



**Chiefs of Ontario Justice Sector**  
Anti-Racism Public Education  
and Awareness Campaign



**7**

# Things

You May Not Know Were

**SYSTEMIC  
RACISM**

**Policing & Community Safety Edition**

**Anti-Racism Public Education and Awareness Campaign**

**One Little, Two Little,  
Three Little Indians,  
Four Little, Five Little,  
Six Little Indians ...**

**7 Things You May Not Know Were Systemic Racism  
Policing & Community Safety Edition**

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CHIEFS OF ONTARIO JUSTICE SECTOR



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## Chiefs of Ontario Overview

The Chiefs of Ontario (COO) is a political forum and secretariat for collective decision-making, action, and advocacy for the 133 First Nations located within the Province of Ontario. Guided by the Chiefs-in-Assembly, we uphold self-determination efforts of the Anishinabek, Mushkegowuk, Onkwehonwe, and Lenape Peoples in protecting and exercising their inherent and Treaty rights. Keeping in mind the wisdom of our Elders, and the future for our Youth, we continue to create the path forward in building our Nations as strong, healthy Peoples respectful of ourselves, each other, and all creation. The activities of the Chiefs of Ontario are mandated through and guided by:

- Resolutions passed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly of the 133 First Nations in Ontario region;
- The Political Confederacy made up of the Grand Chiefs of Political Territorial Organizations (PTOs), Independent and unaffiliated First Nations; and
- The elected Regional Chief for the Chiefs of Ontario.

## Background

During the November 2021 Chiefs of Ontario Special Chiefs Assembly, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed *Resolution 21/36: Anti-Racism Work in Ontario*. Amongst other mandates, the resolution directed the COO Secretariat to seek funding to develop awareness and public education campaigns and to explore systemic conditions affecting various sectors, including Education, Health, Justice, and Social.

This resolution stemmed from increased media attention and public outcry over the devastating impacts of systemic racism disproportionately impacting First Nations Peoples and communities. In 2023, our first anti-racism campaign was released entitled: [7 Things You May Not Know Were Systemic Racism](#). This campaign sought to raise awareness about lesser-known systemic issues, the policy decisions that lead to them, and the solutions to dismantle and correct them. In pinpointing some of the precise policy choices that have led to these systemic issues, we highlighted the importance of connecting apathetic bureaucratic

It is critical that we do not allow this well-recognized systemic racism to persist without action and remedy

choices and their real-world outcomes. Our hope was for the campaign and the linkages it draws to both educate the public on the causes and consequences of systemic issues and move us away from endless loops of engagement and inquiries on these already well-studied topics.

For our second campaign, we decided to focus on the impacts of systemic racism in the context of policing and community safety, as this topic is a regularly mandated priority by the Ontario Chiefs-in-Assembly, with significant impacts on First Nations across our region. Note, however, that this document does not outline all the steps needed to address systemic racism in the context of policing and community safety. Much more is needed. Also, this document is without prejudice to efforts by individual First Nations, COO, and other First Nations organizations to improve policing and community safety, including through the courts.

Crime rates for First Nations communities are consistently higher than in non-First Nations communities and First Nations people are overrepresented in the criminal justice system as victims and offenders.<sup>1</sup>

Recently, the state of emergency declared by Netmizaaggamig Nihnsaabeg has brought to light the dire consequences of chronic underfunding and inadequate police services.<sup>2</sup> A lack of police presence and resources has left this First Nation with response times often longer than 45 minutes, exacerbating the crisis of violence, addiction, and mental health challenges. Unfortunately, this is not an uncommon reality for many First Nations communities.

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<sup>1</sup> "Evaluation of the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program – Evaluation Report", Public Services Canada, 2022 at p. 37: <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/2022-vltn-ndgns-police/2022-vltn-ndgns-police-en.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://anishinabeknews.ca/2025/01/07/indigenous-leaders-call-for-equal-and-equitable-community-safety/>

Note, however, that this document does not outline all the steps needed to address systemic racism in the context of policing and community safety, and much more is needed. This document is also without prejudice to efforts by individual First Nations, COO, and other First Nations organizations to improve policing and community safety, including through the courts.

Contrary to what colonial stereotypes often imply, the disproportionate number of community safety crises impacting First Nations is not due to a lack of internal will and capacity for change. Rather, these tragedies are the direct result of colonialism, systemic racism, and longstanding neglect by Canadian and provincial governments and institutions to guarantee access to justice and the rule of law for First Nations Peoples.

Over the years, there have been numerous engagements, inquiries, and court decisions, such as [\*Dominique \(on behalf of the members of the Pekuakami-Ilnuatsh First Nation\) v. Public Safety Canada, 2022 CHRT 4\*](#),<sup>3</sup> and the [Auditor General of Canada's March 2024 audit report](#), which found racism and discrimination in the context of First Nations policing to exist – undeniably.

It is critical that we do not allow this well-recognized systemic racism to persist without action and remedy. Policy cannot continue to be developed and implemented in ways that ignore the realities and unique needs of First Nations communities and policing. Because when First Nations receive the level of policing and community safety guaranteed to every Canadian, our collective security and wellbeing is exponentially improved. Our problems do not arise in a vacuum and are not restricted to First Nations reserves. Community safety in one area impacts community safety everywhere.

We know what is required - from ensuring First Nations laws are enforced, to providing equitable funding for First Nation police services, and implementing culturally competent practices.

**Let's not wait any longer. It's time to act.**

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<sup>3</sup> Upheld by the Federal Court of Appeal in *Canada v PekuakamiIlnuatsh First Nation*, 2025 CAF 24.

## What is systemic racism?

Systemic racism, also known as institutional racism, refers to the ways in which whiteness and white superiority become **embedded in the policies and processes of an institution**, resulting in a system that **advantages** white people and **disadvantages** BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour), notably in employment, education, justice, and social participation.

In a settler colonial state like Canada, systemic racism is deeply rooted in every system across the country. This means that systems put in place were designed to **benefit white colonists while disadvantaging the Indigenous populations** who had lived on these lands since time immemorial. This power dynamic continues to be **upheld and reinforced** in our society, extending its impact on racialized peoples <sup>4</sup>.

Systemic racism includes racial laws, inequitable provision of services, intentional neglect and exclusion, social bias, and the ways institutional policies impact the well-being of BIPOC. This also includes the child and family welfare system, the education system, representation in governments at all levels, and health-care, among countless other programs, services, and systems.<sup>5</sup>

This campaign seeks to raise awareness of systemic racism issues, such as those in First Nations policing, and educate the public on how specific policy decisions have led to systemic failures. By highlighting these connections, we aim to inspire informed action and accountability, ensuring that systemic racism is addressed at every level.

Our hope is that this campaign and the linkages it draws both educate the public on the causes and consequences of systemic issues, and moves us away from endless loops of engagement and inquiries on these already well-studied topics

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<sup>4</sup> <https://vpfo.ubc.ca/2021/03/systemic-racism-what-it-looks-like-in-canada-and-how-to-fight-it/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.amnesty.ca/blog/black-and-indigenous-solidarity-against-systemic-racism/>

# 1. Chronic underfunding of First Nations police services

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## The issue

Imagine being in distress and calling the police for urgent help but knowing that they won't arrive for over an hour. This is the reality for many First Nations citizens policed by services that suffer from chronic underfunding. First Nations police often operate with significantly fewer resources than their non-Indigenous counterparts, leading to long response times, unsafe working conditions, staffing shortages, and insufficient community coverage. This disparity ultimately creates conditions that do not meet the same level of public safety provided to people in other parts of Ontario policed by non-Indigenous police services. The lack of funding to staff adequate officer allocations, for example, leaves First Nations communities more vulnerable to crime. Offenders know when to strike and communities struggle to stop them.

