

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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October - December 2025

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Message from the Chair

As we approach the end of the year and the start of the holiday season, I want to take a moment to reflect on the work we have done together as members of the Ontario Association of Police Service Boards.

This has been a year of continued pressure on police governance. Police service boards across Ontario are continuing to navigate the Community Safety and Policing Act, stewarding complex budgets, overseeing major capital and technology projects, and responding to evolving community expectations around transparency, accountability, and equity. Through all of this, you have demonstrated professionalism, courage, and a deep commitment to ensuring “adequate and effective policing” in every community you serve.

I am especially proud of the way our members have leaned into their roles as true governors of policing: setting clear priorities, asking the hard questions, supporting chiefs and command teams, and keeping community safety and well-being at the centre of every decision. The OAPSB has been proud to support you through training, conferences, policy guidance, and advocacy with all levels of government, and we will continue to be that voice at the provincial level in the years ahead.

Thank you to our boards, our police service and civilian members, our partners, and our communities for your ongoing trust and collaboration. Your work often happens quietly, behind the scenes, but it is essential to community safety in Ontario.

On behalf of my OAPSB Board colleagues, I wish you and your families a safe, restful, and joyful holiday season, and a healthy, peaceful New Year. I look forward to continuing our work together in the coming year.



Sincerely,

Alan K. (Al) Boughton
Chair, Ontario Association of Police Service Boards

Message from the Executive Director

As we come to the close of 2025, I want to extend my sincere thanks to all of you for your commitment to effective, responsible police governance across Ontario. This has been a year of significant transition for our sector, with new boards forming under the Community Safety and Policing Act and existing boards adapting to new expectations, processes, and responsibilities. Through it all, your dedication has remained steady and clear.

I have had the privilege of working closely with many of you this year. What has stood out most is the willingness to engage, to ask important questions, and to work collaboratively through challenges that are not small in scope. This willingness is exactly what strengthens governance and supports safer communities.

Looking ahead to 2026, our work together becomes even more focused and exciting. With the launch of Police Governance Ontario, we will be expanding our resources, enhancing our member supports, and raising the standard for governance excellence across the province. You can expect clearer tools, stronger training pathways, and more opportunities to connect with peers and experts who are shaping modern police governance.

We will also continue to work to advance advancing key initiatives that matter to you, including advocacy on funding, and legislative issues, and practical governance resources that reflect the real needs and challenges of today's boards. Alongside this, we are building a more integrated member experience through our new website and learning platform, designed to help you access what you need quickly and with confidence.

As you step into the holiday season, I hope you find time to rest and enjoy moments with your family and loved ones. the people who matter most. Thank you for your service, collaboration and leadership. I look forward to the year ahead and to all that we will accomplish together. Warmest wishes for a safe and happy holiday season.

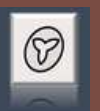


Lisa Darling, M.O.M.
Executive Director,
Ontario Association of Police Service Boards

Website: <https://oapsb.ca/>

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Look for Our App available for iPhone and Android



Stronger Oversight: Ideas for Boards

Ontario's governance system is evolving, and boards are at the center of that change. Municipal Boards, OPP Detachment Boards, and First Nations Boards each face distinct challenges, but all share the goal of stronger oversight and safer communities. This section highlights the most pressing priorities and practical steps boards can take right now.

Municipal Police Service Boards

Key Governance Priorities for This Quarter

Use Inspectorate Decisions as learning tools

The Inspectorate of Policing has begun publishing Decisions and Findings that include determinations related to board member conduct and adequacy and effectiveness compliance. These reports offer practical examples of what strong governance looks like and highlight areas where boards have struggled. Reviewing these decisions helps boards understand emerging expectations and adjust local practice before issues arise.

Stay grounded during budget approval season

Police budgets continue to draw significant attention in many municipalities. Under the CSPA, funders cannot alter individual components of a police budget. They may approve the budget in full or reject it in full. If an agreement cannot be reached, the only pathways are conciliation or arbitration. Boards should ensure their councils understand this structure so that discussions remain constructive and within the legislative framework.

