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ISOLATED WATERLOO INCIDENT DOES NOT REFLECT POLICE PROFESSION: ONTARIO POLICE

Mississauga, ON - The Police Association of Ontario (PAO) says the vast majority of complaints against police officers are dismissed after an investigation, and as a result suspending their pay without due process would significantly impact them and their families.

“The reality is that in most circumstances police officers see people at their worse, which often generates complaints,” says PAO President Bruce Chapman. “According to the Office of Independent Police Review Director Annual Report in 2014, there were 2,657 complaints about police behaviour, of which 72 warranted a review that could lead to discipline up to and including termination. It does not make sense that 97% of police officers subjected to unsubstantiated complaints lose their pay each year – without going through due process that can take up to two years.”

PAO says the behaviour of a couple of former police officers is not an example of a loop hole in a disciplinary process, but of a lack of training, a lengthy judicial period and senior officers not taking appropriate action during a review.

“Chiefs have the authority to place an officer in an administrative function during an investigation of a complaint,” says Chapman. “By using their power to reassign an officer to another area allows for a fair review process, value for work and protects public safety.”

PAO says they support police officers and their right to be fairly treated during a complaint. They do not condone or support inappropriate behaviour. The actions of a few do not reflect the pride and commitment to service police officers throughout Ontario have for their neighbourhoods and communities.

“I’ve been a police officer for over 30 years and their conduct was clearly inappropriate,” says Chapman. “I’m hoping this isolated incident and the whole process that followed shouldn’t penalize the 97% of those professional police officers cleared each and every year.”

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Police Association of Ontario is the official voice and representative body for Ontario’s front-line police personnel.