

**Report to / Rapport au:**

**OTTAWA POLICE SERVICES BOARD  
LA COMMISSION DE SERVICES POLICIERS D'OTTAWA**

**23 January 2023 / 23 janvier 2023**

**Submitted by / Soumis par:**

**Chief of Police, Ottawa Police Service / Chef de police, Service de police d'Ottawa**

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**SUBJECT: EQUITABLE WORK ENVIRONMENT - ANNUAL REPORT**

**OBJET: ÉQUITÉ EN MILIEU DE TRAVAIL - RAPPORT ANNUEL**

**REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Ottawa Police Services Board receive this report for information.**

**RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT**

**Que la Commission de services policiers d'Ottawa prenne connaissance  
du présent rapport a titre d'information.**

**BACKGROUND**

On August 16, 2012, a female Ottawa Police Service (OPS) officer filed a human rights application with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario against the Ottawa Police Services Board (Board), alleging discrimination in employment on the basis of sex, marital status, and family status. The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) intervened as a party under section 37 of the Ontario Human Rights Code (Code).

As part of the 2015 settlement reached through the OHRC, the OPS agreed to undertake a series of actions to address inequities related to gender within the organization.

In the Fall of 2017, the OPS concluded its obligations under the Minutes of Settlement in accordance with the prescribed deadlines. Out of the deliverables of the

Minutes of Settlement, the OPS developed and implemented the Equitable Work Environment (EWE) Policy.

The EWE Policy reaffirmed the Service's commitment to providing an environment that is inclusive, reflective of the community it serves, and free of systemic barriers that cause discrimination in the employment relationship as related to protected Human Rights Code grounds (age, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex (including pregnancy), gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, record of offences, marital status, family status, and disability).

The Policy commits the OPS to ensuring equitable workplace policies and practices at all stages of the employment relationship, including but not limited to recruitment, hiring, competitions, promotions, temporary/acting assignments, job placements, and training/development opportunities.

The EWE Policy establishes the requirement for regular audits and reviews to measure the performance of the policy and to monitor and evaluate progress toward achieving an equitable workplace. The policy also establishes a requirement for the Chief of Police to provide an annual report to the Board.

## **DISCUSSION**

The OPS EWE Policy supports the Service's commitment to fostering a work culture that actively promotes equity, diversity and inclusion. The policy defines the expectations, roles and responsibilities to support equitable opportunities and decision-making. The policy reinforces workplace practices that demonstrate all members are valued for the unique contributions they bring to their respective roles, and it supports members in this regard through equitable treatment in all aspects of the employment relationship.

The EWE Policy supports Board Policies CR-1 Positive Workplace and CR-14/GA-14 Accessibility Policy, as well as a number of internal related policies, practices and programs including but not limited to the Service's Accessibility Policy; Accommodations Policy; Civilian Job Competition Policy; Human Rights and Race Relations Policy; Official Language Policy; Respectful Workplace Policy; Sworn Promotion Policy; Violence and Harassment in the Workplace Policy; Process and Procedure on Maternity, Parental Leave and Prevention of Discrimination and Accommodation based on Sex (including Pregnancy); Process and Procedure on Prevention of Discrimination and Accommodation based on Gender, Gender Identity and Gender Expression; Process and Procedure for Prevention of Discrimination and

Accommodation based on Family Status; and Process and Procedure for Prevention of Discrimination and Accommodation based on Disability.

Additionally, the Service's 2020-2022 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan, approved by the Board in February 2020, not only supported the EWE Policy but also provided the blueprint to initiate change and address inequities. The strategic three-year plan focused on improving equitable opportunities within the Service as well as fostering a more inclusive environment both within the workplace and in service delivery. The Service's next EDI Strategy promises to support continued progress for a more equitable work environment.

The EWE Policy Annual Report provides the Board with an account of activities and initiatives undertaken in 2022 to further advance equity within the OPS.

### **Continued Implementation of the 2020-2022 EDI Action Plan**

The Service's first EDI Action Plan (2020-2022) was a major deliverable of the Board's Strategic Plan in the priority area to make "meaningful progress on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion".

The Plan focused on creating meaningful and measurable progress towards a workplace culture that embraces EDI, and leveraged significant police and community input, as well as survey and report recommendations – including recommendations drawn from the [Ottawa Police Service 2019 Diversity Audit Report](#) conducted by Graybridge Malkam (presented to the Board on November 25, 2019).

The 2020-2022 EDI Action Plan included the following ten priority action items, of which just over half were internally focused on creating a more equitable work environment (action items focused on improving equity within the organization are bolded below):

1. Create an EDI Office to enhance EDI efforts and coordination across the OPS.  
**[COMPLETE]**
2. Provide EDI coaching and mentoring to equip our leaders with culture change and EDI tools. **[ONGOING]**
3. Develop an EDI Lens Toolkit to improve our decision-making for internal and external systems and responses – i.e., missing persons/Indigenous women, and internal transfers, promotions, and developmental rotation processes.  
**[COMPLETE, WITH ONGOING APPLICATION]**
4. Reintroduce the Hate Crime Section to improve response and support to impacted communities.

