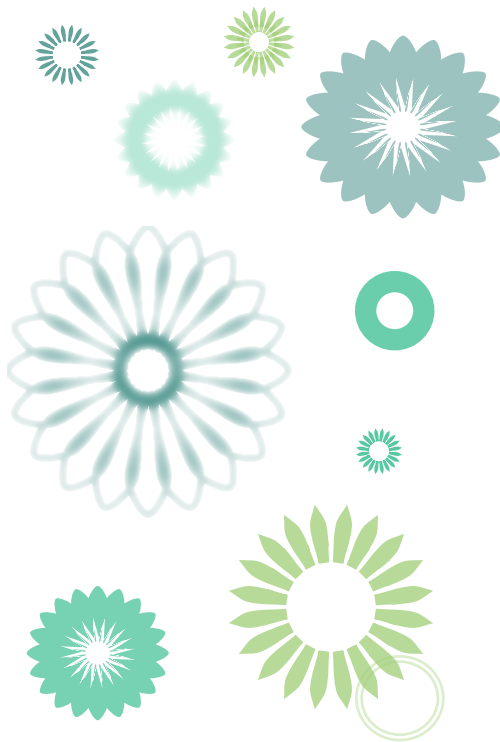




# JUSTICE IN OFFICIAL LANGUAGES – NEWSLETTER

ACCESS · SERVICES · COMMUNITIES · TRAINING

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## WORD OF WELCOME

For several years, the Department of Justice Canada has been promoting linguistic duality in tangible ways by collaborating with different partners to improve access to justice services in both official languages. In this context, Justice Canada encourages the efforts made by various government and non-government partners to offer intensive and regular training and development activities in legal terminology to justice service providers and individuals interested in legal careers.

This issue presents an overview of various initiatives and innovative ideas that have been developed by our partners, and these are making a positive and concrete contribution to improving access to justice. You will also read here about efforts aimed at offering services directly to the Canadian public.

The Department intends to promote and reinforce efforts to train those working in the justice system so they can serve Canadians in the official language of their choice. In the coming months, the Department will be working to promote greater use of new information technologies in order to make the most of the results of training activities, in addition to reaching as many justice stakeholders as possible by offering services to Canada's Francophone and Anglophone minorities, no matter where they are located.

We wish to thank Josée Ménard, a student in the French Common Law Program at the University of Ottawa, and Ellyce Wright, a graduate PhD student in the sociology programme at McGill University, for their contribution in the preparation of this issue.

Enjoy!

The JOL Team



## IN THIS ISSUE

**Training: Acting for the future**

page 2

**Capsule 41**

page 3

**Access to Justice in Both Official  
Languages Support Fund**

page 4

**Recent and Upcoming Events**

page 4

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<http://canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/franc/index.html>



## TRAINING: ACTING FOR THE FUTURE

Why does the Department of Justice Canada regularly speak of official language training in the area of justice? While “justice” has traditionally been associated with judges and lawyers, it is first and foremost an area that offers services to the Canadian population, requiring several levels of interaction. The field of criminal law, for example, requires the involvement of many players at various stages of a trial: police services are called on at the charge and detention stage; judges, lawyers, clerks, registrars, stenographers, interpreters and bailiffs take part in the judicial process; and correctional services and parole officers are involved at the detention or incarceration and follow-up stages.

According to 2006 Census data, out of a total of 128,050<sup>1</sup> people working in the area of justice, 31.4 percent indicated that they have the ability to carry on a conversation in both official languages. There is, however, a considerable difference between being able to carry on a conversation in one’s second language and being able to offer justice services in both official languages. Justice is a complex and technical field, and stakeholders must be able to use and master the legal vocabulary in its practical application.

Justice training efforts are specifically aimed at providing the legal terminology needed for making a concrete contribution to the improvement of the justice system’s ability to offer services in both official languages. Since the Department of Justice is committed to respecting shared jurisdiction with provinces and territories when it comes to the administration of justice, it has mainly focused its efforts on criminal law. Sections 530 to 533.1 of the *Criminal Code* recognize the right of the accused to be tried in the official language of his or her choice, which requires having access to institutionally bilingual criminal courts. This in turn depends on there being an active offer of services in both official languages, without the public having to take additional steps. Efforts are also being made in other areas to help those who need to develop their legal vocabulary, particularly in the area of family law. In this respect, training in legal terminology provides justice personnel with the opportunity to learn and master legal discourse in both official languages in order to better serve the public.



In addition to on-the-job training opportunities available to those already working in the area of justice, the Department has expanded its horizons to include training for individuals interested in pursuing law-related careers. In response to the first strategy proposed in the *Canada-Wide Analysis of Official Language Training Needs in the Area of Justice*, which encouraged law faculties in majority-language environments to play a greater role in students’ language training, three Canadian universities have developed training projects specifically aimed at the practice of law in French.

Thanks to the *Programme prédroit pour les étudiants immigrants admis à la Faculté de droit* [Pre-law program intended for immigrant students admitted to the Faculty of Law], developed by the French Common Law Program of the University of Ottawa, new Francophone or francophile immigrants can take part in an introductory program on the Canadian legal and political systems, as well as Canada’s socio-economic and university realities. In addition to offering French legal training, this program helps improve the offer of French services and increases students’ chances of success.

