

# Halton Regional Police Service

Your Community. Our Service.



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Working in partnership with the communities we serve, the Halton Regional Police Service delivers quality, cost-effective public safety and crime prevention services, as mandated by law.

The Halton Regional Police Service is recognized as one of the leading police agencies in the areas of diversity and community safety and well-being initiatives, and is committed to ensuring that Halton Region is even safer tomorrow than it is today.

## One Vision:

*To be the leader in community safety and policing excellence.*

## One Mission:

*To provide effective and efficient community-based policing.*

## One Team:

*Exemplified through our collaboration and coordination with our community, our partners, and our employees.*

*One Vision, One Mission, One Team*

## Document Overview

The Halton Regional Police Service is the ninth largest police service in the province of Ontario. Under the governance of the Halton Police Board and under the leadership of the Chief of Police, the Halton Regional Police Service serves approximately 600,000 residents in the City of Burlington, Town of Halton Hills, Town of Milton and Town of Oakville.

Both the Halton Regional Police Service and its Police Services Board are extremely proud of the fact that the Region of Halton is annually recognized as the safest large municipality (population over 100,000) in all of Canada. This achievement is measured by both crime rate statistics and our crime severity index. We are equally proud of the fact that we achieve these results with the lowest cost per capita of all comparable Police Services.

The goal of this document is to share information about the rationale, principles, structures and parameters that guide our operations as a police service. This includes how we apply best practices to recruit talent, the breadth of training provided to our sworn and civilian members, how we hold ourselves accountable, what our governance structure looks like and how community safety and well-being is threaded through everything we do, every day.

It is important that the residents of Halton know that the activities undertaken by our Service and by individual members are carefully considered at all times and informed by a deep commitment to strengthening public safety in partnership with the communities that we serve.

## Governance / Oversight

The Halton Regional Police Service is governed through an oversight board and guided by various pieces of local, provincial and federal legislation with the purpose of steering policing through structured actions that are regulated and accountable. Police governance has the responsibility of providing accountability to the public to ensure that community needs are translated into effective policing.

### Halton Police Board

The Halton Police Board (“the Board”) is a seven-member board that provides strategic governance to the Halton Regional Police Service. It is a provincially mandated legal entity that operates independently from Regional or Municipal Council. As such, it is the Board’s responsibility to ensure that the residents of Halton Region receive adequate and effective police services in accordance with policing standards issued by the Province. The Board is the trustee of public interest regarding the provision of all police services in the community. The Board exercises its governance and oversight functions through the development of policies. The Chief of Police reports to and is directly accountable to the Police Board for adherence to and compliance with the Board’s policies.

For more information on the Halton Police Board, please visit their website at:

<https://www.haltonpoliceboard.ca/>

### Police Services Act, R.S.O. 1990

The *Police Services Act* is the law governing the conduct of police officers in the Province of Ontario. The Act became law in 1990 with the purpose of defining the role of police services in Ontario (excluding the RCMP). This Act guides several key areas within policing including but not limited to:

- Duties of police officers and police staff
- Complaints and disciplinary proceedings
- Municipal Police Service Boards
- Independent Police Review Director
- The Special Investigations Unit
- Community Safety and Well-Being Plans

See below for a full copy of the *Ontario Police Services Act*:

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/s19001>

### Ministry of the Solicitor General

The Ministry of the Solicitor General has a wide range of responsibilities for policing in Ontario including:

- Explaining in detail the standards Ontario’s Police Services must follow
- Responsibility for the Ontario Police College, which trains police recruits and offers advanced training for experienced police officers and civilian employees of police services
- Researches criminal justice trends that affect policing
- Writes and updates the Policing Standards Manual

For more information on how the Ministry of the Solicitor General guides policing in Ontario visit:

[https://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/english/police\\_serv/about.html](https://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/english/police_serv/about.html)

## Accountability

### Service Philosophy

The Halton Regional Police Service is committed to providing our community with the highest quality police service possible. Public input is essential to ensuring that we continue to meet the needs or exceed the expectations of those we serve. Sometimes the Halton Regional Police Service and or its members make mistakes or act in ways that the residents we serve may not understand nor like. It is only by bringing your concerns to our attention that we can deal with them effectively. Your constructive comments about our service, both good and bad, will help us to improve. Our goal is to continue establishing and maintaining a relationship with our community founded on trust.

### About the Professional Standards Bureau

The purpose of the Halton Regional Police Service Professional Standards Bureau is to contribute to the achievement of our organization’s mission, goals and objectives by providing an effective, efficient and economical support service.

If misconduct exists, the goal of the Professional Standards Bureau is to:

1. Correct misconduct
2. Deter misconduct
3. Reassure the public

The Professional Standards Bureau also works to ensure that the prescribed Service standards concerning its administration promote and support professionalism. This includes the practices, conduct, appearance, ethics and integrity of its members and in doing so, strengthens public confidence and cooperation within the community.

We believe that the professional police officer will:

- Ensure the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* is protected for all people;
- Place the interests of the community before any personal or private interests; and
- Provide public safety and a level of policing excellence through our people, our work and our relationships.

### Transparency and Accountability

Public confidence and trust are enhanced by oversight agencies such as the Office of the Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD) and the Special Investigations Unit (SIU).

### The Special Investigations Unit

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) is a civilian law enforcement agency that conducts investigations of incidents involving the police resulting in death, serious injury, or allegations of sexual assault. The SIU has the power to both investigate and charge police officers with criminal offences.

The Professional Standards Bureau will also conduct administrative reviews at the conclusion of an investigation completed by the SIU to ensure that the Service’s policies and procedures were followed.

For more information on the Special Investigation Unit and their mandate, please visit:

<https://www.siu.on.ca/en/index.php>

## Office of the Independent Police Review Director

The Office of the Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD) is a civilian oversight agency that ensures that public complaints against police in Ontario are dealt with fairly, efficiently and effectively. The OIPRD oversees the handling of all public complaints made against the police. This begins with receiving the complaint, through to its conclusion.

The Professional Standards Bureau will conduct investigations into member conduct allegations under the *Police Services Act* and through public complaint investigations initiated by the OIPRD. Investigations could include interviewing complainants, officers and witnesses and gathering physical and digital evidence. At the conclusion of an investigation assigned by the OIPRD, the investigative report is submitted to both the OIPRD and the complainant. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, a review can be requested and if accepted, will be completed by the OIPRD.

Further information on the OIPRD complaint process can be found here:

<https://www.oiprd.on.ca/complaints/complaints-process/>

## Authorities

The Halton Regional Police Service develops focused strategies to ensure public safety while acting within the scope of the authorities that are available to our officers through legislation. Our officers receive extensive training as it relates to local, Provincial and Federal legislation that sets parameters as to our day-to-day operations. These authorities have been developed through years of policing reform and reviews, case law, the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and other legislation such as the *Highway Traffic Act*, *Provincial Offences Act* and local by-laws.

### The Highway Traffic Act

The *Highway Traffic Act* covers all things traffic related in the Province of Ontario. It consists of the *Act* itself often referred to as the “rules” and the regulations around the rules. Our police service in consultation with the community, has identified traffic safety as one of our key service priorities. As a result, our officers spend many hours a year conducting proactive traffic enforcement which has a direct impact on public safety.

There are a number of factors that authorize an officer to pull over a vehicle and can be explained further in various sections within the *Act*. One key point is that police are authorized to stop a vehicle to determine if the driver has documents pertaining to operating the vehicle. This includes a driver’s license, vehicle permit and valid insurance card. Authorization to stop a vehicle also includes any offence committed either provincially or criminally, road worthiness of a vehicle, or driver sobriety.

### Commencing a Charge

There are 2 ways in which an officer can lay a charge under the *Highway Traffic Act*.

- Provincial Offence Notice (PON), also known as a traffic ticket
- Summons to Defendant (directs a person to appear in court)

A PON is given when there is a fine specified for an offence. A summons however, is issued when there is no fine set. This is due to the seriousness of the offence or possibly when a person has previous convictions for the same offence.



**Criminal Offences**

Canadian laws are found within the *Criminal Code of Canada* and a breach of those laws constitutes a criminal offence. When an individual commits a criminal offence, the *Criminal Code of Canada* gives officers the power to arrest and lay a charge. Criminal offences can be dissected into 3 classifications; summary conviction, indictable and dual procedure (considered indictable for purposes of arrest). These classifications are based on severity. As a frame of reference, summary conviction offences are minor in nature and penalties are generally lesser than indictable offences. Indictable offences are the most heinous of crimes and penalty can be as severe as life in prison. Dual procedure offences cover everything in between.

