Community Safety Officer Program FAQ

What is a CSO?
A Community Safety Officer is a municipal employee tasked with carrying out high priority, low risk enforcement of bylaws and select provincial statutes. The ability to carry out provincial statutes is received through a special constable appointment from the Ministry of Justice. Each appointment can be tailored to a community’s needs, but they typically include enforcement of The Traffic Safety Act.

What can CSOs do?
A CSO can provide a uniformed presence in your community, liaise with schools and community groups, and use targeted enforcement to increase compliance with municipal bylaws and traffic laws. Unlike an RCMP, the municipality has complete control over a CSO’s schedule, and can deploy them where they best see fit.

What can CSOs not do?
CSOs cannot make arrests or investigate matters pertaining the The Criminal Code, or carry a firearm, except for the purpose of dealing with animals in their capacity as a bylaw enforcement officer. The CSO is not a police officer, or an RCMP member. They are a municipal bylaw enforcement officer that has been given special constable status to enforce a few, select provincial statutes.

How much does it cost to employ a CSO?
- The first year is anticipated to cost between $147,000-$170,000.
- Subsequent years will be less expensive, depending how the municipality chooses to amortize the assets used by CSOs. Expect $75,000-$120,000.

What do those costs include?
All years include CSO wages between $45,000 and $80,000 (up to the municipality and may vary...
based on duties). There is a cost of approximately $26,000 for dispatching and officer monitoring services, cell phone services, and regular recertification for things like pepper spray and baton use.

The first year also includes a number of assets, including vehicle and modifications (ballparked at about $60,000 altogether), uniform ($3,000), and supplies (varied, but probably $10,000 total). There is also an initial cost of training, which can be obtained through SaskPolytechnic.

Can I partner with other municipalities to share costs?
Yes. There are provisions to share services between municipalities, either by each municipality becoming an authorized employer and the CSO splitting their time accordingly, or with one municipality taking the lead as the primary employer. This municipality will ensure that a structured chain of command is in place, and be responsible for dealing with any complaints that may arise from the public.

Do I get to keep the fine revenue from tickets CSOs write?
Yes. Municipalities retain 100 per cent of bylaw enforcement revenue. SUMA and SARM also successfully advocated for municipalities to retain 75 per cent of fine revenue from tickets pertaining to provincial statutes, such as The Traffic Safety Act and The Highways and Transportation Act. The remaining 25 per cent is remitted to province for administration and oversight of the court system.

Who provides oversight for my CSO?
As the employer, you are responsible to provide oversight for your CSO. The specific manager is usually the administrator/CAO. Any complaints you receive should be investigated and reported to the Ministry of Justice.

What are my duties as an employer?
In addition to standard employer responsibilities, such as scheduling, payroll, and benefits, a CSO
employer must maintain rigorous records, which must be submitted for Ministry inspection upon request, review of at least 30 per cent of files generated by the CSO, secure appropriate liability insurance, and deal with public complaints, as per *The Police Act, 1990*.

**How do I choose an applicant?**

CSOs are peace officers, and care should be taken in the selection of a potential candidate. In general, candidates must be of good character, maturity, and an exemplary background. Base qualifications are:

a) Grade 12 or equivalent qualification.

b) Minimum age of 18 years old.

c) Be of sound mind and good character.

d) No criminal record,

e) No outstanding criminal charges and not subject of a criminal investigation. A criminal record and police check must be completed and submitted by the authorized employer. A vulnerable sector check may also be required.

**NOTE:** Criminal Record and police checks will only be recognized as valid for thirty (30) days after the law enforcement agency has completed the check.

f) Three reference checks satisfactory to the Assistant Deputy Minister of Justice have been completed.

g) Successful completion one of the following approved physical abilities evaluation test for CSOP (POPAT and PARE).

h) Successful completion of training course(s) approved by the ADM

**What training and certification is necessary?**

A training program has been developed with SaskPolytechnic for the enforcement of provincial statutes. An applicant must successfully complete this training as a pre-requisite for their special constable appointment. Additional training may be provided by the municipality for bylaw enforcement.
All CSOs must be certified to carry a collapsible baton and OC spray. This certification must be refreshed periodically.

Where do I start?

Step one is to contact the Ministry of Justice. They will be able to provide an example of a CSO business case and help you determine exactly what your community’s needs are. The contact for the CSO program is:

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