The program called *Renforcement de la capacité de la faculté de droit de l’Université du Manitoba d’offrir aux étudiants en droit une formation en français* [Building French language education at the University of Manitoba’s Faculty of Law] offers mandatory and optional courses in French designed to help students master legal vocabulary. A partnership between the University, the Centre canadien de français juridique, and the Association des juristes d’expression française du Manitoba will allow for teaching tools to be developed. In addition to raising awareness about language rights among bilingual and Francophone students, this project gives them the opportunity to learn and use legal terminology, starting in their first year of law school.

The University of Alberta’s Campus Saint-Jean has created the *Initiative de formation pour l’amélioration de l’accès à la justice en Alberta* [Training Initiative for the Improvement of Access to Justice in Alberta], a multi-faceted program that offers both a university course on the Canadian justice system and on careers in the area of justice and a language training certificate. The project also plans on offering a course for professionals already working in the area of justice and working predominantly in English in order to help them maintain and develop their existing knowledge of French. The Campus St-Jean is working in partnership with the Alberta Bar Association and the University of Alberta

<sup>1</sup> The data compiled includes the following categories of professionals: judges, justices of the peace, lawyers, clerks and registrars, bailiffs and sheriffs, technicians and parole officers in Canada. Statistics Canada Census (2006).

Law Faculty to offer defence attorneys some opportunities to develop their legal knowledge in French. Finally, this project has a very interesting component: the development of a community justice centre offering legal information, support and referral services to Canadians.

Thanks to innovative proposals from its many partners, Justice Canada is helping to expand the type of activities offered as well as the amount and frequency of training opportunities. Thus, to the list of training activities offered to stakeholders in the justice system, we can now add the opportunities offered to law students as future justice professionals. Not only do these projects meet the objectives of the *Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality 2008-2013*:

*Acting for the Future*, but they also meet the French-language training needs of minority Francophone communities. Training activities allow learners to go from having a basic knowledge of a language to mastering legal discourse in both official languages.



## CAPSULE 41

Michèle Vincent, Coordinator responsible for the implementation of section 41 of the *Official Languages Act* for the Department of Justice Canada in Alberta.

### Bibliographic notes



Michèle was called to the Bar in 1994 after completing a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Alberta and a Bachelor of Law degree at the Université de Moncton. After beginning her litigation career in private practice, Michèle worked as a legal counsel for the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta and then joined the Department of Justice Canada in 2001. She currently works as a Legal Counsel within

the Civil Litigation and Advisory Services branch of Edmonton's prairie-region office.

### Her role as coordinator

Active within Alberta's Francophone community for several years, Michèle has been working as a departmental Section 41 Coordinator since 2009. As Coordinator 41, Michèle's main responsibility is to maintain ties with representatives from Alberta's Francophone community organizations. She regularly attends activities hosted by the Association des juristes d'expression française de l'Alberta and the Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta, where she takes the opportunity to promote the Department's programs and initiatives.

### Did you know?

Although she was the daughter of a unilingual French mother, Michèle spent her elementary and high school years in English schools, because Francophones at that time did not have access to French schools, and immersion schools were only available in certain cities. To help her to hold on to her mother tongue, Michèle chose to do her university studies in French at the University of Alberta's Campus St-Jean, where she studied art, and at the Université de Moncton, where she received her law degree. She is proud that her three children can receive a French education and also have the opportunity to be comfortable as Francophones in a majority English environment.

### Contact

If you have questions about the implementation of section 41 in Alberta, or if you wish to invite Michèle to attend an activity, don't hesitate to contact her!

Michèle Vincent  
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Email: [michele.vincent@justice.gc.ca](mailto:michele.vincent@justice.gc.ca)



## ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN BOTH OFFICIAL LANGUAGES SUPPORT FUND

The Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund enables the Department of Justice Canada to fund many initiatives and projects that meet the needs of minority Francophone and Anglophone communities.

### Community Justice Centre in Ottawa

The purpose of this initiative by the Association des juristes d'expression française de l'Ontario is to integrate a "justice centre" within a multi-service centre that offers services directly to Ottawa's Francophone community. The mission of the justice centre is to promote access to justice by offering legal information, support and referral services to Ottawa's Francophone residents, in order to help them better understand and face legal problems. The creation of this centre is the product of a partnership with several Francophone organizations in Ottawa, including community centres for seniors, health centres and a hospital.

## RECENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS

### French-Language Institute for Professional Development

The French Language Institute for Professional Development offers a language training program to justice sector professionals who are responsible for the delivery of French language services legislated by the *Criminal Code* of Canada.

**DATE:** October 22 to 26, 2012

**LOCATION:** Toronto, Ontario

**INFORMATION:** [mirjeta.dhamo@ontario.ca](mailto:mirjeta.dhamo@ontario.ca)

### Centre canadien de français juridique

You can now consult the 2012-2013 training calendar.

**INFORMATION:** [www.ccfjinc.ca](http://www.ccfjinc.ca)

### The rights of Francophone minority communities in Alberta

Through the "Official Language Rights Project", Alberta's Legal Resource Centre proposes to design various information tools in English and French in order to educate the Anglophone community about the language rights of Francophone minorities. These resources will be made available in paper and electronic formats in libraries, community centres, cultural centres, seniors centres and schools. The project also includes designing and developing information kits adapted for the general public and for schools.

### *Justice en français aussi pour s'intégrer ici*

Several workshops on access to justice in criminal law and linguistic rights have been developed and tailored for French-speaking immigrants residing in Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario.

**DATES:** November 3, 2012 (Ottawa), November 10, 2012 (Edmonton), November 17, 2012 (Winnipeg) and December 1, 2012 (Toronto)

**INFORMATION:** [fatoumata@passerelle-ide.com](mailto:fatoumata@passerelle-ide.com)

