



PEEL VAW/FLS REFERRAL AGREEMENT

JUNE 2015

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Foreword

The francophone community has a 400-year history in Ontario. Presently the community makes up approximately 4.8% (611,500) of the population, representing the largest francophone community in the country outside the province of Quebec¹.

Peel's francophone community is diverse. It is made up of francophones born in Ontario, other parts of Canada and increasingly from areas around the world such as Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and the Caribbean. Racial minorities represent approximately 10% of Ontario's francophone community².

Ontario Regulation 284/11

A new regulation was passed by the Government of Ontario, to clarify the existing obligations under the *French Language Services Act* (FLSA) with respect to services offered by third parties on behalf of ministries and other government agencies. The regulation, *Ontario Regulation 284/11, Provision of French Language Services on behalf of Government Agencies*, came into force on July 1, 2011. *The new regulation does not create new obligations but aims to improve the delivery of services in French in the public and broader public sectors by clarifying:*

- **the government's duty to ensure** that services offered on its behalf by third parties are also available in French;
- the concept of “**active offer**”, which means that services in French are obvious, easily available and accessible, and publicized so that Ontario's French-speaking population is informed about the services available in French and can access those services;
- the **reporting requirements** by asking the government to ensure that its contracts with third parties clearly set out its expectations for services in French.

There are currently 25 designated areas under the *French Language Services Act* (FLSA). For an area to obtain designation, francophones must make up at least ten per cent of its population, or in urban centres, must have at least 5000 francophones. In the Region of Peel, both the cities of Brampton and Mississauga are designated areas as defined by the FLSA. This designation guarantees the right to services in French from the provincial government. The government is also obligated to ensure that services offered on its behalf by third parties are also available in French.

An Inclusive Definition of Francophone

On June 4, 2009, the government also introduced an inclusive definition of francophone to be more inclusive and better reflect the diversity and growth of the Francophone community. In the past francophone was defined as “a person whose mother tongue is French”. The new definition captures those whose mother tongue is neither French nor English, but who have a particular knowledge of French as an official language and use French at home, including many recent immigrants.

"Those persons whose mother tongue is French, plus those whose mother tongue is neither French nor English but have a particular knowledge of French as an official language and use French at home" (Government of Ontario)

¹ Statistics Canada 2011 census

² Portrait of the Francophone Community in Ontario – Office of Francophone Affairs

This new definition increased the population of Francophone in the Toronto area by about 42%

Francophone Population According to Inclusive Definition

Category	Total Population 2011	Francophone Population 2011	Francophone Percentage
Ontario	12,722,065	611,500	4.8
Peel	1,291,370	23,870	1.8
Mississauga	710,475	14,800	2.1
Brampton	521,685	8,295	1.6
Caledon	59,210	780	1.3

*Source: Government of Ontario -Office of Francophone Affairs

Although Francophone is a term familiar to Canadians, many French-speaking newcomers, especially those who have a different mother tongue may not define themselves as Francophone.

“When you already feel so belittled, how can you ask for something? In any case, I did not know I could request services in French. I felt so ashamed of myself, ashamed of my situation, ashamed of my life.”

Testimonial from Francophone survivor³

³Comité Réseau – Report on the Accessibility of French Language Services – February 2004 – Sourced from: http://www.octevaw-cocvff.ca/sites/all/files/pdf/reports/rapport_ANG.pdf

1. Introduction

Effective July 1, 2011, **Ontario Regulation 284/11** adopted by the government under the *French Language Services Act (FLSA)*, mandates delivery of services in French by third party service providers on behalf of government agencies. The regulation requires that Transfer Payment Agencies provide an *active offer* of French Language Services (FLS) to the public. The purpose of this VAW-FLS Referral Agreement is to support agencies in the VAW sector in Mississauga and Brampton in working together to fulfill the requirement of *active offer*, and to ensure that appropriate FLS referrals are being made.

In the GTA there are two organizations OASIS centre de femmes (OASIS) and la Maison d'hébergement pour femmes francophone (La Maison), funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) which provide services exclusively in French for women and children who have experienced violence.

This Agreement establishes a formal partnership between Violence Against Women (VAW) services in Mississauga and Brampton and OASIS and La Maison to facilitate access to services for francophone women survivors of woman abuse and children who are witnesses to such violence.

1.1 Principles/Values that Guide the Agreement

The Referral Agreement is based on a collective belief that:

- Violence against women is a serious societal problem that negatively affects the health, well being, and development of women, children, families, and communities of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, socio-economic classes, religions, ability levels, and professions. This violence is intensified depending on women's intersecting identities
- Violence is gendered, and women are disproportionately affected by violence as a result of their gender and their marginalized position in society.
- Violence against women and children is unacceptable.
- The safety of women and children supersedes all other considerations.
- All women survivors and children exposed to woman abuse have a right to services and supports.
- Francophone women who experience woman abuse and children who witness abuse have various and unique needs that must be recognized and addressed.
- "Providing service of equivalent quality in both official languages is a matter of professionalism, respect, integrity and social justice"⁴.
- All partners will put aside their own specific interests in order to advance the needs of francophone women and their children who witness abuse.

⁴ . "Dyane Adam, National Report on Service to the Public in English and French: Time for a Change in Culture, p. 4.

1.2 Commitment to Ongoing Collaboration

We are committed to ongoing collaboration to increase our capacity to ensure francophone women and their children have access to French language services, and to work towards the provision of a similar range of services as are available to English speaking women and children.

Partners to this agreement recognize and respect the rights of all French-speaking women who are survivors of woman abuse and their children who witness abuse to receive services in their own language and will work diligently to ensure that all of their services and activities, through visible and clear articulation, actively offer the option of accessing services in French and to continue to enhance the capacity of all MCSS funded VAW services to address the needs of francophone women and their children.

1.3 Definition of a Referral

For the purposes of this agreement a referral is defined as one partner to this agreement connecting a woman to another partner for the purposes of accessing services in French. A referral is made by the referring organization completing the FLS VAW Services Referral Form, obtaining consent from the woman to disclose such information as required for the purpose of an effective referral, and transmitting the form electronically i.e. via fax or e-mail to the service where the woman and/or her children are being referred.