**Police Officer’s Power of Arrest**

Under the *Criminal Code of Canada*, a police officer has the authority to make an arrest if one or more of the following exist:

- They have reasonable grounds to believe a person has or is about to commit an indictable offence whether past, present or future;
- They find anyone committing a criminal offence;
- They believe a person has a valid outstanding warrant for their arrest; and/or
- They believe anyone is breaching a release condition (i.e. have been charged with an offence(s) and released from custody by either the police or a court with conditions to abide by).

It is important to understand that a police officer’s power to arrest is not only found within the *Criminal Code of Canada*. Several other pieces of Provincial legislation also provide police officers with arrest authorities.



**Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

The Halton Regional Police Service is dedicated to the pursuit of an equitable, diverse and inclusive workplace for all our members. Through ongoing professional development, we are also committed to ensuring our officers are competent and effective when navigating Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) issues and capable when engaging the diverse population living in the Region of Halton. Members of our police service receive ongoing EDI training starting from the time they attend the Ontario Police College and throughout their whole careers. Training topics include diversity and human rights, cultural awareness, self-awareness and internal / implicit biases.

**Internal**

We recognize the importance of integrating equity, diversity and inclusion principles throughout our whole Police Service. By doing this, we are able to emphasize the importance of creating a workforce that is not only reflective of the community we serve but is sensitive to the needs of our culturally diverse Region. Several key initiatives have been developed to strategically guide our organizational culture and members’ professional development. Some of these initiatives include the creation of internal support networks to provide guidance and support to individuals from diverse backgrounds that are employed by our Service and the creation of Diversity Teams to expand the capacity of our members to more effectively address EDI issues that they encounter when working together with members of the public. We also struck an Executive EDI Committee to provide strategic direction as we look to enhance our curriculum of EDI programming. The Executive EDI Committee is made up of members who have direct oversight and responsibility for critical areas within the Service impacting equity, diversity and inclusion.

**External**

Our Service recognizes that the Region of Halton is a mosaic of people who not only bring their differences but uniqueness to our community. By building links and relationships within the community, we are able to leverage the expertise and experiences of those living within the Region of Halton. Community outreach and engagement has always and continues to be a focal point for our Service. We understand the importance of communicating with our diverse community through roundtable discussions and consultations including our Diversity Engagement Table. Our Diversity Engagement Table is comprised of community members and organizations that provide advice and insight on ways to improve relationships with our Police Service and diverse members of our community. We understand that building relationships between our Police Service and the community is an opportunity to enhance overall community safety and well-being. We have also leveraged the expertise of outside consultants who are experts in EDI work to ensure we continuously strive towards implementing best practices within our organization and also develop mechanisms and accountability measures to address the needs of the diverse community we serve.

**Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator**

The role of our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator is to enhance and evaluate all EDI programming and initiatives to ensure we have the most inclusive workplace for our members and the most engaged Police Service for the community we serve. The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator works to collaborate and engage our diverse community partners with the goal of strengthening the relationship between our Service, our officers and members of the public.

## Member Wellness

The Halton Regional Police Service has long advocated that psychological well-being is best achieved by a holistic health care strategy that addresses every aspect of our member's lives. This holistic approach to overall health is reflected in a wide range of resources and services available to our members and their families. Our service recognizes that when our members are better able to manage stressors associated to their personal and professional lives, they are more effective when responding to the needs of the community.

### Code of Conduct

The Halton Regional Police Service expects all of its members to act in the public interest and perform all duties in a competent manner while applying the laws that govern each and every one of us. Every day, our members are expected to exercise their best judgment to uphold the trust that has been placed in them by the Service and by the residents of our community. These expectations are outlined in a Service-wide Code of Conduct.

### Fit for Duty

The Halton Regional Police Service has a Fit for Duty Policy to protect the health and safety of all individuals. This policy ensures that our members and volunteers that perform work on behalf of the Service are fit for duty and have the ability to safely perform the essential functions of their position.

