

# Police Costing Model Engagement

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Backgrounder

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# Introduction

The police costing model has a large impact on the lives of Albertans. In communities and municipalities that help pay for their police services, their tax-payers pay for cost increases. Changes in the costing model guides local budget deliberations and may affect police services.

Over the past decade, stakeholders told Alberta Justice and Solicitor General that the police costing model needs revision. The current approach is 15 years old. It has been adjusted since 2004, but there have been no large-scale changes. But policing has evolved. The costing model needs to address those changes and keep pace with current and future needs. To modernize the cost model, the ministry wants to hear from you as elected and administrative municipal leaders, and from the groups that represent you: the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association and Rural Municipalities Association.

This engagement process will gather your input on how a new police costing model would fit for communities across Alberta. We are counting on you, our partners. You are the experts on the needs of your local communities. With your help, this will be a thorough and effective review, so the new model helps your communities and police services thrive together.

This backgrounder provides context around the police costing model. Please get in touch with the engagement team ([JSG.PSDEngagement@gov.ab.ca](mailto:JSG.PSDEngagement@gov.ab.ca)) if there are any errors, omissions, or aspects that are unclear.

## Guiding Questions for this review:

- What are your thoughts on the province recovering a percentage of frontline policing costs from those currently not paying?
- What aspects of the proposed costing model do you feel would reflect the needs of your community?
- What will not work in the proposed costing model?
- What ability do communities and municipalities have to be agile in their budgets for policing costs?
- What kind of timeline would be ideal for implementation of a new model?
- What impact will a new costing model have on communities?
- What do you anticipate as challenges for implementing the model?
- What impact to addressing rural crime would you anticipate this costing model having?
  - What other impacts might a new cost model have?

The engagement will focus on broad questions about funding for police services to identify the most important factors for communities in a model.

## What is *not* being reviewed?

This review will focus only on the development and implementation of a proposed new cost model. Other issues related to policing costs and the *Police Act* will not specifically be addressed. This includes:

- *Police Act* issues unrelated to policing costs;
- Municipal Policing Assistance Grants (MPAG);
- Police Officer Grants (POG);
- First Nations Policing; and
- Enhanced policing for Metis Settlements.

First Nations Policing and enhance policing for Metis Settlements will not be affected by a new costing model.

## Ways to participate

The review team will host two kick-off meetings. The first one will focus on policing costs and will take place on September 5, 2019. AUMA and RMA will be invited to meet with the ministers of Justice and Solicitor General and Municipal Affairs to discuss the purpose of this engagement and the ways in which stakeholders can participate.

A webinar will share information on a police costing model with elected and administrative leaders from all municipalities on (date). Stakeholders will have until October 15, 2019 to provide written feedback on the police costing model via an online survey.

A second kick-off meeting will focus on costs incurred related to enforcing the legalization of cannabis. AUMA, RMA, and the Metis Settlements General Council will be invited to attend that meeting on September 24, 2019.

The first week of October, a second webinar will provide information on the input being gathered for this engagement to municipal and Metis Settlements leaders (elected and administrative). Municipal and Metis Settlement representatives will then have until November 1, 2019 to provide feedback via an online survey.

A separate backgrounder will be made available to those invited to participate in the cannabis enforcement portion of the engagement. This backgrounder **only** addresses information pertinent to the police costing model.

