



NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

Police Service Board Report

PUBLIC AGENDA

Subject: Annual Report - Equal Opportunity, Discrimination and Workplace Harassment Prevention - January 1 – December 31, 2023

Report To: Chair and Members, Niagara Police Service Board

Report Date: 2024-03-04

Recommendation(s)

That the Niagara Police Service Board receive this annual report respecting equal opportunity, discrimination and workplace harassment prevention.

Key Facts

- Regional Municipality of Niagara Police Service Board By-Law 331-2012 sets out the policy on equal opportunity, discrimination and workplace harassment prevention and requires that the Service provide the Board with an annual statistical report.
- A summary of the written procedures relating to equal opportunity; discrimination and workplace harassment prevention,
- Confirmation that Service members have received training on diversity and human rights;
- The number and nature of harassment complaints received in 2023 with disposition of such complaints;
- An analysis of grievance activity in 2023 that includes grievance status, outcomes and/or resolutions, and any observable trends, if they exist.

Financial Considerations

- None

Analysis

Written Procedures and Training:

In response to this By-Law the Service has prepared General Order 104.12 – Respectful Workplace Policy and General Order 222.06 – Workplace Violence that addresses the administration of occurrences deemed to be discriminating, harassing or violent in nature. Both General Orders define unacceptable behaviours, provide clear direction on reporting incidents, provide the duties and obligations of all members regardless of rank, and have procedures for the initiation of investigations for both formal and informal complaints.

All Service members are expected to be conversant with general orders, and all orders are electronically accessible on desktop computers and in each patrol vehicle's mobile data terminal. Further, the NRPS Training Unit, in cooperation with The Human Resources Unit, provides training on The Ontario Human Rights Code, and Workplace Harassment and Violence responsibilities and prevention. This training is provided for new Service hires, regular members, and during supervisor training courses.

Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Incidents:

In 2023, the Niagara Regional Police Service received seven (7) complaints of harassment in the workplace.

Of these seven complaints, it was ultimately determined by the Respectful Workplace Review Committee that three (3) complaints did not rise to the level of workplace harassment. One (1) matter was referred to the members' Unit Commander to investigate further, and to take appropriate corrective action. One (1) matter was determined to not rise to the level of workplace harassment; however, it was referred to the Professional Standards Unit to be investigated as a Chief's Complaint for Discreditable Conduct. Two (2) matters of workplace harassment were referred to an external investigator and these matters remain under investigation.

It should also be noted that one workplace harassment matter reported in 2022 was resolved by way of an informal process and concluded in February 2023.

Equal Opportunity Plan:

In keeping with the Service's strategic plan, the NRPS Recruiting Unit continues to seek recruitment from diverse communities in Niagara through information sessions in partnership with community services.

In 2023, the NRPS Recruiting Unit received a total of 269 applicants for the position of police constable with 40 being female (15%) and 229 being male (85%). About 15% appeared to be from equity deserving groups. It should be noted that the number of applicants that have been provided by the Recruiting Unit are based on observations or disclosed by the applicant. The Recruiting Unit has discontinued requesting gender identification from any applicant.

There were 47 new police constable recruits hired in 2023, including 12 females (25.5%) and 35 males (74.5%). Within the 47 new hires there were 5 (11%) recruits from equity deserving groups.

As of December 31, 2023, the NRPS employed 768 sworn officers, with 142 being female which equated to 18.5% of our authorized strength.

Grievance Activity 2022:

In 2023, the Service received two formal grievances and zero informal grievances initiated by the Niagara Region Police Association, and zero formal grievances initiated by the Senior Officers Association.

Seven formal grievances were resolved, two are pending, and one is in abeyance.

In terms of total formal and informal grievances received in 2023, there was a decrease of seven formal grievances when compared to 2022. The number of informal grievances remained unchanged when compared to 2022.

Alternatives Reviewed

To not receive this report.

Relationship to Police Service/Board Strategic Priorities

In pursuit of equal opportunity, and discrimination and workplace harassment prevention, the Service continues to work towards organizational excellence that can only be achieved by creating a healthy and respectful work environment that supports fairness, opportunity, a sense of belonging, and promotes diversity. The Service continues to follow a comprehensive recruitment strategy that identifies quality candidates reflective of our community.

Relevant Policy Considerations

PSB By-Law 331-2012, Equal Opportunity, Discrimination and Workplace Harassment Prevention.

General Order 104.12 – Respectful Workplace Policy.

General Order 222.06 – Workplace Violence.

Other Pertinent Reports

Not applicable.

This report was prepared by Dave Gomez, Inspector, Chief's Office, in consultation with Paul Koscinski, Inspector, Professional Development, and Richard Gadreau, Sergeant, Recruiting Unit, and recommended by Chief of Police Bill Fordy.



Submitted by:

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Chief of Police