

Solicitor General

Office of the Solicitor General

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132-2020-380
By e-mail

April 24, 2020

Dear Head of Council/Chief Administrative Officer/Municipal Clerk:

As you may know, on January 1, 2019, amendments to the *Police Services Act* (PSA) came into force, which mandate every municipality in Ontario to prepare and adopt a Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) plan.

As part of these legislative requirements, municipalities must consult with chiefs of police and police services boards or detachment commanders and various other sectors, including health/mental health, education, community/social services and children/youth services, as they undertake the planning process. As previously communicated, municipalities had two years from the in-force date to prepare and adopt their first CSWB plan (i.e., by January 1, 2021). Municipalities also have the flexibility to develop joint plans with neighbouring municipalities and/or First Nations communities, which may be valuable in order to meet the unique needs of the area.

With the COVID-19 outbreak, our government appreciates that municipalities are currently facing unprecedented circumstances in their communities. We also understand that some municipalities may experience delays in their planning and engagement processes as a result of the current provincial emergency.

In order to support our municipal, policing and community partners during this emergency, on April 14, 2020, the government passed the *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Support and Protection Act, 2020*, which amends the PSA to allow the Solicitor General to prescribe a new deadline for the completion and adoption of CSWB plans past January 1, 2021. The amendments came into force immediately upon Royal Assent. This change will help ensure municipalities are able to meet the legislative requirements and complete their CSWB plans. The Ministry of the Solicitor General (ministry) will work with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, as well as the City of Toronto, to determine an appropriate new deadline that will be set by regulation at a later date. For reference, the new Act can be found at the following link:

<https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-42/session-1/bill-189>

This extension will ensure municipalities, police services and local service providers can continue to dedicate the necessary capacity and resources to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak, while also providing adequate time to effectively undertake consultations, work collaboratively with partners, and develop meaningful and fulsome plans following the provincial emergency. Where possible, municipalities are encouraged to explore

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alternative options to continue on-going planning efforts, such as through virtual engagement (e.g., webinars, teleconferences, online surveys, etc.).

At this time, the ministry would also like to provide some additional resources and remind you of existing resources to further support municipalities and municipal partners as these CSWB plans are prepared and adopted.

The ministry has recently developed two resource documents, which outline examples of data sources and funding opportunities available to support the CSWB planning process (see Appendix A and B). These resource documents were developed in collaboration with the ministry's Inter-Ministerial Community Safety and Well-Being Working Group, which consists of representatives from nine Ontario ministries and the federal government. The documents highlight examples of sector-specific data available at the provincial, regional and local level, which can assist in the identification of local priority risks in the community, as well as funding opportunities that can be leveraged to support the development and implementation of plans.

As you may recall, in spring 2019, the ministry hosted webinar sessions on CSWB planning to assist municipalities, policing and community partners as they began the planning process. The webinars consisted of an overview of the CSWB planning requirements and provided guidance on how to develop and implement effective plans. A recording of these webinars has been made available and can be accessed through the following link: <http://mcscs-erb.adobeconnect.com/p3e0qppm8g30/>.

The ministry has also made updates to its Frequently Asked Questions document to provide more information and clarification regarding CSWB planning, including changes to the CSWB planning provisions that came into force as a result of recent legislation (see Appendix C).

Municipalities are encouraged to continue utilizing the *Community Safety and Well-Being Planning Framework: A Shared Commitment in Ontario* booklet to support the planning process (see Appendix D). This booklet includes the CSWB Planning Framework as well as a toolkit of practical resource documents, including a tool on engagement, to guide municipalities, First Nations and their partners as they develop and implement their plans. The booklet is also available on the ministry's website at: <https://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/english/Publications/MCSCSSOPlanningFramework.html>.

If communities have any questions, please feel free to direct them to my ministry staff, Tiana Biordi, Community Safety Analyst, at Tiana.Biordi@ontario.ca or Steffie Anastasopoulos, Community Safety Analyst, at Steffie.Anastasopoulos@ontario.ca.

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I greatly appreciate your continued support as we move forward on this modernized approach to CSWB together. Through collaboration, we can work to build safer and stronger communities in Ontario.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sylvia Jones". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sylvia" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Jones".

Sylvia Jones
Solicitor General

Enclosures