

Report to / Rapport au:

**OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE BOARD
LA COMMISSION DE SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA**

2 December 2024 / 2 décembre 2024

Submitted by / Soumis par:

**Chief of Police, Ottawa Police Service / Chef de police, Service de police
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**SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INQUIRY I-24-05 – REPORTING OF ILLEGAL DRUG
CONSUMPTION IN PUBLIC SPACES**

**OBJET: RÉPONSE À L'ENQUÊTE I-24-05 – SIGNALEMENT DE LA
CONSOMMATION DE DROGUES ILLICITES DANS LES ESPACES
PUBLICS**

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Police Service Board receive this report for information.

RECOMMENDATIONS DU RAPPORT

**Que la Commission de service de police d'Ottawa prenne connaissance du
présent rapport à titre d'information.**

INQUIRY

1. Does OPS consider the consumption of illegal drugs in public spaces as a police matter?
2. If yes, what would be the appropriate route for reporting the consumption of illegal drugs in public spaces to OPS?
3. Please describe the steps OPS would take if the consumption of illegal drugs in public spaces is reported.

RESPONSE

The Ottawa Police Service (OPS) considers the consumption of illegal drugs in public spaces a policing matter. Not every incident a police officer encounters will result in an arrest or a charge. Depending on the situation and (lack of) previous arrest history, police officers may use outreach and engage the person in other resources before arresting or charging an individual.

If a member of the public would like to report the consumption of illegal drugs in public places, they can do so through the OPS Communications Centre. Members of the public are encouraged to report crimes in progress by calling 9-11. If the crime is not currently in progress, members can make a report through our non-emergency line, 613-236-1222, extension 7300. Reports through the non-emergency line will likely be followed up by NRT, CPO, and/or FLD and may be fielded through our community partners.

The approach OPS would take is dependent on the situation. For reports related to known locations or persons, responding officers would likely take the approach of enforcement (i.e., enforce any applicable laws not being followed, this may include arrest, charges, or issuing tickets) and/or suppression (i.e., an effort to prevent the criminal activity from occurring or deterring the criminal act. This may end in enforcement). For reports concerning the City of Ottawa Safe Harm Reduction Services, the officer will start by collaborating with the City of Ottawa Social Services to assist individuals in need. By working closely with social services, the officer aims to provide comprehensive support that addresses the individuals' needs, which extend beyond the typical responsibilities of law enforcement. For reports related to an unknown person, or unknown location, officers will first try proactive outreach and engagement with individuals to try to prevent and/or deter the individual through relationship, rapport building and proactive presence in the area.

OPS utilizes various methods to raise public awareness about police actions or interventions in specific areas. For instance, the media is regularly engaged, and updates are posted on social media to keep the community informed about police activities. Additionally, officers in the area may directly notify local residents and businesses about any police actions taking place nearby.