



Study on Designation: Revitalizing the Provision of French Language Services

TORONTO, March 7, 2018 - Today, Ontario's French Language Services Commissioner François Boileau announced the release of a special study on the current status of the agency designation process under the *French Language Services Act* and *Regulation 398/93*. The report's conclusions confirm that it is essential for the Ontario government to modernize this important mechanism in order to enhance French language services and to contribute to the development of the entire Francophone community.

According to Commissioner Boileau, *"By optimizing and improving the agency designation process, we will be able to promote better services in French in a manner that meets the expectations and needs of Ontario's Francophone populations"*.

The study's findings identified a number of obvious shortcomings that undermine the provision of services in French; these include the failure to promote designation, the slow processing of applications, the disparity in support provided to agencies seeking designation, and the shortcomings of the accountability mechanism for designated agencies. Consequently, the provision of French language services did not increase in several essential sectors and were often of lesser quality.

Mr. Boileau added that: *"This study provides concrete solutions for each of the shortcomings identified in the designation process, not only in terms of increasing the number of designated agencies in the province, but also in considerably improving the availability of French language services in several activity sectors"*.

In the mindset of being able to provide quality French language services that give due consideration to the needs and concerns of Francophones, this study's goal was to take stock of the legislative mechanism and come up with recommendations on how to improve it.

Key Facts

- In Ontario, agency designation is a legal and administrative process that follows the rules and procedures prescribed in the *French Language Services Act* and *Regulation 398/93*, as well as the directives from the Ministry of Francophone Affairs.
- The revamping of the designation process is part of the mandate letter from the Premier to the Minister of Francophone Affairs.
- There are currently 245 designated agencies in Ontario, 84 of which fall under the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Most of these agencies have limited designation for a specific program.
- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, through the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs), adopted an administrative procedure that consists of *identifying* certain health care providers for the purpose of offering French language services. The purpose of this administrative procedure was to better prepare them for submitting a designation application.
- While approximately 201 agencies were *identified* by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, few have sought designation.
- The study of the designation process was largely based on interviews with ministerial stakeholders and agency directors, and on quantitative data produced by the French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario.

The office of the French Language Services Commissioner reports directly to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and its mandate is essentially to ensure that government services are delivered in compliance with the French Language Services Act.

*Available in
French*

Touria Karim
Lead, Strategic Communications
Office of the Commissioner of French Language Services
Telephone : (416) 906-7021 or 1 866 246-5262 (toll-free)
Email: touria.karim@csfontario.ca