



Language Rights in Atlantic's region

Note: This table is intended as an overview (not exhaustive) of language rights in Atlantic's regions, 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 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 (constitutional right)	<p>Section 133 of the <i>Constitutional Act, 1867</i></p> <p>For more details, see the <i>Official Languages Act</i> and <i>Official Languages Regulations</i></p>
English and French are the official languages of Canada and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the Parliament and government of Canada.	The federal government has two writing teams (English and French) for the drafting of laws. Laws must be written in both languages simultaneously. A translation would be contrary to the principle of equal status and use. Both versions have equal force of law.	Federal government (constitutional right)	<p>S. 16 (1) of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i></p> <p>For more details, see the <i>Official Languages Act</i> and <i>Official Languages Regulations</i></p>
Right to use English or French in any debates and other proceedings of Parliament.	Members of parliament can use English or French during parliamentary debates.	Federal government (constitutional right)	<p>S. 17(1) of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i></p> <p>For more details, see the <i>Official Languages Act</i> and <i>Official Languages Regulations</i></p>
The statutes, records and journals of Parliament shall be printed and published in English and French and both language versions are equally authoritative.	All statutes and regulations adopted by the federal government must be written and published in both official languages.	Federal government (constitutional right)	<p>S. 18(1) of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i></p> <p>For more details, see the <i>Official</i></p>

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			<i>Languages Act and Official Languages Regulations</i>
Right to use French and English in any pleading in or process issuing from, any court established by Parliament.	A person may testify in the language of his/her choice before the federal courts. The definition of “court” is interpreted broadly and liberally; meaning that it includes the federal courts created by federal statute. For example: Public Service Staffing Tribunal.	Federal government and federal courts (constitutional right)	S. 19(1) of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i> For more details, see the <i>Official Languages Act and Official Languages Regulations</i>
Right to receive services and communications from the federal government in both official languages where there is “significant demand” Active Offer : The active offer concept means that the service providers publicize the availability of services in both languages, and ensure that people feel equally comfortable in dealing with the designated service centres in the language of their choice. Right to services of “substantive equality” offered by the federal government to official language minority communities	The government has the obligation to communicate in both official languages when communicating with the public. Ex.: communications from Ministers to the population Central offices of the Federal government have the obligation to offer services in both official languages. Ex. : Veterans Affairs (P.E.I.), Atlantic Pilotage Authority (N.S.). Obligation to offer in both languages equal service (ex. Comparable waiting time, equal quality of service) such as the Passport Service, the postal service.	Federal government (constitutional right)	S. 20(1) of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i> For more details, see the <i>Official Languages Act and Official Languages Regulations</i>
Right to education and management of school boards	French-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>
Note : All Atlantic provinces have an Education Act stating their obligations			
New Brunswick			
English and French are the official languages of N.B. and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the legislature and	Laws must be written in both languages simultaneously. A translation would be contrary to the principle of equal status and use. Both versions have equal force of	Provincial government (constitutional right)	S. 16 (2) of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i>

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government of N.B.	law.		Purpose of the <i>Official Languages Act of N.B.</i>
The English and the French linguistic communities in New Brunswick have equality of status and equal rights and privileges	Distinct educational and cultural institutions for English and French linguistic communities of N.B.	Provincial government (constitutional right)	S. 16 (2) of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i> Purpose of the <i>Official Languages Act of N.B.</i>
Right to use English or French in any debates and other proceedings of the legislature of New Brunswick.	Members of parliament can use English or French during legislature debates.	Provincial government (constitutional right)	S. 17 (2) of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i> S. 6 et 7 of the <i>Official Languages Act of N.B.</i>
The statutes, records and journals of the legislature of New Brunswick shall be printed and published in English and French	All statutes and regulations adopted by the N.B. government must be written and published in both official languages.	Provincial government (constitutional right)	S. 18 (2) of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i> S. 8 à 15 inclusively of the <i>Official Languages Act of N.B.</i>
Right to use French and English in any pleading in or process issuing from, any court of New Brunswick.	Trials in civil, criminal and penal matter Administrative Tribunals Example : Labour and Employment Board	Provincial government (constitutional right)	Art. 19(2) of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i> Art. 16 à 26 inclusively of the <i>Official Languages Act of N.B.</i>
Right to receive services and communications from the N.B. government in both official languages Active Offer : The active offer concept means that the service providers publicize the availability of services in both languages, and ensure that people feel equally comfortable in dealing with the	All institutions of the Legislative Assembly or the Government of N.B. are obligated under the <i>Official Languages Act of N.B.</i> Note : Crown Corporations are included Example : New Brunswick Lotteries and Gaming Corporation offers services in both official languages RCMP is a federal institution that is	Provincial government (constitutional right)	Art. 20(2) of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom</i> Services in both official languages – S. 27 à 32 inclusively of the <i>Official Languages Act of N.B.</i>

