



HAMILTON POLICE SERVICES BOARD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Joint Statement from the Hamilton Police Services Board and Hamilton Police Service with Respect to Systemic Racism and Community Safety

At Hamilton Police Service, our vision is to be a trusted partner in delivering public safety in partnership with our communities. We recognize that the public trust is fragile, and that the legitimacy of policing is in question.

We recognize that generations of discrimination have led to distrust and we acknowledge that systemic racism exists in policing, including within Hamilton Police Service. We must address these issues, and take action to eliminate racism and discrimination in all its forms. We are not perfect and we have more work to do.

Our communities are demanding change and we are prepared to work with you. Discussions about systemic racism and how police respond to situations are important. These are complex and challenging conversations that need to take place – with all voices at the table.

We are encouraged by the discussions taking place around the Community Safety and Well Being plan and are optimistic for collaborative solutions that will bring about necessary change. This framework is designed to break down existing barriers and encourage multi-sectoral solutions to improve the well-being of everyone in Hamilton. Community safety is a collective effort.

Now is the time to adapt internally in order to affect change externally. As a public institution, the onus is on us to take the first steps towards meaningful change. We have recently committed to undertaking a diversity audit in partnership with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, as well as starting a Diversity and Inclusion Internal Support Network to support our members' understanding of diversity, inclusion and equity both within the service and the work we do in our communities.

We have an opportunity to press the reset button in reimagining what policing looks like in Hamilton. We cannot do this alone. The first step is building and strengthening the relationship between police and our communities. Relationships are the key to understanding. What is important is that we become partners and problem solvers together.