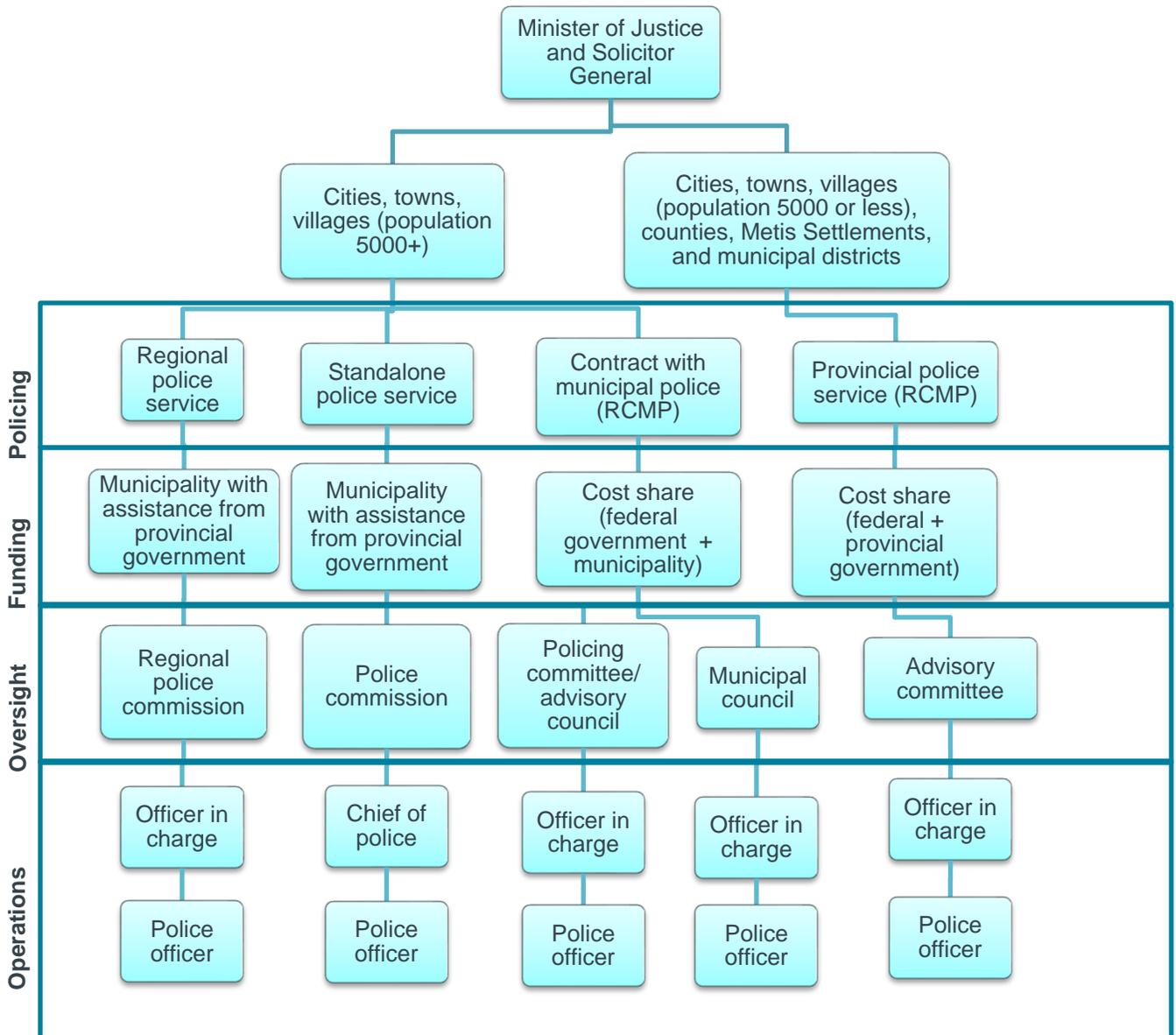
After all information is gathered, stakeholders will be invited to participate in a wrap-up session where the results will be shared. **The date of this wrap-up is still to be determined.**

The engagement team is happy to hear from you at any time. Contact us at **[JSG.PSDEngagement@gov.ab.ca](mailto:JSG.PSDEngagement@gov.ab.ca)**.

# Policing Models

This chart provides an overview of policing in Alberta as outlined in the current *Police Act*.

**Chart 1: Policing Models Flow Chart**



**Provincial policing:** As per the Alberta *Police Act*, under the Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA), the province provides policing at no direct cost to all rural municipalities (towns with a population of 5,000 or fewer, Metis Settlements and all municipal districts/counties regardless of population). Alberta contracts the RCMP as its provincial police service.

**Municipal policing:** Urban municipalities with a population greater than 5,000 are responsible for their own policing. They can opt for one of the following options:

- Establish a stand-alone municipal police service.
- Pay the federal government, the Alberta government or another municipality to deliver police services, often under a policing agreement. Most municipalities contract their police services directly from the RCMP through a Municipal Police Service Agreement.
- Two or more municipalities enter into a contract to establish a regional police service.

**First Nations policing:** First Nations are policed by the RCMP provincial police service (PPS) unless another arrangement is made under the *Police Act* of Alberta. The First Nations Policing Program (FNPP) provides First Nations with two other such arrangements in Alberta:

1. Tripartite agreement (e.g. stand-alone police service like Blood Tribe Police)
2. Community tripartite agreement that provides enhanced policing in addition to the core policing provided by the PPS.

