

Ministère des Affaires francophones

Ministry of Francophone Affairs

Bureau de la sous-ministre adjointe

Office of the Assistant Deputy Minister

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March 9, 2026

Katherine Hebert
County Clerk
County of Essex

Electronic Transmission: KHebert@countyofessex.ca

Subject: Expansion of Designated Areas under the FLSA

Dear Ms. Hebert,

I am writing to inform you of recent updates to the list of designated areas under the *French Language Services Act* (FLSA) that may be of interest to you.

You may be aware that the County of Essex is a designated area under the FLSA. “Designated areas” are areas of Ontario where **provincial** government services must be available in French to meet the needs of Francophone communities.

These changes do not create any new municipal obligations for the County of Essex. Under the FLSA, the responsibility to provide services in French rests with provincial ministries, provincial agencies, and third-party organizations delivering provincially funded services.

The purpose of this update is to share information on what provincial services changes can be expected by 2029, ensuring that these services delivered in your community reflect the linguistic rights of Francophone residents.

As of January 2026, the Government of Ontario approved changes to ensure that designated areas reflect current municipal boundaries, as established by [Ontario Regulation 180/03, Division of Ontario into Geographic Areas](#), under the [Territorial Division Act, 2002](#).

When the FLSA first came into force in 1989, the designation included the City of Windsor and ten other towns and townships. As part of the 2026 update, the Municipality of Lakeshore and the towns of LaSalle, Tecumseh, Amherstburg and

Essex, the last two of which were the object of an expansion, will be accurately identified as designated areas within the County of Essex.

More precisely, the changes are formally reflected in [O. Reg. 272/25: Designation of Areas](#) and will take effect as of January 1, 2029. By that date, provincial ministries and agencies that provide government services will ensure that French-language services are available in the newly expanded designated area.

Based on the most recent census, this expansion will include approximately 715 additional Francophone residents in your municipality, bringing the total Francophone population served to 13,620 in the County of Essex designated area. The designated area will also increase by 234 km², for a new total of 1,296 km².

If you have any questions, please contact the Ministry of Francophone Affairs. We remain committed to supporting our municipal partners throughout this process.

Thank you for your continued collaboration.

Sincerely,



Maria Lamani
Assistant Deputy Minister
Ministry of Francophone Affairs

cc: Sean Fraser, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal and Housing Operations Division,
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing