



# NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

## Police Services Board Report

**PUBLIC AGENDA**

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**Subject:** Annual Report – Management of Police Records  
January 1 to December 31, 2023

**Report To:** Chair and Members, Niagara Police Service Board

**Report Date:** 2024-05-31

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### **Recommendation(s)**

**That the Niagara Police Service Board (Board) receive this report for information.**

### **Key Facts**

- The purpose of this report is to comply with Board By-Law 516-2024 that establishes the policy for the Management of Police Records.
- By-Law 516-2024 contains provisions requiring the Chief of Police to report specific information in order to ensure compliance with legislative guidelines.
- This report is submitted to provide the Board with the necessary and required information with respect to the management of police records.

### **Financial Considerations**

There are no financial implications relating to the recommendations contained within this report.

### **Analysis**

In accordance with By-Law 516-2024, the Chief shall make an annual written report to the Board on or before August 30 of each year in respect of management of police records. The report shall include:

- a) a summary of the written procedures concerning management of police records;
- b) confirmation of Service compliance with said procedures;
- c) a listing of records retained beyond the retention period pursuant to Section 4.1.1, together with the reason therefore; and
- d) confirmation that the appropriate records have been destroyed in accordance with the By-Law.

This Board Report will outline each of the above and confirm our compliance with the By-Law.

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a) *“...a summary of the written procedures concerning management of police records...”*

For the year ending December 31, 2023, the Niagara Regional Police Service (Service) complied with written policies and procedures as outlined in:

- General Order (GO) 003.14 - Release and Dissemination of Information;
- GO 006.09 - Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA); and
- GO 031.11 - Retention and Destruction of Records.

GO 003.14 contains provisions for the release and dissemination of information in accordance with *MFIPPA*, and/or in compliance with legislation and/or mandated policies, including the CPIC Policy Manual.

GO 006.09 contains provisions for the processing of requests for information received under *MFIPPA* and in accordance with the provisions of said Act, and consistent with legislation and/or mandated policies.

GO 031.11 contains provisions for the retention, security, and destruction of records in the custody or control of the Service, which are managed as corporate resources to support effective decision making, meet operational requirements, protect and enforce legal and other rights and obligations, including the general right to access and privacy under *MFIPPA*, and provide evidence of the Service’s decisions and actions essential for public sector accountability.

b) *“...confirmation of Service compliance with said procedures...”*

For the year ending December 31, 2023, the Service complied with written policies and procedures as outlined in all 3 GOs.

Further, 2023 saw the completion of a digitization project where approximately 7,000 physical file folders and their contents were scanned and entered in the Service’s enterprise content management system. This allows for more robust security as access is restricted to a limited few, enhanced preservation for the long term, as these files are subject to a lengthy retention period and reduced physical record storage space.

c) *“...a listing of records retained beyond the retention period pursuant to Section 4.1.1, together with the reason therefore...”*

The review of records eligible for destruction in 2023 has been completed, with all the approved records being destroyed. The following chart identifies the volume of records retained beyond their retention period, with the reason why a destruction hold was put in place.

Reason for Hold	Number of Boxes Currently on Hold
Hold for archive	5 boxes
Hold for member retirement	1 box
Hold for retention schedule updating	2 boxes

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Hold until next destruction cycle for review by office of primary responsibility (at their request)	20 boxes
Ongoing litigation	13 boxes

d) "...confirmation that the appropriate records have been destroyed in accordance with the By-Law...."

Purging of records is an ongoing process that commences each January and takes several months to complete. Each unit is supplied with a destruction memo identifying a list of records eligible for destruction. The records are only destroyed after a review of the list, physical examination of the records (if required), and sign-off by the applicable district/unit commander or department head. This is to ensure the retention schedule is being followed and its requirements are met. Certificates of destruction are maintained permanently.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

Not applicable.

### **Relationship to Police Service/Board Strategic Priorities**

To comply with provisions of Board By-Laws and to maintain compliance with Adequacy and Effective Policing.

### **Relevant Policy Considerations**

- Board By-Law 516-2024 - Management of Police Records
- GO 003.14 - Release and Dissemination of Information
- GO 006.09 - Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- GO 031.11 - Retention and Destruction of Records.

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

8.7 - 2023.06.22 Annual Report – Management of Police Records – January 1 to December 31, 2022.

*This report was prepared by Laurie Switzer, Manager, Records and Information Management Unit. Reviewed and approved by Luigi Greco, Deputy Chief, Support Services.*



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### **Submitted by:**

Bill Fordy, O.O.M. #9615  
Chief of Police

## **Appendices**

Not applicable.