



An Inclusive Ontario For All



February 2025

OACP Position on
Equity, Diversity, and
Inclusion

At this point in time of our history when there is so much debate about values and where we see hate crimes on the rise everywhere, the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) reaffirms its unwavering commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion as guiding principles for policing in the Province of Ontario. Effective and equitable policing must reflect the communities we serve. We recognize that fostering inclusive police services is fundamental to building public trust, enhancing community safety, and delivering fair and impartial policing to all Ontarians.

EDI and Policing in Ontario

As Ontario's police leaders, members of the OACP have an obligation to ensure that all members of the communities we serve across our province have trust and confidence in their police services. We believe that all Ontarians deserve to feel safe and respected in their values and beliefs and to live, work, and play in a province that truly values the diverse skills and contributions of its people.

We also believe that Ontarians and the members of our police services who represent the communities they serve want to hear from their police leaders that they value the diversity that is a hallmark of our province. Ontarians must know that diversity, equity, and inclusion (EDI) remain key values for our services and how these values are put into action by police leaders. In other words, Ontarians should know that equity, diversity, and inclusion are part of the DNA that drives policing in the Province of Ontario.

EDI is not just an aspirational goal for Ontario police services; it is a core operational priority. The OACP believes that diverse perspectives and inclusive environments strengthen our police services and contribute to innovative problem-solving, better decision-making, and stronger relationships with the public. Recruiting officers from a broad range of cultural, racial, and gender identities ensures that Ontario's police services are representative of the communities they serve, fostering deeper understanding and meaningful engagement with diverse populations.

Promoting EDI within police organizations has been shown to enhance police services and bolster public safety. For example, the CACP's 2018 *Diversity is a Canadian Reality: Inclusion is a Choice* emphasized the critical importance of diversity and inclusion in modern policing. The study highlighted that embracing EDI principles leads to improved community relations, increased trust, and more effective policing outcomes. It also found that diverse police services are better equipped to understand and serve Canada's multifaceted communities.

Another study, the 2024 *National Research Study on Gender Equity in Canadian Policing* conducted by the Durham Regional Police Service in partnership with Ontario Tech University and endorsed by the OACP, addressed gender equity within Canadian police agencies and found that fostering inclusivity and addressing barriers faced by women in policing are fundamental to the effectiveness of police services. The research suggested that gender-diverse teams enhance problem-solving and decision-making processes, leading to more effective policing strategies.

Ontario police services believe in authentic inclusion, which must involve a genuine, meaningful, and sustained commitment to creating environments where all individuals, regardless of their background, identity, or abilities, feel valued, respected, and empowered to participate fully.

Within our police organizations, this means that we move beyond representation – it's not just about having diverse individuals present, but ensuring their voices, perspectives, and lived experiences are actively valued and integrated; that we strive to ensure that systems, policies, and practices remove barriers to full participation, rather than simply “accommodating” differences; that we pursue cultural and structural changes through promoting inclusive mindsets and policies that lead to long-term change rather than performative gestures; that our people feel safe to express themselves without fear of discrimination, tokenism, or bias; and that our police services continuously assess and improve their inclusion efforts, addressing implicit biases, systemic inequities, and barriers to full participation.

Authentic inclusion is about action, not just words – it requires commitment, accountability, and ongoing efforts to create environments where everyone truly belongs and thrives.

Furthermore, the OACP reaffirms its [2020 statement](#) that systemic racism exists in policing, as it does in many institutions, and we remain committed to identifying and addressing barriers that contribute to inequitable outcomes. We continue to advocate for policies, training, and initiatives that actively dismantle discriminatory practices, enhance cultural competency, and promote fair treatment within policing and the broader justice system.

The OACP stands by the principles of accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement in our profession. We support ongoing education, engagement, and proactive policy measures that uphold EDI as a fundamental aspect of modern policing. Through collaborative efforts with communities, advocacy groups, and government partners, we will continue to work towards a police service that is inclusive, responsive, and reflective of the diverse people of Ontario.

Together, we can ensure policing is just, equitable, and capable of serving all communities with dignity and respect.

Further Reading:

- The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police's (OACP) Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee has produced a [*Hate/Bias-Motivated Crime: A Review of Policies, Practices, and Challenges \(2024\)*](#) document as a resource for police services across Ontario. Its goal is to assist police services by providing information and practical resources to address challenges related to the investigation and frontline policing of hate/bias-motivated crimes and to provide strategies for more effective interventions to prevent their occurrence.
- The Ontario Government's Anti-Racism Directorate published the province's [Anti-Racism Strategic Plan](#) in August 2023.
- The provincial [Anti-Hate Security & Prevention Grant](#) aims to combat hate in Ontario and build stronger, safer and more inclusive communities.

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