Understand the significance of Section 2.20

Boards should also be aware of recent developments related to Section 220 of the CSPA. An arbitration decision released this fall clarified how this section applies to certain senior civilian roles. The decision confirmed that while employees in these designated positions cannot be members of a police association due to the potential for conflict of interest, they remain members of the police service under the Act. As a result, they remain part of the bargaining structure and are entitled to the association's duty of fair representation even without association membership.

This interpretation means the membership restriction does not remove these roles from the collective bargaining framework. It also reinforces that if the legislature had intended to exclude these positions entirely from Part XIII, it would have done so in the same way chiefs and deputy chiefs are excluded. Boards do not need to take action at this time but should monitor updates as further clarity continues to develop across the sector.

Strengthen transparency as community expectations rise

Public trust continues to hinge on how boards communicate. Ensure agendas, minutes, public materials, and board updates are posted promptly and written in clear, accessible language. Consistent transparency remains one of the most effective ways to support community confidence in police oversight.

Make use of the Governance Insights series

This quarter's Governance Insights materials offer guidance on readiness, decision making, and governance culture. Boards are encouraged to use these resources to support discussion at the table and reinforce strong oversight practices.

OPP Detachment Boards

Moving from Formation to Function

OPP detachment boards are still evolving, and many are operating with uneven support, varying levels of municipal understanding, and the legacy of communities that never had police boards before. With the 2026 policing year approaching, the focus now is on clarity, stability, and demonstrating value across all municipalities in the detachment.

For Boards Still Getting Organized

Finalize the essential governance tools

If bylaws, codes of conduct, or role descriptions are still in draft form, make them a priority. These documents give the board structure, protect fairness, and prevent individual municipalities from dominating the process.

Reinforce understanding of the board's role

Many councils still view board costs or board activities as optional. Clear communication about the board's mandate under the CSPA helps shift old assumptions and reduces friction as the new policing year begins.

Build visibility across the detachment

A few plain-language updates or simple online summaries can help communities understand that the board exists, is active, and supports local safety.

For Boards Advancing Their Governance Work

Use the annual governance cycle (available in the members portal)

The annual workflow developed for OPP boards gives structure to meetings, reporting, and oversight. Boards further along in their journey should rely on it to keep their governance work consistent.

Anchor discussions in Community Safety and Well-Being plans

Reviewing each municipality's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan helps the board understand local priorities and identify common themes for detachment-wide oversight.

Connect to the local action planning cycle

As municipalities refresh their Community Safety and Well-Being priorities, boards should be aware of the OPP local action planning underway. This strengthens alignment between community needs and board discussions.

Strengthen documentation and compliance

The Inspectorate's expectations apply equally to detachment boards. Clear minutes, transparent decisions, and consistent use of bylaws help demonstrate readiness.

Current Priorities for All Detachment Boards

- Ensure bylaws and core governance documents are finalized and in active use.
- Review Community Safety and Well-Being plans from all municipalities to inform upcoming discussions.
- Begin engaging with municipalities on their next local action planning cycle tied to CSWB priorities.
- Strengthen transparency through clear minutes and accessible board updates.
- Reinforce understanding among municipalities of the board's mandate and legislative responsibilities.

Use available supports

The Governance Insights series, discussion groups, and shared templates offer practical help for boards at every stage. These tools are designed to support boards with limited resources as they move from formation into effective and confident oversight.

First Nations Police Boards

Strengthening Governance Across Different Legal Pathways

First Nations police service boards operate in a landscape that is not uniform. Some communities have adopted the Community Safety and Policing Act, while others continue to operate through sovereign governance structures or negotiated agreements. Regardless of the pathway, strong oversight, cultural legitimacy, and community trust remain central to effective governance.

This quarter, the focus is on clarity, readiness, and support for boards operating within different legal and cultural frameworks.

For Boards Operating Under the CSPA

Align oversight with community priorities

Even within a statutory framework, oversight is most effective when it reflects Indigenous values, community-defined priorities, and local approaches to safety and well-being. Use CSPA tools as a foundation, not the ceiling.