2. Partner Role & Responsibilities

2.1 Lead Agency

The Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse (PCAWA) is a group of individuals representing various agencies in the Region of Peel. Established in 1984, with a vision to eliminate violence against women in the Region of Peel. The mandate of PCAWA is to promote a comprehensive and effective response to woman abuse in the Region.

The work of PCAWA is guided by an Integrative Feminist Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression (IF-ARAO) framework, which is woman-centred, and focuses on the lives and realities of women and marginalized people. As a tool for analyzing and problem solving, this framework recognizes the need to use an intersectional perspective to understand women's oppression by looking at how gender, race, class, sexuality and other social and cultural identities intersect to create a system of multiple forms of oppression and gives us a way to understand issues and experiences.

PCAWA as the lead will support effective coordination between all partners by facilitating consultation, networking, problem solving and evaluating the agreement's effective implementation.

2.2 Referral Agencies

The role of MCSS funded VAW agency partners to this agreement will be to meet all of the responsibilities, expectations and requirements as set out by the *Service Description Schedule for Non-Designated Transfer Payment Agencies Required to Offer Services in French in Areas Designated Under the FLSA*.

This will be accomplished by:

- ensuring signage in service environments on how to obtain French language services appears in French and are visible;
- ensuring that public awareness, education and outreach activities promote the availability of services in French;
- ensuring websites, general phone messages, intake forms, awareness and promotional materials provide information on how to obtain services in French, and actively offer French language services;
- ensuring that agency staff and volunteers are aware of the requirements of an active offer and how to make referrals to designated French language services;
- referring and facilitating connection of French-speaking clients to OASIS, Fem'aide, and/or La Maison; and other agencies service the French-speaking community; and,
- regularly monitoring and participating in the evaluation of the implementation and effectiveness of the Referral Agreement.

2.3 FLS Service Providers

The role of designated French language service agency partners to this Agreement, namely OASIS and La Maison, is to:

- accept referrals from non-FLS VAW service providers (subject to capacity);
- advise partnering agencies of any changes to service including service disruptions or new programs/services;
- share with partnering agencies any promotional materials or resources, as appropriate, to help support an active offer and referral to FLS;
- facilitate clients' connection to other appropriate French language services;
- keep other partners abreast of emerging needs or issues relevant to this Agreement.

3. Promoting Active Offer of FLS

3.1 Active offer

An active offer of service happens when Francophone members of the public are informed of the availability of services in French, have access to these services, and are satisfied with the quality of these services.⁵

To promote an "active offer" of FLS partners to this Agreement will:

- Educate staff and management on the *FLS Act* and the FLS requirements for Referral Agencies.

⁵ From "OPS Framework for Action: A Modern Ontario Public Service", 2006

- Ensure visual cues in the service environment let the public know that services are available in French.
- Provide an active offer of French language services in both French and English (i.e. on the phone, at the reception desk, at admission, in print, etc.).
- Develop mechanisms for non-bilingual staff to handle requests for services in French in person or over the phone.
- Identify and carry out an assessment of bilingual staff and the resources needed to ensure an active offer of FLS (i.e. language testing and training, bilingual tools, etc.).
- Develop a mechanism to identify French-speaking clients in order to facilitate needs assessment and matching of clients with French-speaking staff or making a referral.
- Engage with French language services and members of the Francophone community as active partners in designing programs and services that meet the community's own needs (i.e. FLS Committee, consultations, etc.).
- Integrate FLS in strategic plans and develop policies and procedures pertaining to FLS (i.e. in HR policies, complaint mechanism, etc.).⁶

Emergency assistance is always important and useful. Although I experienced some difficulties with a heating problem, my stay [at La Maison] went well ... I recommend it especially for a Francophone individual. Vulnerable women often have problems in an English environment. The Shelter for Francophone women is an appropriate place to break the isolation. What I was looking for most of all is an organization that can provide me with emotional support

[Francophone Survivor- Translated]

⁶ Adapted from North East Local Health Integrated Network; French Language Services Toolkit: Employer Fact Sheet

3.2 Intersection Points for Referral

Intersection Points	Agreed Upon Referral Process
A French-speaking woman contacts a VAW agency and is in imminent danger.	<p>All VAW Workers will: Assess the level of risk and contact police if needed.</p> <p>and/or</p> <p>If language is a barrier contact Fem'aide by 3 way call. Fem'aide is a 24hr service.</p>
A French-speaking woman requests emergency shelter.	<p>All VAW workers will: Facilitate access to a shelter by contacting La Maison or Fem'aide by 3-way call. La Maison and Fem'aide is a 24 hour service</p> <p>If necessary offer transportation for the woman to get to a shelter. The shelter will provide transportation.</p> <p>or</p> <p>Provide the woman with the contact information for La Maison or Fem'aide and encourage her to call.</p>
A French-speaking woman requests crisis counseling services.	<p>All VAW Workers will: Facilitate immediate access to the most readily available French-speaking counsellor and/or refer or connect the woman to Fem'aide.</p>
A French-speaking woman requests Legal Support & Advocacy services	<p>All VAW Workers will: Refer the woman to OASIS.</p> <p>And/or contact OASIS to schedule an appointment with a French-speaking counsellor.</p>
A French-speaking woman requests Outreach and/or Transitional & Housing Support services	<p>All VAW Workers will: Refer the woman to OASIS.</p> <p>And/or contact OASIS to schedule an appointment with a French-speaking counsellor.</p>
A French-speaking woman requests sexual assault counselling & advocacy services	<p>All VAW Workers will: Refer the woman to OASIS.</p>

	And/or contact OASIS to schedule an appointment with a French-speaking counsellor.
A French-speaking woman requests ongoing clinical counseling.	<p>All VAW Workers will: Refer the woman to OASIS who will conduct an assessment and make a referral as appropriate to a French-speaking counsellor.</p> <p>And/or contact OASIS or local agency with a French-speaking counsellor to schedule an appointment with a French-speaking counsellor.</p>
A French-speaking woman requests support for her children who have witnessed abuse or a worker deems such services to be of benefit.	<p>All VAW Workers will: Refer the woman to OASIS who will conduct an assessment and make a referral as appropriate including to the HEAL network.</p> <p>And/or contact OASIS to schedule an appointment with a French-speaking counsellor.</p>

French-Speaking Woman Declines Offer of FLS

Partners agree that where possible and available immediate connection to French Language Services should be the practice of first choice i.e. OASIS, Fem'aide or La Maison. However, In a situation where a French-speaking woman declines services in French but requires interpretation in order to access services and supports for herself and her children interpretation services may be accessed from MCIS.

