

Clear Expectations. Practical Tools. Real Progress.

A FRESH START FOR POLICE GOVERNANCE

Edition 5 Spring 2026

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Welcome to the Spring Edition

This edition marks an important moment as we move forward under the Police Governance Ontario banner.

Across the province, boards continue to build their understanding and approach to governance under the Community Safety and Policing Act. What is becoming clearer is that governance is not just about meeting requirements, but about how boards apply their role in practice.

This newsletter is designed to keep you informed, highlight key developments across the sector, and provide practical insight to support your work at the board table.

As we move into the spring, the focus is on building consistency, strengthening confidence, and making use of the tools and supports now available.

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communications@pgo.ca

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Al Boughton

**Chair
Police Governance
Ontario**

Message from the Chair

Police governance in Ontario is entering a period of greater clarity and expectation.

As boards continue to work within the Community Safety and Policing Act, there is a growing recognition that governance is not only about meeting legislative requirements, but about how boards exercise their role in practice. This includes setting direction, providing oversight, and making informed decisions that reflect both community needs and public trust.

Across the province, boards are navigating complex and evolving environments. What is encouraging is the continued commitment to strengthening governance, building knowledge, and engaging in meaningful discussion about what effective oversight looks like.

As Police Governance Ontario continues to evolve, our shared focus remains clear: supporting boards to carry out their responsibilities with confidence, consistency, and purpose.

Message from the Executive Director

This quarter marks an important step forward as we continue our transition to Police Governance Ontario.

Our focus remains on providing practical support to boards as they navigate governance under the Community Safety and Policing Act. Over the past several months, this has included advancing the development of a new website and member portal, expanding Governance Insights and tools, and strengthening opportunities for connection through discussion groups and sector events.

We have also secured a Transfer Payment Agreement to support the continued development and delivery of training. This will allow us to further strengthen learning opportunities and align training with the evolving needs of boards.

We recognize that boards are at different stages in their governance journey. Our goal is to ensure that the resources, training, and supports we provide are accessible, relevant, and grounded in the realities of board work.



Lisa Darling M.O.M.

**Executive Director
Police Governance
Ontario**

What Boards Should Be Paying Attention To

As boards continue operating under the CSPA, several practical priorities are emerging across the province.

1. Election Year Preparation and Continuity

- plan for member transition and onboarding
- prepare orientation materials and continuity of work

2. Website Transparency

- ensure required information is posted and accessible
- review agendas, minutes, policies, and complaint links

3. In-Camera Meetings (CSPA s.44)

- confirm appropriate use of closed sessions
- ensure clear reporting out and documentation

4. Community Engagement

- engage with community partners and stakeholders
- support local community safety & well being

5. Structuring Board Work

- align agendas with compliance
- use governance or annual workplan cycles downloaded from the PGO Website



*Need Help?
We're Here to
Support You*

Building Capacity, Expanding Support

New Learning Management System & Training Programs



Linda Skoyles

Director of
Curriculum
Development &
Training

PGO has secured a Transfer Payment Agreement that supports the continued development of a formal training program for boards across Ontario. This builds on existing work and moves toward a more structured and accessible approach to board learning.

A key component of this work is the development of a Learning Management System (LMS), which will be accessed through the new PGO member portal. This will provide centralized access to training and learning resources. Training will be delivered through a combination of:

- **synchronous** learning (live sessions, webinars, and facilitated discussions)
- **asynchronous** learning (self-paced modules available at any time)
- in-person and hybrid opportunities

PGO has also established a dedicated training unit to support the development and delivery of this program. The team includes **Natalie Champagne, Anitra Basant Sisavang, Clemencia Pineda, Victoria Skoyles,** and **Tom Strancaric**, bringing experience across policing, governance, curriculum design, and public sector environments.

Additional information on the training team and their work will be shared in future communications.

Content will cover core governance topics, including roles and responsibilities, oversight, decision-making, and board processes, with a focus on practical application.

PGO is also in the early stages of exploring partnerships with post-secondary institutions to support potential micro-credential opportunities for members seeking further development.

Further details on training opportunities will be shared through the PGO website and upcoming communications.