## Policy decision & impacts

- The First Nations and Inuit Policing Program (FNIPP) was established in 1991 as a contribution program “to enhance the effectiveness of policing services in First Nations and Inuit communities.” It treats First Nations policing as program, instead of treating it like an essential service with guaranteed funding.
- Multiple audits and court rulings have found the FNIPP consistently fails to meet its own mandates and does not provide adequate or equitable policing.
- In turn, First Nations police services often operate with fewer officers and resources, leading to delays in response times to emergencies, and inadequate equipment, training, and support.
- With fewer officers and resources, many First Nations communities are left without adequate police presence, compromising public safety and community trust in law enforcement, which is already riddled by a complex history.
- Amendments to Ontario's new policing legislation relating to funding appeals may help some First Nations, but they exclude entire policing models (e.g. the OFNPA) and they contain important caveats and limitations.

- By continuing to underfund First Nation police services, Ontario and Canada are violating international human rights standards, including those set out in the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#).

#### **Article 2**

Indigenous peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in the exercise of their rights, in particular that based on their indigenous origin or identity.

#### **Article 4**

Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.

#### **Article 5**

Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social, and cultural institutions.

#### **Article 20**

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and develop their political, economic and social systems or institutions, to be secure in the enjoyment of their own means of subsistence and development, and to engage freely in all their traditional and other economic activities.

#### **Article 21**

Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.

## **How to address this?**

- The Ipperwash Inquiry Report (2007)<sup>6</sup> addressed the chronic underfunding of First Nations police services and provided several key recommendations to enhance their sustainability and effectiveness, such as:

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<sup>6</sup> [https://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/e\\_records/ipperwash/report/vol\\_2/pdf/E\\_Vol\\_2\\_Full.pdf](https://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/e_records/ipperwash/report/vol_2/pdf/E_Vol_2_Full.pdf)

- **#43 Recognize First Nations Police Services as Essential Services:** The federal and provincial governments must formally recognize First Nations police services as an essential service, ensuring they receive the same legal standing, protections, and funding commitments as non-Indigenous police forces. Without this designation, First Nations policing remains subject to unstable, discretionary funding that fails to meet public safety needs. Recognition as an essential service would provide long-term financial security and prevent funding gaps that endanger both officers and communities.
- **#44 Develop Long Term, Sustainable Plans for First Nations Policing:** A comprehensive long-term strategy for First Nations policing in Ontario must be developed to ensure sustainable growth and development. This plan should:
  - Include clear commitments from federal and provincial governments regarding funding, training, and recruitment
  - Address the unique geographic and cultural challenges faced by First Nations police services
  - Provide multi-year funding agreements rather than short-term funding cycles, allowing for proper resource planning and expansion
- **#44 Funding Parity:** Establishing parity between First Nations police services and municipal police services by ensuring that funding is based on comparable metrics, such as population size, geographic area, crime rates, and community needs.
- **#45 Recognition of Inherent Rights:** Ensuring that funding models respect First Nations' inherent rights to self-determination and self-governance, recognizing their jurisdiction over policing within their territories. This includes honoring treaties and agreements that affirm First Nations' authority to manage their own public safety services.

## INDIGENOUS POLICE CHIEFS OF ONTARIO VS PUBLIC SAFETY CANADA

In May 2024, nine self-administered First Nations police services represented by the Indigenous Police Chiefs of Ontario (IPCO) lodged a formal complaint under the Canadian Human Rights Act (CHRA).<sup>7</sup> They assert that the federal government, through Public Safety Canada (PSC), engages in willful and deliberate underfunding of policing for Indigenous communities. This underfunding stems from the flawed design and administration of the FNIPP, also known as the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program (FNIPP).

The complaint cites Canada's own policy, which explicitly

calls for policing standards "equal in quality and level of service to policing services found in communities with similar conditions in the region." The lawsuit states that Canada's consistent under-resourcing blatantly ignores these commitments.

This litigation highlights Canada's ongoing failure to rectify the systemic discrimination recognized in prior legal decisions, including the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal complaint filed by Chief Gilbert Dominique on behalf of Pekuakaminulnuatsh First Nation.<sup>8</sup>

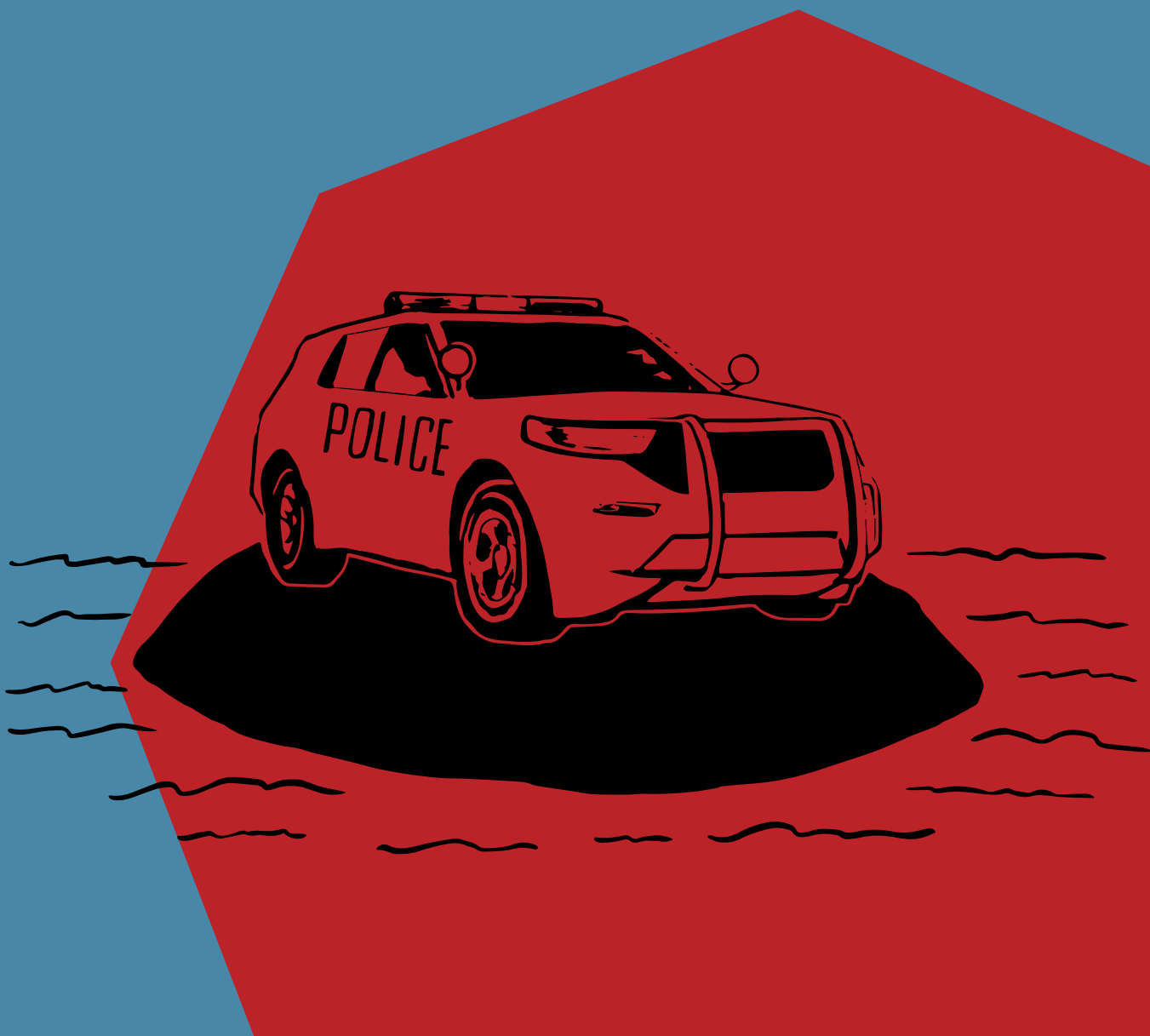
# On the Ground

<sup>7</sup> <https://falconers.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/IPCO-Notice-of-Motion.-Federal-Court.-re-Canadian-Human-Rights-Complaint-May-3-2023-FINAL2.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.scc-csc.ca/case-dossier/cb/2024/40619-eng.aspx>

## 2. Lack of access to First Nations policing

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## The issue

Despite the major failings of the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program, it is currently the primary path for First Nations to have culturally appropriate police services. It is critical that First Nations can access this option because of the unique community safety issues facing their communities. Without their own policing, First Nations are often left with police services that do not understand their needs and have a long history of animosity from enforcing harmful colonial policies.

