




HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Hamilton Police Services Board
BOARD MEETING DATE:	March 26, 2021
SUBJECT:	Five Year Report: Freedom of Information Branch Statistics
REPORT NUMBER:	221-022
SUBMITTED BY:	Frank Bergen, Acting Chief of Police
SIGNATURE:	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Hamilton Police Service (HPS) Freedom of Information (FOI) Branch maintains annual statistics on the number of access to information requests received for the release of records held by the HPS; these statistics are also reported to the Information and Privacy Commissioner/Ontario
- Under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)*, institutions may collect fees associated with search time, photocopying, and materials used to satisfy a request; the fees are governed by O. Reg. 823

INFORMATION

Over the past five years, the volume of FOI requests has remained fairly consistent. We presume that the reduction in requests for 2020 has been an effect of the Covid-19 pandemic. The complexity of individual requests continues to increase over the years. Files are often more voluminous due to the type and detail of the information sought. As a result, the time spent on individual files has increased from 4.3 hours/file in 2016 to 4.5 hours/file in 2020.

The attached table reflects the number and category of requests received during the past five years, and includes staff time used, appeals filed, and fees collected.

Vision: To be a trusted partner in delivering public safety.

Mission: To serve and protect in partnership with our communities.

Our Values: Compassionate, Dedicated, Inclusive, Integrity, Innovative, Professional, Teamwork

The necessities of the pandemic have also brought new efficiencies to the practice of the Freedom of Information Branch. For example, staff are now using a secure, encrypted cloud site to provide requesters access to their records. This eliminates the need for requesters to attend the station to receive their records and eliminates courier costs. We will monitor the impact of these process changes and will report on them in 2022.

In 2020, the Freedom of Information Branch was able to respond to 98% of the requests within the 30-day legislated time period.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” – Five Year FOI Requests

FB/A.Hepplewhite