



Language Rights in Quebec

Note: This table is intended as an overview (not exhaustive) of language rights in Quebec, and does not constitute legal opinion.

Rights	Examples	Implemented by	Reference
Right to use French and English during parliamentary debates, for printing and publishing laws, as well as Records and Journals of Houses of Legislatures of Quebec and of Houses of the Parliament of Canada	<p>All statutes and regulations adopted by the federal and Quebec governments must be written and published in both official languages.</p> <p>Members of parliament can use English or French during parliamentary debates.</p> <p>A person may testify in the language of his or her choice in courts.</p>	Federal government and provincial government (constitutional right)	Section 133 of the <i>Constitutional Act, 1867</i>
Rights in sections 16 to 19 of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i> are detailed by the <i>Official Languages Act</i> .		Federal government and federal courts (constitutional rights)	Section 16 to 19 of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i> For more details, see the <i>Official Languages Act</i>
<p>Right to receive services and communications from the federal government in both official languages where there is “significant demand”</p> <p>Right to services of “substantive equality” offered by the federal government to official language minority communities</p>	<p>The government has the obligation to communicate in both official languages when communicating with the public. Ex.: communications from Ministers to the population</p> <p>Central offices of the Federal government have the obligation to offer services in both official languages. Ex. : CRTC, Passport Canada.</p> <p>Obligation to offer in both languages equal service (ex. Comparable waiting time, equal quality of service) such as the Passport Service, the postal service.</p>	Federal government (constitutional right)	Section 20 of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i> For more details, see the <i>Official Languages Act</i> and <i>Official Languages Regulations</i>
Right to education and management of school boards	English-language school boards in regions where the number of citizens warrants it.	Provincial government (constitutional right)	Section 23 of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i>
Right to bilingual signs and posters, access to municipal services in both official languages.	The bilingual status of a city or borough gives citizens the right to receive municipal services in English and gives city employees the right to work in English.	Provincial government and the municipality	Section 29.1 of the <i>Charter of the French Language</i> gives the bilingual status to a city if more than 50% of its population speaks English

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<p>Right to bilingual health and social service institutions where services are provided to persons who, in the majority, speak English.</p>	<p>Some hospitals offer English services. Ex.: Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal.</p>	<p>Provincial government</p>	<p>Section 29.1 of the <i>Charter of the French Language</i></p> <p>For more details, see <i>An Act respecting health services and social services</i> and the <i>Regulation respecting the formation of regional committees for programs of access to health services and social services in the English language</i></p>
<p>Right to signs and posters in both official languages when reasons of health and public safety require its use.</p>	<p>Essential safety services must be indicated in both official languages Ex. : first aid services in case of an emergency.</p>	<p>Provincial government</p>	<p>Section 22 of the <i>Charter of the French Language</i></p>
<p>Right to signs and posters in both official languages when reasons of health and public safety require its use.</p>	<p>Publication of schedules and routes in English by the Communauté métropolitaine de Quebec and the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal, the Société de transport de Québec, the Société de transport de Montréal, the Société de transport de l'Outaouais, the Société de transport de Laval, and the Société de transport de Longueuil.</p>	<p>Metropolitan communities and public transit companies as listed in the <i>Charter</i></p>	<p>Section 22 and Appendix A of the <i>Charter of the French Language</i></p>
<p>Right to signs and posters in both official languages when reasons of health and public safety require its use.</p>	<p>Signs and posters in English by telephone, cable, and bus companies; and by gas, water and electricity production, transportation, distribution or sales companies that are not government agencies. Ex. : Gazifère, 911 service, the Barreau du Québec</p>	<p>Utility companies and professional orders</p>	<p>Section 22 and Appendix A of the <i>Charter of the French Language</i></p>
<p>Right to a bilingual status for cities or municipalities when more than half of its residents have English as their first language.</p> <p>The bilingual status gives citizens the right to receive services in both official languages, and gives</p>	<p>The following cities and/or boroughs have a bilingual status: Westmount, Senneville, Beaconsfield, Dorval, Mont-Royal, Kirkland, Baie-d'Urfé, l'Île-Dorval, Hampstead, Pointe-Claire, Côte-Saint-Luc, Dollard-des-Ormeaux et Montréal-Ouest, Pierrefonds-Roxboro.</p>	<p>The status is given by a provincial law and is implemented by the municipality</p>	<p>Section 29.1 of the <i>Charter of the French Language</i></p> <p>Section 11 of the <i>Charter of Ville de Montréal</i> for</p>

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municipal employees the right to use both official languages at work. More than 90 cities and boroughs have a bilingual status in Quebec.	In order to retain its bilingual status, Grosse-Île officially became a borough of the new municipality of Îles-de-la-Madeleine.		Montreal boroughs
Receiving municipal services in both official languages	Many cities in Quebec offer services on a voluntary basis in both official languages despite the absence of policies or regulations. Ex. : City of Gatineau, City of Chelsea, Temiscaming, Manicouagan, etc.	Municipal	(No reference : Services given on a voluntary basis)

Note: In 2000, *Bill 171* (L.Q. 2000, chap. 57), which is the criterion for the recognition of municipal bodies under Section 29.1, specifies that more than half the residents of any given territory must have English as their first language.