Yet more than 40% of First Nations and Inuit communities in Canada are shut out of the Program and the federal government has failed to expand access to new First Nations wishing to join.

The Independent Auditor General's 2024 Report into the FNIPP criticized this failure.<sup>9</sup>

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Program

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<sup>9</sup> Reports of the Auditor General of Canada to the Parliament of Canada: First Nations and Inuit Policing Program, Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2024, at pp. 7-8. [https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/docs/parl\\_oag\\_2024\\_03\\_03\\_e.pdf](https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/docs/parl_oag_2024_03_03_e.pdf)

## Policy decisions & impacts

- Public Safety Canada, which administers the FNIPP has no application process for First Nations and Inuit communities wishing to enter the Program.
- Canada has not allowed new entrants into the program because the budget could not support additional agreements, leaving over one third of First Nations and Inuit communities without access to the FNIPP services<sup>10</sup>.
- Canada promised to re-open access to the FNIPP in 2019, but has failed to live up to its promise.
- The moratorium undermines First Nations' inherent rights to exercise control and jurisdiction over their own justice systems as communities are left without a choice to enter into a self-administered service and cannot fully develop or implement their own policing and legal frameworks.
- The moratorium signals a lack of government commitment to First Nations reconciliation, further fueling frustrations and tensions that have weakened relationships between Indigenous communities and colonial public institutions.
  - By maintaining a lack of available, and culturally appropriate, policing options for First Nations, Ontario and Canada are violating international human rights standards, including those set out in the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#):

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<sup>10</sup> [https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/docs/parl\\_oag\\_2024\\_03\\_03\\_e.pdf](https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/docs/parl_oag_2024_03_03_e.pdf)

#### **Article 4**

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Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social, and cultural institutions.

#### **Article 18**

Indigenous Peoples have a right to participate in decision-making in matters that affect their rights.

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#### **Article 21**

Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.

## **How to address this?**

- **End the Moratorium Immediately:** The federal government must fully fund, at parity with other community police services in Canada, any First Nations seeking to obtain First Nations policing and to end the moratorium on entry into the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program.
- **Renewed Approach:** As recommended in the 2024 Auditor General's audit report on the FNIPP, Public Safety Canada should work collaboratively with First Nation and Inuit communities and provincial and territorial governments to develop and implement a renewed approach to the FNIPP<sup>11</sup>.

- **Fulfilling Promises:** Funding agreements must recognize and reinforce First Nations' right to self-determination in policing, reflecting treaty relationships and principle of free, prior, and informed consent.
- **Funding Utilization:** Multi-year funding agreements must provide predictable and stable resources, while being legislatively recognized as an essential service rather than a contribution-based program.
- **Self-Governance:** Financial mechanisms must adapt to the distinct governance structures of each First Nation, allowing for genuine Indigenous control over policing priorities and practices.

Out of **680** First Nation and Inuit communities in Canada...

only **385** are covered by policing agreements under the program

These agreements include

**36**  
self-administered  
arrangements serving

**155**  
communities

**140**  
community tripartite  
agreements serving

**230**  
communities

11 [https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl\\_oag\\_202403\\_03\\_e\\_44452.html](https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_oag_202403_03_e_44452.html)

Since the federal government promised to expand access to First Nations policing in 2019, many Ontario First Nations have asked for this support. They have been repeatedly put off by federal officials. Six years after the federal government promised, all of these Ontario First Nations are still left hanging. None have been provided with access to First Nations policing and none have been told when this promise might be fulfilled.

This problem is replicated across the country. The Auditor General's 2024 audit report<sup>12</sup> on the FNIPP highlights that out of 680 First Nation and Inuit communities in Canada, only 385 are covered by policing agreements under the program.

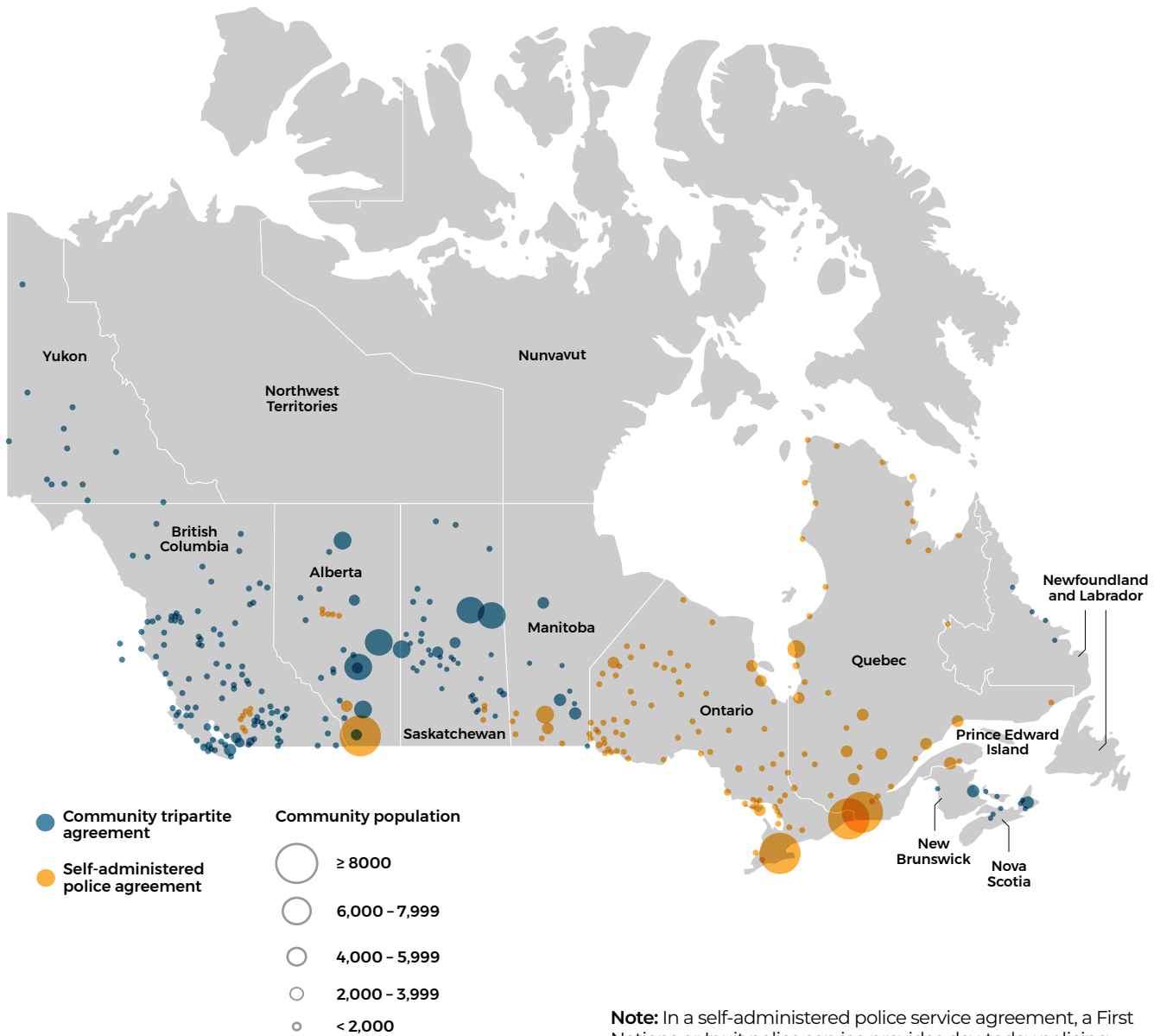
These agreements include 36 self-administered arrangements serving 155 communities and 140 community tripartite agreements serving 230 communities, both of which are cost shared between federal and provincial governments.

More than 40% remain without policing services under the FNIPP.

While some First Nations prefer alternative models to policing, the gap in policing services for many First Nations communities remains unchanged due to the ongoing moratorium on entry into the FNIPP. The 2024 Auditor General's report confirmed that the federal government has failed to ensure equitable access to policing for First Nations, exacerbating the lack of community safety and adequate law enforcement in First Nations communities. The significant gap highlights the program's inability to meet the demand for equitable and culturally responsive police services. The lack of inclusion leaves many First Nation communities reliant on provincial or federal policing that cannot address the unique needs of Indigenous communities, further perpetuating systemic inequities in public safety.

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<sup>12</sup> [https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl\\_oag\\_202403\\_03\\_e\\_44452.html](https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_oag_202403_03_e_44452.html)



**Note:** In a self-administered police service agreement, a First Nations or Inuit police service provides day-to-day policing services. In a community tripartite agreement, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police provides dedicated policing services to a First Nations or Inuit community that supplements the police services available through the province or territory.

# On the Ground

# 3. Discriminatory lack of enforcement and prosecution of First Nations laws

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## The issue

First Nations often need laws and by-laws to regulate and oversee important areas of life, including community safety, health, public order, and crime prevention. They also pass laws on issues where provincial and federal laws don't apply on reserve – for example, relating to marriage and property.

For these laws to work effectively, they must be enforced by police or other officers and prosecuted. But right now, most First Nations laws are not enforced or prosecuted.

Ontario's *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019* (CSPA) explicitly excludes the enforcement of First Nations laws from the duties that police forces are required to carry out.<sup>13</sup>

This means that the enforcement of First Nation by-laws is optional. It also means that police services as not guaranteed funding to enforce these laws.

That is because police are only funded to fulfil the mandatory requirements of “adequate and effective” policing. In addition, First Nations are not guaranteed funding to hire their own enforcement officers to fill this gap.

Further, there is a lack of prosecutorial services provided to First Nations people living on reserve by Ontario and Canada whereas other Ontarians have access to prosecutors. Therefore, even if police exercise discretion to enforce a First Nation law, there are generally no prosecutions, rendering many of these laws unenforceable in practice.

This is a serious problem because First Nations laws often relate to critical community safety, public order, and crime prevention issues. For example, First Nations by-laws are used to prohibit intoxicants, regulate cannabis, and ensure that dangerous individuals are removed from situations where they could harm children and undermine community safety. Without mandatory enforcement, these laws remain ineffective and unenforced, further entrenching systemic inequities in policing and community safety, disregarding First Nations inherent right to self-governance, and leaving communities in a dangerous legal void.

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<sup>13</sup> *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, S.O. 2019, c. 1, Sched. 1 at para. 11(2).

The continued refusal to recognize First Nations legal authority and ongoing prejudice to that authority amounts to an explicit denial of self-determination, which is further reinforced by the lack of funding for enforcement mechanisms. If municipal residents are afforded full legal recognition, resources, and enforcement tools, why are First Nations people treated as less than?<sup>14</sup>

On May 7, 2024, the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) initiated a significant legal<sup>15</sup> action against Ontario and Canada. The lawsuit was prompted by longstanding issues related to the enforcement and prosecution of First Nations laws and by-laws and access to justice, which were exacerbated by the provisions of the *Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA)*, enacted on April 1, 2024.

Chiefs of Ontario have long called for the mandatory enforcement of First Nations laws. The legal action was publicly announced during a press conference at Queen's Park, where First Nations Leadership and Indigenous Police Chiefs emphasized the intolerable nature of this discrimination and the pressing need for governmental accountability.

First Nations laws often relate to critical community safety, public order, and crime prevention issues

The lawsuit underscores the systemic barriers First Nations communities face in achieving equitable access to justice and public safety. It highlights the urgent need for legislative reform, adequate funding, and recognition of First Nations laws within Canada's broader legal and policing framework. This case has the potential to set a critical precedent for how Indigenous laws and governance are respected and supported in the future.

Despite Canada and Ontario dragging their feet, Chiefs of Ontario remains committed to

<sup>14</sup> Further reflections on the impact of Ontario's new provincial policing legislation on First Nations can be found in a 2024 report published by Anishinabek Nation: [chrome-extension://efaidnbnmnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/66fd4744d67022cabe242f67/67179f4fde97b629131ce7ae\\_LEGAL-Niizaanat%20Meshkdoonaa-Community%20Safety%20and%20Policing%20Act%20Report%20\(FYI\).pdf](chrome-extension://efaidnbnmnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/66fd4744d67022cabe242f67/67179f4fde97b629131ce7ae_LEGAL-Niizaanat%20Meshkdoonaa-Community%20Safety%20and%20Policing%20Act%20Report%20(FYI).pdf)

<sup>15</sup> <https://chiefs-of-ontario.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/2024-05-07-Statement-of-Claim-.pdf>

working collaboratively with both levels of government to see a speedy resolution to this matter and to achieve the consistent and reliable enforcement and prosecution of First Nations laws.

The Supreme Court of Canada recently emphasized this point and the “need” for First Nations policing, finding that “the need of Indigenous peoples for culturally appropriate police services originates in the difficult, and at times even traumatizing, relationship that Indigenous peoples had, and in some cases continue to have, with the police services imposed on them over the years by the Crown.”<sup>16</sup>

## Policy decisions & impacts

- The *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019 (CSPA)*, which outlines the core functions of policing in Ontario, explicitly excludes the enforcement of First Nations by-laws<sup>17</sup> from the list of mandatory police functions. This is the first time in Ontario history that this exclusion has been explicitly legislated, and nowhere else in Canada does this explicit exclusion exist.
- Without a legislative mandate, police services are reluctant to enforce First Nations laws. Also, they are not funded to do so.
- Canada and Ontario refuse to make their prosecutors available for prosecutions of offences under First Nations laws.
- Canada and Ontario do not provide permanent or sufficient funding for First Nations to hire their own prosecutors or enforcement officers.
- First Nations police services are not guaranteed funding for the enforcement of First Nations laws.
- Excluding First Nations laws and by-laws reinforces the systemic neglect of Indigenous legal authority, leaving communities unable to exercise their inherent jurisdiction effectively, undermining self-governance and public safety.

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<sup>16</sup> Quebec (Attorney General) v. Pekuakamiulnuatsh Takuhikan, 2024 SCC 39, paragraph 183.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.canlii.org/en/on/laws/stat/so-2019-c-1-sch-1/latest/so-2019-c-1-sch-1.html>

- By failing to recognize and enforce First Nations laws, Ontario and Canada are violating international human rights standards, including those set out in the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#):

#### **Article 2**

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#### **Article 5**

Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social, and cultural institutions.

#### **Article 18**

Indigenous Peoples have a right to participate in decision-making in matters that affect their rights.

#### **Article 34**

Indigenous peoples have the right to promote, develop and maintain their institutional structures and their distinctive customs, spirituality, traditions, procedures, practices and, in the cases where they exist, juridical systems or customs, in accordance with international human rights standards.

## **How to address this?**


- **Amendments to CSPA:** Amend the CSPA to include the enforcement of First Nations laws as a mandatory police function.

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**16** Quebec (Attorney General) v. Pekuakamiulnuatsh Takuhikan, 2024 SCC 39, paragraph 183.