Strengthen documentation and transparency

Meeting records, bylaw updates, and clear decision pathways help maintain trust with funders, the community, and partner governments. These practices also position boards well as Inspectorate expectations continue to evolve.

Coordinate across jurisdictions

Tripartite and negotiated structures still influence how police services operate, even under the CSPA. Boards should remain attentive to intergovernmental agreements and ensure local needs are clearly reflected in detachment or service-level priorities.

For Boards Operating Outside the CSPA

Maintain strong governance structures

Boards functioning through sovereign or negotiated models should continue to rely on culturally grounded decision-making, restorative approaches, and relational accountability. Good governance does not depend on the statute; it depends on clarity, fairness, and community legitimacy.

Align community safety priorities with governance work

Even outside the CSPA, many First Nations communities maintain local action plans or safety strategies. Boards can use these as anchors for oversight discussions, helping align police service activity with community direction.

Document processes and decisions

Funders, partner governments, and community members increasingly look for transparency. Clear procedures and consistent documentation support stable governance, regardless of legal structure.

Shared Priorities for All First Nations Boards

- Integrate cultural values and traditions into oversight practices and decision-making.
- Review community safety priorities and local action plans to guide board discussions.
- Ensure governance tools such as bylaws, terms of reference, and role descriptions are clear and accessible.
- Strengthen relationships with police service leaders through open communication and shared understanding of community needs.
- Prepare for new members by ensuring orientation materials reflect both statutory and culturally grounded governance expectations.

OAPSB Support

The OAPSB is committed to supporting all First Nations police service boards, whether operating inside or outside the CSPA. Members can access adaptable templates, policies, and board resources, and participate in learning circles and discussion groups that focus on Indigenous approaches to governance and community safety. These supports are designed to honour sovereignty while strengthening oversight capacity.



2025 has been a year of continued implementation and learning under the Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA) for the Inspectorate of Policing (IoP). As Ontario's policing oversight framework continues to take shape in practice, the IoP remains focused on transparency, accountability and continuous improvement across the police and police governance sector.

This month, the Inspector General of Policing, Ryan Teschner, began publicly releasing his Inspector General Decisions arising from completed IoP investigations into public complaints. These decisions will be published regularly on the IoP's website.

These decisions result from two types of investigations:

- Section 106 matters, which address the conduct of police service board members; and
- Section 107 matters, which examine whether police services are adequate and effective, comply with Ontario's policing laws and standards, and follow policies or procedures established by police service boards, the Minister, or Chiefs of Police.

Each investigation concludes with a Findings Report that sets out the evidence and analysis gathered by the IoP. Based on this report, the Inspector General issues a decision confirming whether provincial requirements have been met and, where necessary, Directions or Measures to address non-compliance. The publication of these decisions represents the next phase of the IoP's work – supporting efforts to strengthen policing performance and accountability. By sharing decisions openly, the Inspector General aims to highlight both areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. This focus will continue to guide IoP's work in the year ahead, supporting police services and boards in better meeting their obligations under the law, reinforcing public confidence in the policing system, and ultimately helping to better serve communities across Ontario.

As the year draws to a close, the IoP extends warm seasonal wishes to police service board members and their families, and thanks you for your continued dedication to supporting strong police governance across Ontario.

Call for Photos!

As we build our new website and expand our newsletter content, we would love to showcase real boards, real communities, and real moments of governance in action. If your board has photos from meetings, community events, swearing-ins, or engagement activities, please consider sharing them with us. Be sure that anyone identifiable in the photo has given permission for it to be used. Your images help us reflect the true work of police governance across Ontario. Feel free to email your submissions to communications@oapsb.ca

Tools and Resources

[Visit the Member Portal](#)

Preparing for the Transition to Police Governance Ontario (PGO)

We are actively preparing for the transition from OAPSB to **Police Governance Ontario** in early 2026. This shift includes a redesigned website, updated member tools, and a more intuitive structure that will make it easier for boards to find what they need, when they need it. More information will be shared as we move through this transition, and boards can expect a cleaner, more coordinated experience across all platforms.