Improving Access to Tools and Resources

PGO's new website and member portal are being developed to improve how boards access governance tools, resources, and information.

This work is focused on creating a more structured and intuitive experience, making it easier for board members and administrators to locate relevant materials and understand how they support governance in practice.

The member portal will serve as a central access point for:

- governance resources and guidance documents
- training and learning modules through the LMS
- updates, announcements, and new content
- tools to support board operations and administration

Content is being organized to reflect how boards work, with a focus on practical application rather than document storage. This includes aligning resources to key governance activities such as planning, decision-making, transparency, and oversight.

As part of this transition, existing materials are being reviewed, updated, and restructured to improve clarity and usability. New resources will continue to be added over time.

Recent Conference Updates

Highlights from the PAO Joint Employment Conference

1. Workforce Pressures Are a Governance Issue
Recruitment, retention, and staffing challenges continue to affect police services across Ontario.

For boards, this raises important considerations related to:

- long-term workforce sustainability
- budget planning and resource allocation
- oversight of staffing strategies and risks

2. Mental Health and Workplace Well-Being

There is increasing focus on psychological health, disability management, and workplace supports.

Boards should be aware of:

- the impact of workplace culture on service delivery
- the governance role in supporting policies and oversight
- the broader implications for organizational performance and risk

3. Evolving Employer Responsibilities

Discussions highlighted the complexity of the board's role as employer, particularly in areas such as:

- labour relations and collective bargaining environments
- arbitration trends and outcomes
- policy and oversight responsibilities under the CSPA

Boards are not involved in operational decision-making but are responsible for ensuring appropriate governance structures and oversight are in place.

4. Increasing Complexity and Risk Awareness

The employment landscape continues to evolve, with increasing legal, financial, and reputational considerations.

Boards should remain attentive to:

- emerging trends in employment decisions and rulings
- alignment between governance policies and current practices
- the need for informed and proactive oversight



Bridging the Gap: First Nations Law & Policing Symposium on CSPA

The Bridging the Gap: First Nations Law and Policing Symposium focused on the implementation of the Community Safety and Policing Act within First Nations contexts, bringing together participants from communities, policing, and governance.

Discussions highlighted that while the CSPA provides a legislative framework, its application across First Nations communities is not uniform. Governance approaches continue to reflect distinct community structures, priorities, and relationships.

For boards, this reinforces the importance of:

- understanding that implementation of the CSPA may look different across communities
- recognizing the role of local context in shaping governance approaches
- approaching governance with respect, listening, and a willingness to learn

The symposium also emphasized the importance of building governance capacity in ways that support community-led priorities and long-term sustainability.

PGO's continued engagement in this space is focused on supporting governance through practical tools, shared learning, and respectful collaboration, recognizing that approaches must reflect the communities they serve.

Expanding First Nations Governance Supports

PGO is continuing to expand its work to support First Nations police governance, with a focus on strengthening governance capacity through practical tools, shared learning, and approaches that reflect community context.

Across communities, governance structures, priorities, and relationships vary significantly. While legislative frameworks such as the CSPA may shape some environments, the need for clear roles, effective oversight, and reliable governance systems exists regardless of the model in place. This work recognizes that strong governance is not defined by uniform structures, but by the ability to operate with clarity, consistency, and accountability over time.

As part of this effort, PGO is launching a First Nations Governance Roundtable, creating a dedicated space for board members, administrators, and community partners to connect and share governance experiences.

The roundtable is designed to:

- support peer-based learning across communities
- explore governance challenges and practical solutions
- provide access to tools and approaches that can be adapted locally

PGO's role in this space remains focused on supporting governance through practical infrastructure and shared learning, while respecting the leadership, authority, and distinct approaches of First Nations communities.



**FIRST NATIONS
POLICE
GOVERNANCE
ROUNDTABLE**
Virtual Discussion Group

When: 3rd Wednesday Every Month **Time:** 12 - 1:30 PM (EST)

A dedicated space for First Nations Police Boards and their support partners to connect, share experiences, and strengthen governance practice in ways that reflect the distinct legal, community, and relational realities of First Nations policing. This roundtable is designed to encourage open discussion, surface shared challenges, and help shape future supports tailored specifically to First Nations Police Boards.