**17** <https://www.canlii.org/en/on/laws/stat/so-2019-c-1-sch-1/latest/so-2019-c-1-sch-1.html>

- **Community-Driven Prosecution:** Fully fund all First Nations seeking to hire their own prosecutors to prosecute their own laws.
- **Crowns prosecutors:** Make Crown prosecutors available on request by First Nations that do not wish to retain their own prosecutors.
- **Officer Training:** Develop and mandate training programs for police officers on the enforcement of First Nations laws, emphasizing cultural competency and the unique needs of First Nation communities.
- **Law-Making Capacity:** Provide the adequate resources for First Nations to develop their own laws in accordance with their own legal traditions, values, and processes and to revitalize their own legal systems and legal institutions.
- **First Nations calls for action:** Implement all of the calls for action on the enforcement and prosecution gaps outlined in COO Resolution 23/10A.
- **Work together:** Canada and Ontario should stop fighting Ontario First Nations in court and focus their resources on finally resolving the enforcement and prosecution gaps.



The continued refusal to recognize First Nations legal authority and ongoing prejudice to that authority amounts to an explicit denial of self-determination, which is further reinforced by the lack of funding for enforcement mechanisms

A few years ago, Batchewana First Nation learned that a dangerous individual was present on the reserve and was arrested in a drug bust that uncovered a large quantity of drugs clearly intended for trafficking, including crack, heroin, other opioids (oxycodone), and methamphetamines (crystal meth). The individual was charged with various trafficking, possession, and firearms-related offences. As a result, the First Nation declared the individual a trespasser and prohibited

him from being present on the reserve.

In November 2021, this individual trespassed on the reserve and officers laid charges. Unfortunately, all the relevant Crown prosecutors refused to prosecute the case. This included the provincial Crown Attorney, the Director of Crown Operations for the North Region, and the agent for the Public Prosecution Service of Canada (PPSC). All of them said that it was not their responsibility.

## On the Ground

# 4. Lack of police training on First Nations policing and culture

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## The issue

Police officers in Ontario lack training on the unique challenges of First Nations policing, especially in northern First Nations, and also in the specific cultures, circumstances, traditions and histories of the specific First Nation or First Nations they serve. This is a major problem, particularly where First Nations are policed by non-First Nations officers. Although cultural training occurs, it typically takes a blanket pan-Indigenous approach instead of focusing on the specific First Nation that the officers serve. Treating First Nations as a homogenous group, or a few homogenous groups, is grossly inaccurate, as there are a very wide variety of First Nations in Ontario with distinct cultures, languages, histories, treaties, and traditions. The pan-Indigenous approach to training is insulting to First Nations and does not appropriately prepare officers for their difficult jobs. In Ontario there is no requirement that officers receive training on the unique challenges of First Nations policing and on the unique cultures of the specific First Nation(s) they serve, and that needs to change.

First Nations police services navigate a complex landscape marked by geographic challenges, including remoteness, and profound cultural considerations, aspects that mainstream policing frameworks often fail to adequately address. In northern Ontario, these services are responsible for policing vast, often remote areas, with limited accessibility which can complicate logistics and delay emergency response.

Additionally, First Nations' cultural values require policing approaches that are not only sensitive but also deeply integrated with the traditions and practices of



The pan-Indigenous approach to training is insulting to First Nations and does not appropriately prepare officers for their difficult jobs

the community, a requirement often unmet by standard policing models. Police training remains minimal and inadequate, failing to include trauma-informed responses, Indigenous legal traditions, or the historical impacts of colonialism. Policing is very different in many First Nations, especially remote northern policing. Instead of equipping officers with the necessary knowledge and skills, training is standardized to meet only basic requirements, leaving officers unprepared to engage with First Nations communities in a culturally competent manner. Furthermore, provincially mandated cultural training generally takes an inappropriate pan-Indigenous approach that fails to reflect the huge diversity among First Nations in Ontario.

## Policy decisions & impacts

- The combination of funding instability and insufficient training results in inefficient policing practices that do not meet the unique safety needs of First Nations communities, thereby perpetuating systemic racism and deepening community trust
- The lack of appropriate cultural competency training for officers often leaves many non-Indigenous officers with little to no training on specific First Nations cultures, traditions, or legal frameworks. In turn, officers may misinterpret community dynamics, fail to properly handle cases involving Indigenous trauma, and reinforce systemic racism in their interactions.
- [The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action](#), #57 directs all governments to provide mandatory cultural competency training for public servants, including law enforcement. This training must include the history of residential schools, Treaties, Indigenous rights, and the legacy of colonialism in Canada.
- [The Police Code of Conduct](#) outlines the social responsibility of officers to uphold human rights, protect vulnerable populations, and engage in fair, unbiased policing. Yet, without meaningful training, officers lack the knowledge, tools, and skills to properly serve First Nations communities.
  - The lack of appropriate culturally competent police training, illustrates Ontario and Canada are violating international human rights standards, including those set out in the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#).

### **Article 2**

Indigenous peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in the exercise of their rights, in particular that based on their indigenous origin or identity.

### **Article 5**

Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social, and cultural institutions.

### **Article 18**

Indigenous Peoples have a right to participate in decision-making in matters that affect their rights.

### **Article 21**

Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.

## **How to address this?**

- Mandate Cultural Competency Training for Officers – Require ongoing training for all officers working in or with First Nations communities *that is First Nations-specific and First Nation-led*.
  - Training is to include trauma-informed approaches, Indigenous legal traditions, treaty rights, and the history of colonialism in policing. The curriculum of this training should be developed and guided by First Nations.
  - Recognize cultural competency as a core competency in policing, rather than an optional course.
  - Expand Indigenous-led training initiatives across municipal, provincial, and federal policing institutions.

- **First Nations Policing Training** – Develop and mandate training for officers specific to the First Nations context, including training specific to remote First Nations and including training on pre-charge diversion and restorative justice
- **Equitable Support for Remote Policing** – Adequate and sustainable resources must be administered and tailored to the unique challenges of remote policing so police can competency serve these communities, including transportation, training, and mental health support for officers.
- **Accountability and Oversight** – Include interested First Nation Leadership in decision-making processes regarding policing priorities and resource allocation.
  - Implement independent oversight to ensure training is administered and received respectfully, and not performative, but results in real changes.
  - Require police forces to publicly report on cultural competency completion rates.

First Nations' cultural values require policing approaches that are not only sensitive but also deeply integrated with the traditions and practices of the community, a requirement often unmet by standard policing models

