



Public service supervisors and language-of-work requirements

(Part V of the *Official Languages Act*)

EXPLORATORY RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY THE COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

SCOPE

Public service supervisors' familiarity with and knowledge of **language-of-work requirements**, as well as their experiences and needs



4,200+
respondents



40+
federal
institutions



Spring of
2025

SURVEY MAIN FINDINGS

- Overall, the supervisors surveyed reported quite high levels of familiarity with general language-of-work requirements, however the application of best practices is relatively lower.
- The survey results underscore the relationship between supervisors' second official language capacities and their ability to respect their employees' language-of-work rights.
- The survey results also point to some inequalities between French-speaking and English-speaking supervisors.
- Most supervisors who responded to the survey agreed that there should be mandatory training on language of work across the government.

REGIONS DESIGNATED AS BILINGUAL FOR LANGUAGE-OF-WORK PURPOSES



Public servants in these regions have the right to expect the following in the official language of their choice:

- Supervision
- Access to work instruments (reference books, manuals, keyboards, software, telephone systems, etc.)
- Personal and central services
- A working environment that allows them to express themselves to their supervisors, orally and in writing, including during meetings
- Training

In addition to ensuring that these rights are respected, federal institutions must ensure that the workplace is truly conducive to the use of both English and French.

SURVEY CONTEXT: MAJOR CHANGES IN 2025

- Amendments to the *Official Languages Act* came into force that confirm the right of all federal public servants who work in regions designated as bilingual to work in the official language of their choice, regardless of the linguistic designation of their position.
- A Treasury Board Secretariat directive increased the language requirements for bilingual supervisory positions.

SURVEY RESPONSE DETAILS

LEGEND: ■ English as a first official language ■ French as a first official language

Supervisor familiarity with employee language-of-work rights

Percentage of respondents with positive responses:



Supervisor familiarity with institutions' obligations

Percentage of respondents with positive responses:



Supervisor familiarity with regions designated as bilingual for language-of-work purposes

Percentage of respondents with positive responses:



Supervisor knowledge of the preferred official language of all of their employees

Percentage of respondents with positive responses:



Supervisor views on leadership

My senior management shows the necessary leadership to promote a work environment where both official languages are used.

Percentage of respondents who agreed:



My immediate supervisor regularly keeps me informed of the resources and training related to language of work.

Percentage of respondents who agreed:



My institution provides employees with reminders on language-of-work rights and obligations at least yearly.

Percentage of respondents who agreed:



I feel that my supervisors or my management supports me adequately to ensure that the work environment is conducive to the use of both official languages.

Percentage of respondents who agreed:



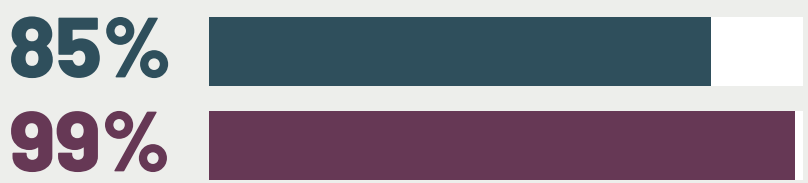
Supervisor views on the usefulness of mandatory government-wide training on language of work

Percentage of respondents who agreed:



Frequency with which survey respondents say they can regularly (always or often) respect their responsibilities to supervise their employees in their official language of choice

Percentage of respondents with positive responses:



Frequency with which survey respondents say they can regularly (always or often) exercise their own language-of-work rights as employees

Percentage of respondents with positive responses:

