

Summer 2020

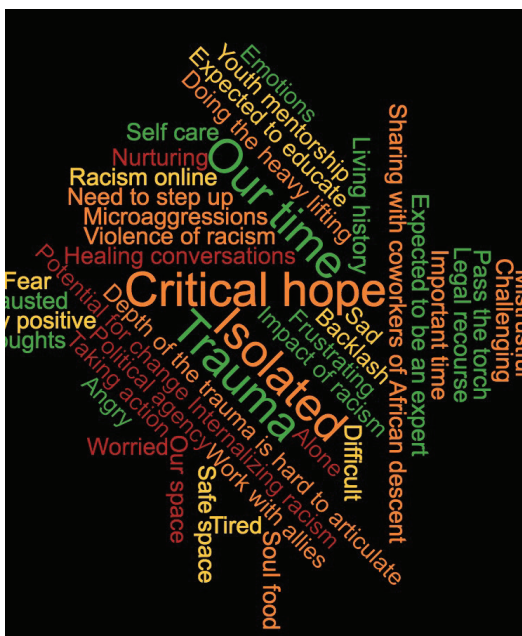
July/August 2020

PASSAGES & PROSPERITY

News about African Nova Scotian culture, heritage, and lived experience.

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MESSAGE *from* DEPUTY MINISTER



It is my pleasure to introduce the second edition of the ANSA “Passages and Prosperity” newsletter. This is a wonderful source of information to share not only within the African Nova Scotian community, but with all Nova Scotians.

Since I started as Deputy Minister a year ago, I have witnessed significant achievements by the ANSA staff who champion important work such as advancing the Land Titles Initiative, launching a successful action plan to support the United Nations’ International Decade for People of African Descent, and advancing the work of the Nova Scotia Home for Coloured Children Restorative Inquiry.

I have also gained a better understanding of the issues and injustices still facing African Nova Scotians. I continue to learn every day. The deep impact of systemic racism and racial discrimination has caused a lack of community trust and trauma to the African Nova Scotian community.

My duty as a government official is to further educate myself and others, support efforts within ANSA and the community, and to be a voice to the wrongdoings in our midst. I am fully committed to do my part in creating the conditions for change. This is something I take very seriously.

I am proud to work with the ANSA team and the African Nova Scotian community. I look forward to being part of the positive change in creating full inclusion in all facets of society.

Thank you and enjoy the newsletter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Justin Huston'.

Justin Huston
Deputy Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage

**“..this session
is like soul
food, it’s good
for my soul”**

Province Wide African Nova Scotian Wellness Check-In

On Thursday, June 18, 2020, the Nova Scotian Human Rights Commission (NSHRC), African Nova Scotian Affairs (ANSA) and the Association of Black Social Workers (ABSW) hosted a province-wide wellness check-in for people of African descent.

The meeting acknowledged the communal trauma experienced by people of African descent, resulting from the May 25, 2020 murder of George Floyd, an African American at the hands of the Minnesota Police. The incident shines a light on recent or historic injustices and anti-Black racism acts.

The gathering provided a safe space and outlet for the African Nova Scotian community members to voice their feelings and gain mutual support. 108 people from across the province attended the Zoom meeting. The session started with an introduction and welcome by Dr. Késa Munroe Anderson, Director of Race Relations, Equity and Inclusion with NSHRC, who then introduced Rev. Andrea Anderson, who delivered powerful remarks that uplifted everyone. Her comments reflected on the resiliency of people of African descent. She called on people of African descent to band together to support, encourage and build each other up during this traumatic time.

Tracey Thomas, Director of Government & Community Relations (ANSA), thanked Rev. Anderson and introduced Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard, who facilitated the check-in.

Senator Thomas Bernard asked participants to share how they were feeling, coping, and what they were doing for self-care, and how the event impacted their family and kids. She also probed to see what type of support people need and what gives them hope.

Through the partnership with ABSW, Veronica Marsman and four social workers were available to talk with people who may have felt overwhelmed during the call. We thank Winnie Grant, Anne Simmonds, Vivian Dixon and Kim Bernard, who volunteered their time to counsel individuals who requested additional support during the call.

The session concluded with community members, Archy Beals, Louise Delisle, and Kenneth Oguzie, reciting Dr. Maya Angelou’s poem *“Still I Rise.”*

The check-in was very powerful and affirming for many with comments like, "it's nice not to feel alone/isolated in my feelings and be with the community for a while" and "listening to everyone's stories has helped me realize that I'm not the only one feeling these feelings. Thanks!"

We had participants from across the province from Amherst, New Glasgow, Kentville, Yarmouth, Sydney, Digby, Halifax, and Dartmouth. There was a balance of male and female, youth to seniors and many different backgrounds (African, African Nova Scotian, Caribbean) who all self-identify as African Nova Scotian or of African Descent. One person noted that "I was beginning to resent zoom until now. This is a beautiful site to see so many beautiful brown faces," and "I am already breathing better."

For some, it felt as if we were fighting two pandemics (COVID-19 and anti-Black racism). People shared how seeking mental health support is very important to ones overall health and those on the call were encouraged to seek help.

The session concluded with one person commenting the session was like soul food; "it's good for my soul". We have to continue to have hope and encourage the youth to be active participants because they are our future.

We must continue to embrace Ubuntu (I am because we are).





Wearing a Non-Medical Mask

Starting July 31st, non-medical masks are mandatory in most indoor public places. Indoor public places include:

- ◆ Retail businesses
- ◆ Shopping centres
- ◆ Personal services businesses such as hair and nail salons, spas, body art facilities, except during services that require removing a mask
- ◆ Restaurants and bars, except while people are eating or drinking
- ◆ Places of worship or faith gatherings
- ◆ Places for cultural or entertainment services or activities such as movie theatres, concerts, and other performances
- ◆ Places for sports and recreational activities such as a gym, pool or indoor tennis facility, except while doing an activity where a mask cannot be worn
- ◆ Places for events such as conferences and receptions
- ◆ Municipal or provincial government locations offering services to the public
- ◆ Common areas of tourist accommodations such as lobbies, elevators, and hallways
- ◆ Common areas of office buildings such as lobbies, elevators and hallways, but not private offices
- ◆ Public areas of a university or college campus, such as library or student union building, but not classrooms, labs, offices, or residences
- ◆ Train or bus stations, ferry terminals and airports

Children under 2 years of age are exempt, as well as children 2 to 4 years of age when their caregiver cannot get them to wear a mask. People with a valid medical reason for not wearing a mask are also exempt. Schools, day cares and day camps continue to follow their sector-specific plans.

For more information about wearing a non-medical mask, visit <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/staying-healthy>

<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/restriction-updates>

NON-MEDICAL MASKS

Keeping each other safe is more important than ever. Wearing a non-medical mask is now mandatory in most indoor public places. Here's how to safely wear and care for your non-medical, reusable mask.



Ensure the mask is made of at least two layers of tightly woven fabric.



Inspect the mask for tears or holes. Ensure mask is clean and dry.



Wash or sanitize your hands before and after touching the mask.



Use the ties or ear loops to put the mask over your mouth and nose.



The mask should fit snugly to the cheeks and cover your nose and mouth. There should be no gaps.



Avoid touching your face while wearing the mask.



Wash or sanitize your hands if you touch the mask and before and after removing the mask.



Remove the mask by the ties or ear loops. Avoid touching the front of the mask.



Store the mask in a clean place if wearing it again.



Wash the mask with hot, soapy water and let dry completely. Masks can be included with laundry.

Mask Don'ts

- ✗ Don't reuse masks that are moist, dirty or damaged
- ✗ Don't touch your mask while wearing it
- ✗ Don't hang the mask from your neck or ears
- ✗ Don't leave your used mask within reach of others
- ✗ Don't wear a loose mask
- ✗ Don't remove your mask to talk to someone
- ✗ Don't share your mask
- ✗ Don't wear a face shield instead of a mask

A mask alone cannot prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Be sure to:

- Stay home if you feel unwell
- Maintain physical distance as much as possible
- Wash or sanitize your hands often
- Use proper cough or sneeze etiquette
- Avoid touching your face, mouth, nose and eyes

ABSW & HAAC COVID-19 PROVINCIAL IMPACT TOLL FREE LINE

PROVIDING SUPPORT TO PEOPLE OF
AFRICAN DESCENT IN NOVA SCOTIA



ABOUT

The Response Plan provides services to the entire province working in collaboration with existing community organizations. As with emergency planning, the goals of the Response Team are to mitigate risk of COVID-19 spread throughout African Nova Scotian (ANS) communities and return the communities back to 'normal' or a 'new normal' state of function.

