



WORKPLACE SEXUAL VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT PROJECT

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OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE
SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA

A Trusted Partner in Community Safety
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INTRODUCTION



- We need to ensure that everyone who comes to work at the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) feels safe and valued and respected
- That is why we launched a review into Sexual Violence and Harassment
- This ongoing project has been developed with external/internal stakeholders as well as internal focus groups to ensure a diverse range of voices are heard
- This is an issue that affects mental health, morale, and trust of our members and it impacts our greater Ottawa community
- The project results was expected to be launched in early 2021

GOALS OF THE PROJECT



- Understand the impact of sexual violence and harassment (SV&H) on member health and wellness
- Educate members about the impact SV&H has on individual members and the OPS as a whole
- Change the culture that may be contributing
- Break down barriers to reporting SV&H, calling it out, or seeking support
- Ultimately, eliminate sexual violence and harassment in the workplace
- Tackling sexual violence and harassment in the workplace is a priority item for 2020 in the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

PROGRESS TO DATE



- Increased investment and organizational focus into SV&H
- Built an important dialogue, engaged members and community partners that represent a diversity of voices and subject matter experts through:
 - A core working group
 - An internal advisory group
 - Internal focus groups
 - An external advisory group
- Interim Reporting Process to provide resources, advice, and investigate complaints
- We have used this feedback to develop a detailed organizational strategy

SHIFT IN APPROACH



- Initial plan: submit recommendations to the Board by the end of February 2021
- Our members are clear - they are asking for an independent and an external party to handle sensitive reports and investigations
- Given the strength of this feedback, we must act now
- We can use this time to learn from the experience with third-party experts - to help build a better workplace for everyone
- Now is the time to shift from discussion to action

ACCELERATING OUR PROGRESS



- All feedback has consistently and unequivocally led us to recommend the use of third-party experts for intake and investigations
- This is necessary to:
 - Build trust and confidence in the complaint process
 - Allow anonymous and confidential reporting
 - Improve response and resolution timelines

NEXT STEPS



- Engage a third party to build on and accelerate our work
 - **Rubin Thomlinson LLP** is a Canadian law firm focused solely on workplace and institutional investigations and assessments, training for HR professionals, and consulting. Their expertise in investigations, workplace harassment and misconduct is diverse and decades deep - giving them unique insight into these serious and high-stakes situations.

WHAT WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE



- Create a safe place for disclosure
- Regain trust in the Service and process
- Build an effective mechanism for members to:
 - Report current and historical complaints
 - Bring forward other issues and concerns
- Timely resolution to complaints and issues

THIRD-PARTY EXPERTS



- Under this proposal, the third-party service provider will:
 - Design and deliver a complaint intake process
 - Take reports
 - Case management
 - 24/7 service
 - Undertake investigations
 - Independent and confidential

THIRD-PARTY EXPERTS (CONTINUED)



- Perform a workplace assessment
 - Gather information and identify systemic problems and solutions related to harassment and discrimination in the workplace
- Evaluate the project at the end
 - To measure performance success against our needs and goals