

# Official Languages Policy

2023-05-19

<b>APPLICABLE SECTIONS OF THE ACT, BY-LAWS AND REGULATIONS and/or PURPOSE</b>	Official Languages Act		
<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	CEO and Communications Officer		
<b>APPROVED BY</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE</b>	<b>REVIEWED</b>	<b>REVISED</b>
<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>	<b>May 19, 2023</b>	-	-

## Introduction

The College of Patent Agents and Trademark Agents (CPATA) is the public interest regulator of patent agents and trademark agents in Canada. CPATA aims to conduct its regulatory activities in ways that value and support the official languages spoken in Canadian communities.

## Context

CPATA was established in June 2021. It is not a governmental organization; rather, it is a federally constituted regulator. It has a small staff team that manages its daily operations.

## Legislative Framework

CPATA is subject to the [Official Languages Act](#), the [Official Languages Regulations](#) and the *Policy on Official Languages*.

## Policy Objective

CPATA's objective is to ensure it performs its regulatory activities in ways that are free from linguistic bias for Canada's official languages communities. More specifically, this means its services, communications, work environment and activities are available to individuals in the official language of their choice, French or English, without prejudice.

## Official Languages Governance

The CEO and Registrar is the Deputy Head responsible for Official Languages at CPATA. On an operational level, the Communications Officer acts as the Official Languages Champion and is responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are applied. The Communications Officer also monitors compliance with the *OLA* and flags concerns to the CEO and Registrar.

## Scope

The policy applies to all of CPATA's activities and to all individuals acting for or on behalf of the College, including:

- The College Board and Committees;
- Individuals employed or retained by the College on a permanent, temporary, part-time, or contract basis;
- Members of the College's committees; and
- All service providers acting on behalf of the College.

## Policy Requirements

### Communications with and services to the public

CPATA is a virtual organization, without physical offices. CPATA communicates to its audiences (e.g., its licensees and the public) via its website, Licensee Portal and Public Register, monthly newsletter and social media. Individuals can reach CPATA via e-mail and phone.

Goal:

- To provide access to information of equivalent quality in both French and English within the same timeframe for responses regardless of language
- To provide services in the official language of choice of the individual accessing the service
- To ensure that no linguistic bias exists that may prejudice against individuals from Canada's official language minority communities

Examples actions:

- Information published through mass communication channels is distributed in both French and English at the same time
- CPATA's Public Register and Licensee Portal are available in both French and English
- One-on-one communication with individuals is conducted in the language of choice of the individual
- Regulatory activities such as qualifying examinations, agent conduct proceedings and committee hearings are conducted in the language of choice of the licensee or applicant
- Information regarding CPATA's functioning, including policies and Board meetings, are available in both official languages

### Workplace Culture

CPATA has a small staff team, working remotely from home offices across the country. A Board of Directors governs the organization, and committees help CPATA perform its regulatory functions. The College views geographic, cultural and linguistic diversity as a major asset in its development as a national regulator.

Goal:

- To create a workplace culture that values the use of both official languages

- To provide equal access to employment opportunities and advancements for English-speaking and French-speaking individuals

Example actions:

- Key positions will be staffed without prejudice to the official language of choice of the incumbent, provided they meet the language requirements of the role

## Training and Awareness

As a new organization, CPATA is building its institutional understanding of the *Official Languages Act* and is creating systems to advance an extensive and ongoing understanding of the *OLA's* provisions, motivations and relevance among team members.

Goal:

- To foster an understanding of the *Official Languages Act*, and of linguistic duality and official languages minority communities, among the Board of Directors, staff and external providers

Example actions:

- All new employees, Board members and committee members will receive training as part of their onboarding dedicated to explaining how the *Official Languages Act* applies to CPATA
- All external providers will be briefed about their obligations as they pertain to their specific functions

## Monitoring and Compliance

Compliance with the *Official Languages Act* is monitored constantly by the Communications Officer and issues are flagged to the CEO. Members of the public can raise concerns via CPATA's website. Compliance is reported quarterly to CPATA's Board of Directors in the form of a legislative compliance memo, which is available to the public on CPATA's website as part of the Board Meetings Materials package.

This policy will be reviewed at least every 5 years, with more frequent revisions expected in the first years of CPATA's existence.