RESOURCES

We can connect People of African Descent across Nova Scotia to the following resources and services:

Mental Health Supports

Public Health COVID-19
Information and Supports

Social Supports (i.e. food
boxes, sanitation supplies)

Spiritual Guidance

Technology Supports

Education Information
and Supports



CALL US TODAY



TOLL FREE 1-855-732-1253



African Nova Scotian Affairs would like to give a big thank you to first responders, health care and essential workers of African descent during COVID-19. You have continued to work tirelessly to keep our communities safe, healthy and well informed as we adjust to the new normal.



BACK TO SCHOOL



Nova Scotia's Back to School Plan

Public school students across the province will return to class on Tuesday, Sept 8th.

Nova Scotia's Back to School Plan is supported by public health, the IWK Health Centre and education partners.

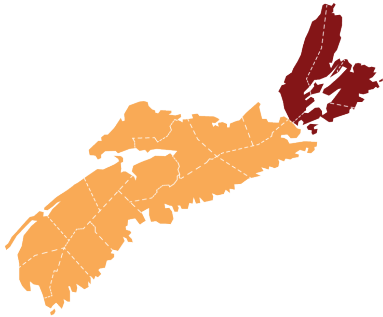
The plan was developed with feedback from more than 28,000 parents and students, and input from union and education partners. The plan outlines public health guidelines and enhanced safety measures for students and staff. It also includes measures to enhance student learning.

There are supports and services for African Nova Scotian students including access to African Nova Scotian student support workers and, if we move to at-home learning, priority access to computers.

To learn more about what returning to school will look like in September, visit the following website: <https://novascotia.ca/backtoschool>

Recent Community Initiatives and Shout-outs

Since March, COVID-19 has made a significant impact across Nova Scotia. Many of the events and activities planned had to be postponed, cancelled or moved online. However, this did not stop the great work, initiatives and achievements shown by members of the African Nova Scotian community.

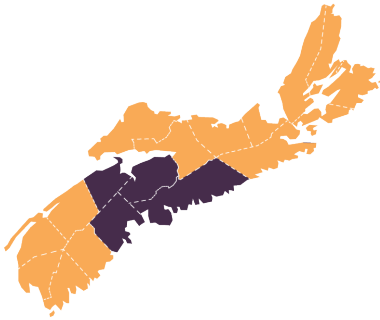


CAPE BRETON REGION

- ◆ In **May 2020**, the Glace Bay Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) Community Hall and Museum had to postpone its regular Marcus Garvey Days celebration in August 2020 due to COVID-19. However, the group will celebrate in other ways while following public health guidelines.
- ◆ In **June 2020**, a dynamic duo started a “Go Fund Me” and raised approximately \$2,000 to help support the general expenses of the Glace Bay Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) during COVID-19.
- ◆ **March 21**, the St. Philip’s African Orthodox Church cancelled its major fundraiser, “Caribbean Days,” which is held the first week of August due to COVID-19. Stay tuned for further details about the event later this year.
- ◆ Since **March 2020**, the Boys & Girls Club of Cape Breton – Whitney Pier Youth Club (WPYC) worked vigorously to give food hampers and other items to families of the club during COVID-19. WPYC has started its summer program, ensuring participants adhere to all guidelines. They are utilizing their facility as well as a partnership formed with the Menelik Hall in Whitney Pier.
- ◆ On **Wednesday, June 3, 2020**, a Black Lives Matter march against racism was held in Sydney. Mr. Darnell Kirton organized this event. More than 1,500 people marched from the Mayflower Mall Parking lot to the Cape Breton Regional Police Service Headquarters.



Photo by: Sean Francis



CENTRAL REGION

◆ In **March 2020**, the African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office (ANSAIO) and the Halifax Partnership hosted consultation meetings with various African Nova Scotian communities in the Halifax Regional Municipality area. The sessions focussed on HRM's "Road to Economic Prosperity Action Plan for African Nova Scotian Communities." The meetings were an opportunity to provide input and gather feedback on the plan, aiming to advance economic development and community priorities for African Nova Scotians.

◆ On **March 7, 2020**, the Morning Café hosted African Nova Scotians in Kentville and the surrounding areas. It was an opportunity to meet with the Deputy Minister and the Associate Deputy Minister of the Department of Community Services (DCS) and learn about the community's concerns and provide feedback on existing programs that support the needs of African Nova Scotians.



