

ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN FRENCH IN ONTARIO: FINALLY, A REAL ACTION PLAN!

TORONTO, August 3, 2012 – The French Language Services Commissioner welcomes the report on *Access to justice in French* in Ontario that was published yesterday by the French Language Services Bench and Bar Advisory Committee to the Attorney General of Ontario.

The report precisely describes the steps necessary to ensure that French speakers have meaningful and effective access to justice in French in Ontario while making the most efficient use of existing resources.

From the Law Society of Upper Canada to Legal Aid Ontario hereon to the Ontario Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee and law schools, the report presents solutions that ask for the mobilization of a diversity of partners in the judicial system.

QUOTES

“The Committee’s report confirms that the current status quo relating to the access to justice in French is unacceptable. Its recommendations have the potential to generate significant progress and to finally ensure equal access to justice for Francophones, as long as solutions are implemented efficiently and efforts are well-coordinated,” said the Commissioner.

“I thank all members of the Committee and more particularly its co-chairs for their tremendous work and their holistic approach towards the access to justice in French. In light of this thorough report, the time for conducting studies and analysis is now over. I rely upon the leadership of the Ministry of the Attorney General for the implementation of this action plan and I am fully committed to closely monitor this important process.”

QUICK FACTS

- The French Language Services Bench and Bar Committee was established in 2010 in response to a recommendation that the Commissioner made in his 2008-2009 Annual Report. The Committee is co-chaired by the Honourable Paul Rouleau, an Ontario Court of Appeal judge, and Paul Le Vay, president of the *Association des juristes d’expression française de l’Ontario* (AJEFO).
- The report contains 17 important recommendations gathered in nine activity sectors for which accountability and evaluation methods are defined.
- The current legislative framework for French-language rights in Ontario is articulated in three pieces of legislation: the *Criminal code*, the *Courts of Justice Act* and the *French Language Services Act*. These pieces of legislation confer and confirm the official status of the French language in the justice system.

LEARN MORE

You can view the French Language Services Bench and Bar Advisory Committee’s report on *Access to justice in French* at http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/about/pubs/bench_bar_advisory_committee/default.asp.

The Office of the French Language Services Commissioner works to ensure active, integrated delivery of French-language services in support of the development of the Francophone community and Ontarian society.

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