### Organizational Wellness Unit

The Organizational Wellness Unit consists of a Staff Sergeant, a Constable and a psychologist and is a full time resource dedicated to our members. The Organizational Wellness Unit provides mental health awareness and training and implements preventative measures to better prepare our members for the challenges of policing.

### Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program is a professional service that offers counselling, coaching, information and support that is accessible to all of our members. The Employee Assistance Program provides supports for a variety of issues our members may be facing relating to:

- Mental health
- Career
- Life balance
- Health management
- Achieving greater personal well-being

### Multi-Faith Support Team

The Multi-Faith Support Team (MFST) is made up of volunteer community members who represent different faiths and religions. The mandate of the MFST is to support the spiritual well-being of our members and their families. MFST members volunteer their time and have special skills in spiritual, psychological and sociological matters and are available to support, provide guidance and serve our members and their families 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week.

## Community Safety and Well-Being

In 2019, the Community Safety and Policing Act was introduced and passed into law as part of Bill 68, the *Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act*. The Act enhanced and strengthened the emphasis on community policing concepts and expectations. The Halton Regional Police Service is at the forefront of police services in Ontario with the implementation of these provincial enhancements. The Service has put a specific emphasis on upstream intervention, identification of community risk and leveraging community collaboration. These concepts are now entrenched within the Halton Region Police Service and the Halton Region's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (CSWB) with the overall goal to build a safer and healthier community for all who call Halton home.

### What does this mean?

The delivery of policing services in Ontario has evolved to include working with community partners to focus on reducing the risks that affect community safety. This reduces the demand for emergency response. This concept is known as the "upstream approach to intervention" and provides a coordinated response to risk, which allows for the system to be applied most effectively to those that need it the most. The Halton Regional Police Service has built on our policing philosophy by including proactive measures of intervention, known as the four pillars of community safety and well-being.

### Framework for Community Safety and Well-Being

The Halton Regional Police Service's Framework for Community Safety and Well-Being has the following strategic priorities:

- **Incident Response** – To ensure those in need get the right response, at the right time, by the right responders.
- **Risk Intervention** – To address the criminal behaviour that most affects the safety of community members.
- **Prevention** – Community collaboration is the catalyst for positive working relationships with all community agencies, resources and partners.
- **Social Development** – To assist in the continued development, education and support of all social groups in Halton Region.

The Halton Regional Police Service reinforces the Community Safety Planning Framework by incorporating its principles into the Service's training, performance management process, project development and delivery of ongoing initiatives. The Service's four priorities of focus include mental health and addictions, priority populations, traffic safety and crime. The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan is a living system of collaboration and convergence of service delivery, risk mitigation, safety promotion and social development.

To review our Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, click the link below:

[https://www.halton.ca/getmedia/8b348f60-7d3a-4e85-b503-d8166408fd6d/SCS-Community\\_Safety\\_Well\\_Being\\_report.pdf.aspx](https://www.halton.ca/getmedia/8b348f60-7d3a-4e85-b503-d8166408fd6d/SCS-Community_Safety_Well_Being_report.pdf.aspx)

### Situation Table

The Halton Situation Table plays a critical role in connecting some of the Region's individuals and families, who are at acutely elevated risk, with services and support they need to thrive. The Situation Table is a collaborative of the Halton Regional Police Service, the Regional Municipality of Halton, local municipalities, social services and community-based organizations that identify and support individuals at an acutely elevated risk of harm, committing an offence, or coming into contact with the police or other crisis-driven services. There are currently 35 partner agencies who attend the Situation Table on a weekly basis with the goal of ensuring individuals get the right help, at the right time, from the right people.

## Strategic Policing

The Halton Regional Police Service is a leader in the use of technology and innovation to enhance public safety. In 2014, the Service created the Strategic Management Office (SMO) with a mandate to catalyze transformational change. The SMO, which includes our Police Analytics Unit and our Planning, Policy, Research and Emergency Management Unit, leverages data and analytics to inform and guide the activities of our Service through a community safety and well-being lens.

### Police Analytics

The Police Analytics Unit is the Service's source for reporting, analysis and consultative services related to data. The unit is responsible for producing both scheduled and ad hoc reports for all areas of the organization and also develops and maintains several web-based reporting tools for delivering information in a real-time and on-demand manner. Police Analytics also has a mandate to serve as an organizational resource for business process changes and projects by providing data-driven, evidence-based decision support to primary stakeholders.