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designated service centres in the language of their choice	also a third party on the behalf of the N.B. government (Doucet Case).		Active Offer – S. 28.1 et 31(1) of the <i>Official Languages Act of N.B.</i>
<p>Health services in both official languages offered by the Regional Health Authorities.</p> <p>There are 2 categories of Regional Health Authorities: A and B. Regional Health Authority A operates in French and Regional Health Authority B operates in English. Both have the obligation to provide health services to members of the public in the official language of their choice.</p>	<p>Regional Health Authority A Example : Gloucester County, excluding the portion of the village of Belledune lying in Gloucester County</p> <p>Regional Health Authority B Examples : Charlotte County; Saint John County; Kings County; the parishes of Petersville, Hampstead, Wickham, Brunswick</p>	Provincial	<p>S. 33 et 34 of the <i>Official Languages Act of N.B.</i></p> <p><i>Regional Health Authorities Act</i> (new act in force since Dec 30, 2011)</p>
Services and communications in both official languages offered by municipalities	<p>A municipality whose official language minority population represents at least 20% of its total population is required to adopt and publish its by-laws in both official languages. (Bathurst, Campbellton, Charlo, Dalhousie, Dieppe, Edmundston, Eel River Crossing, Fredericton, Miramichi, Moncton, Rexton, Richibucto, Saint John, Shediac et Tide Head) and all cities.</p> <p>A town having a population of ten thousand or more may be incorporated as a city.</p>	Provincial and municipal	<p>S. 35 à 38 inclusively of the <i>Official Languages Act of N.B.</i></p> <p>S. 16 of the <i>Municipalities Act</i> (define a city)</p>
Nova Scotia			
Delivery of French-language services by designated institutions	<p>A list of the departments, offices, and government agencies is available on the website of the Government at http://www.gov.ns.ca/bonjour/</p> <p>Examples: Agriculture, Nova Scotia Archives, Nova Scotia Legislature, Registry of Motor Vehicles, Public Service Commission</p>	Provincial government	<i>French-language Services Act</i>
Receiving municipal services in both official languages	Municipality of Clare offers services in both official languages.	Municipal	Municipal policy
Receiving municipal services in both official languages	Richmond et Argyle offers some services in French	Municipal	(No reference : Services given on a voluntary basis)

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Prince Edward Island			
Right to receive communications in the official language of his choice where the Acadian and Francophone community could reasonably be expected to use a particular service on a regular basis.	All government institutions are subject to the <i>French Language Services Act</i> . Examples : Public Safety – Emergency Management Office and 911 administration, bilingual Services at Central Office, bilingual services at Summerside, Charlottetown, Wellington and Tignish	Provincial government	<i>French Language Services Act</i>
In criminal and penal matters, right to a French trial where an accused has requested that the proceedings be conducted in French.	Provincial Tribunals	Provincial government	<i>Provincial Court Act ; Jury Act ; French Language Services Act</i>
Any resident of the Maritime Provinces has the right to communicate with and to receive service, in English and French, from any institutions established in pursuance of economic cooperation.	All areas of economic cooperation between the provinces of N.B., P.E.I., and N.S.	Provincial government	<i>Maritime Economic Cooperation Act</i>
Receiving municipal services in both official languages	The municipalities of Abram-Village and Wellington offer services in French	Municipal	(No reference : Services given on a voluntary basis)
Newfoundland Labrador			
Receiving municipal services in both official languages	The municipal authority of Port-au-Port Peninsula includes 22 villages. Three of them are Francophone communities. One, Cap St-Georges, offers some services in French.	Municipal	(No reference : Services given on a voluntary basis)