

# Processing Times for Female and Francophone Veterans

## Issue

Between 2015-2016 and 2023-2024, Veterans Affairs Canada experienced a 78% increase in the number of applications received for disability benefits, which caused the Department to get behind in processing applications, including French and female applications. Veterans Affairs Canada has made significant progress in addressing the turnaround times for applications from female and Francophone Veterans.

## Context

The Department has implemented a number of measures to improve the turnaround times for both female and Francophone Veterans. In September 2021, the Department added a team dedicated to processing disability benefit applications from female applicants/Veterans. This team has assisted us in closing the gap in processing times for female and male applicants. However, it is important to note the results will continue to fluctuate.

Additionally, the Department hired more bilingual and Francophone Disability Adjudicators to supplement our capacity to process French applications and bring the average processing times for English and French applications closer to parity. Approximately 30% of the Department's staff that make disability benefit decisions are either French or bilingual. With the help of these additional resources, we have reduced the processing times for French applications and are processing on par with English applications. In 2023-2024, 16% of the disability benefit applications received by the Department were French.

## Key Data and Milestones

In the first two quarters of the 2024-2025 fiscal year (April to September), the average turnaround times for first applications are 19.5 weeks for female and 19.4 weeks for male. For 2023-2024, the average turnaround times for first applications were 22.3 weeks for female and 19.8 weeks for male compared to 54.1 weeks and 47.9 weeks in 2020-2021.

In the first two quarters of the 2024-2025 fiscal year (April to September), the average turnaround times for first applications are 19.5 weeks for Anglophone and 19.1 weeks for Francophone. For 2023-2024, the average turnaround times for first applications were 20.3 weeks for Anglophone applicants and 19.3 weeks for Francophone applicants.

It is important to note the results for both female and French applications will continue to fluctuate.