5. Enhance community policing including expansion of Neighbourhood Resource Teams.
6. Continue anti-racial profiling efforts on addressing over- and under-policing concerns, using a multi-stakeholder approach to policy, procedures, and accountability measures.
7. Update Outreach & Recruitment and Background Check Processes to remove unintended barriers and increase competitive applications. **[COMPLETE]**
8. Initiate community dialogue and work with stakeholders for more effective mental health response (including training) with an interagency and intersectional approach that addresses gaps, improves service delivery, builds collective action, and contributes to community safety and well-being.
9. Enhance member wellness supports and inclusion efforts - accommodations, early intervention, and formalizing Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). **[ONGOING]**
10. Improve the complaint resolution process for members and supervisors— including a special project focused on addressing sexual violence and harassment in the workplace. **[ONGOING]**

The Service continued to implement its EDI Action Plan throughout 2022 and provided a fulsome account of the status of each action item to the Board through last November's Human Rights and Racial Profiling annual report. With respect to supporting a more equitable work environment, the OPS provides the following updates to related action plan items and other initiatives undertaken in 2022.

### **EDI Coaching, Mentoring, and Training**

As part of a multi-pronged approach to leading change at OPS, all members were required to participate in a number of equity-related learning opportunities in 2022, including an interactive six-module course developed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police titled Cultural Awareness and Humility. Upon completion of the course, individuals are better able to recognize the potential impact of their own personal identity on their actions, perceptions, and interpersonal experiences; the importance of respecting history, traditions, customs, values, and norms from different cultures; and culturally relevant, personally sensitive, and appropriate approaches for working with people from diverse backgrounds.

OPS also introduced anti-Black racism learning sessions for all members in 2022. Developed with police and community input, the sessions explore the social

construction of race and how systemic racism affects an organization's policies, processes, and business practices. Participants are provided with an opportunity to reflect on anti-Black racism and how the historical and current context can impact interpersonal relationships and service delivery.

Over the course of the past year, the Service also launched Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) training for all members. ABLE training was developed by Georgetown University with the objective of creating law enforcement cultures that support peer intervention and provide skills to intervene successfully, regardless of rank, to prevent harm. The course is designed to enhance self-awareness, as well as explore the science behind bystandership, and builds skills to move from passive to active bystandership.

The Service's Operational Leadership Course received a focused presentation on EDI at the Ottawa Police Service, and subject matter experts participated in an open panel discussion to increase operational awareness at mid-management levels.

The Service also continued to build increased Intercultural Development Inventory assessment and coaching capacity with the addition of supplementary in-house qualified administrators.

### **Development of a customized OPS EDI Lens Toolkit**

In 2022 the Ottawa Police Service launched its newly tailored EDI & Engagement Lens. The tool was developed in partnership with Global Affairs Canada's Centre for Learning in Intercultural Effectiveness and International Assistance Policy (CIL), to weave EDI considerations into the work of all functions at the OPS. CIL leveraged the Government of Canada's Gender-Based Analysis+ process and tool, adapting the material in consideration of the OPS work environment. The robust tailored Lens facilitates the application of EDI considerations to a wide variety of initiatives and processes. This past calendar year, the Service began to integrate the Lens into strategy, planning, major initiatives, and various Human Resources processes including employee movements, acting assignments, and other candidate selection processes.

The EDI & Engagement Lens is also being applied to ongoing review of the current promotions process and a new leadership development program at the OPS.

Additionally, the Lens was applied to review of the Service's EWE Policy. The Policy revision is expected to be finalized in 2023. The Lens also continues to be leveraged to identify and address systemic barriers and foster a more equitable work environment.

## **Enhanced Member Wellness Supports and Inclusion Efforts**

The OPS is dedicated to a duty of care for its members as well as the public, and maintains numerous supports for member wellness including, but not limited to, both internal and external supports, a comprehensive Wellness Strategy, the Employee Assistance Program, and a peer support program. Additional supports developed in 2022 include:

- The Support and Reintegration Program, which fully launched in 2022. This program is a comprehensive, supportive, and interactive program to assist an employee who is experiencing an emotional, cognitive, or physical reaction to a critical incident and/or an exposure to a stressful event. The program is also aimed at helping to reduce potential stress associated with return to work after a lengthy leave of absence. It is a peer-driven process delivered in collaboration with the employee's health professional and is not intended to replace any other supports or programs, but rather add to existing supports as an additional tool employees may leverage.
- A new Wellness Portal, launched in March 2022, which provides resources and support information for all OPS members, whether at work or on leave, as well as retirees and their families.
- The Wellness team, comprised of both Sworn and Civilian members, which provides support to OPS members, retirees and families through training and presentations, debriefs/defusing and critical incident stress management sessions, early intervention, direct support to chain of command when assisting members, return to work support services, and one to one support to name just a few of the methods in place to strengthen member wellness and inclusion.