**“Racist attitudes’ contributed to poor Indigenous death investigations by Thunder Bay police”, report says.**

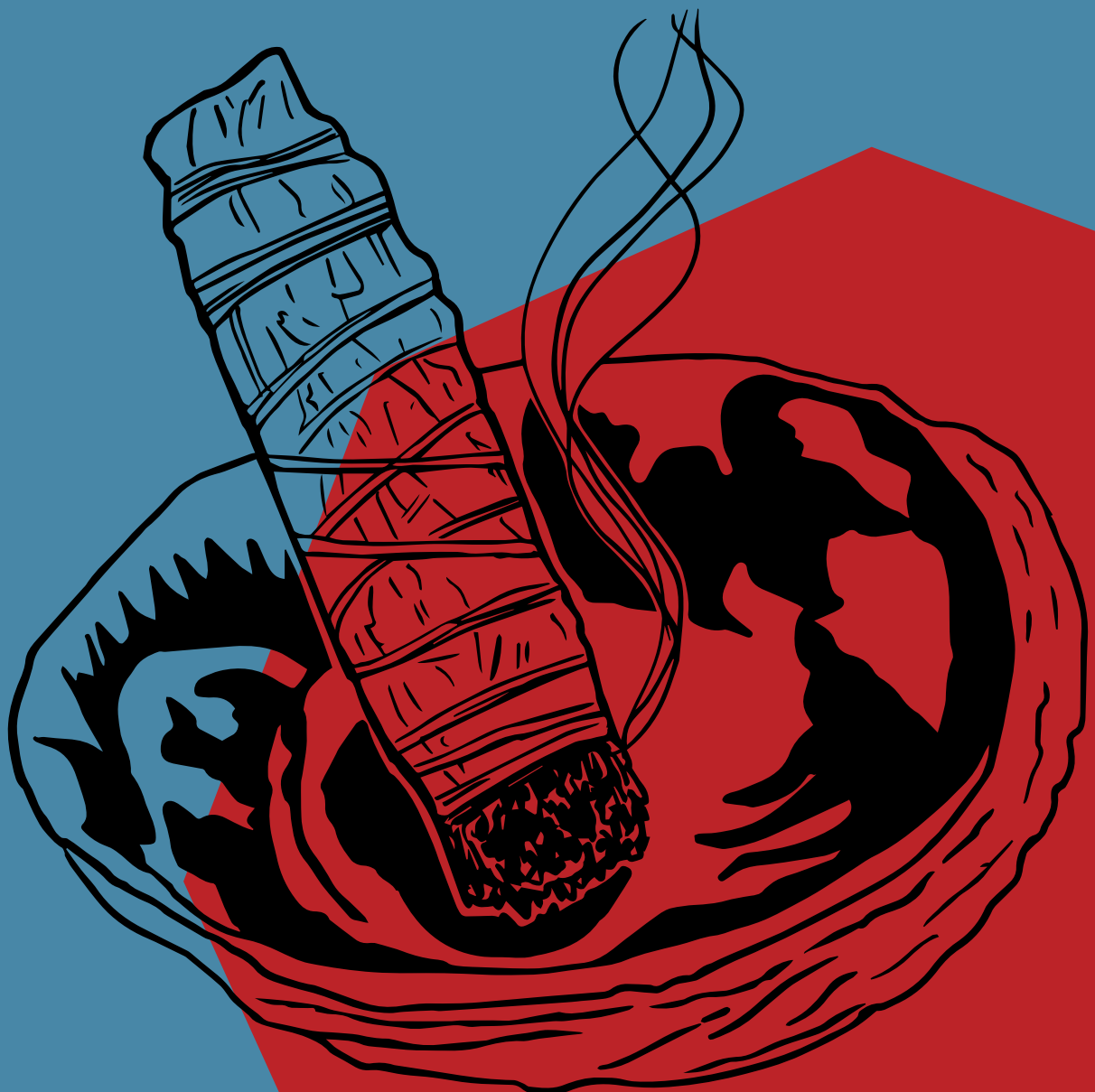
The Thunder Bay Ontario Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD) report, as detailed in a [CBC article](#), revealed systemic issues within the Thunder Bay Police Department (TBPS) that have severely undermined community trust, especially among Indigenous populations. In response to these findings, the Broken Trust Recommendations were developed, with Recommendation 32 explicitly calling on TBPS to focus proactively on eliminating systemic racism. This recommendation urges the removal of entrenched systemic barriers and the root causes of racial inequities within the service. According to the report, discriminatory

practices such as racial profiling and biased decision making have led to a breakdown of trust between TBPS and the local Indigenous community. The Broken Trust Recommendations emphasize that TBPS must implement transformative reforms ranging from overhauling internal policies to introducing comprehensive, Indigenous-led cultural competency training to restore credibility and ensure equitable public safety. Without these necessary changes, TBPS will continue to perpetuate a legacy of neglect and injustice, leaving Indigenous communities with insufficient protection and a deep mistrust of law enforcement.

## On the Ground

# 5. Compromised police officer mental health and wellness

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Nearly **74.4%** of officers reported experiencing mental health issues during their employment,

yet **40.6%** of those individuals did not disclose their struggles due to stigma, fear of career impact, or distrust in available services

## The issue

First Nations police officers face significant mental health challenges due to the high levels of trauma and stress associated with their work. Unlike their non-Indigenous counterparts, these officers often work in isolated communities with limited resources, inadequate mental health supports, and high exposure to crisis situations, including violence, addiction, and systemic social-economic struggles within the communities they serve.

The recent mental health review of First Nations police services under the Ontario First Nations Policing Agreement (OFNPA) highlights a concerning reality: nearly 74.4% of officers reported experiencing mental health issues during their employment, yet 40.6% of those individuals did not disclose their struggles due to stigma, fear of career impact, or distrust in available services. Compounding this issue is the lack of adequate replacement officers when someone is off-duty due to mental health concerns, which leads to increased workload, burnout, and decreased morale among remaining staff.


## Policy decisions & impacts

- **Underfunding and understaffing** are the most major root cause of mental health challenges. For instance, underfunding means that officers in First Nations policed under the OFNPA often must work alone in unsafe conditions where their OPP counterparts would have a partner. Understaffing leads to burnout and vacancies, which puts more pressure on remaining officers, which in turn leads to even more burnout and a vicious cycle.
- **Lack of accessible and culturally appropriate mental health supports:** the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program (FNIPP) does not explicitly allocate funding for mental health resources, forcing many Indigenous police services to rely on inconsistent or inadequate provincial or community-based funding. Further, officers often need to pay out of pocket for therapy or specialized mental health treatment, as many existing wellness programs are not sufficiently resourced.
- Officers reported a reluctance to access mental health services, primarily due to concerns of potential negative implications and the stigma surrounding mental health, perpetuating untreated stress and trauma.
- 
- The OFNPA format is problematic because the First Nations are not direct signatories to the tripartite agreements, meaning that critical decisions about funding, staffing, and resource allocation are made by the OPP without adequate consultation with First Nation communities, resulting in under resourced policing and undermining Indigenous self-governance over public safety.

## How to address this?

- **Prevention Mechanism:** to Implement prevention mechanisms, building a stronger, healthier police force that serves First Nations.
  - Develop proactive mental health services for officers, rather than waiting for crises to emerge.
  - Create officer wellness programs that include physical, emotional, and cultural well-being strategies.

- **Secure Sustainable Funding for Mental Health Programs:** First Nations police services require guaranteed and long-term funding to develop culturally appropriate wellness programs, rather than relying on insufficient short-term provincial or grant based funding.
- **Improve Access to Mental Health:** Establish mental health crisis response teams within First Nations police services to provide specialized care for officers exposed to trauma.
  - Establish mandatory, trauma-informed debriefing sessions after critical incidents to prevent long term mental health impacts.
  - Ensure access to immediate mental health interventions, rather than relying on officers to request support when already in distress.
  - Consider the specific needs of Northern and remote First Nations.
- **Address the Issue of Officer Burnout and Workload:** Implement a guaranteed replacement policy ensuring officers who take leave for mental health reasons are replaced by a temporary or seconded officer to maintain adequate staffing levels.
  - **Implement Report Recommendations:** Implement the recommendations made in the reports on mental health of officers in OFNPA and self-administered policer services.
  - **Policing Support Systems:** Establish Elder-led support groups/Healing circles within police services, creating a safe space to discuss struggles, in a way that aligns with First Nations values. Incorporating healing circles into officer wellness programs would provide a community-based, culturally affirming method of processing trauma. [The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action](#) address police officer mental health and wellness through:
    - **TRC Call to Action #22** – Inclusion of Indigenous Healing Practices which calls upon all level of governments to recognize the value of Indigenous healing practices and work with Indigenous communities to provide culturally relevant services in collaboration with Elders, healers, and Indigenous knowledge keepers.



