

Report to / Rapport au:

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

23 November 2020 / 23 novembre 2020

Submitted by / Soumis par:

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

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**SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INQUIRY I-20-16: USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE
EQUIPMENT (PPE) BY OPS OFFICERS**

**OBJET: RÉPONSE À LA DEMANDE DE RENSEIGNEMENTS I-20-16 :
UTILISATION DE L'ÉQUIPEMENT DE PROTECTION INDIVIDUELLE
(EPI) PAR LES AGENTS DU SPO**

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Police Services Board receives this report for information.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

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

INQUIRY

Since the beginning of the COVID 19 restrictions in March 2020, how much has the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) spent in purchasing PPE for frontline officers; what instructions are issued to frontline officers who are interacting with the members of the public for wearing PPE; are instructions to wear PPE voluntary or mandatory; if mandatory, what are the penalties for non-compliance; if voluntary, why was it not made mandatory; what are the rights of citizens to refuse to answer or interact with frontline officers who are not wearing PPE and not maintaining physical distancing of the recommended 2 metres?

RESPONSE

The health and safety of the Ottawa Police Service's (OPS) members is paramount to ensure that we can effectively continue to maintain capacity during the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic. Equally important is ensuring the safety of the residents we serve and protect. Throughout the pandemic we have supported best-practices as advocated by our partners at Ottawa Public Health (OPH).

During the pandemic we have ensured that our members were protected by the proper personal protective equipment (PPE). Our first order was to ensure fit testing for all of our frontline officers. In Ottawa, we are lucky that each officer is issued his or her own personal gas mask upon enrollment. Messaging went out to sworn officers, directing them to wear their masks when encountering a person who presented with fever and a cough, or had recently been out of country, or was identified as COVID 19 positive by the (now closed) Ontario healthcare portal. In addition, officers were encouraged to wear nitrile gloves and liberally use of disinfectant sprays and wipes. Frontline civilians were next or concurrently registered for fit testing of N95 masks.

Fit testing was conducted by an external agency. By May, all members of the OPS were offered fit testing and N95 masks if they wanted it.

The OPS's quartermaster was had a stockpile of N95 masks (some expired) and a second order for more N95 masks was completed in early March. Later, all OPS members were issued cloth masks, along with any additional PPE they may require.

Additionally, the OPS ordered 750 P100 half masks for frontline officers. These masks are more comfortable to wear and 588 officers have been fit tested to-date with this PPE, as an option to their issued gas mask. More fit testing for the P100 masks will be ongoing.

In total, the OPS spent \$44,000 on N95 masks, and to-date \$22,500 on P100 masks, as well as \$135,000 for cloth masks.

This past month, mandatory orders were issued that all members must wear either a cloth mask or N95 mask within all areas of OPS facilities (unless at a physically distanced workstation) and outside in public, in accordance to best-practices advocated by OPH.

Any member not in compliance has been redirected to discuss with his or her supervisor. There have not been any incidents that have had to be further escalated.

It is important to keep in mind that policing is a dynamic profession, and an officer can never know what he or she will encounter on any given call. While our members have

been ordered to wear the proper PPE at all times, responding to calls can be fluid and/or have exigent circumstances involved. In cases where an officer is attending a call, but not immediately wearing a mask, the public is required to follow lawful direction from the officer.