Even in such situations it is important that VAW workers continue to make an active offer of FLS.

3.3: Intake

All partners' intake processes will include questions that satisfy the *FLSA's* "active offer of service" requirement. Options for intake process questions, answering phone etc. are provided in *Supporting an Active Offer of French Language Services: Tools & Resources for Violence Against Women Services in Peel*.

Where a woman indicates a preference to be served in French or where a woman is French-speaking and language is a barrier the following information will be provided in French:

- share information about services offered by OASIS and La Maison and provide connection to these services;
- advise the woman about the limits to confidentiality;
- advise the woman of information that will be shared for referral purposes and obtain consent to release this information. (*Sample release form provided in Supporting an Active Offer of French Language Services: Tools & Resources for Violence Against Women Services in Peel*).

4. Referral Process

Once it is determined that a woman needs to be referred to FLS the referring agency will obtain consent to disclose information from the woman and will complete the VAW FLS Referral Form (*Sample release form provided in Supporting an Active Offer of French Language Services: Tools & Resources for Violence Against Women Services in Peel*).

The form will be sent electronically (fax or e-mail) to the referral agency to which the woman is being connected.

- Once the woman has been able to access services the referral agency will complete the portion of the VAW FLS Referral Form which confirms connection and return this portion to the referring agency.
- If the referral agency is unable to make contact within the timeline specified for the agency in this agreement, the referring agency will be advised of this by returning said portion of the VAW FLS Referral Form indicating such.

5. Timelines for Response

It is expected that OASIS will respond to referrals made by partners to this agreement within a 72-hour period. La Maison will respond to partners within a 24-hour time period unless at the time of the referral the referring agency or client identifies a need for an alternate timeframe. In such cases OASIS or La Maison will make every possible effort to comply with the request. Other partners to this agreement who have the capacity to provide FLS will respond to referrals within a 72-hour period.

6. Confidentiality & Consent to Disclose

All parties to this agreement and their respective directors, officers, employees, agents and volunteers will hold confidential and not disclose to any agency, other than those parties to this agreement, at any time during or following the term of this FLS Referral Agreement except where required by law or statute, any information or document that tends to identify any individual in receipt of services under this FLS Referral Agreement without obtaining the written consent of the individual.

The referring party will obtain written consent to connect with another party to the agreement and provide information necessary for the purpose of facilitating a referral (i.e. name and safe contact number where the woman may be reached, and reason for referral).

Parties will use a specified release form written in French that will include a generic description of the reason for the release of information and limitations. In crisis situations where written consent is not possible, verbal consent will be acceptable but should be recorded.

7. Conflict Resolution Process

Individual specific issues are defined as issues involving communication, role clarification, and process of interpretation of information with respect to referral procedures. The steps outlined in this procedure are progressive. Differences of this nature can usually be resolved at any step.

- Step 1 Workers discuss issues with each other and seek a resolution.
- Step 2 Workers involved their immediate supervisors to seek resolution. A face-to-face meeting is preferred.
- Step 3 Managers/Directors are involved and will determine how issues will be addressed and ultimately resolved.
- Step 4 Managers/Directors will assess whether the type of issue has systemic characteristics and where the advice of the signatory agencies would be beneficial to determine how to address similar situations in the future.

Systemic Issues are defined as legislative or policy/procedures issues relating to the mandate of the respective signatory agency. They might be related to administrative or procedural differences between agencies requiring a systems response to harmonize policies; differences in service philosophy; and/or resource shortages. All steps in this procedure may be followed as required:

- Step 1 Workers inform their supervisor and/or Manager/Director
- Step 2 Managers/Directors forward the issue in writing to the Lead Agency
- Step 3 The Lead Agency brings the issue forward to the partners who determine what actions are required to resolve the issue.
- Step 4 The decision is communicated in writing to all signatory agencies.

8. Monitoring & Evaluation

Signatories agree to meet at least twice per year to review the referral agreement, discuss issues, including the effectiveness of the agreement, and plan and coordinate training and education activities.

Partners to the agreement will be required to maintain and submit basis statistically data to the Lead Agency on a quarterly.

For FLS service providers, data to be collected with respect to persons referred by partners to this agreement will include:

- number of individuals served
- types of services provided
- number of individuals on the waiting list or turned away due to lack of availability/capacity to provide services
- length of wait time to access services

VAW agencies will maintain information on:

- number of requests for FLS
- number of francophone individuals served
- number of referrals made to FLS
- types of services provided
- purpose of referral
- where referred
- length of time to access services

9. Term

This Referral Agreement may be reviewed and or updated upon the request of any or all of the parties to this agreement, otherwise the term and conditions of this Referral Agreement will be in place on a continuous basis unless terminated by all parties or superseded by another Regional Referral Agreement.

10. Commitment to Collaborate

We, the signatory agencies, agree to engage in collaborative actions to ensure that francophone survivors of woman abuse and their children who have witnessed violence have the same access to quality services in French as English speaking individuals. These actions will be in accordance with our respective mandates, and in compliance with requirements for third party VAW agencies and designated FLS service providers and the terms of this Agreement:

11. List of Signatories & Signatures

Armagh

Malton Neighbourhood Services

Catholic Crosscultural Services

Muslim Community Services

Catholic Family Services Peel Dufferin

OASIS centre de femmes

Family Services of Peel

The Salvation Army Family Life Resource Centre

India Rainbow Community Services

The Salvation Army Women's Counselling Centre

Interim Place

United Achievers Community Services

la Maison d'hébergement pour femmes
francophone

Victim Services of Peel

Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse (PCAWA)

Agency Profiles

Armagh is a non-profit, Second-Stage Supportive Transitional Housing program for women and their children who have experienced abuse. Armagh accepts referrals from the local crisis shelters and the Peel Children's Aid Domestic Violence Team. Services include supportive transitional housing for up to one (1) year less a day; individual and group counselling; legal support, housing support, self-esteem, parenting, life skills and support programs for both women and children, referrals about community resources and outreach follow up for women and their children for up to one more year when they leave.