Unlike their non-Indigenous counterparts, [First Nations police] officers often work in isolated communities with limited resources, inadequate mental health supports, and high exposure to crisis situations, including violence, addiction, and systemic social-economic struggles within the communities they serve

A recent mental health review conducted of the Ontario First Nation Police Agreement Services (OFNPA) highlighted the need for practical and culturally appropriate for reform. First Nations policing in the OFNPA context presents particular and specific challenges to the mental health of First Nations police officers as a result of: insufficient staffing levels, employment uncertainty and lack of support, limited opportunity for growth and increased opportunity for trauma, and insufficient wellness and mental health supports in the workplace. These challenges are a direct result of underfunding and understaffing. As a result of this reality, OFNPA members experience high rates of mental health challenges, require very long periods of time of related to mental health and leave policing. These are significant implications for each individual police member and for the communities they serve.

Of the  
**43** officers surveyed,  
**74.4%** reported  
experiencing a mental  
health issue during their  
career

In particular, of the 43 officers surveyed, 74.4% reported experiencing a mental health issue during their career, yet nearly half of them did not disclose their struggles. Part of these struggles stems from that for the most part, OFNPA officers work alone. In some services, this may mean alone in the car but there is another officer on the same shift somewhere else in the community. In many services, this means fully alone and acting as the only police officer on duty in the community. The mental health consequence of this structure is hypervigilance, fear, and isolation.

**“ I have fear – if I’m not in who will cover for me? I’m a supervisor and I just want to look after my people. So I won’t take time off.”**

— INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT

Additionally, 82% of surveyed officers were over 40 years old, meaning many have spent decades in high-stress roles with little to no access to consistent mental health support. Officers reported relying on their colleagues and family members for emotional support rather than structured mental health programs.

The Review makes seven findings and 14 recommendations under three headings: Staffing and Employment Deficiencies, Lack of Opportunity, and Specific Mental Health Challenges and Needs.

## On the Ground

# 6. Policing and the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG)

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## The issue

Indigenous women and girls continue to face disproportionate levels of violence across Canada, with the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIW)<sup>18</sup> concluding that this crisis amounts to genocide. Despite years of documented cases and advocacy efforts, policing systems remain ineffective, under resourced, and culturally incompetent in responding to and preventing violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirited individuals. The root causes of this crisis are deeply connected to colonial policies and systemic racism that have devalued First Nations women, and the failure of law enforcement and government agencies to prioritize Indigenous safety.

One of the most neglected aspects of this crisis is the failure to address human trafficking and sexual exploitation in resource extraction such as trucking, logging, and mining which are linked to spikes in violence against Indigenous women, girl, and two-spirit people. These industries often operate in or near Indigenous lands, yet there are no targeted initiatives to prevent trafficking or ensure worker accountability<sup>19</sup>. Without proactive policing in these spaces, traffickers, exploiters, and predators continue to operate unchecked.

Many cases remain unsolved or improperly investigated, leaving families without justice.

## Policy decisions & impacts

- Systemic Failures in Law Enforcement Investigations
  - The policing system has historically failed Indigenous women, often dismissing cases as runaways, suicides, or overdoses, i.e. “no foul play”, without conducting proper investigations.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/breeding-grounds-for-predators-mps-probe-links-between-resource-extraction-mmiwg/>

- Police services in Canada, including the RCMP and provincial/municipal police, have been found to systematically under-investigate cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women<sup>20</sup>
- Failure to Implement the 231 Calls for Justice
  - The 2019 Final Report of the National Inquiry to MMIWG<sup>21</sup> issued 231 Calls for Justice, outlining clear steps for the government to take to address the crisis. [Article 8\(c\)](#): “States shall provide effective mechanisms for prevention of, and redress for any form of forced population transfer which has the aim or effect of violating or undermining any of the rights of Indigenous Peoples”.
  - Indigenous women and girls are overrepresented in the sex trade and face heightened risks of being trafficked for sexual exploitation<sup>22</sup>.
  - Provinces and territories have not uniformly committed to implementing the Calls for Justice, leading to fragmented, inconsistent responses across the country.
- Inadequate Support for First Nation Police Services
  - Indigenous women and girls in many First Nation communities, especially remote communities, face slower police response times, fewer officers, and less protection from violent offenders
  - Communities are left vulnerable to organized crime, gang activity, and human trafficking, with no adequate police response.
- By continuing to fail on solving the MMIWG crisis, Ontario and Canada are violating international human rights standards, including those set out in the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#).

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/rcmp-crcc-indigenous-woman-death-1.7199167>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/the-trafficked-sexual-exploitation-is-costing-canadian-women-their-lives/article28700849/>

## Article 2

Indigenous peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in the exercise of their rights, in particular that based on their indigenous origin or identity.

## Article 22

Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities in the implementation of this Declaration. States shall take measures, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to ensure that indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.

## How to address this?

- **Full Implementation of the 231 Calls for Justice** – Ensure accountability and clear timelines for federal, provincial, and territorial governments to implement the Calls for Justice including specialized Indigenous policing units (CFJ 9.4), standardized investigation protocols (CFJ 9.5), partnerships with front line services (CFJ 9.7), and more accountability on unresolved cases (CFJ 9.10).
- **Improve Law Enforcement Accountability** – Establish mandatory Indigenous-led oversight bodies to review police handling of MMIWG cases
  - Mandate police presence and proactive investigations in industries linked to human trafficking in resource extraction industries.
  - Implement mandatory anti-racism training for all officers, focusing on real world examples of police bias in MMIWG investigations.
  - Implement culturally competent liaison relationships and processes between families and communities and law enforcement and other relevant agencies investigating cases.
- **Recognize and Address Human Trafficking** – Fund dedicated law enforcement units specializing in investigating trafficking cases involving Indigenous women and girls.

## **THE DISAPPEARANCE AND MURDER OF MAISY ODJICK AND SHANNON ALEXANDER – A FAILURE OF POLICE RESPONSE**

**“ It is with deep disappointment and frustration that I say the lack of accountability is staggering and unacceptable”**

— HILDA ANDERSON-PYRZ, CHAIR OF THE NATIONAL FAMILY AND SURVIVORS CIRCLE<sup>23</sup>

Maisy Odjick and Shannon Alexander, two Algonquin teenagers from Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation in Quebec, went missing on September 6, 2008, from Maniwaki, Quebec, near the Ontario border. The two young women, aged 16 and 17, were last seen at Shannon’s home, where they had planned a night together before heading to a dance

the next day. However, when Shannon’s father came home, the girls were gone—leaving behind their purses, wallets, and identification. From the very beginning, their families knew something was wrong, but law enforcement failed to take their disappearance seriously.

Despite immediate concerns raised by Maisy’s and Shannon’s families, the police initially dismissed their case as that of two runaways, failing to launch an urgent investigation. There was no Amber Alert, no widespread search effort, and no media attention comparable to cases of missing white girls in Canada. The families were forced to conduct their own searches, post flyers, and pressure law enforcement to take action. Even when Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg Police requested support from the Sûreté du Québec, the response was slow, and critical time was lost.

For years, the families of Maisy and Shannon fought to keep their story in the public eye, organizing vigils, speaking to the media, and demanding a proper police response. Tragically, in 2021, their remains were discovered near where they had vanished. To this day, their deaths remain unsolved, and their families have received few answers about what happened to them. The lack of urgency in investigating their disappearance reflects the systemic racism within policing, where missing Indigenous women and girls are not given the same attention as non-Indigenous cases.

The case of Maisy Odjick and Shannon Alexander underscores the long-standing issue of police negligence in cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG). Their families were forced to fight for their daughters' cases to be recognized, despite clear evidence that

their disappearance was suspicious. The National Inquiry into MMIWG has repeatedly documented cases of police dismissing Indigenous disappearances, failing to conduct thorough investigations, and delaying action when critical time could save lives.

If Maisy and Shannon had been white, would they have received immediate action? Would their cases have gone cold for over a decade? These are the difficult but necessary questions that highlight the ongoing crisis of MMIWG in Canada. Their story serves as yet another painful example of how systemic racism, police inaction, and a lack of accountability continue to endanger the lives of Indigenous women and girls.

