



Internal Use Only – Not for Public/Media Distribution

Key messages are provided to ensure consistent and up-to-date messaging by police spokespersons. They are to be used by designated police service members and senior managers when speaking to the public or the media.

Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police – Key Messages

Police Week 2024

Date: May 3, 2024

Sunday, May 12 to 18, 2024, has been designated as this year's Police Week in Ontario. Police Week was first observed in 1970 and coincides with Peace Officers Memorial Day, recognized internationally on May 15. This year's theme, ***Join Policing: Keep Ontario Safe***, provides an opportunity to highlight the important role police officers and police personnel play in community safety, and how members of the community can take an active role in keeping Ontario safe by joining this rewarding profession.

This year's Police Week presents police services with an opportunity to communicate important narratives about how they seek individuals with a passion for strong and vibrant communities on our law enforcement teams. We want to use Police Week to demonstrate to Ontarians the value of the work our police officers and personnel do each day and encourage individuals to consider a career in policing. It is important to use Police Week to support our people and connect positively with all our communities.

***It is important to use
Police Week to support
our people and connect
positively with all our
communities.***

During this year's Police Week, please consider taking the opportunity to highlight traditional and non-traditional recruiting initiatives and promote public safety, crime prevention, and community engagement as important components of a rewarding career.

The OACP partners with the Ministry of the Solicitor General, police services across Ontario, and many community groups to promote and celebrate policing. In addition, the Ministry and the OACP will actively promote policing during Police Week through social media (Twitter: @ONSafety, @OACPOfficial; Instagram: OACPOfficial). Please remember to use the Police Week hashtag #PoliceWeekON/ #Semainedelalpolice in all your service's communications.

Please note that the OACP also supports the National Police Week initiative lead by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP), which also takes place during the week of May 12 to 18, 2024. Please visit the [CACP website](#) for more information.

Key Messages – General

- Policing in Canada is founded on trust, accountability, and support for all the communities we serve. Policing is a vital public service, and police personnel are ultimately responsible to the people of Ontario. Fair and unbiased policing must be a hallmark of Ontario policing.
- Police Week provides us with an opportunity to promote the bonds between police officers and personnel and the people they serve. Without public trust, police services cannot serve their communities effectively.
- Our police officers and personnel work hard every day to keep Ontarians safe. Police Week is about acknowledging their hard work in delivering community safety services in a professional, accountable, and effective manner. It provides opportunities for police and the community to celebrate policing and to talk about how members of the community can join this rewarding profession.
- Police officers do important law enforcement and community building work every day that often goes unnoticed, unreported, and sometimes uncelebrated. Police Week is an opportunity to highlight some of the exceptional everyday work of Police Officers and thank them for their dedication to our communities.
- Policing as a career provides individuals to not only enjoy a rich and rewarding career but empowers them to make a real difference in the lives of their fellow Ontarians. There are many opportunities both for sworn police officers and police professionals to contribute to safe and healthy communities.
- To ensure safe and healthy communities, we require a collaborative effort by police organizations and between police services, other first responders, as well as social, business, and community organizations. We must all work together to manage the risks and impacts to the health and safety of Canadians caused by crime, natural disasters, mental illness, addiction, etc. Health and safety are built on four pillars: treatment, harm reduction, enforcement, and prevention. Police organizations take pride in their leadership and/or support role for each of these pillars. As frontline first responders, police officers are often the gateway to many community supports. Our goal is always to make that first contact meaningful and to achieve the best possible outcome.
- Police in Ontario have heard and continue to carefully listen to communities about the need for continuous improvement in the delivery of policing services. Our services are making real and tangible efforts to “re-imagine” policing to ensure we adapt and respond to changing community health and safety needs. We remain committed to community engagement, well-being, and proactive crime prevention efforts that reflect true partnerships.

*We believe in
community
policing. It's
what we do.*

- Investing in the evolving needs of Ontario police services is an investment in our Province's future. We need to attract quality candidates to our profession, evolve our professionalism, and provide our police personnel with the tools they need to keep us safe. The recent elimination of the fee for new recruits to attend the Ontario Police College (Basic Constable Training) removes a significant financial barrier for potential new officers.
- We believe in community policing. It's what we do. For community policing to positively impact our communities, we need individuals, families, businesses, and community groups to work together.
- Community partnerships play a key role in modern and effective policing. As public service organizations, our police services are held to high levels of professionalism and accountability. In order to meet these goals, the government, businesses, community groups, and individual Ontarians must work together to identify common community safety and well-being needs and meet these goals.
- Policing requires police leaders and personnel to be adaptable and professional. Better, more effective, and accountable policing depends increasingly on partnering with other government, business, and community groups to deliver services that meet Ontarians changing public expectations when it comes to law enforcement and community safety.