### Planning, Policy, Research and Emergency Management Unit

The Planning, Policy, Research and Emergency Management Unit is responsible for the effective and efficient delivery of several services within the Halton Regional Police Service including:

- Strategic / business planning
- Emergency preparedness planning
- Organizational research and development
- Problem and resource analysis
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) coordination
- Performance measurement
- Best practices and research central repository
- CIPER (Critical Infrastructure Police Emergency Response) coordination and as a facilities planning resource

The Unit provides recommendations and strategic advice to Senior Command and responds to requests for information from internal and external stakeholders.

### Strategic Use of Data

As a police service, we understand the importance of addressing crime trends and other public safety issues through a strategic lens. This means ensuring that we are taking a proactive approach to developing initiatives and crime prevention strategies that are rooted in evidence and objectivity rather than hypothetical scenarios. This includes the use and analysis of data that can be disseminated to frontline officers for the development of appropriate responses. This ensures that officers are addressing criminal behaviour and other public safety issues that have the greatest impact on our communities.

## Talent Acquisition

The Halton Regional Police Service currently employs over 1,000 sworn and civilian members, each of whom plays an integral role in ensuring we are able to deliver top-tier services to those in our community. Because of this, we have placed an emphasis on attracting the best talent and only hiring those who have the knowledge, skills and abilities to address the changing needs of the community we serve. We have developed several outreach initiatives with the goal of attracting diverse talent and making the Halton Regional Police Service truly reflective of the community we serve. Consideration is always given to the changing requirements of our police service through legislation, shifting population and demographic profiles of our community to ensure we achieve each of our Service's strategic goals for the following year.

### Minimum Requirements for Sworn Officer

The *Police Services Act* sets out the minimum requirements to apply to be a police officer in Ontario:

- Be 18 years of age or older
- Be a Canadian citizen or Canadian permanent resident
- Be physically and mentally able to perform the duties of the position
- Be of good moral character and habits, meaning being an individual other people would look upon as being trustworthy and having integrity
- Have successfully completed at least four years of secondary school education or equivalent

Our recruitment process requires applicants to highlight qualifications and competencies well above the minimum standards set out in the *Police Services Act*. This includes higher levels of education, community involvement and work experience which makes them a more attractive and qualified candidate for employment with our Service.

### Application Process

Our Service has developed a multi-stage selection process to ensure we are hiring the most competent individuals to serve our community. This process includes written application submissions, background questionnaires and investigations, several stages of interviews to assess suitability and a psychological assessment with a psychologist. All of these steps are designed to ensure that successful candidates are suited to address the challenges of a career in policing and that they possess the skills to undertake critical decision-making and sensitivity when interacting with the community on a daily basis. Our Recruiting Unit conducts regular assessments of our application system to ensure we have processes in place to attract and hire acceptable police candidates. We also regularly seek guidance from various provincial ministries, agencies, other police services, community organizations and experts in the field of psychology and equity, diversity and inclusion to assess the suitability of applicants applying to our police service.

### Recruitment Outreach Initiatives

We recognize that hiring individuals from diverse backgrounds has a tremendous impact on how we deliver policing within the Region of Halton. Not only are we mandated under the *Police Services Act* to have our police service be reflective of the community we serve, we have built this into our recruiting philosophy which guides the many outreach opportunities we use to attract new talent.

Through the tracking of applicant demographics, we are able to take a more strategic approach to identifying gaps and barriers within our current application process to ensure we are attracting individuals from all backgrounds who wish to pursue a career in policing.

For more information about our application processes please visit:

<https://www.haltonpolice.ca/joinus/index.php>

# Police Training

The Halton Regional Police Service leads in the area of training and professional development for all our sworn and civilian members. As we know, policing in the province of Ontario poses many complexities and challenges and we recognize the need for continuous and diverse training to maintain a standard of excellence that all of our members strive to obtain. Beyond the requisite Basic Constable Training Program that every officer in Ontario completes through the Ontario Police College, there is a comprehensive training program that our members participate in for the duration of their careers. Through an evidence-based approach, best practice review and scenario-based training, we are able to deliver innovative training in a variety of formats to meet standards and continually develop our members. Our Service recognizes that professional development in policing is paramount and through our training framework and approach we will continue to maintain a policing standard of excellence.