To further support a diverse and inclusive workplace, the OPS continues to share information about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities during its recruitment process. Applicants selected for interview are notified that accommodations are available upon request, and successful applicants are advised of OPS accommodation policies.

As the Service continues to identify and remove barriers that cause inequities in various aspects of the employment relationship, most notably those related to Code protected grounds, the OPS recognizes that despite these efforts members may continue to require individual accommodations. All accommodation requests are

considered fairly and in good faith. No employee is penalized for making an accommodation request, and such requests are provided to the point of undue hardship, as defined by the Code.

In 2022, the OPS continued to provide accommodations for needs related to Ontario Human Rights Code grounds.

### **Improved Complaint Resolution Process**

In December 2020, as part of a joint strategy between OPS and the Board to address all forms of harassment within the workplace, the OPS engaged the services of Rubin-Thomlinson (RT) LLP (a Toronto-based Canadian law firm with expertise in investigations, workplace harassment and misconduct) to conduct an assessment of OPS workplace culture, practices, policies, and procedures relating to workplace harassment and discrimination, and to act as an outside third party on the intake and investigation of workplace complaints. Results of the RT report, presented to the Board in January 2022, have since informed revised strategy and approach to ensuring a safe workplace.

On October 1, 2022, the OPS launched the Safe Workplace Office, which is an independent office committed to addressing workplace violence, harassment, and discrimination. The Safe Workplace Office acts as an independent body dedicated to the intake and triage of all internal complaints for the Ottawa Police Service, and to resolving formal complaints about workplace harassment, violence, discrimination, and retaliation through independent investigations.

### **Additional Awareness-Raising Efforts**

To foster an inclusive environment at OPS and continually raise awareness of EDI-related matters, the Service recognized a number of commemorative days in 2022, including but not limited to Black History Month (February), International Women's Day (March 8), International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21), National Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21), Capital Pride Week (August 22-29), National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (September 30), International Inuit Day (November 7), and International Human Rights Day (December 10). Some events saw a return to in person activities and recognition, celebrating the rich diversity within our city and culminating with the Service's annual Human Rights Learning Forum on International Human Rights Day. The Forum provides attendees with the opportunity to gain insights into human rights issues impacting communities and offers a discussion platform to encourage positive change.

In continued effort to build EDI capability in support of policing practices that will improve community safety and well-being, demonstrate a duty of care, and improve trust with all residents, the OPS continued to issue its internal newsletter called the "RVI Spotlight." The Spotlight provides members with insights into the world of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and why it plays an important role in policing. Articles featured in Spotlight editions are meant to increase awareness of EDI to reinforce the pillars of equal opportunity and the full inclusion of all OPS members.

Additionally in 2022, the Service developed inclusive language reference materials for all members. Inclusive language is a best practice leveraged in many organizations and across many fields to improve inclusion both internally and in service delivery.

The Service continues to both support and seek input from its Employee Resource Groups (ERG), who provide valuable inclusion efforts and feedback on related initiatives. In 2022, as an example, a collaborative effort was undertaken to offer multi-faith rooms at OPS facilities. While the initiative continues, key stakeholders work together with ERG members to bring the project to realization.

Additional efforts towards a more equitable workplace included collaboration with the City of Ottawa to improve EDI-related data capture systems to better inform performance measurements and future strategy, and the development of a detailed Employment Systems Review (ESR) plan. The OPS intends to initiate the ESR in 2023.

## **CONSULTATION**

The OPS is committed to ongoing collaboration and consultation with both internal and external stakeholders. The organization continued to seek input from relevant functional teams and community groups on various initiatives throughout 2022, including policy revisions, training material and strategic planning. Meaningful and collaborative engagement with police and community members is fundamental to successfully fostering an equitable and inclusive police service.

## **CONCLUSION**

The OPS remains committed to providing an equitable work environment for all members. This means ensuring that opportunities are open and accessible to all qualified members, that diversity in all aspects and forms is encouraged and valued for the benefits it provides, and that each and every member is respected for the individual expertise and talents they bring the organization.

To this end, the Service will continue to seek out and address systemic barriers, increase equitable access to opportunities, and foster a culture of respect that leverages the talents of all individuals who join and are a part of the Service.



Furthermore, to streamline reporting and avoid duplication of both effort and content, the OPS is examining the feasibility of amalgamating this report with other related reports to the Board (i.e., the Human Rights and Race Relations Annual Report) going forward.