

# The Community Safety Officer Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is a Community Safety Officer?**

A Community Safety Officer (CSO) is employed by a municipality (or First Nation) for the purpose of providing an additional option to enhance community safety and support local policing agencies by addressing high priority/low risk to harm concerns, such as enforcing the *Traffic Safety Act* and engaging in crime prevention initiatives at the community level. Through their Special Constable appointments, CSOs may enforce other selected provincial statutes and assist in the investigation of minor criminal offences.

### **What can a Community Safety Officer do?**

A CSO provides a uniformed presence in the community. They can liaise with schools and community groups and engage in the enforcement of certain provincial statutes and *Criminal Code* offences. Like other employees of municipalities, CSO employers have control over the schedule and deployment of CSOs within the geographical boundaries of their jurisdiction, pursuant to their Special Constable appointments.

### **How much does it cost to employ a Community Safety Officer?**

The cost for the first year, for full time salary, equipment, and training, should be anticipated to be approximately \$147,000-\$170,000. Municipalities can expect \$75,000-\$120,000 for subsequent years, depending on how the municipality chooses to amortize the required assets.

### **What do those costs include?**

Every year will include the following *approximate* costs:

- Salary, as decided by the municipality. May vary based on duties: \$45,000-\$80,000.
- Dispatching and monitoring services, cell phone, and recertification: \$26,000.

The first year also requires the following *approximate* capital/equipment costs:

- Various assets, including a vehicle and the required modifications: \$60,000.
- Uniform: \$3,000.
- Supplies: \$10,000.
- Initial six week training at Saskatchewan Polytechnic: \$3,900-\$4,700 (depending on enrollment).

### **Can I partner with other municipalities to share costs?**

This may be possible through an exchange of services agreement in accordance with the *Municipalities Act*. It is important to note that CSOs must be authorized to perform duties in each municipality through their Special Constable appointments. If you are interested in pursuing this arrangement, please contact the Ministry of Justice official indicated on the final page of this document.

### **Who receives the fine revenue from tickets Community Safety Officers write?**

Municipalities 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 the province for administration and oversight of the court system. Municipalities are required to work with the Manager of the Fine Collection Branch and Provincial Prosecutions to ensure they are set up with Saskatchewan Justice databases, which are required in order to issue and enter violation tickets. This must be completed before the ministry will grant municipalities approval to employ CSOs.

**NOTE:** The ministry is currently working to make this consistent with First Nations that employ CSOs.

### **Who provides oversight for Community Safety Officers?**

As the employer, the municipality is responsible for providing oversight for their CSOs and must do as follows:

- Establish policies and procedures for public accountability in compliance with Part IV of the *Police Act, 1990*;
- Be subject to regular and specific reporting requirements regarding CSO programs and CSO activities;
- Ensure that a CSO's duties are restricted to those contained in their Special Constable appointment;
- Conduct periodic supervisory reviews of CSO investigative files and develop other procedures for internal quality assurance; and
- Adhere to the Community Safety Officer Program Policy (currently under development).

### **How do I choose an applicant?**

Care should be taken in the selection of a potential candidate. In general, candidates must be of good character, maturity, and have an exemplary background. For CSOs to be considered for a Special Constable appointment by the Minister Responsible for Corrections and Policing, municipalities should be aware of the requirements listed in the answer to the “How does a CSO candidate obtain Special Constable status?” question that follows.

### **What training and certification is necessary?**

A training program has been developed with Saskatchewan Polytechnic to certify CSOs for the enforcement of provincial statutes and some *Criminal Code* offences. An applicant must successfully complete this training as a pre-requisite for their Special Constable appointment.

All CSOs must obtain and maintain certifications to carry a collapsible baton and oleoresin capsicum spray (OC spray).

### **What is the first step to employ a CSO?**

- First, submit a business case that includes details such as the CSO’s proposed duties and responsibilities; the requested enforcement authority; the geographical area; and, if the CSO will be enforcing traffic safety, the submission of a Traffic Safety Plan.
  
- There are also a number of documents that need to be forwarded to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Policing and Community Safety Services. These include the following:
  - Letters from the Fine Collections Branch and Provincial Prosecutions stating processes have been completed to enter and issue tickets;
  - Evidence that a records management system is in place;
  - The name and title of the person acting in the capacity of the Chief of Police, in accordance with the *Police Act, 1990*;
  - The name of the person who will be responsible for the program (other than the CSO); and
  - Confirmation of adequate liability insurance.

## **How does a CSO candidate obtain Special Constable status?**

All Special Constable appointments are issued under the signature of the Minister as authorized under the *Interpretation Act, 1995*. To obtain a Special Constable appointment for CSOs, applying employers must determine and demonstrate that the candidate meets the following requirements:

- Grade 12 or equivalent qualification;
- Minimum age of 18 years old;
- Be of sound mind and good character;
- No criminal record;
- No outstanding criminal charges and is not the subject of a criminal investigation. A criminal record check, a police check and a vulnerable sector check must be completed and submitted by the approved employer;

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

- Three reference checks satisfactory to the ADM have been completed;
- Successful completion of an approved physical abilities evaluation test for uniformed enforcement roles; and
- Successful completion of training course(s) approved by the ADM.

## **Where can I obtain further information?**

If you are interested in learning more or employing a CSO, please contact the Ministry of Justice/ Corrections and Policing:

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