



Corporate Services Department
Legislative Services Division

Date & Time Received:	March 20, 2025 9:23 am
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DURHAM REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE BOARD

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M. Welch, Member * W. Woo, Member**

March 19, 2025

Chair John Henry and Members of Durham Regional Council

By email: clerks@durham.ca

Dear Chair Henry and Members of Council,

At its meeting on March 17, 2025, the Police Service Board considered the motion referred to it by Council on February 26, 2025 regarding a possible gun amnesty.

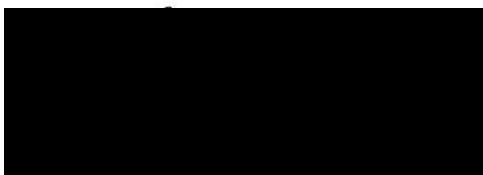
The Board and the DRPS are committed to reducing incidents of gun violence in our community. Unfortunately, the prevalence of illegal firearms has caused an increase in shootings, and related deaths and injuries, with 50 shootings or firearms discharges in 2024 across the Region. Addressing this violence, through investigation, enforcement, and prevention, remains a critical operational priority for the DRPS.

The DRPS, like all Police Services in Ontario, enables members of the public to turn in unwanted firearms on a year-round basis. In 2024, 126 firearms were turned in to DRPS through this program. The term “amnesty”, however, is not used to promote the opportunity to turn in firearms. This term offers a false impression to citizens who surrender their firearms that they will not be subject to legal repercussions in the event the firearm was used in a criminal offence. All firearms are investigated to determine if they were involved in the commission of a crime and, if so, individuals possessing these weapons could potentially face criminal charges. Academic research has concluded that time-limited amnesty programs have not been shown to reduce gun violence or attract the types of firearms used in crime and the offer of an amnesty may also create an expectation of compensation by citizens who turn in their firearms.

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In order to ensure that there is greater community awareness of the existing program, the DRPS will enhance its education and communication efforts to encourage members of the public to contact the police regarding unwanted weapons that are in their possession. More regular and consistent engagement with residents will occur in the future on how they can turn in unwanted firearms year-round and the process and legalities associated with this program. We would be pleased to report to Council on the number of firearms turned in to the Service on an annual basis.

Sincerely,



Shaun Collier
Chair

c.c.: Chief Moreira, DRPS