Catholic Crosscultural Services is a Newcomer Settlement agency providing a continuum of settlement supports in Scarborough, Mississauga and Brampton.

Mission: CCS provides services that assist in the settlement and integration of immigrants and refugees. Our Guiding Principles are that all people are treated with dignity, respect, and understanding and without discrimination and that services are guided by the principles of Catholic Social Justice teaching.

Our Women Support Services programming provides community-based general counselling, support and referral services for women and their children who have experienced abused and/or sexual assault, including historic sexual abuse in childhood in order that they may live free of violence. The program is delivered in 5 different languages, Polish, Spanish, Punjabi, Tamil and English. Service in other languages is provided with interpretative services.

Catholic Family Services Peel-Dufferin provides professional and affordable counseling services to all people who come to the agency seeking help, with a specialized focus on families impacted by domestic violence. CFSPD's staff and client base is as diverse as the Region it serves. With capacity in 12 languages, the agency reaches out to people of all cultures and faiths. Programs include individual and family counseling, as well as support groups for women dealing with the impacts of abuse. Longer-term support is provided through the volunteer Sistering Program. CFSPD also operates one of the regional Partner Assault Response (PAR) programs designed to help men stop their abusive and controlling behavior. CFSPD is the lead agency for a number of collaborative programs focused on helping individuals and families impacted by domestic violence. **The HEAL Network** (Helping End Abuse for Life) is a partnership of 18 human-service organizations dedicated to supporting children and youth exposed to violence; **The Safer Families Program** is a collaboration between Peel Children's Aid, Family Services of Peel and CFSPD to provide wrap around community-based services to families who have come to the attention of child protection services due to domestic violence; **Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network (PEAPN)** represents over 45 community organizations that have come together to stop and prevent the abuse of older adults; **The Safe Centre of Peel (SCoP)**, a collaboration of a wide range of social and legal support and services in one setting for those who are experiencing violence and abuse in their relationships.

Family Services of Peel offers a wide array of interventions and support to women who have experienced domestic or sexual violence including one-to-one counselling, therapy groups, education, advocacy and support services. The focus is on helping women to manage life challenges. Counselling staff work with clients to develop personalized strategies and solutions that help to promote hope and wellness in the client, their family and the community at large. The program recognizes the differing individual and family values and goals while respecting and valuing variations in cultural, ethnic and racial backgrounds, sexual orientation and gender identification, age and physical or intellectual abilities; emphasizes client growth and development, promoting situational change and participation and empowerment from an anti-oppression framework; concentrates on the client's strengths with the client's right to self-determination being the

primary governing practice; and, utilizes approaches/models of service deemed most suitable to the intellectual, cognitive, emotional, social, cultural, spiritual and philosophical background of the client.

India Rainbow Community Services - Abuse Prevention (SAFE) Stop Abuse in Families Everywhere, provides culturally responsive counselling to women to assist and help empower the development of personalized strategies and solutions that help promote hope and wellness in the woman and the family. This program helps promote quality of life for women living with violence or in fear of violence, by enabling them to take control of their lives and make a healthy transition to independence, freedom and empowerment. Services and supports include: Crisis intervention/counselling/risk assessment; safety planning; transitional support; empowerment and educational workshops; assistance with legal issues, advocacy; referrals to community resources; groups for women to promote wellness; and, support groups for women and children who have witnessed partner abuse Helping end abuse for life (HEAL)

Interim Place provides shelter; support counseling and advocacy services to help abused women and their children break the cycle of violence. Our two 24-hour emergency shelters provide up to 54 beds for women with or without children in a safe, secure, confidential setting. In addition to emergency shelter our community support and outreach programs help women in the community who are currently experiencing or have experienced violence and abuse. The Community Support and Outreach Program is available to all women whether they have previously resided at the shelter or have remained in the community. Interim Place also operates a 24 Hour Crisis Line and a Centralized Intake Line for individuals who are seeking support in the community. Interim Place is also the lead agency for the Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse in partnership with many agencies within the region of Peel. Interim Place's services are provided in a manner that honours the diversity of women and children. We are committed to a philosophy of feminism, anti-racism and anti-oppression.

La Maison d'hébergement pour femmes francophone (La Maison) is a designated agency under the *FLSA* and operates an emergency shelter where French-speaking women, 16 years and older who identify themselves as having been sexually, physically, or emotionally abused by their partners, or significant others, and their children can receive help and support to gain their autonomy.

Malton Neighbourhood Services (MNS) offers supportive services for women who have experienced abuse and their children. Our services include supportive counseling, advocacy and referrals. We also do community presentations to promote awareness of woman abuse, the H.E.A.L. network and other local support services. Our Violence Against Women (VAW) services are offered from Monday to Friday, on Mondays, Wednesdays from 9.00 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. and Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. Staff speak Punjabi, Hindi and English. MNS is a non-profit, community/settlement support agency.

Muslim Community Services (MCS)

MCS is a not for profit multi-service agency established in 1987 with the mission of helping individuals and families in need to overcome barriers that prevent them from reaching their full potential and integrating into the community. Operating from two locations in Brampton and Mississauga, MCS provides settlement, educational, employment and social services in over 16 languages.

MCS' Family Violence program was initiated in 1988 to help women and children of domestic violence and abuse to find safety and rebuild their lives. The program offers crises intervention, culturally sensitive counseling, safety planning, and advocacy in addition to information and referral. It also brings women together on a monthly basis in a safe space to tell their stories, offer mutual support, and learn to take care of themselves and feel good again. The program offers help and support to children who have either experienced abuse or witnessed abuse. Counselling helps children deal with anger, learn about safety plans, and reduce self-blame for domestic violence.

Oasis Centre des femmes is a multidisciplinary centre operating in the GTA and the Halton-Peel region. The mission of Oasis is to offer services to francophone women 16 years and older who are affected directly or indirectly by any form of abuse or violence, with the goal of improving their living situations and allowing them to become fully autonomous. All services and programs are offered in French and from a feminist perspective.