AFRICENTRIC
LEARNING INSTITUTE

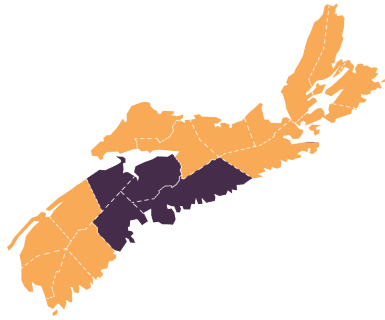
◆ On **March 11, 2020**, the Africentric Learning Institute hosted an event titled "From Striving to Thriving: A Case for Africentric Immersion in Public Education." The event focused on the need to incorporate Afrocentric learning in the school curriculum to empower and improve learning outcomes for African Nova Scotian students.

◆ In **April 2020**, the Association of Black Social Workers (ABSW) developed a COVID-19 toll-free support line to help African Nova Scotians navigate the available resources, services and supports they may need during the pandemic. As well the service is now open to those needing supports resulting from the recent Portapique mass shooting. If you need assistance, please call 1-855-732-1253 or by email at nsabswcovid19@gmail.com



◆ Starting in **May 2020**, the Nova Scotia Black Men's Health League and the Nova Scotia Black Women's Alliance introduced a weekly virtual "Community Talk" series via Zoom every Thursday. The series main focus is on the health and wellness of the African Nova Scotian community.

◆ On **May 6, 2020**, the Arts-Community-Culture-Economics (ACCE) hosted a virtual Provincial Black Youth Town Hall in their discussion series "Black Wellness: Not Too Distant to Talk" with over 3,000 people across the province. A discussion on physical health on May 13 and Community Service on May 20 followed this first event.



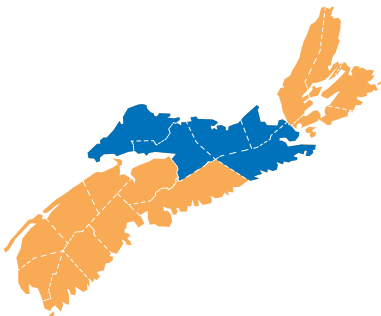
◆ On **May 6, 2020**, the Health Association of African Canadians (HAAC), the Association of Black Social Workers (ABSW) and the African United Baptist Association (AUBA) hosted the first “Provincial-Wide African Nova Scotian Wellness Check-In”. The virtual event was for people of African descent to share their concerns during the pandemic and recent tragedies in a safe space.

◆ In **June 2020**, several Black Lives Matter demonstrations, marches, and activities occurred in the central zone and included:

- Black Lives Matter Vigil in Halifax
- Artists United: A Rally to Support the Black Lives Matter Movement in Halifax
- A spiritual and prayerful protest in Africville
- Black Lives Matter Rally in Spryfield
- Black Lives Matter marches in Windsor and New Minas

◆ On **July 14, 2020**, the founders of GameChangers902, Kate Macdonald, Trayvone Clayton and DeRico Symonds were named this year’s Halifax Pride Festival Ambassadors. These African Nova Scotian youth were chosen for their efforts in fighting systemic racism, discrimination, and oppression in Nova Scotia, as well as keeping with Halifax Pride’s solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement.

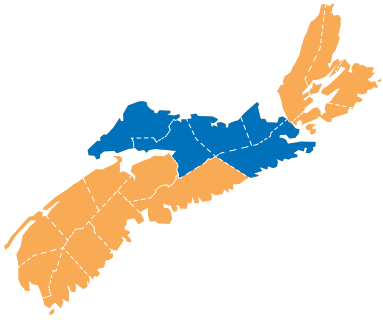
NORTHERN REGION



◆ In **April 2020**, Mary Desmond, from Upper Big Tracadie, publishes a children’s book, “Good Morning Mr. Charlie.”

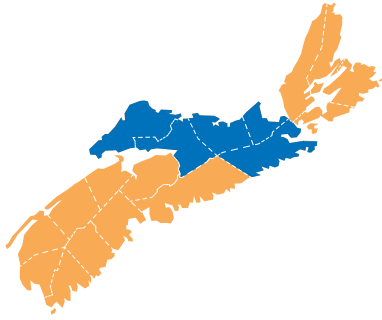
◆ In **May 2020**, Dr. Tiffany Richards, originally from West Prince Street in Truro (the Island), graduated from Dalhousie Medical School and is featured in the Dalhousie Grad Profiles. She will begin her residency in Family Medicine in Toronto.

