose of determining the location of federal offices designated bilingual when multiple offices provide the same services in a given region.

Also, section 6.1.7 of the Directive provides that the linguistic minority is to be informed when an office is no longer required to provide its services in both official languages.

What is a consultation?

Consultations enable the participants to inform decision-makers about their opinions and perspectives. They can take various forms, and the degree of involvement can vary depending on the circumstances.

When should the English or French linguistic minority population be consulted or informed?

The Regulations provide that, when a federal institution has multiple offices providing the same services within a given region, the number of offices designated bilingual among them must be equal to or greater than the proportion of the French or English linguistic minority population in that region.

When the federal institution has determined the number of offices that must be bilingual in a given region, it must consult the English or French linguistic minority population and also factor in that population’s distribution within the region and the offices’ mandate in order to determine which office(s) will provide services in both official languages.

The Directive requires informing the official language minority population in the event of the discontinuation of bilingual services by an office subject to a provision of the Regulations regarding general circumstances not requiring the measuring of the demand for services, on the basis of the demographics of the decennial census. The delivery of bilingual services must be maintained until the official language minority population served by the office is informed of the terms and conditions and the date scheduled for discontinuation of bilingual services and of the locations of offices where they can receive services in their official language in person, over the phone, in writing, or via a website. The office has a maximum of one year to do so.



Who is to be consulted/informed?

Federal institutions are responsible for identifying the individuals or groups of individuals potentially affected by changes in the linguistic status or designation of a federal office.

In general, it may be required or appropriate to inform or consult the following individuals or groups of individuals:

	Obligation	Good practice
Official language minority population served by the office in question, regardless of the method of communication and service.		
Representatives of the Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs) in the province, territory or region served by the office.		
Representatives of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, at headquarters and/or in the regions.		
Representatives of the provincial, territorial, municipal or local governments responsible for francophone affairs outside Quebec or English-speaking Quebecers in Quebec.		
Large organizations representing OLMCs at the national level.		

For a list of the main organizations, see [Appendix A](#).

How are OLMCs to be consulted or informed?

The [Consultation process with OLMCs](#) provides information to guide federal institutions in their process for consulting or informing OLMCs.

Requests for information

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact the Treasury Board Secretariat at info-ollo@tbs-sct.gc.ca.

Appendix A

List of Key Stakeholders and Organizations

1	When the French linguistic minority is likely to be affected	Fédération des communautés francophones et acadiennes (FCFA)
2	When the English linguistic minority is likely to be affected (Quebec)	Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) Regional Development Network (RDN)
3	Newfoundland and Labrador	Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador
4	Prince Edward Island	La Société acadienne et francophone de l'Île (SAF'île)
5	Nova Scotia	Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FANE)
6	New Brunswick	Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick (SANB)
8	Ontario	Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario (AFO)
9	Manitoba	Société de la francophonie manitobaine (SFM)
10	Saskatchewan	Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise (ACF)
11	Alberta	Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta (ACFA)
12	British Columbia	Fédération des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique (FFCB)
13	Nunavut	Association des francophones du Nunavut (AFN)
14	Yukon	Association franco-yukonnaise
15	Northwest Territories	Fédération franco-ténoise (FFT)

Appendix B

Checklist for Holding a Consultation

- Develop the methodology
- Plan the consultation(s)
- Hold the consultation(s)
- Factor in the feedback received
- Make the decision
- Update the Official Languages Obligations System