**Metis Settlements:** Indigenous Relations funding provides an enhanced level of policing service to each of the eight Metis Settlements, with one RCMP officer dedicated to each location.

# History of Cost Model Engagements

The following provides a brief overview of the previous discussions that have taken place with regards to the police costing model. It is important to address the historical process of reviewing the police costing structure, as it has contributed to the design of the proposed model.

## Discussions and the Law Enforcement Framework

- **2009:** Several engagements were held with AUMA, RMA, and other stakeholders. These discussions were referred to as “Police Funding in Alberta – Continuing the Discussion.” In response, a Policing Task Force was created that consulted with AUMA members through a workshop and survey at the annual AUMA convention. A subsequent survey to all AUMA members asked about policing funding options and special circumstances that affect police resources.
- **2010:** Engagements with the RMA and AUMA on the Law Enforcement Framework raised issues on the flexibility and equity of the costing model. The framework was released the same year and incorporated prior input, but did not include a costing model.
- **2012:** The RMA report “Funding Options for Law Enforcement Services in Alberta”, was received. It proposed six potential options for funding. The ministry completed a review of the report and principles for consideration. RMA’s preferred vision was to maintain the status quo, but identified a Base plus Modifier model as their second choice.
- **2013 to 2017:** The ministry communicated with AUMA and RMA to explore community views on factors to include in a new police-costing model. The ministry put out a request for proposals to develop an analytical tool that would show the effects of the factors being considered, and how each factor impacts municipal policing costs. Due to budget constraints, the request for proposals was cancelled and no contract was awarded.
- **2018:** Police costing was the topic of a letter writing campaign from AUMA members.

## Police Funding and the 2018/2019 *Police Act* Review

- The first phase of the *Police Act* review occurred between June 2018 and March 2019, to gather stakeholder perspectives on topics related to the *Police Act* and Police Service Regulation. Engagement occurred through roundtable discussions, a survey to police officers, a survey to administrative and elected officials from municipalities and Indigenous communities, in-person discussions with Indigenous communities, and written submissions. While the roundtable discussions focused on distinct topics, police funding was often mentioned. Stakeholders emphasized the necessity for a multi-factor police-funding model and policing grants that better reflect the needs of different-sized municipalities.

Written submissions also contained sections on police funding:

#### RCMP Submission

- RCMP K-Division highlighted the need for consistent commitments for funding and the benefits of multi-year funding agreements.

#### Rural Municipalities Association Submission

The RMA suggested that much more engagement was needed on funding police services. They wanted several factors to be considered in the development of a funding model:

- Ability to pay – focusing on equating fairness only with equal cost contributions is inappropriate as all municipalities have different needs, ability to pay, and service level expectations;
- Clarify costs of policing – recognize that saying some municipalities do not pay for policing is inaccurate. They contend that all pay, but in different ways.
- MPAG and POG should be considered in evaluating various costing models.
- Costs for policing should be linked to service levels; funding should be directed where it is needed; efficiency, effectiveness, and police-community collaboration should be encouraged; all police-related costs should be recognized; and funds should remain where they are collected.

#### Alberta Urban Municipalities Association Submission

The AUMA stated that the *Police Act* should specify a new, more equitable police costing model where all municipalities contribute directly to the costs of policing. The new model should consider both the demand for services in a municipality, as well as the municipality's ability to pay. Specifically, the AUMA believes that a costing model should be:

Equitable:

- All Albertans are entitled to receive police services.
- Police should treat all Albertans equitably.
- All Albertans should contribute to the costs of policing.
- Police governance and oversight should be equitable and universal.

Responsive:

- Police must be responsive to the needs of Albertans.
- Police must be responsive to changing legislative and social environments.

- Police should have the flexibility to adjust to regional differences.
- Policing must be appropriately resourced to fulfill its responsibilities.