A streamlined website and portal are on the way!

The new PGO website and Member Portal are being built to:

- simplify navigation and reduce clutter
- bring Governance Insights, resources, and templates into one clearly organized system
- support future training modules and learning pathways
- connect seamlessly with the mobile app, database and coming learning portal, for a single sign-in experience

As we complete this work, you may notice adjustments to how content is organized. These changes will support a smoother experience once the transition is complete. Watch for the announcements on our coming social channels!

Governance Insights: new content available

The Governance Insights section continues to grow with practical, board-ready guidance. These short posts can support agenda planning, spark discussion, and help boards strengthen their governance practices.

Stay connected through the mobile app

The OAPSB app will continue to operate and evolve through the transition to PGO, giving members fast access to updates, resources, and coming features.

Help keep your board connected

Accurate contact information in GrowthZone, our internal database, remains essential. Some boards still have incomplete member records, which limits access to communications, training opportunities, and member-only resources. Chairs and administrators are encouraged to review and update their rosters regularly to ensure full connectivity as we transition to PGO.



1. Got an Idea for a topic?
2. Want to feature your board in upcoming newsletters?
3. Can't find what you're looking for?
4. Have you checked our new Governance Insights Blog?

email communications@oapsb.ca

Events & Engagement

Introducing the New Employment Conference - February 25 & 26, 2025

This year, our long-standing Labour Conference has transitioned into a new sector-wide initiative: the Employment Conference, delivered in partnership with the Police Association of Ontario and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. This collaborative model brings all three perspectives together; employer, leadership, and members, to reflect the realities of today's policing environment.

Why the shift

Policing employment issues now span far beyond traditional labour relations. The new conference format allows us to address the full spectrum of topics that boards and services are navigating, including:

- workforce planning and staffing pressures
- mental health and psychological safety
- modern performance management
- legislative updates under the CSPA
- arbitration trends and dispute resolution
- equity, inclusion, and workplace culture

What this means for boards

This shared approach strengthens understanding across the sector and ensures board members receive practical, relevant support for their role as employers and oversight leaders. It also reduces duplication and unifies conversations that affect every level of policing.



Member Discussion Groups

Discussion Groups remain one of the most effective ways for boards to share challenges and find solutions together. Whether it's navigating the CSPA, preparing budgets, or improving community engagement, these sessions connect members with peers who face the same issues. These sessions are free with your membership but registration is required. Upcoming dates and registration are available through the Member Portal.

A promotional graphic for Discussion Groups. It features a photo of three people in a meeting. The graphic is divided into sections: "DISCUSSION FORMAT" with a circular arrow icon, "Updates" with a checkmark icon, and "Best Practice Sharing" with a checkmark icon. There is also a section for "Discussion Groups" with a brief description. At the bottom, there is a blue bar with the text: "EVERY 3RD WEEK Monthly 12:00PM", "TUESDAYS Admin & Municipal Staff", and "THURSDAYS Board Members".

<https://oacsb.ca/events/>
training@oacsb.ca



Partner Perspective

30Forward: Advancing Women in Policing

30Forward continues to gain momentum across Ontario as police services commit to measurable actions that strengthen the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women in policing. The initiative focuses on mentorship, inclusive culture, family support, leadership development, and building a national resource hub that supports long-term change.

Thank you to those Ontario Police Services that have taken the 30Forward Pledge!

- Durham Regional Police Service
- Peel Regional Police
- York Regional Police
- Toronto Police Service
- Ottawa Police Service
- Waterloo Regional Police Service
- Halton Regional Police Service
- Niagara Regional Police Service
- Hamilton Police Service
- Sudbury Police Service
- Guelph Police Service
- London Police Service
- Owen Sound Police Service
- OPP



[Learn more at 30Forward.ca](https://30forward.ca)

A call to action

We encourage all police services in Ontario that have not yet taken the 30Forward Pledge to consider joining this collective effort. The pledge is a practical way to demonstrate commitment to equity, modern policing practices, and a healthier, more inclusive workplace culture.

