



OFFICE OF THE  
POLICE COMPLAINT COMMISSIONER

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British Columbia, Canada

**NEWS RELEASE**

January 9, 2025

**OPCC's annual report shows changing landscape**

**Victoria** - The Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner's (OPCC) 2023-2024 Annual Report has been reported to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and posted on the OPCC's website. We would like to acknowledge that the work of the OPCC takes place across unique and diverse traditional Indigenous territories. We thank the ɫəkʷəŋən (Lekwungen) people, also known as the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations, for their stewardship, care and leadership on the land on which our main office is located in downtown Victoria, BC.

The OPCC's work focuses in large part on ensuring that every complaint lodged against a municipal police officer or department is dealt with in a fair and impartial manner. This report highlights the steps taken to improve accessibility to the complaints process to all members of the public, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples, in a culturally relevant and safe manner, recognizing there is much work to do in this area.

"I acknowledge the harmful and ongoing impact of colonialism and accept the existence of systemic racism in the justice system," said Police Complaint Commissioner Prabhu Rajan. "The OPCC is also a product of this system, and we are committed to ongoing learning and a pathway to reconciliation in our journey forward."

The Office has also expanded its outreach and education work in the past year and included connecting with more than 50 community support agencies to increase awareness of the OPCC, and translating general information and complaint resolution brochures, as well as the complaint form, into a total of 13 languages.

"To support our accessibility efforts, we engage with agencies that support people from diverse communities and populations, advocacy groups, and public sector organizations to listen and learn," said Commissioner Rajan. "Too often we have found that complainants face barriers around English as a second language, gender, sexual orientation, age, race, disability, and/or socioeconomics."

Once a complaint is received, there are different ways a complaint may be resolved, including the use of restorative approaches such as complaint resolution or mediation. It is a path that puts people first, bringing complainants and officers together to find meaningful resolution.

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“Of the police complaint files that were concluded, approximately 27% were resolved through a resolution process, instead of a formal investigation,” said Commissioner Rajan. “Open and honest communication breaks down barriers and helps strengthen the bonds between police officers and the communities they serve.”

The OPCC remains committed to continuously improving the BC municipal police complaint process. Amendments to the *Police Act* in 2024, including the ability to conduct systemic investigations, arrange public hearings earlier in the process, and designate consultants or experts to observe an investigation, will only further this progression.

The 2023-24 Annual Report is available on the [OPCC website](#). The Appendix to the report summarizes substantiated allegations between April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024. Many of the allegations of police misconduct reported to the OPCC related to abuses of police powers, neglect of duty, and conduct that would discredit the reputation of the police department.

The report also includes statistical information on all files opened and key themes in the past year.

**Key facts about the OPCC:**

- The Police Complaint Commissioner is a civilian, independent Officer of the Legislature overseeing complaints, investigations and discipline involving municipal police in British Columbia.
- The Police Complaint Commissioner operates independently of government and police and may accept complaints from the public or independently order investigations into allegations of police misconduct.
- The Police Complaint Commissioner may appoint retired judges as discipline authority and to conduct reviews and adjudications.
- The Police Complaint Commissioner may call public hearings, refer matters to Crown Counsel for consideration of prosecution and make recommendations to police boards or to government regarding policies, practices or systemic issues that may contribute to the misconduct.
- The OPCC has the authority to initiate systemic investigations arising from police complaints or problems identified with the complaints process, and to provide meaningful recommendations aimed at preventing police misconduct and to report on these publicly.
- The Police Complaint Commissioner is required under the *Police Act* to publish an annual report each year.

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