Our services and programs include: **Individual support and follow up**, with such services as; crisis intervention, counselling, transitional and housing support, and family court support for women survivors of any form of violence; **Community support** for personal, as well as social and economic development for all Francophone women through the following programs: Immigrant and refugee women networking, Élan (employment preparation and career planning), Entrepreneurship training, and a Micro-financing project.; **Prevention programs and related activities**, offering educational opportunities and community liaison to raise awareness of all issues related to violence against women. Since its inception, 20 years ago, Oasis has continued to demonstrate its leadership and expertise. Now, more than ever, we are convinced that personal support must be combined with a community response that addresses the systemic barriers which isolate women and prevent them from leaving abusive relationships. We not only continue to push further to address inequalities and tackle women's poverty through our analysis and feminist approach, but we also develop approaches and strategies for the development and recovery of women's economic power.

The Salvation Army Family Life Resource Centre is a short-term emergency crisis shelter for women and children fleeing family violence/intimate partner abuse. The average stay is 6 to 8 weeks or longer if necessary. The building consists of 18 apartments, with 54 beds that will comfortably accommodate families seeking shelter. The Centre provides a variety of support services to the women and children including, individual and group counselling, legal and housing support, on-site child care services and programs for mom's and children, abuse groups, self-esteem, parenting, life skills and children's programming volunteer services as well as 24-hour crisis support to clients. Follow up care is provided in partnership and collaboration with the many agencies in the community. We serve Peel and the surrounding areas.

The Salvation Army Women's Counselling Centre is a client centered therapeutic environment providing holistic counselling from a feminist perspective. Our clients are women 16 years of age and older who live in Peel Region and who have experienced any form of abuse. We provide crisis short term counselling, psychotherapeutic longer term counselling, psychoeducational and psychotherapeutic groups, transitional housing and support, legal support and client advocacy.

United Achievers' Community Services' Fresh Start for Women Program offers one-on-one supportive counseling, advocacy, telephone crisis intervention, support groups, transitional housing, information and referrals, court accompaniment. We are committed to educating and supporting women who have experienced violence by family members and/or intimate partners. All services are safe, confidential, and free. UACS reflects the intention and protections of the Ontario Human Rights code and includes transgendered women, women of all spiritual and religious faiths, regardless of age, sexual orientation (same gender loving, bisexual), relationship status (married, non married, common law, dating) and women living with disabilities.

Victim Services of Peel (VSOP) is a not for profit, charitable organization that provides 24 hour crisis support to persons victimized or at risk of victimization by crime or tragic circumstance in the communities of Brampton and Mississauga. Services include: Crisis Intervention, Bail Court Support & Advocacy, Transitional & Housing Support and South Asian Family Enrichment program. Visit www.vspeel.org for more information.

DESIGNATIONS

Transfer Payment Agencies (TPAs)

Agencies that receive funding from the provincial government to provide services on their behalf.

FLS Service Provider

TPAs that meet the following criteria:

- Offer quality services in French on a permanent basis and demonstrate that employees possess the required skills in French to provide these services.
- Guarantee access to its services in French and follow the principle of active offer of services.
- Francophone representation on the Board of Directors and committees of the Board has to reflect the proportion of the Francophone community being served.
- Submit every three years a resolution of the Board attesting that the agency has remained compliant with the criteria for designation and that the Board and senior management team are aware of the legal consequences of submitting a false attestation, including the possibility of having complaints filed with the Commissioner for French Language Services.

Referral Clause Agencies

TPAs who have no current or anticipated FLS capacity are required to:

- Ensure signage on how to obtain FLS appears in French;
- Ensure website, general phone message and referral information provides information on how to obtain service in French;
- Give consideration of Francophone cultural and linguistic needs in all strategic planning;
- Work collaboratively with partner agencies to support the provision of FLS; and,
- Formalize referral agreements with community partners
- Submit annual plans to regional office of respective Ministry.

Clause 1 Agencies

TPAs who satisfy the following expectations:

Ensures accountability for French language service provision and addresses issues of:

- quality of services
- access to services and communication with stakeholders
- including correspondence, telephone and over the counter services, signage, public consultations, translation of written materials, complaints resolution, etc.

Clause 2 Agencies

TPAs that meet most FLS requirements and satisfy the following expectations:

Access to French Language Services:

- Initial incoming calls will be answered in French; over-the-counter services are available in French; signage and visibility of available services in French; and appropriate means of communicating with the Francophone population.

Quality of services:

- Services are provided at the advanced or superior level of French proficiency.

Communication with stakeholders:

- All correspondence sent to the agency in French must receive a reply in French. All materials intended for public distribution will be made available in English and French. Any forum, meetings and/or consultations are offered in both French and English.

Written communication:

- The agency will ensure the appropriate translation and/or revision of documents produced for public use.

Complaint resolution:

- A complaint mechanism will be identified to support resolution of complaint/issues pertaining to the delivery of French language services.

Clause 3

TPAs that meet all FLS requirements and are moving towards designation and are able to provide high quality services

This agreement was made possible through the contributions and efforts of PCAWA and the following individuals on behalf of their respective agencies.....

Dima Amad (Muslim Community Services)

Jakki Buckeridge (India Rainbow Community Services)

Lana Burchett (Victim Services of Peel)

Sharon Mayne-Devine (CFSPD)

Marilyn Field (The Salvation Army FLRC)

Sharon Floyd (Interim Place)

Ricardo Gascon (Malton Neighbourhood Services)

Denise Gashagaza (OASIS centre des femmes)

Dada Gasirabo (OASIS centre des femmes)

Adrienne Hendricks (United Achievers' Community Services)

Andrea Hernandez (Family Services of Peel)

Jason Linton (Catholic Crosscultural Services)

Jeanne Françoise Mouè (La Maison)

Amira Masud (India Rainbow Community Services)

Major Catherine Skillin (The Salvation Army Women's Counselling Centre)

LaRee Walters-Boadway (CFSPD/SCOP)

Lynn Ward (Armagh)

Ministry of Community & Social Services Resource Staff

Ilda Gizas

Kathleen McColm

Process Facilitated by Donna Joyette, Joyette Consulting Services

disponibles au comptoir; la disponibilité des services en français est affichée et bien visible; l'agence a des moyens adéquats pour communiquer avec la population francophone.

