



December 7, 2021

Hon. Doug Downey
Attorney General
McMurtry-Scott Bldg 11th Floor
720 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 2S9

Delivered by Email:
attorneygeneral@ontario.ca

Dear Hon. Doug Downey;

RE: Concerning Rates of Recidivism

At the Penetanguishene Police Services Board meeting held on June 14, 2021, members of the board received a quarterly report from the Southern Georgian Bay OPP Detachment Commander. Within the report, the board noticed that the crime rate numbers were surprisingly high. The Detachment Commander explained that a major contributing factor to the high crime rate was that a high number of offenders were often being released by the courts and therefore given the opportunity to re-offend.

Following the meeting, the Detachment was able to research the recidivism rates for the catchment area in order to get a better understanding of the circumstances. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (August 2018 to February 2020) to post pandemic (March 2020 to September 2021) there was increase of 11% in recidivism rates. In Penetanguishene alone, there were a total of 12427 charges that were analyzed (29% criminal and 71% Provincial) with 519 persons who had charges withdrawn in the same time period.

These recidivism rates were concerning for the Police Services Board for two reasons. The first being that it's obvious that no lesson is learnt by most offenders when they are provided with multiple chances. The second being that this recidivism cycle that's being created continues to cause more work for the police which then takes them away from other important duties.

We're aware that the analysis of rates demonstrates an increase since the pandemic, and fully recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic could have been a contributing factor to the increase in rates. However, since the pandemic restrictions seem to be lifting, we're hopeful that the recidivism rates lessen as well.

Our hope is to bring awareness to the recidivism rates, advocate for the Southern Georgian Bay OPP and finally, enact change within the provincial court system to help minimize these rates. It would be most helpful not only to the Southern Georgian Bay OPP but all detachments across the province if the provincial court system could help minimize





recidivism rates by monitoring and recording the offenders who continue to reoffend and highly consider recidivism when sentencing.

We're hopeful that by raising awareness of the high recidivism rates within our detachment, it may persuade change within the provincial court system related to offender sentencing. Please feel free to reach out to the undersigned bcummings@penetanguishene.ca should you have any questions.

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF PENETANGUISHENE

Brian Cummings, Board Chair
Penetanguishene Police Services Board

CC: Hon. Sylvia Jones, Solicitor General
Inspector Joseph Evans, OPP
Interim Executive Director, Bruce Chapman, OAPSB
Council of the Town of Penetanguishene
Chief Administrative Officer, Jeff Lees, Town of Penetanguishene
All municipalities in Ontario

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