[Register for April Roundtable](#)

[Register for May Roundtable](#)

[Register for June Roundtable](#)

Who Should Attend:

- Board Chairs and Members
- Board Administrators
- Band Governance Partners

What Makes This Different?

- Designed specifically for First Nations Police Boards
- Combined participation of board members and support partners
- Ongoing, standing roundtable format
- Practical, discussion-driven sessions

Why Participate:

- Connect with peers across First Nations communities
- Discuss real governance questions in a focused, respectful setting
- Share practical approaches and lessons learned
- Identify priority areas where additional support or programming may be helpful

Free to attend but registration is required

Have Questions or Want More Information?
Contact jeanine@policegovernanceontario.ca

OPP Detachment Boards – Insurance Requirement and Coverage Options

With the implementation of the Community Safety and Policing Act, OPP detachment boards serving multiple municipalities are no longer considered local boards under the Municipal Act. This shift created a gap in how these boards are classified for the purpose of obtaining appropriate insurance coverage.

To address this, a new insurance category was required. Police Governance Ontario, formerly OAPSB, worked to support boards in navigating this change and now offers a group insurance option designed specifically for OPP detachment boards.

All boards are required to carry indemnification insurance. For OPP detachment boards, providing proof of this coverage is a condition of membership with Police Governance Ontario.

Boards are asked to submit proof of insurance to:
membership@policegovernanceontario.ca

For boards that have not yet secured coverage, the PGO group insurance program is available and has been structured to meet board requirements at a cost significantly lower than many boards have been able to obtain independently.

If you have questions or require further information, please contact
connect@policegovernanceontario.ca

Police Governance Ontario participates as a sponsor organization within OMERS, reflecting the role of police service boards as employers within the OMERS pension system. PGO maintains representation through the Sponsors Advisory Council, supporting the interests of participating employers, including police service boards.

The OMERS Annual Meeting will take place on Thursday, April 23, 2026 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, with a simultaneous webcast available.

The session will include updates from the OMERS leadership team on:

- 2025 financial results
- Strategic priorities and future direction
- Ongoing support for members throughout their career and retirement

Boards and administrators are encouraged to attend to better understand the broader pension environment and its connection to governance and employer responsibilities.

Annual Meeting 2026

OMERS

Building
Tomorrow
together

Discussion Groups

PGO's member discussion groups continue to provide a practical and accessible space for board members and administrators to connect, ask questions, and share experiences.

These sessions are designed to reflect the day-to-day realities of board governance, offering both timely updates and open discussion in a supportive, peer-based environment.

Discussion groups provide an opportunity to:

- hear how other boards are approaching similar challenges
- ask questions and gain clarity in real time
- take away practical insights that can be applied at the board table

What Members Are Saying:

"For Police Service Boards navigating governance, legislative changes, and responsibilities under the CSPA, these discussion groups are time well spent. They've become a valuable resource for understanding what the role truly requires."

— Chair, Belleville Police Service Board

"The OAPSB has been instrumental in providing resources, support, and practical tools to help our new Police Services Board establish effective governance and oversight. The monthly discussion forums offer an opportunity to ask questions, receive timely updates, and connect with board members from across the province."

— Grey Bruce OPP Detachment Board

These sessions are free but registration is required.

Upcoming session details and registration information are available through the PGO website.

www.policegovernanceontario.ca/events

Upcoming Events



2026 IN PERSON SPRING CONFERENCE & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

PGO Conference Chair Lisa Darling invites all members and partners to the 2026 Spring Conference & AGM.

The Police Governance Ontario's 2026 Spring Conference and AGM is being held in person!

**First Nations Boards:
June 1 - 3, 2026**

**OPP Detachment:
June 1 - 2, 2026**

**Municipal Boards:
June 1 - 3, 2026**

**The Brock Niagara Falls - Fallsview
Niagara Falls, Ontario Canada**

Discussion Group Registration Links

[Board Member April Session](#)

[Admin April Session](#)

[Board Member May Session](#)

[Admin May Session](#)

[Board Member June Session](#)

[Admin June Session](#)

Have something you want to talk about?

Contact Us!

communications@policegovernanceontario.ca