

Official
languages
of Canada

Official Languages of Canada

16. (1) 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.

Official
languages of
New Brunswick

(2) English and French are the official languages of New Brunswick and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the legislature and government of New Brunswick.

Advancement of
status and use

(3) Nothing in this Charter limits the authority of Parliament or a legislature to advance the equality of status or use of English and French.

Proceedings
of Parliament

17. (1) Everyone has the right to use English or French in any debates and other proceedings of Parliament.

Proceedings of
New Brunswick
legislature

(2) Everyone has the right to use English or French in any debates and other proceedings of the legislature of New Brunswick.

Parliamentary
statutes and
records

18. (1) The statutes, records and journals of Parliament shall be printed and published in English and French and both language versions are equally authoritative.

New Brunswick
statutes and
records

(2) The statutes, records and journals of the legislature of New Brunswick shall be printed and published in English and French and both language versions are equally authoritative.

Proceedings in
courts established
by Parliament

19. (1) Either English or French may be used by any person in, or in any pleading in or process issuing from, any court established by Parliament.

considered unacceptable. This will also permit the development of affirmative action programs for other groups of people who may have suffered as a result of past discriminatory laws or practices.

The Charter confirms that English and French are Canada's official languages, meaning that you have the right, among other things, to communicate in English or French with the federal government and to receive services in the official language of your choice wherever there is a significant demand for services in that language. You also have the right to use English or French in Parliament and in all courts of law under federal jurisdiction. However, there is nothing in these sections that will require any member of the public to become bilingual. Rather, they will ensure that the federal government can serve members of the public in the official language of their choice.

The Charter also recognizes English and French as the official languages of New Brunswick, at the specific request of that province. The people of New Brunswick will have the constitutional right to use either official language in dealings with their government, in their legislative assembly and before the provincial courts. People of Quebec and Manitoba will continue to have the right to use either French or English in the provincial legislatures and before the courts of those provinces. The rights in these two provinces were established by the *BNA Act, 1867*, and the *Manitoba Act of 1870*.