◆ In **May 2020**, the Town of Truro partnering with the African Nova Scotian community began work to repair relationships and strengthen services. A newly formed committee will report directly to the town council with recommendations to help address systemic racism and discrimination of African Nova Scotian residents. The committee will consist of members from the Town’s Diversity Committee and the African Nova Scotian community.

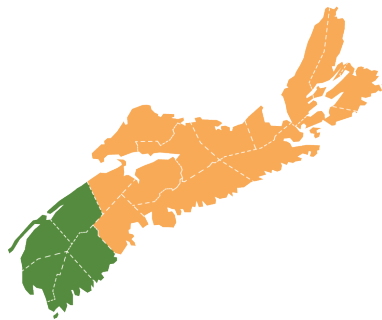


- ◆ In **June 2020**, the Town of Truro has worked to get the community gardens up and running at the Stan “Chook” Maxwell Memorial Park. Water and hoses have been installed, and fences are being constructed.
- ◆ In **June 2020**, an outdoor drive-thru graduation ceremony was held in Upper Onslow to celebrate the success of more than 300 Cobequid Educational Centre (CEC) high school graduates. It was the largest outdoor high school graduation ceremony for 2020 in Canada. Braden Gray, an African Nova Scotian student, was the Class Valedictorian, and he delivered a speech that ended with “All lives can’t matter until Black lives matter.” This ceremony also paid tribute to a fellow student who lost their life in the recent Portapique mass shooting.



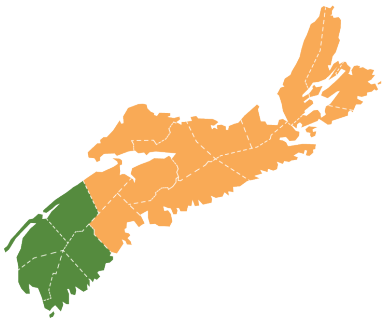


- ◆ On **June 6, 2020**, a Black Lives Matter protest attracted close to 1,000 participants in Amherst.
- ◆ On **June 6, 2020**, a Black Lives Matter protest attracted close to 2,000 participants in Truro. The crowd marched from the Truro Amateur Athletic Club Grounds (TAAC) to the Civic Square.
 - Tracey Dorrington-Skinner gave opening remarks.
- ◆ In **July 2020**, a new Regional Service Provider Network was established to focus on the needs of the African Nova Scotian community and provide a platform to discuss, share and collaborate on shared interests and issues.

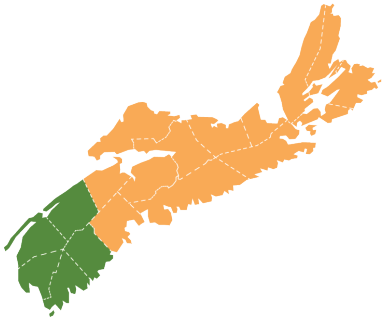


SOUTHERN REGION

- ◆ In **March 2020**, founder of the Southend Environmental Injustice Society (SEED) Louise Delisle managed the installation of a well for an individual household in the South End of Shelburne.
- ◆ In **April 2020**, "Preliminary Judicial Consultation Outreach Sessions" in Shelburne, Digby, and Yarmouth were postponed until this Fall due to COVID-19. The sessions allow the judiciary to collect important cultural and historical information to assist in their critical decision-making.
- ◆ In **April 2020**, the first virtual Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA) Kick-off Event planning meeting was held. Despite COVID-19, the committee continues to plan the event while following the necessary health measures. They are optimistic that the event will still happen on October 2nd in Digby.
- ◆ In **May 2020**, the Southend Environmental Injustice Society (SEED) appointed Jessika Hepburn as Secretary of the organization. She has taken the lead on the Community Well project for the South End of Shelburne which was funded by Ellen Page. The well was approved by the Town of Shelburne in January 2020 and plans are underway to have it completed by this Fall.
- ◆ In **May 2020**, Brian Fells, who is the 1st Black male teacher at the Digby Elementary School, was appointed as the part-time Vice Principal. The Digby Education Committee continues their hard work to increase African Nova Scotian representation. This is a result of the ongoing work from a Human Rights case settlement, dating back to 2008.