Qualité des services :

- La prestation de services se fait avec un niveau de connaissance avancé ou supérieur de la langue française.

Communication avec les personnes concernées :

- L'agence doit répondre en français à toute correspondance reçue en français. Tout le matériel destiné à la distribution publique sera disponible en français et en anglais. Tous les forums, réunions ou consultations se feront en français et en anglais.

Communication écrite :

- L'agence assurera une traduction et une révision adéquate des documents destinés au grand public.

Résolution des plaintes :

- Il y aura un mécanisme de résolution des plaintes et des problèmes liés à la prestation de services en français.

Clause 3

Les APT répondant aux exigences des SEF, voulant obtenir une désignation et capables d'offrir des services en français de très haute qualité.

La présente entente a été rendue possible grâce à la contribution et aux efforts du PCAWA et des personnes suivantes qui ont agi au nom de leurs agences respectives

Dima Amad (Muslim Community Services)

Jakki Buckeridge (India Rainbow Community Services)

Lana Burchett (Services aux victimes de Peel)

Sharon Mayne-Devine (CFSPD)

Marilyn Field (The Salvation Army FLRC)

Sharon Floyd (Interim Place)

Ricardo Gascon (Malton Neighbourhood Services)

Denise Gashagaza (OASIS centre des femmes)

Dada Gasirabo (OASIS centre des femmes)

Adrianne Hendricks (United Achievers' Community Services)

Andrea Hernandez (Services à la famille de Peel)

Jason Linton (Catholic Crosscultural Services)

Jeanne Françoise Mouè (La Maison)

Amira Masud (India Rainbow Community Services)

Major Catherine Skillin (The Salvation Army Women's Counselling Centre)

LaRee Walters-Boadway (CFSPD/SCOP)

Lynn Ward (Armagh)

Personnes ressources du ministère des Services sociaux et communautaires

Ilda Gizas

Kathleen McColm

Processus dirigé par Donna Joyette, Joyette Consulting Services



Supporting An Active Offer of French Language Service for Survivors

TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
SERVICES IN PEEL

APRIL 2015

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Key Elements of an Active Offer

“It has been shown, time and time again, that active offer has a considerable impact on the demand for services. The more actively a service is offered, the more demand there is for it.”

François Boileau, French Language Services Commissioner, Special Report on French Language Health Services in Ontario, 2009, p. 10.s

RESPONDING TO REQUEST

When a **client comes into contact with your agency** (calls/ walks in/ comes in for intake/visits your website, etc.):

- As a first step, ask her if she would like to receive services in French. Have pamphlets available in French regarding the French language services available. Have signage in French about French language services available and also have information on your website in French regarding French language services that are available.

When the **client requests services in French**:

- As the first step for any client requesting service in French, share information about FEM'AIDE (contact information: 1-877-336-2433).

When a woman **requests emergency shelter services** – refer her to La Maison (contact information: 647-777-6733) or FEM'AIDE (contact information: 1-877-336-2433).

When a woman **requests Transitional and Housing Support Services** – refer her to Oasis centre des femmes (contact Information: 416-591- 6565 extension 231).

When a woman **requests VAW Counselling Services** – refer her to Oasis centre des femmes (contact Information: 416-591-6565 extension 226).

Intake information

Example:

Option 1

You can also receive services in French. Would you prefer to receive services in French? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Vous pouvez recevoir le service en français aussi. Préférez-vous être servi en français? <input type="checkbox"/> Oui <input type="checkbox"/> Non
---	---

Option 2

OASIS Centre des femmes and la Maison d'hébergement pour femmes francophone provide services for French speaking women, we can refer you to these services. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	OASIS Centre des femmes et la Maison d'hébergement pour femmes francophone offre des services pour femmes francophone/langue français. Nous pouvons vous référer à ces services. <input type="checkbox"/> Oui <input type="checkbox"/> Non
---	---

Option 3

<p>Services in French are offered by our partners OASIS Centre de femmes et la Maison d'hébergement for Francophone women/French speaking women. If you wish to have services in French we can refer you to these services or call the FEM'AIDE line at 1-877-226-2433.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>Des services en français sont disponibles auprès de nos partenaires, OASIS Centre des femmes et la Maison d'hébergement pour femmes francophone.</p> <p>Si vous désirez obtenir des services en français, demandez-nous de vous référer à ces services ou appelez la ligne FEM'AIDE au 1-877-336-2433.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Oui <input type="checkbox"/> Non</p>
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ANSWERING CALLS & GREETING CLIENTS

A bilingual greeting is a proactive way of offering services in French. It is an open invitation to callers to use their preferred language.

When **answering the phone** or even when **greeting clients**, could add “**bonjour**” (Hello) or “**comment puis-je vous aider**” (How can I help you?) at the end of the usual greeting, for example “*Hello, Victim Services of Peel, bonjour, How can I Help you, comment puis-je vous aider?*”.

If the person answering the phone or greeting clients is bilingual, he/she continues in the preferred language of choice of the caller or client.

If the person is not bilingual, he/she should say “Un moment, s’il vous plaît” (one moment, please) and promptly transfer the call to a French speaking employee or automated message that gives the individual information about how to access French language services.

AUTOMATED GREETINGS & VOICE MAIL

Telephone greeting should be bilingual. Callers should be given a choice to hear the message in French by prompting them to press a number such as “pour le service en français, appuyer sur le 2” (for service in French press 2).

French greeting following the English. “Hello, Bonjour. A French message will follow. You have reached (insert name of organization). Please leave a message at the tone and we’ll return your call as soon as possible. Thank you and have a great day! Vous avez joint le (*insérer nom de l’organisme*). Laisser un message et nous vous rappellerons le plus tôt possible. Merci et bonne journée.”

AUTOMATED GREETING ON CRISIS LINE

Si vous désirez obtenir des services en français, prière d’appeler la ligne FEM'AIDE au 1-877-336-2433.

If you wish to have services in French please call the FEM'AIDE line at 1-877-336-2433.

