



**Canadian Police Association**  
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## Canadian Police Association Election Questionnaire

As the national voice for front-line police personnel in Canada, the Canadian Police Association (CPA) represents over 60,000 members dedicated to ensuring public safety and effective policing. The CPA is a non-partisan organization that takes pride in our strong working relationships with Members of Parliament from all recognized political parties. Our focus remains on advocating for policies that enhance public safety and support the well-being of front-line officers.

With the upcoming federal election, we are seeking to provide our members with clear, non-partisan insights into each major political party's stance on key issues affecting policing, criminal justice, and public safety. The responses to this questionnaire will be collected and distributed to our members exactly as received from the respondents, with no editorial commentary provided by the CPA. Our goal is to help front-line officers make an informed decision at the ballot box by ensuring they have direct access to the positions and commitments of each political party. We understand there are significant demands on your party's resources, particularly during an election campaign, however we will communicate with our members if no response is received and allow them to decide how to weigh that information.

We kindly ask for your responses to the following seven questions by April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Your answers will be shared with our members to help them make informed decisions at the ballot box.

### 1. Addressing Violent Crime and Repeat Offenders

- **Background:** Recent years have seen a troubling increase in violent crimes across Canada. According to Statistics Canada, the Violent Crime Severity Index (VCSI) rose by 0.4% in 2023, reaching 99.5. The overall rate of violent criminal code violations also increased by 3.71% during the same period. Front-line police officers know from experience that a relatively small number of repeat violent offenders are responsible for a disproportionately high level of offences, yet existing bail and parole policies often allow these individuals to reoffend while awaiting trial or after release.
- **Question:** If elected, what measures will your party take to address violent crime, prevent repeat offenses, and ensure that Canada's bail and parole systems are effectively protecting the public while balancing rehabilitation efforts?

### 2. Resources for Front-Line Policing

- **Background:** Police services across Canada are facing increased demands with limited resources, leading to officer burnout and staffing shortages. Canada currently has the lowest police-to-population ratio among all G7 nations and comparable countries. According to Statistics Canada, as of 2023 the rate of police strength was 178 officers per 100,000 population, down almost 2%

from 2022 and the lowest rate since 1970, compared to approximately 242 per 100,000 in the United Kingdom, 246 in Australia, 298 in the United States, and 335 in Germany. This shortage of personnel places significant strain on officers and affects the ability of police services to effectively respond to calls for service.

While police funding is largely a provincial responsibility, the federal government has acknowledged its role in supporting police resources in the past, including through initiatives like the Police Officer Recruitment Fund. Addressing these challenges will require cooperation between all levels of government.

- **Question:** What is your party's plan to ensure that front-line police services are adequately funded and resourced to effectively serve and protect Canadian communities? How will your government work with provinces and municipalities to address the national shortage of police personnel?

### **3. Addressing the Opioid Crisis, mental health, and Public Safety**

- **Background:** The opioid crisis remains one of Canada's most pressing public health and safety challenges. While efforts to curb overdoses and provide harm reduction have been implemented, including decriminalization experiments in certain jurisdictions, these initiatives have not yielded the expected results in reducing public disorder and illicit drug use. Police officers are often on the front lines of this crisis, responding to overdoses, addressing community concerns, and managing the broader public safety impacts of widespread drug use. However, policing alone cannot be the solution.
- **Question:** What is your party's approach to tackling the opioid crisis while balancing harm reduction, treatment access, and public safety? How will you work with law enforcement, health professionals, and all levels of government to address this ongoing crisis? Would your party consider including involuntary care programs for individuals who cannot care for self and have proven to be a safety risk to themselves or others, as is currently the case for serious mental health issues?

### **4. Protecting Officers and Enhancing Police Well-Being**

- **Background:** Police officers face significant mental and physical health challenges due to the nature of their work. According to recent prevalence studies, police officers experience mental health disorders at a significantly higher rate than the general population. Conditions such as PTSD, depression, and anxiety are widespread in the profession. Recognizing these challenges, the federal government has made substantial investments in organizations like the Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment (CIPSRT) to improve access to mental health resources and research for public safety personnel.
- **Question:** If elected, will your party commit to maintaining and increasing federal investments in mental health supports for police officers, including continued funding for organizations like CIPSRT? Additionally, what other commitments will your party make to help alleviate the mental health challenges faced by front-line civilian and sworn police personnel?

## 5. Modernizing the Criminal Justice System

- **Background:** Recent federal funding cuts to the Public Prosecution Service of Canada (PPSC) have led to significant challenges in prosecuting serious drug offenses. In January 2025, reports surfaced that 19 drug trafficking charges in Hamilton, ON, including cases involving fentanyl and cocaine, were dropped due to budgetary constraints imposed on federal prosecutors. These decisions were made without reasonable explanation and were not related to the quality of police investigations. Similarly, police services across the country have expressed concerns over numerous criminal cases, including drug trafficking charges, being stayed due to federal Crown 'billing caps'. These funding issues have resulted in serious criminal charges being dismissed, undermining efforts to combat drug-related crimes and affecting public safety.
- **Question:** If elected, what measures will your party implement to ensure that federal prosecution services are adequately funded to prevent the dismissal of serious criminal charges due to budget constraints? How will your party work to restore public confidence in the criminal justice system and ensure that serious offenses are prosecuted effectively?

## 6. Policing Mass Demonstrations and Resource Allocation

- **Background:** Large-scale public demonstrations, protests, and civil disobedience events have become more frequent and resource-intensive. Managing these events requires significant police personnel, logistical support, and funding, often stretching law enforcement resources and impacting other public safety priorities. Police leaders have expressed concerns about diverting dedicated teams from their regular duties to manage public assemblies, leading to increased overtime and staffing challenges. Additionally, protests are increasingly escalating from peaceful demonstrations to high-risk situations, posing heightened threats to officer and public safety.
- **Question:** What is your party's plan to support law enforcement agencies in effectively managing mass demonstrations while ensuring public safety, protecting democratic rights, and maintaining adequate resources for other policing responsibilities?

## 7. Future of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)

- **Background:** As you are no doubt aware, on March 10, 2025, former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau released a white paper proposing significant reforms to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The proposal suggests refocusing the RCMP's mandate exclusively on federal law enforcement responsibilities, such as organized crime, national security, and cybercrime, while transferring provincial and municipal policing duties to local agencies. This shift aims to address longstanding concerns about resource allocation, oversight, and the effectiveness of the RCMP in its diverse roles, and follows on numerous recommendations made by various Parliamentary Committees and Commissions of Inquiry.
- **Question:** What is your party's position on the proposed restructuring of the RCMP? How do you plan to ensure that such reforms enhance public safety, improve policing efficiency, and address the unique needs of communities across Canada, particularly given the existing resource challenges faced by provincial and municipal police services currently?

**Submission Details:**

We appreciate your participation and look forward to sharing your responses with our members. Please submit your completed questionnaire by April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, to [mgendron@cpa-acp.ca](mailto:mgendron@cpa-acp.ca). Should you require any clarification, please contact us directly.

Thank you for your time and commitment to public safety in Canada.

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