- ◆ In **June 2020**, Black Lives Matter Anti-Racism Rallies were held in Yarmouth and Digby. As part of the events, participants knelt for over eight minutes and forty-six seconds to take a stand against racism. This was the same duration of time that the police officer held his knee on the neck of George Floyd in Minneapolis.
- ◆ In **June 2020**, founder of the Southend Environmental Injustice Society (SEED) Louise Delisle submitted five additional applications and bids for individual well installations in Shelburne.
- ◆ In **June 2020**, the Jordantown Acaciaville Conway Betterment Association (JACBA) "Centre of Excellence" construction continues. A well has been installed and the consultants are now working with the contractors on the floor plan.
- ◆ In **June 2020**, Nathaniel Fells has accepted a teaching position at the Digby High School beginning this Fall.
- ◆ In **June 2020**, the "New Southern Regional Network" had their 1st Face-to-Face meeting. The Regional Networking groups have been established by ANSA in various locations throughout Nova Scotia to help African Nova Scotian community members and organizations create initiatives and address concerns. The Southern Regional Network is still in its early stages and next meeting is tentatively scheduled for this Fall.



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- ◆ In **July 2020**, the Langford Heritage Community Council in Weymouth launched its own website which includes a list of Council members, upcoming events and the history of Sam Langford:
<https://langfordheritage.com>



Diversity and Community Capacity Fund and Community and Cultural Identities Fund

African Nova Scotian Affairs (ANSA) is one of the divisions within the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage (CCH). This department recognizes that involvement by Nova Scotia's diverse population in cultural and community activities contributes to the social, economic, educational, and spiritual life of welcoming communities. Our Commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is demonstrated and supported through two companion funding programs:

The Diversity and Community Capacity Fund (DCCF) invests in the capacity-building efforts of organizations that represent traditionally marginalized communities and promote diversity and social equity.

The Cultural Communities and Identities Fund (CCIF) supports activities which recognize and celebrate the diversity of Nova Scotia's new, emerging, and established cultural communities. By embracing and sharing our cultural identities, our province becomes a more welcoming, resilient, and creative place to live.

Grant Amount:

- ◆ Funding is available for up to \$10,000;
- ◆ Larger requests may be considered where other conditions are met.

Upcoming Deadlines for 2020:

- ◆ August 30
- ◆ October 31

For more information about the DCCF and CCIF Programs or to access the application; please call (902) 424-5793 or email CommunitiesNS@novascotia.ca

Visit <https://cch.novascotia.ca/investing-in-our-future/diversity-and-community-capacity-fund>

Legacy Series Coffee

In February 2019, the Valley African Nova Scotian Development Association (VANSDA) in partnership with “Just Us!” Coffee Roasters Co-op launched a “Legacy Series Coffee” dedicated to increasing awareness to African Nova Scotian history and heritage. It pays tribute to various historic people including William Edward Hall VC, Rose Fortune, Marcus Garvey, and Portia White.

Legacy Series Coffee also supports post-secondary studies for African Nova Scotian students through the William Hall Scholarship while promoting the value of fair-trade coffee.

This initiative is part of the VANSDA multi- phase anti- racism and education strategy which assists in creating more welcoming workplaces and eliminating racism in our communities. Sales from the coffee enable VANSDA to continue developing initiatives to further support the African Nova Scotian community.

Legacy Series Coffee can be purchase at Just Us! Coffee locations, participating Sobey's locations and online at <https://vansda.ca/shop>.