VISUAL IDENTIFICATION AND GENERAL PRINT MATERIAL

If the organization has French speaking staff or volunteers, clients should be able to easily recognize French-speaking staff. To do this, provide bilingual staff with buttons or lanyards saying

“Je parle français”.

SIGNAGE - INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR:

All written signs in public areas should be bilingual. Bilingual Welcome sign should be placed at entrances and/or reception desks, for example:

General Sign:

Si vous désirez obtenir services en français, demandez-nous comment les obtenir.

If you wish to have services in French, ask us how you can access them.

Informing clients that the organization offers services in French:

Nous offrons des services en français
We offer services in French

Informing clients that the organization can provide referral to French language services:

Nos services sont offerts en français par référence.

Our services are offered in French by referral.

WRITTEN MATERIAL

All documents intended for public distribution should be available in both languages preferably in a bilingual format.

If the English and French version are separate documents, a note should be added in French in the English document, and vice versa, stating that “Ce document existe en français”/ “This document is available in English”

If the document is double sided French/English on the English side add “Français au verso” and on the French side add “English on reverse”.

Business Cards should be bilingual for staff members in designated positions or those capable of providing services in French.

Consent to Disclose Information

You can use this form.....

Consentement de partage d'information inter-agence

Par la présente, je, _____, donne mon consentement à la Maison d'hébergement pour Femmes Francophones (La Maison) de divulguer ou d'acquérir des renseignements verbaux et écrits auprès des organismes suivants :

À l'égard de :

Je reconnais que les informations sont acquises et divulguées à l'égard des motifs suivants :

Je donne l'autorisation à la Maison d'hébergement pour Femmes Francophones (La Maison) de faire parvenir les formulaires pertinents par télécopieur aux agences mentionnées ci haut : _____

SIGNÉ: _____

DATE: _____

TÉMOIN: _____

DATE: _____

Worksheet for developing French language services: two useful tools ¹

If you are an identified service provider, totally or partially designated, or if your financial supporters require that your program reach Francophones, or simply if you are interested in offering services to the Francophone community, this exhaustive checklist will help you become more sensitive to the various aspects of setting up quality French language services. It will help you design your organizational development plan to provide French language services.

CATEGORY	✓	COMMENTS
Governance/Accountability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have Francophone members on our board of directors and working committees. We have Francophone executives and administrators in key posts. Our board of directors has stated its explicit support to make French language services a priority. Services in French are part of our strategic and development plans and framework of accountability. We regularly evaluate our French language services and make the necessary adjustments along the way. 		
Appropriation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our board of directors, executives and administrative personnel are well-informed of our procedures and our progress. Our staff, members, volunteers and unions are well-informed of our procedures and progress. We have sought the support of our unions in setting up services in French. 		

¹ ***“Working Together with Francophones in Ontario: Understanding the Context and Using Promising Practices”*** was developed by the Healthy Communities Consortium for the Health Promotion French Language Services Committee.

CATEGORY	✓	COMMENTS
<p>Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We answer the telephone in English and French. • Our answering service and voice mail answer in both English and French and offer the choice of language. • We welcome people in both languages. • We are careful to identify the preferred language of services of our clients. • We refer French-speaking clients to an employee who speaks fluent French. • The services we offer in French are available at all times. • The quality of the services we offer in French is the same as that of our English language services. • We have a policy regarding French language customer service. • Documents intended for clients are in French – intake forms, consent forms, instructions, etc. • Bilingual employees are identified with a lapel button. • We ask clients to evaluate the quality of the services they have received in French. • The programs and services we offer in French are adapted to the needs, values and cultures of our local Francophone community. 		
<p>Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have determined which of our services we will offer in French. • We have an implementation plan with benchmarks to measure our progress. • We have a method to monitor services. • We report our progress on a regular basis to our executives, board of directors and the Francophone community. 		

CATEGORY	✓	COMMENTS
Human resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have set up a human resources plan. • We have designated bilingual positions. • We have adopted policies and procedures for recruitment, endowment, training and continuing education, performance reviews, cultural skills, etc. • Our designated positions are occupied by permanent bilingual staff members. • We formally acknowledge the contribution made by our bilingual personnel. 		
Work tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our bilingual employees have professional work tools in French. • Our bilingual employees have language support tools. • Our computer/data entry system accepts entries in French. 		
Communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our documents containing publicly available information are bilingual – books and articles, brochures, information bulletins, press releases, and annual reports. • Our letterheads and business cards are bilingual. • Our website presents documents in French and English; the quality of the site is the same in both languages. • We answer, in French, the correspondence we receive in French within the same timeline as letters received in English. • We regularly mention our services in French in our internal and external communications and bulletins. 		

CATEGORY	✓	COMMENTS
Links with the Francophone community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We collaborate actively in coordinating/planning committees for French services in our region. • We participate in Francophone community activities such as career days, festivals and information days. • We have set up agreements with other French language services providers regarding client referrals, resource-sharing, continuing education for professionals and mentorships, and others. • We are aware of the resources in French in our region and we direct our Francophone clients to them. • When we conduct community consultations, we offer a session in French for Francophones. • We invite key people from the Francophone community to work with us in setting up services in French (consultations, participation in the French language services committee, involvement in designing new programs or services). • We encourage our bilingual personnel to create links and network with their bilingual colleagues from other organizations (including organizations devoted to serving Francophones). 		
Bilingual organizational culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We adopt an attitude of reflection toward administrative resistance to French language service provision. • We have identified and educated our administration and employees on the myths, aspects of symbolic violence etc. in our organization. 		

Action plan: our three priorities for the short and medium term

After having evaluated your services in French using the checklist and after comparing the results with your French language services plan (if you have one), it's recommended that you set three priority goals to reach in the short and medium term.

GOAL	ANTICIPATED RESULTS	ACTIONS TO TAKE TO ATTAIN GOAL	RESOURCES REQUIRED	TIMELINE

French Language Services

Recruitment of French Language Staff and Language Proficiency Testing

- ❖ The provision of high quality French language service can be bolstered with French speaking staff. This requires two main courses of action: recruiting staff that speak French and understanding the appropriate method for determining their level of proficiency.

Recruitment

The aim is to develop a recruitment strategy which reaches out to French-speaking individuals. The recruitment of qualified staff for the provision of French language services can be facilitated through various options.