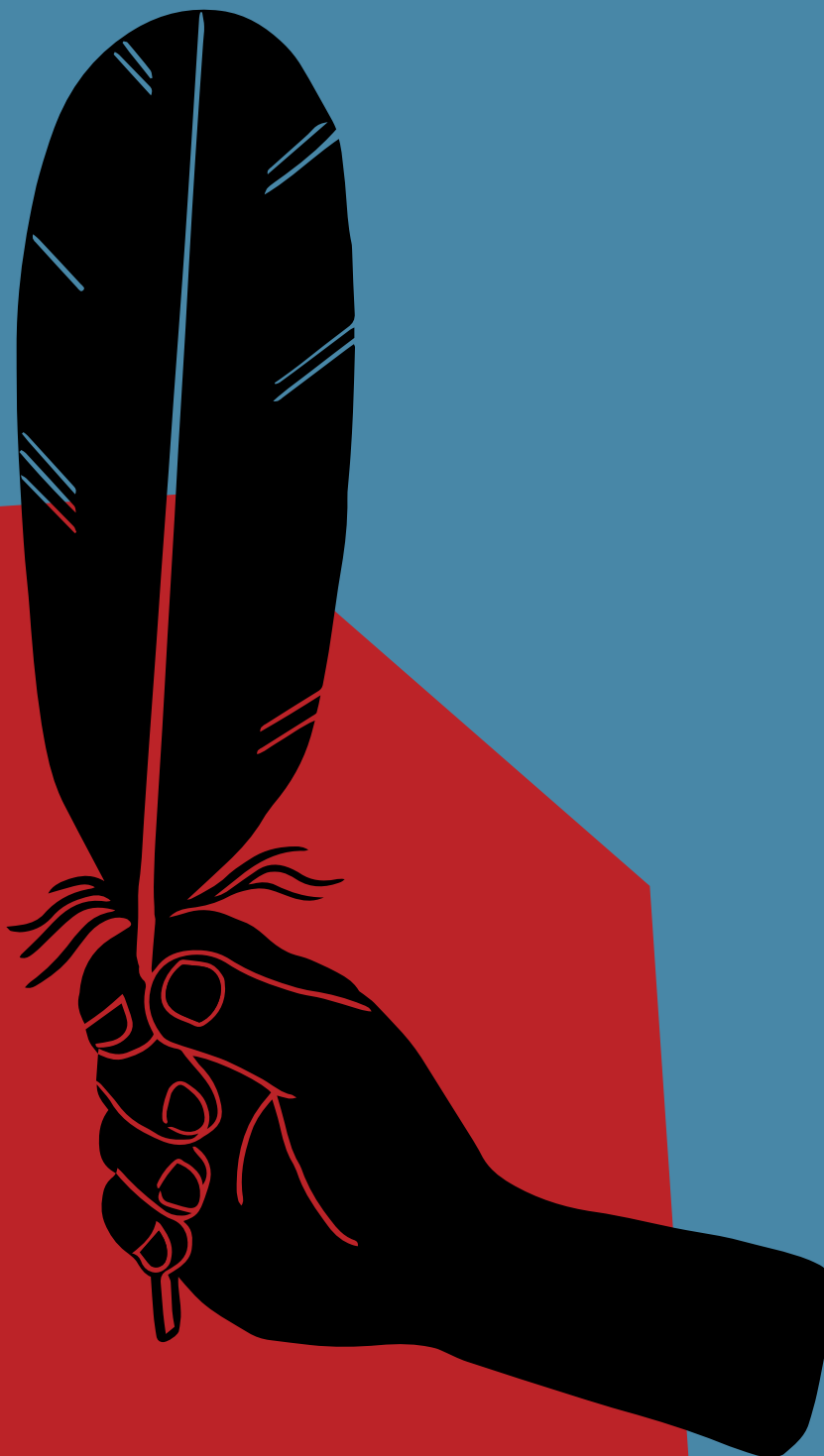
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**23** <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/mmiwg-action-plan-update-1.6476685>

## On the Ground

# 7. Private prosecution pilot

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## The issue

Despite the longstanding need for First Nations to enforce and prosecute their own laws, there has been a persistent enforcement gap. Traditional prosecutorial mechanisms have proven inadequate or non-existent in addressing violations of First Nations laws, leaving communities without meaningful legal recourse.

As part of Chiefs of Ontario's mandate from the Ontario Chiefs-in-Assembly in participating at the Tripartite Collaborative Technical Table on the Enforcement and Prosecution of First Nations Laws, COO advocated for the interim solution for the federal and provincial governments to fund First Nations to hire their own prosecutors.

In response, Canada and Ontario initiated [pilot funding](#) to support the prosecutions of First Nations laws during the 2022-23 and 2023-24 fiscal years, which was extended until March 31, 2025. While not perfect and not permanent, this is a positive development which provides First Nations with a partial prosecution mechanism for infractions of their laws, in the absence of the availability of Crown prosecution.

## Policy decisions & impacts

This pilot was achieved through Ontario Chiefs-in-Assembly mandates to Chiefs of Ontario via COO Resolutions 21/37 and 23/10A.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action directly support the need for this initiative by calling for equitable legal treatment, access to justice, and recognition of Indigenous legal traditions.

### Call to Action #25

Equitable Access to Justice - Calls on federal, provincial, and territorial governments to implement and evaluate initiatives to address inequities in the justice system and ensure Indigenous people have equal access to justice.

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**24** <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/tcttepfnl2-ttctalpnpd2/index.html>

Traditional prosecutorial mechanisms have proven inadequate or non-existent in addressing violations of First Nations laws

#### **Call to Action #42**

Recognition and Integration of Indigenous Legal Traditions which calls upon the government to commit to recognizing and integrating Indigenous legal traditions into Canada's Legal Traditions.

#### **Call to Action #50**

Calls upon the federal government to fund the establishment of Indigenous law institutes for the development, use, and understanding of Indigenous laws.

### **Further development required**

- While this pilot provides a prosecution mechanism for interested First Nations, it is a temporary, application-based funding model. A permanent and adequately and sustainably funded program is required
- Federal and provincial Crown prosecutions must also be made available to prosecute infractions of First Nations laws as requested by a First Nation
- Alignment of this initiative with broader policy reforms that recognize First Nations policing as an essential service, ensuring that prosecutorial support is part of a comprehensive strategy for First Nations self-governance in public safety.

**‘ It’s a step in recognizing our laws that have been developed for the First Nation.’**

SUCCESSFUL PROSECUTION OF ALLEGED DRUG DEALER MARKS FIRST TIME FIRST NATIONS’ LAW HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED IN AN ONTARIO COURTROOM

In a landmark case, Mississauga First Nation (MFN) has emerged as a successful example of First Nation communities asserting their inherent jurisdiction through the First Nations Prosecution Pilot Project. When the local OPP declined to lay charges under the Mississauga First Nation Community Protection Law – a statute enacted by the First Nation under its inherent jurisdiction and recognized under the federal [Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management Act](#), the community decided to take matters into their own hands. Utilizing this pilot funding for retaining private counsel, MFN initiated

a prosecution. This case marks the first matter to proceed before the Ontario Court of Justice under the pilot program and represents a significant step towards filling the enforcement gap for Indigenous laws. The successful pursuit of this prosecution not only demonstrates the potential of the pilot project to deliver justice but also underscores the critical need for permanent, well-funded solutions that support Indigenous-led legal processes and upholds First Nations’ self-determination in public safety.

## On the Ground

**Anti-Racism Public Education and Awareness Campaign**

**Seven Little, Six Little,  
Five Little Indians,  
Four Little, Three Little,  
Two Little Indians ...**

**7 Things You May Not Know Were Systemic Racism  
Policing & Community Safety Edition**

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CHIEFS OF ONTARIO JUSTICE SECTOR





<https://chiefs-of-ontario.org/>

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