Boards, chiefs, and municipal leaders all play an important role in shaping this change. If your service is ready to move forward, now is the time to connect with the 30Forward team and add your name to the growing list.

BENEFITS

Why Membership Matters More Than Ever

As we move toward the transition to Police Governance Ontario, membership has never carried more practical value. Boards that remain active members gain access to tools, protections, and sector insights that directly support their ability to meet legislative responsibilities and strengthen governance at the local level.

Governance protection for your board

Board Indemnification Insurance (Group Program)

OAPSB members have exclusive access to a group insurance program designed to protect police services board members in the event of legal action related to their governance role.

- Lower cost than purchasing standalone municipal coverage
 - Consistent protection across all board members
 - A significant benefit for OPP detachment boards that lack municipal administrative infrastructure
- For many boards, this one benefit more than justifies the cost of membership.

Personal benefits for individual members

Medallion Home and Auto Insurance Program

Members also gain access to the Medallion Group Home and Auto Insurance Program through McFarlan Rowlands.

- Discounted rates
- Flexible payment options
- Dedicated member service
- Available to both sworn and civilian board members

This is a personal perk that adds value for every individual on the board, not just the board as an entity.

Tools and support you can't get anywhere else

- Full access to Governance Insights
- Board templates, policies, and oversight tools
- Member Portal access with upcoming PGO enhancements
- Discounted rates for training and events,
- Direct updates on Inspectorate expectations, legislative changes, and sector trends
- A community of peers across the province for discussion, problem-solving, and shared learning

A simple reminder

Invoices have been sent, and renewal ensures uninterrupted access to member-only supports as we prepare for the transition to PGO. If your board has not yet renewed, now is an ideal time to secure your benefits for the year ahead.

Also as a reminder, you will need to submit the names and contact details of board members for our confidential data base and proof of insurance.

Connect & Learn More

Final Thoughts

As we move toward the transition to **Police Governance Ontario**, boards and administrators across the province are preparing for a new year of expectations and opportunities. This is a good moment to take stock of where your board stands, confirm you have the right supports in place, and make sure your governance foundation is ready for 2026.

Strong governance depends on clear roles, strong administrative support, and consistent communication. With that in mind, we are pleased to highlight two important developments that will help boards move forward with more confidence.

New Administrator Handbook

The new Administrator Handbook is now available to all members. This resource brings together the core responsibilities of the board administrator role, along with practical tools, templates, workflows, and guidance to help support compliance under the Community Safety and Policing Act.

If your board has a dedicated administrator, or if administrative tasks are shared among members or municipal staff, this handbook can help create clarity and consistency across meetings, records, communication, and reporting. We encourage all boards to download it, share it, and use it as part of your onboarding and orientation process.

New Social Media Channels Coming Soon

As part of the transition to Police Governance Ontario, new LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram channels will be launched in early 2026. These platforms will feature updates, events, sector insights, and stories from boards across Ontario. This is where your photos matter.

If your board has images from meetings, swearing in ceremonies, community events, or engagement activities, please consider sharing them with us. Make sure anyone in the photo has agreed to its use. Real images help us show the work of police governance in a way that stock photos never can.

Quick Actions for Boards Right Now

- Download and review the new Administrator Handbook
- Share your board photos for use on the website, newsletters, and social media
- Confirm board member contact information is current in our database
- Review Community Safety and Well Being plans and upcoming local action planning
- Ensure meeting minutes and public materials are posted in an accessible format
- Reach out if your board needs support with governance, policy updates, or training

Staying Connected

- Visit the OAPSB website and Member Portal for resources and Governance Insights
- Use the mobile app for updates, tools, and quick access to materials
- Watch for announcements about PGO social media and website launch
- Contact us any time for governance support or training needs

Together we are building stronger, more connected, and more confident police governance across Ontario.