AUMA's suggested principles for an equitable police costing model are:

- A fair, flexible, and equitable model should be developed that:
  - Ensures the level of provincial funding is sufficient to meet standard levels of service.
  - Requires services beyond the standard level to be funded by the jurisdiction wanting the additional services.
  - Recognizes the unique needs of each municipality.
  - Recognizes the ability of a municipality to pay for services.
- The model should encourage efficiencies by:
  - Using other mechanisms to address municipal capacity issues.
  - Encouraging regional policing models.
- The transition to a new model should:
  - Ensure an adequate impact assessment analysis is completed.
  - Ensure that effective education and engagement mechanisms are available to Alberta's municipalities.
  - Allow for an adequate notice period.
  - Revenues created from the new model should be reinvested in public safety.
  - Ensure any revenue collected from an "everyone pays" model is returned to the municipalities that generated the revenue for the protection of public safety.
  - Ensure fine revenues stay in the municipalities in which they are generated.
  - Paying directly for policing should enable municipalities to participate meaningfully in police oversight, e.g. setting local policing priorities.

# Current Funding for Police Services

## Municipal Policing Assistance Grant

The Municipal Policing Assistance Grant eases the financial burden on towns and cities responsible for their own policing. The funds are for:

- Police operating and administration costs, including manpower costs
- Kit and clothing, equipment, police vehicles, etc.
- Governance- and oversight-related initiatives by police commissions and policing committees. Funding is provided to municipalities based on the following payment formulas:

Population of municipality	Payment thresholds
5,001 to 16,666	\$200,000 base payment + \$8.00 per capita
16,667 to 50,000	\$100,000 base payment + \$14.00 per capita
Over 50,000	\$16.00 per capita

## Police Officer Grant

The Police Officer Grant applies to municipalities that were responsible for their own policing before 2008. Municipalities had added 300 police officers. Each eligible municipality receives \$100,000 per position, per year.

## Distribution of fine revenues

Traffic violations generate most provincial statute fine revenues. Fine revenues are returned to either the province or the municipality whose police service levied the fine.

Under the *Fuel Tax Act*, *Gaming and Liquor Act*, *Tobacco Tax Act* and *Weed Control Act*, revenue from a conviction for an offence that occurred in a city, town, village, municipal district or Metis Settlement or First Nation reserve goes to that community.

## The *Police Act*

Funding provisions are mentioned in the following areas of the *Police Act*:

- Section 4(1) states that municipalities and communities with a population under 5,000 will receive general policing services provided by the provincial police services at no direct cost to the town, village, summer village, municipal district or Metis settlement.
- Section 4(5) states that municipalities and communities with a population over 5,000 will enter into an agreement or establish their own police services in their area.
- Section 5(4) states that when a town, village or summer village attains a population that is greater than 5000, that municipality shall assume responsibility for providing its policing services on April 1 in the 2nd year following the year of the population increase
- Section 6 states that the population for municipalities and communities will be determined in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*.
- Section 29 (1) states that commissions with the chief of police are able to prepare an annual budget for police services.

# Proposed Costing Model

The following provides a brief overview of the proposed model. This section can be used for reference when completing the survey.

## Communities with Populations under 5,000

Currently 291 municipalities do not directly pay for policing through their municipal taxes. These communities account for one-fifth (20 per cent) of Alberta's population. Under the proposed costing model, these communities would begin paying a percentage of their frontline policing costs. Frontline policing refers to general duty, traffic, and general investigations, which are about 62 per cent of all policing positions. In 2018-2019, the cost of frontline policing was \$232.5 million.

## Cost Distribution

The proposed costing model distributes costs based on two factors: equalized assessment and population. Equalized assessment would look at the annually calculated assessment value for the municipality to determine the relative resources to pay. The assessment value will be weighted at 70 per cent to determine part of the base cost distribution – the costs to a municipality prior to applying the subsidies.

Using the most recent municipal or federal census data, as reported to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, population would account for 30 per cent of the base cost distribution.

## Cost Modifiers

### *Shadow Population*

These often are workers who generally live and pay property taxes outside of a community or municipality and are not included in local census data on which per capita funding is based. But when in the community they use the same municipal resources and infrastructure as primary residents. A shadow population cost modifier would enable a subsidy for frontline policing. To receive a maximum five per cent subsidy, a shadow population would need to be recognized and officially reported to Municipal Affairs.

### *Crime Severity Index*

This measure analyzes changes in police-reported crime rates across the country, and is tracked and reported to Statistics Canada annually. The index allows the ability to track changes in the volume of police-reported crime each year, in the volume of particular offences, and their relative seriousness. More serious offences have a greater impact on the index, which allows comparisons across municipalities. The crime severity index rural municipal average would be calculated and used as a baseline measure. A community with a higher crime severity index than the baseline would be eligible for a subsidy of 0.05 per cent per index point.