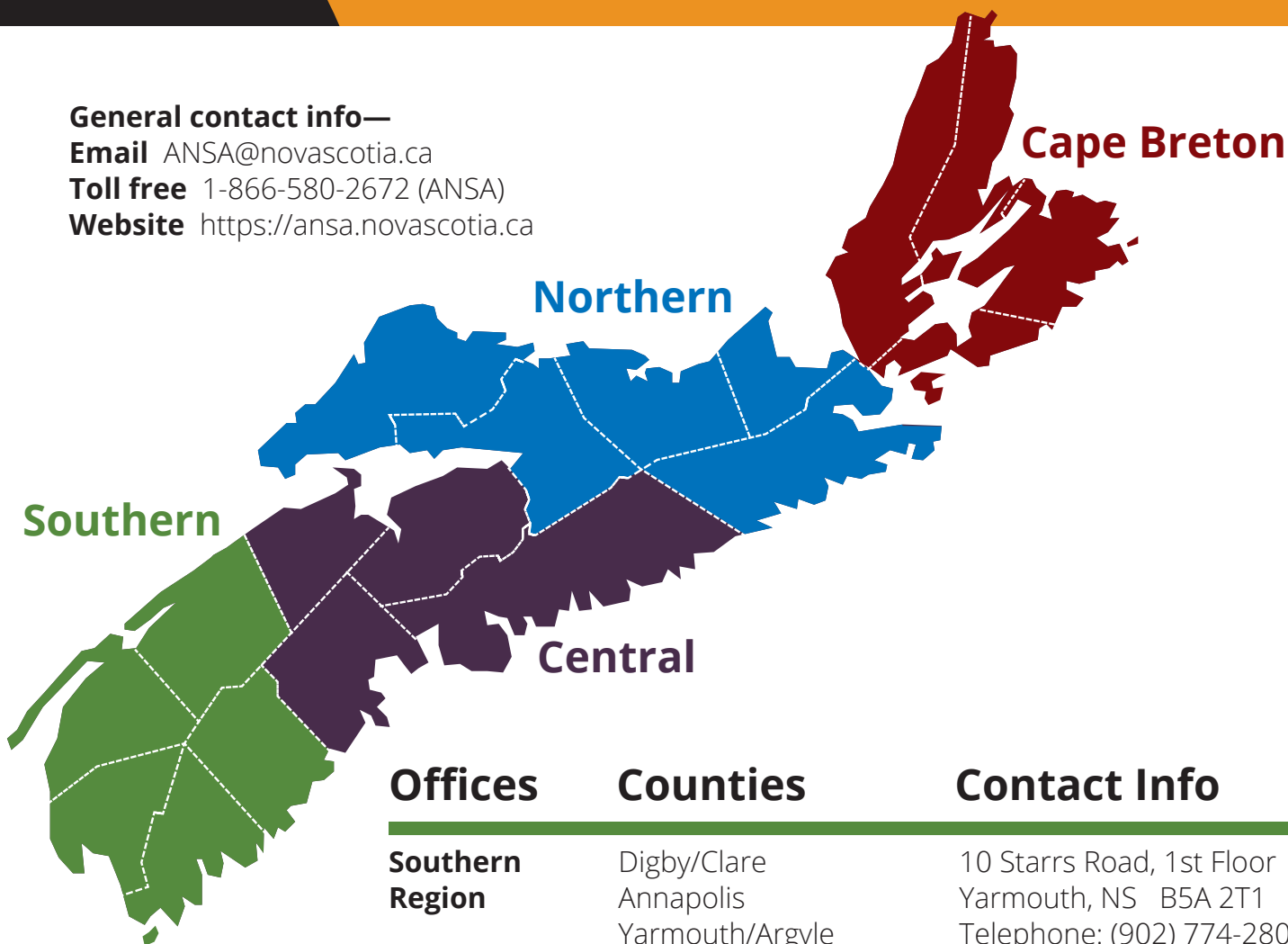


General contact info—

Email ANSA@novascotia.ca

Toll free 1-866-580-2672 (ANSA)

Website <https://ansa.novascotia.ca>



Offices	Counties	Contact Info
Southern Region	Digby/Clare Annapolis Yarmouth/Argyle Shelburne Queens	10 Starrs Road, 1st Floor Yarmouth, NS B5A 2T1 Telephone: (902) 774-2804 Fax: (902) 749-2258
Northern Region	Cumberland Colchester Pictou Antigonish Guysborough/St. Mary's	80 Walker Street, Suite 1 Truro, NS B2N 4A7 Telephone: (902) 956-8985 Fax: (902) 896-2425
Central Region	Kings Hants (East & West) Lunenburg/Chester Halifax	1741 Brunswick Street, 3rd Floor Halifax, NS B3J 3B7 Telephone: (902) 424-5555 Fax: (902) 424-7189
Cape Breton Region	Inverness Victoria Richmond Cape Breton	15 Dorchester Street, Suite 501 Sydney, NS B1P 5Y9 Telephone: (902) 563-3735 Fax: (902) 563-2700