## Coach Officer Training

Following their basic training at the Ontario Police College, a new officer's training continues in the field with a Coach Officer for approximately 3 months. We invest in this process by selecting and training Coach Officers for this important role, which is often the most influential in an officer's development. Coaching and mentoring our newest members to do the job within our community plays the integral role of building capacity within our Police Service.

## Block Training

Our annual training program encompasses much of what is required by regulation to keep our members qualified to do their job. This includes Use of Force training, police vehicle operations and incident response training. Beyond what is required by regulation, this training time is also devoted to addressing emerging community issues and officer development. Modules on cultural competence, scenario-based de-escalation training, mental health response and victim-centered investigations are some examples of what our members have received training in over the past few years. All of our officers are required to complete this training on an annual basis.

## Cohort Training

Recognizing the need to develop our younger officers early in their careers led to the development of our Cohort Training Program. For the first 4 years of an officer's career, they are provided with an additional training program aimed at enhancing their investigative skills. The content of this training, which includes search warrant training, investigative scenarios and character development, is a foundational program that prepares officers for future assignments.

## Supervisory and Leadership Development

Our Service is committed to training and developing our members of all ranks. Dedicated training for our supervisory staff at the Sergeant and Staff Sergeant rank is done consistently to ensure that they are equipped to lead and guide our members in the work that they do. Senior command staff at the rank of Inspector and higher are also provided with courses and developmental opportunities specific to their leadership roles within the Service.

## Civilian Training

Our civilian members currently occupy a variety of critical roles within our Police Service. Many of these roles are unique and present challenges requiring our civilian members to be highly trained within their area of responsibility. Similar to our officers, civilian members receive extensive training at the time they start with our Police Service. This training continues as our civilian members progress through their careers.

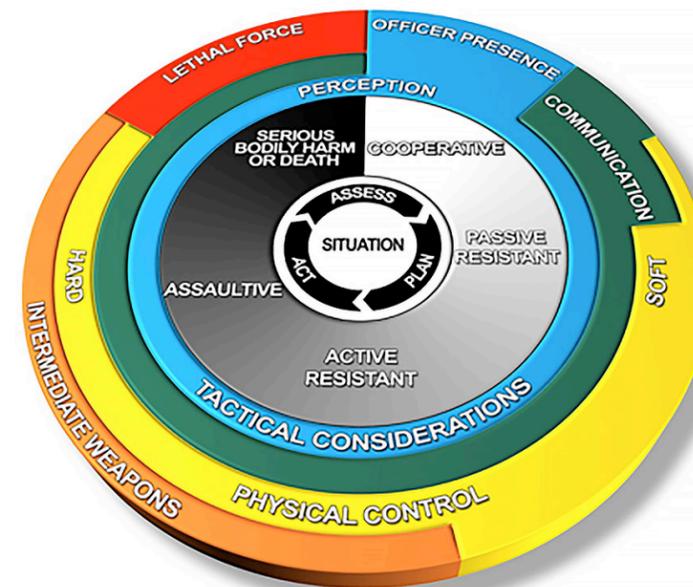
## Use of Force

Use of Force amongst police in the province is a highly regulated practice that draws its authority and limitations from the *Criminal Code of Canada*, the *Police Services Act*, related Provincial Regulations and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Situations involving police using force against members of the public make up a very small percentage of police interactions with the public. Use of Force in Ontario is best explained through the Ontario Use of Force Model. A guiding principle to Use of Force is that the situation or behaviour of a person that the officer is interacting with is the basis for any use of force. An officer's perception of the situation, along with information that they may have about the subject they are interacting with, has an impact on their decision to use force. There are also clear reporting requirements on police Use of Force in Ontario. If an officer points or discharges a firearm, uses a weapon on an individual, or uses physical force that results in injury a Use of Force Report must be submitted.

Although the incidences of Use of Force make up a small percentage of police interactions with the public, this has always been an area in which officers have received extensive training. In recent years, our Police Service has made a significant investment in less lethal force options. This is due to the increase in our response to incidents involving mental health and addiction and a shift towards crisis intervention and de-escalation training.