- ❖ Advertisements in French language media (e.g. newspapers) and employment agencies
- ❖ Identify potential outreach sources for posting including colleges/universities, community groups, etc.
- ❖ Identify alternative solutions to attract French-speaking employees such as internship and coop programs, short term contracts, etc.
- ❖ Postings in English media specifying the level of French proficiency required for the position

Le Regroupement des intervenants francophones en santé et en services sociaux de l'Ontario (RIFSSSO) is a non-profit organization that connects French-speaking professionals in the fields of health and social services. You can access this website at: <http://www.rifssso.ca/>

Cliquez Santé is a service directory that connects French speaking professionals in the health and social service sector. It also provides a space for job postings targeting French-speaking professionals. You can access this website in English at: <http://www.cliquezsante.ca/en>

French Language Proficiency Testing

A test determining a person's level of proficiency is essential to ensuring the provision of high quality French language service. The objective is to establish language capacity level required for identified positions.

It is necessary to obtain proof of proficiency to avoid the risk of selecting and hiring candidates without the required language competencies. Applicants can visit a vendor to receive an evaluation assessing their level of proficiency (see below for list of vendors). These varying levels of proficiencies allow the employer to determine if the applicant's level of fluency is suitable for the position. It is recommended that French language proficiency evaluations be completed before the interview.



FRENCH LANGUAGE EVALUATION & TRAINING SERVICES

VENDOR CONTACT: ALLIANCE FRANCAISE DE TORONTO

Ansuya Ramdenee (Manager - Corporate Training)

4261 Sherwoodtowne Blvd.
Mississauga, ON L4Z 1Y5
Phone: 905 272 4444
Email: ansuya@alliance-francaise.ca

VENDOR CONTACT: A.B. BILINGUAL SERVICES INC.

Any Badiere

114 Bamwood Dr.
Richmond Hill, ON L4E 5A2
Phone: 905-773-2285
Fax: 905-773-2172
Email: abbs44@sympatico.ca

VENDOR CONTACT: BERLITZ CANADA

John Aziz

3660 Hurontario St.
Mississauga, ON L5B 3C4
Phone: 416 399 2914
Email: John.aziz@berlitz.ca

VENDOR CONTACT: COLLEGE BOREAL D ARTS APPLIQUES ET DE TECHNOLOGIE DE L'ONTARIO

Jean-Francois Rose

1 Yonge street, 3 rd floor
Toronto, ON M5E 1E5
Phone: 416-289-5130
Email: jean-francois.rose@collegeboreal.ca

VENDOR CONTACT: COLLEGE D'ARTS APPLIQUES ET DE TECHNOLOGIE LA CITE COLLEGIALE

Josee Lacourse

Phone: 613-742-2493
Fax: 613-742-2461

VENDOR CONTACT: ECOLE DE LANGUES DE L'ESTRIE INC.

Pierre Lefai

200 Elgin Street
Ottawa, ON K2P 1L5

Phone: 613 231 7762
Email: pierre@lestrieonline.com

VENDOR CONTACT: ECOLE DE LANGUES LA CITE INC.

Louise Paris

113 Castlewood Rd.
Toronto, ON M5N 2L3
Phone: 416-281-6925
Fax: 416-281-1745
Email: lparis@sympatico.ca

VENDOR CONTACT: EXCELSIOR CANADA

Annick Karki

16 Henning Avenue
Toronto, ON M4R 1X7
Phone: 416 716 8278
Email: excelsiorcanada@gmail.com

VENDOR CONTACT: FRENCH EVALUATION SERVICES INC.

Marie-Rose Reboul

188 Sturgeon Glen Road
Fenelon Falls, ON K0M 1N0
Phone: 705-887-7118
Fax: 705-887-7119
Email: mreboul@sympatico.ca

VENDOR CONTACT: GRAYBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL CONSULTING INC.

Stanica Karadzic

1309 Carling Ave., Suite 5
Ottawa, ON K1Z 7L3
Phone: 613 761 7440
Email: skaradzic@graybridgemalkam.com

VENDOR CONTACT: NEW AVENUES LINGUISTIC SERVICES INC.

Rose Gorrie (Executive Director)

2301 St. Laurent, Suite 700
Ottawa, ON K1G 4J7
Phone: 613-738-3240
Fax: 613-738-4838
Email: rose@newavenues.ca

VENDOR CONTACT: THE LANGUAGE STUDIO INC.

Una Mitchell (Office Manager)

435 Stone road Mall,, Suite 218
Guelph, ON N1G 2X6
Phone: 519-763-8806
Fax: 519-763-2239
Email: una@language-studio.com

References & Links

French Language Services Act

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90f32_e.htm

Office of Francophone Affairs

<http://www.ofa.gov.on.ca/en/flsa.html>

Office of the French Language Services Commissioner

<http://csfontario.ca/en/>

Map of Designated Areas

<http://www.ofa.gov.on.ca/en/flsa-mapdesig.html>

Statistical Data

Portail francophone du Réseau Régional de langue française -

<http://www.portailfranco.ca/peel>

Peel Francophone Steering Committee - <http://peel.cioc.ca/start.asp?UseCICVw=51>

Ontario Office of Francophone Affairs - <http://www.ofa.gov.on.ca/en/flsa.html>

Infographic prepared by the FLS Commissioner's Office regarding French presence in

Ontario - <http://csfontario.ca/en/articles/5117>

Statistical report published by the Ontario government on Ontario's Francophone

community - <http://www.ofa.gov.on.ca/en/franco-stats.html>

Southwest LHIN French Language Services Toolkit

<http://www.southwestlhin.on.ca/SiteContent/PublicCommunity/HealthServiceProviders/FLS/FLS.aspx>

Consortium national de formation en santé

Reference Framework – Training for Active Offer of French Language Services

http://cnfs.net/upfiles/Cadre_de_reference_CNFS_pour_formation_offre_active_services_de_sante_en_francais_ENG.pdf

Directory of French Language Services in Peel

<http://peel.cioc.ca/?UseCICVw=51&UseEq=on>

Calendar of Francophone Events in Peel

<https://www.cdrpc.com/centreouest/month.php>

Action Ontarienne

<http://aocvf.ca/>