## Examples of the Cost Model

Police Costing Model (PCM) Options						
Weighting	30%	70%		0.05% per Municipal CSI point above average	5%	
Cost Recovery Options - Frontline Policing Costs	Population affected	Total Equalized Assessment	Total Share Policing Cost	CSI Subsidy given	Shadow Population Subsidy given	Revenue Generated
15%	765,780	\$293,162,459,917	\$34,900,000	\$1,015,167	\$203,263	\$33,681,570
30%	765,780	\$293,162,459,917	\$69,800,000	\$2,030,334	\$406,526	\$67,363,141
40%	765,780	\$293,162,459,917	\$93,000,000	\$2,705,172	\$541,646	\$89,753,182
50%	765,780	\$293,162,459,917	\$116,300,000	\$3,382,920	\$677,349	\$112,239,731
60%	765,780	\$293,162,459,917	\$139,500,000	\$4,057,758	\$812,469	\$134,629,772
70%	765,780	\$293,162,459,917	\$162,800,000	\$4,735,506	\$948,172	\$157,116,322

Source:

Alberta Municipal Affairs, Municipal Services Branch, 2018 Official Population List  
 Alberta Municipal Affairs, Municipal Financial and Statistical Data, 2018 Equalized Assessment  
 Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, CSI Weighted 2015-17 file

If a 15 per cent cost recovery model is implemented:

- Municipality A would be responsible for \$4,049,067 of policing costs or 0.74 per cent of its municipal property tax (excluding education). This figure would be adjusted for subsidies for CSI (minus \$708,512) and shadow population (minus \$202,453). The total cost recovery would be \$3,138,101 as revenue to the province.
- Municipality B would be responsible for \$277,966 of policing costs or 1.54 per cent of its municipal property tax (excluding education). Municipality B would not qualify for any subsidies. The total cost recovery would be \$277,966 as revenue to the province.

If the cost recovery was maximized to 70 per cent:

- Municipality A would be responsible for \$18,887,911 of policing costs or 3.45 per cent of its municipal property tax (excluding education). This figure would be adjusted for subsidies for CSI (minus \$3,305,036) and shadow population (minus \$944,396). The total cost recovery would be \$14,638,479 as revenue to the province.
- Municipality B would be responsible for \$1,296,642 of policing costs or 7.19 per cent of its municipal property tax (excluding education). Municipality B would not qualify for any subsidies. The total cost recovery would be \$1,296,642 as revenue to the province.

# Jurisdictional Scan

The comparisons below highlight the police costing models in use by provinces that recover the cost of police services. The most current cross-Canada review found that British Columbia (BC), Saskatchewan (SK), Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia all required every municipality to pay a portion of its policing costs. It is important to note:

- In BC, there is a police tax: municipalities over 5,000 people pay for most of their police costs directly through their municipal taxes. In municipalities under 5,000 people, and in rural areas, the BC government sets tax rates to recover a portion of police costs. These tax rates are based on provincially set tax ratios.
- In SK, the costs of policing are distributed in accordance with a formula prescribed in the regulations among all municipalities and “specified municipalities” (rural and those under 500 population) that receive policing services from the RCMP. This includes municipalities with populations less than 5,000.

## British Columbia

Population cut off for provincial funding for police services	5,000
Provincial contribution share for municipalities below the above population threshold	70%
Provincial support for municipalities that do not receive dedicated funding for police services	Receives all revenues from traffic fines
Amount of traffic fine revenue that municipalities receive	See above

## Saskatchewan

Population cut off for provincial funding for police services	5,000
Provincial contribution share for municipalities below the above population threshold	70%  Cost recovery in Saskatchewan is based on population in the rural municipality. The amount invoiced to rural municipalities increases based on the percentage increase of overall policing costs each year.
Provincial support for municipalities that do not receive dedicated funding for police services	None
Amount of traffic fine revenue that municipalities receive	75% only for municipalities in Saskatchewan with stand-alone independent police services. This does not apply to most cities policed by PPSA.

## Manitoba

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<b>Population cut off for provincial funding for police services</b>	<b>3 categories:</b> 750 – 1,499; 1,499 – 5,000; and  Over 5,000
<b>Provincial contribution share for municipalities below the above population threshold</b>	70%  The Province of Manitoba provides per capita grants to municipalities. These grants are not dedicated to policing, but the same population threshold applies to those that receive large grants and pay for policing.
<b>Provincial support for municipalities that do not receive dedicated funding for police services</b>	Per capita grant (similar to the MPAG)
<b>Amount of traffic fine revenue that municipalities receive</b>	30%  If the municipality (in Manitoba) pays for its own policing (stand-alone police service) it is allowed to keep a percentage of provincial fine revenue (estimated at 30%).