### Ontario Use of Force Model



The officer continuously assesses the situation and selects the most reasonable option relative to those circumstances as perceived at that point in time.

## Our Response to Mental Health

As a police service, we recognize mental health as one of our top priorities. Through upstream intervention, referrals, education, crisis response and de-escalation, we are constantly adding layers to our overall mental health approach. The Halton Regional Police Service demonstrates continued leadership in all areas of our mental health service delivery model by:

- Engaging and mobilizing the community, including our Community Safety and Well-Being partners, residents and others, to collaboratively share responsibility for addressing mental health concerns.
- Identifying and responding to situations of acutely elevated risk and mobilizing immediate interventions before an emergency or crisis-driven response is required.
- Proactively identifying and working closely with partners to provide appropriate, efficient and effective response to individuals living with mental health issues / problems.
- Applying proactive strategies to known and identified risks that are likely to result in harm to individuals or communities if left unmitigated.
- Ensuring that all employees are well-trained and well-equipped to address mental health concerns in the community.
- Diverting emergency room visits for those suffering from mental health issues by providing proactive services and resources to individuals and their families.

### Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Team

Our Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Teams (MCRRT), in partnership with St. Joseph's Healthcare, is made up of police officers, psychologists and mental health professionals trained to defuse or de-escalate crisis situations. These teams also advocate for those in crisis and ensure mental health assessments are completed where they are needed most.

### Crisis Outreach and Support Team

The Halton Regional Police Service Crisis Outreach and Support Team (COAST) provides Halton residents aged 16 and over, who are experiencing a mental health crisis immediate outreach and support. These teams are comprised of health care workers and police officers who are trained in mental health and crisis intervention and is funded by the Canadian Mental Health Association of Halton and the Ontario Ministry of Health.

### Reach Out Centre for Kids

In 2019, the Halton Regional Police Service looked to fill a critical gap in our overall mental health service delivery model by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Reach Out Centre for Kids (R.O.C.K) which is a local mental health agency. This Memorandum of Understanding now allows our officers to directly refer youth under the age of 17 and their families to the R.O.C.K for mental health support and follow up. In this way, we can now ensure children, youth and their families can get the appropriate help and support when they need it the most. This Memorandum highlights our Service's understanding of how early response to serious situations especially involving youth can have a direct impact on the safety and well-being of all those living in the Region of Halton.

### Crisis Intervention Training

The Halton Regional Police Service is committed to providing enhanced mental health training to all frontline officers and civilian members. Our Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) is a 40-hour course that equips our members with the knowledge and skills to assist those dealing with a mental health crisis. This training incorporates community collaboration into the curriculum including partnerships with the Canadian Mental Health Association, Local Health Integration Networks (LHINS) and other mental health organizations. CIT is an integral part of our mental health response strategy and will make us the first police service in Ontario to have all frontline officers and staff certified in this training.

### Virtual Reality Training

In 2019, the Halton Regional Police Service partnered with AXON to become the first police service in Canada to introduce virtual reality empathy based training to its members. This virtual reality empathy based training was introduced to better position our members to respond to dynamic mental health crises in the community. This training provides a first-hand experience of what someone going through a mental health crisis is seeing and feeling. The training also provides the same opportunity and experience through the perspective of a responding officer. This ensures that our members approach these types of situations with empathy and understanding and are more able to manage and de-escalate a potentially high risk situation.

### Crisis Negotiation Teams

Our Crisis Negotiation Team consists of 8 members of the Halton Regional Police Service. This team of highly trained officers are utilized to safely resolve any incident requiring crisis intervention or negotiation as part of a comprehensive emergency response function. The Crisis Negotiation Team is available 24-hours-a-day and responds to situations involving persons in crisis, hostage-takings and incidents involving people who have barricaded themselves. The Crisis Negotiation Team receives extensive ongoing training to enhance their active listening / communication skills and ability to effectively implement de-escalation strategies to safely resolve high-risk situations.