Key Messages – Get to Know Policing

- We invite Ontarians to get to know their police services, our police officers, and our police personnel better. Proactive, positive, professional, and accountable policing is vital to building strong, healthy communities.
- Police officers come from many different backgrounds. While we always strive to have police services that reflect our communities, we know that we always have work to do to recruit and attract the best candidates.
- Individuals considering a career in policing are encouraged to reach out to police services during Police Week to find out more about a career in policing. Police services are looking to attract highly qualified and motivated people from many different backgrounds.
- A great place to start is the OACP Constable Selection System. Find out what you need to apply for a Police Constable position with our Ontario police services at www.oacpcertificate.ca. You can also check out opportunities with individual police services as a sworn police officer or in a civilian position. The possibilities are endless.
- Because of the varied nature of police work, this is a profession where people will apply the skills and experiences they have developed from their previous training, education, and professional and personal life. Policing offers opportunities for personal growth, continuous learning, a high level of job satisfaction, specialization, promotion opportunities, and excellent salary, benefits, and pension.
- Our national, provincial, municipal, and Indigenous police services are proud to have individuals who bring exceptional talents and a commitment to life-long learning. We welcome opportunities to engage with the people we serve during Police Week and throughout the year to promote and make policing better.

*Our national, provincial, municipal, and
Indigenous police services are proud to have
individuals who bring exceptional talents and a
commitment to life-long learning.*

Social Media and Police Week

With traditional media undergoing significant changes (e.g., the closing of many community newspapers and the well-documented struggles of traditional media organizations in adapting to today's communication realities), police organizations are being counted on to communicate directly to their communities.

During Police Week, many social media options are available to you. Some of the most popular social media tools are Twitter and Instagram (to name just two platforms). Part of the appeal of Twitter, Instagram, and other social media platforms is the spontaneity and connectedness they offer. We urge you to develop a strategy that will allow your police organization to utilize social media to communicate Police Week events and messages:

- Use the hashtag **#PoliceWeekON/#Semainedelaipolice** in all your Police Week communications.
- Tag the OACP, the Ministry of the Solicitor General, and your local Member(s) of the Provincial Parliament (MPPs) on your social media posts so they can support your organization.
- Share your stories with the OACP about individual police officers and other personnel and how they are positively contributing to safer communities. We want to highlight individual members of police organizations and their work throughout Police Week. Photos are encouraged and welcome!
- Share with the OACP examples of programs and community initiatives that positively contribute to safer communities.
- Use photos and images you own to promote Police Week and the Police Week theme.
- Plan your tweets and other social media engagement. Invite feedback from the community.
- Look for and retweet the @OACPOfficial tweets and Instagram posts, as well as other police organizations' tweets. Let's support one another!
- Contact the OACP if you think we can promote your police organization and members through our communication channels. For example, our [Heroes Beyond the Badge](#) highlights police personnel and their work, which often goes unappreciated. We can also publish short, blog-type stories about police issues, programs, personnel, etc. on our [HQ Magazine website](#).

When engaging with individuals or groups during Police Week, here are a few suggestions:

- **Invite conversations – even difficult ones.** It is important that we be open to engaging with community members on all levels, including on social media. This engagement must be done professionally and respectfully by both police and

members of the public. Of course, not all social media communications directed at your police organization merit interaction.

- **Engage, don't debate.** It is up to each police organization to decide whether or not to engage with groups who may wish to be critical of policing, police services, or police leaders. However, not engaging may be positioned by such groups as disrespectful and evidence that police don't care about their issues. Of course, communication that involves hateful views/behaviours (racist, sexist, homophobic, etc.) should never be tolerated.
 - **Use media, such as photos and video links,** as part of your social media postings.
-

For more information, please contact:

Dr. José Luís (Joe) Couto
Director of Government Relations & Communications

T. (416) 919-9798
E. jcouto@oacp.ca

Larissa Pereira
Communications Co-ordinator

T. (647) 327-7192
E. lpereira@oacp.ca

The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police is the Voice of Ontario's Police Leaders

Members of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police Serve their communities as the senior police leaders in municipal, regional, provincial, National, and First Nations police services across Ontario