## Ontario

<b>Population cut off for provincial funding for police services</b>	<b>No population cut-off</b>
<b>Provincial contribution share for municipalities below the above population threshold</b>	None. There is a sliding scale for rural and small communities: Low of 5% (\$150 < policing costs/household < \$750)  to a  High of 75% (policing costs/household > \$750).
<b>Provincial support for municipalities that do not receive dedicated funding for police services</b>	Receives all revenues from traffic fines.
<b>Amount of traffic fine revenue that municipalities receive</b>	See above.

## Nova Scotia

<b>Population cut off for provincial funding for police services</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Provincial contribution share for municipalities below the above population threshold</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>Provincial support for municipalities that do not receive dedicated funding for police services</b>	<b>None.</b>
<b>Amount of traffic fine revenue that municipalities receive</b>	Traffic fine revenue goes to the jurisdiction paying for the officer (either a municipality or the province). The province retains victim surcharges and court costs.

## Quebec

<b>Population cut off for provincial funding for police services</b>	<b>50,000</b>
	<p>Provincial legislation in Quebec defined the level of police services provided to municipalities according to population with benchmarks set at: less than 100,000 (level 1);</p> <p>100 000 to 199,999 (level 2);</p> <p>200,000 to 499,999 (level 3);</p> <p>500,000 to 999 999 (level 4);</p> <p>1 000 000 or more (level 5).</p>
<b>Provincial contribution share for municipalities below the above population threshold</b>	<p>47% + refund</p> <p>The province pays 47% of the amount of basic police service to communities who are policed by the provincial police service. If the contribution of a regional municipality exceeds 80% of its budget, the municipality can receive a refund for the amount over the 80% budget allocation.</p>
<b>Provincial support for municipalities that do not receive dedicated funding for police services</b>	None
<b>Amount of traffic fine revenue that municipalities receive</b>	Revenue goes to provincial revenue fund



# Glossary

The **crime severity index** is a measure that is tracked and reported to Statistics Canada annually. It analyzes changes in police-reported crime rates across the country. The report allows changes to be tracked in the volume of police-reported crime each year, in the volume of particular offences, and in the relative seriousness of offences compared to other offences. More serious offences have a greater impact on the index, which allows comparisons of municipal crime levels.

**Legislation** is a law enacted by a governing body, including both proclaimed acts, amendments and regulations. It does not include agreements or memorandums of understanding. The *Police Act* has associated regulations, which include: the Police Service Regulation and the Exempted Areas Police Service Agreements Regulation.

A **modifier** is an element that can be taken into consideration to adjust the base price of a service. The amount of the modifier is based on the base price of the service.

The **Municipal Policing Assistance Grant** (MPAG) helps municipalities ensure adequate and effective policing and police oversight, implement provincial policing initiatives and enhance policing services. Municipalities with a population over 5,000 that provide their own municipal police services are eligible. The grant is issued each year and no application is required.

A **municipality** is a city, town, village, summer village, specialized municipality or municipal district and includes a Metis Settlement.

**Police commissions** provide oversight of policing to stand-alone police services, and govern municipal police services.

**Police officers** are responsible for enforcing federal, provincial, and municipal laws, protecting life and property, preventing crime, and keeping the peace. They have a broad range of duties and roles, of which law enforcement is a major part. Police officers investigate occurrences of crime, arrest offenders and bring them before the criminal justice system. They also provide a variety of community services including: crime prevention, educational programs, help locating missing persons, dealing with lost property, traffic control, victim assistance and collision investigation.

The **Police Officer Grant** provides annual funding to municipalities that added police officers between 2008 and 2011. It helps cover the cost of policing and promoting safe and secure communities. Each municipality receives \$100,000 per position, per year. Municipalities with a population over 5,000 that provide their own municipal police services are eligible.

A **shadow population** is made up of workers who live outside of a community or municipality. Because they are not included in the population count, they do not contribute to per capita funding calculations. Shadow populations may only be present seasonally (e.g., transient workers), when they use the resources and infrastructure of the community or municipality as if they were primary residents.