### Authorities under the *Ontario Mental Health Act*

Our Police Services approach to mental health is currently governed by the *Ontario Mental Health Act*. The *Ontario Mental Health Act* sets out the powers and obligations of police officers and psychiatric facilities in the province. The *Ontario Mental Health Act* provides guidelines in which a police officer can apprehend a person who is currently in crisis and take them to an appropriate place for examination by a physician. This includes where a police officer has reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a person is acting or has acted in a disorderly manner and has reasonable cause to believe that the person:

- has threatened or attempted or is threatening or attempting to cause bodily harm to himself or herself;
- has behaved or is behaving violently towards another person or has caused or is causing another person to fear bodily harm from him or her; or
- has shown or is showing a lack of competence to care for himself or herself;

and in addition, the police officer is of the opinion that the person is apparently suffering from a mental disorder of a nature or quality that likely will result in:

- serious bodily harm to the person;
- serious bodily harm to another person; or
- serious physical impairment of the person.

Currently, a police officer in the Province of Ontario is the only person who has the power to apprehend an individual in crisis and bring them to an appropriate place for an examination by a physician.

A full copy of the *Ontario Mental Health Act* can be found below:

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90m07>

## Supporting Victims of Crime

Lives can be forever changed by crime and tragedy. The physical, psychological and social consequences of crime are numerous and complex. Victim Services is a proven model of intervention to effectively reduce the impact of trauma and related consequences of victimization.

Believing that every victim has the right to heal and operating in accordance with the principles of the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*, the Victim Services Unit provides immediate assistance to victims, 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week.

Specially trained staff and volunteers work with police around the clock to provide on-scene and over-the-phone assistance to individuals, families and organizations through crisis intervention, emotional support and practical assistance. Acting as a "gateway to the community", the Victim Services Unit creates opportunities for healing by fostering hope through their skilled and compassionate response.

### Our Programs Include:

- Volunteer Program
- Crisis Response Program
- Victim Quick Response Program +
- Vulnerable Persons Registry
- Project Lifesaver
- Facility Dog
- Sexual Assault Support
- Intimate Partner Violence Support

The Victim Services Unit actively recruits volunteers from various cultures to provide a culturally competent service that supports all members of the community. At any given time, our volunteer base incorporates between 10 and 15 different spoken languages to ensure that every individual within our community receives support that dovetails with their needs.

With the goals of lessening the impact of violent crime, increasing the immediate safety of survivors and preventing future victimization, our Victim Quick Response Program provides limited financial assistance to victims in the immediate aftermath of a violent crime through refunded expenses. In 2019, our Victim Services Unit responded to over 4,000 victims of crime and trauma and donated over \$350,000 back to the community through refunded expenses for victims of crime.

Our Victim Services Unit is also actively involved with intervention and prevention strategies through representation on numerous committees, coalitions and organizations locally but also at the provincial level through the Ontario Network of Victim Service Providers, the Victim Services Alliance of Ontario and the Office for Victims of Crime.

For more information on the individual programs facilitated through our Victim Services Unit, visit:

<https://www.haltonpolice.ca/about/victimservices/programs.php>

## Commitment to Transparency

The Halton Regional Police Service is committed to sharing consistent, factual and actionable information with the communities we serve, in a timely and transparent manner.

We strategically leverage a number of different tools to ensure our communities remain engaged and have an opportunity to participate in conversations about what matters most to them. These tools and tactics include:

- Our website
- Frequent media releases regarding incidents, crime trends, initiatives, etc.
- Publication of an Annual Report
- Community surveys (to gauge the opinion of residents and stakeholders on policing matters and inform the Strategic Plan)
- The publication of our Strategic Plan (every four years, in partnership and consultation with stakeholders throughout the community)
- Targeted media outreach (broadcast, print, digital)
- Social media platforms

The Service maintains an active social media presence on the following platforms:

- Twitter: [@haltonpolice](#) | [@HRPSOak](#) | [@HRPSBurl](#) | [@HRPSMiltHH](#)
- Facebook: [@HaltonPoliceService](#)
- Instagram: [@haltonpolice](#)
- YouTube: [@HRPSBronte](#)
- LinkedIn: [@HaltonRegionalPoliceService](#)

To complement these efforts, members of the Halton Regional Police Service also regularly engage the public via presentations to community groups. Topics include, but are not limited to: residential security tips, fraud prevention, overdose awareness, identity theft and internet safety.



Front cover photo: Justin Tang