




HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Hamilton Police Services Board
BOARD MEETING DATE:	March 28, 2025
SUBJECT:	2024 Year End Report – McMaster University Campus Safety Services
REPORT NUMBER:	25-012
SUBMITTED BY:	Frank Bergen, Chief of Police
SIGNATURE:	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

McMaster University is a vibrant and diverse community, and ensuring the safety, well-being and belonging of our students, faculty, and staff is the foremost priority for Campus Safety Services.

In 2024 Campus Safety Services responded to major legislative changes with the introduction of the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, becoming one of the first universities in Ontario to solidify designation of our Special Constables. In addition, through collaboration with our campus partners, we achieved significant reductions in three criminal incident categories, as noted in this report.

Comprising of 34 staff, Campus Safety Services operates year-round, providing 24/7 support. Our Special Constables, who are appointed as Peace Officers by the Board under the Authority of the *Community Safety and Policing Act*, manage safety for the main campus and all off-campus sites.

Training and development remain a priority, with staff maintaining a high level of virtual and in-person training, including regular Block Training facilitated by Hamilton Police Service's Training Branch.

The team also conducted numerous outreach presentations on campus safety for faculty and student groups, fostering a strong connection with the community.

Vision: To be a trusted partner in delivering public safety.

Mission: To serve and protect in partnership with our communities.

Our Values: Compassionate, Dedicated, Inclusive, Integrity, Innovative, Professional, Teamwork

INFORMATION

The McMaster campus is composed of 300 acres of property and almost 60 buildings. The McMaster community includes 37,000+ students, and 6000+ continuing and long-term contract employees.

Building on a rich history, McMaster University is an innovative education and research community committed to discovery and improving the world around us.

Powered by impactful research, teaching and industry partnerships, McMaster continues to be ranked among the world's top 100 universities in a key international ranking, Times Higher Education (THE) in 2024. Overall, McMaster ranked 30th in the world in this year's THE Impact Rankings, which recognizes the contributions of universities worldwide as they work to make the world a safer, more sustainable place.

McMaster University's primary campus is situated in the west end of Hamilton, surrounded by inviting green spaces, residential living and is part of a vibrant community.

McMaster also includes buildings off-campus in Hamilton that are supported by Campus Safety Services Special Constables including One James North, 10 Bay Graduate Residence and David Braley Health Sciences Centre.

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY CAMPUS SAFETY SERVICES

The primary responsibility of Campus Safety Services is the overall safety and protection of persons and property within the McMaster community. While this requires great diligence and a commitment to excellence, it also requires a pro-active approach which helps to ensure that students, faculty, and staff feel safe, welcomed, valued and respected as individuals.

The team manages community safety for the main campus, all off-campus sites and is supplemented by private contract security services for several off-campus locations. The department's office is located on the 2nd floor of the E.T. Clarke Centre on McMaster University's campus. Campus Safety Services Special Constables travel in marked vehicles, bicycles and on foot on campus.

McMaster campus communities extend to:

- David Braley Health Sciences Centre – downtown Hamilton
- 10 Bay Graduate Residence – downtown Hamilton
- McMaster Continuing Education and university offices – One James North
- McMaster Innovation Park – Longwood Road
- The Ron Joyce Centre – Burlington
- Stonechurch Family Health Centre – Upper Ottawa St., Hamilton

Vision: To be a trusted partner in delivering public safety.

Mission: To serve and protect in partnership with our communities.

Our Values: Compassionate, Dedicated, Inclusive, Integrity, Innovative, Professional, Teamwork

- Kitchener/Waterloo and St. Catharines Health Sciences facilities and programs

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Special Constables interact on a regular basis with internal and external partners including student groups, Student Affairs, Housing and Conference Services, Campus Wellness, University Health and Safety, Facility Services, Parking Services, faculty representatives, Hamilton and Halton Police, Hamilton Fire Department and Paramedic Services.

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY BOARD OF GOVERNORS

On April 1, 2024, new legislation was introduced that governs the actions of police officers and special constables in Ontario, specifically, the Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA), 2019. After a lengthy accreditation process, McMaster University was designated a “Special Constable Employer” by the Ministry of the Solicitor General.

McMaster Special Constables are sworn Peace Officers, appointed by the McMaster Board of Governors under the authority of the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, and the Hamilton Police Service Board provides oversight in specific areas to ensure compliance.

Their appointments endow them with the responsibilities and duties of a Special Constable and enable them to enforce the Criminal Code of Canada, Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, Federal and Provincial statutes and Municipal By-Laws on the University Campus including off-campus university properties in Hamilton. The Special Constables also administer the McMaster Board of Governor’s bylaws and regulations.

PROTOCOL WITH THE HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE

The Hamilton Police Service works closely with McMaster Campus Safety Services to investigate serious criminal incidents. McMaster also continued to invest in the “Mac 91/92” program working closely with the Hamilton Police Service to hire officers to support community safety.

McMaster has a strong partnership with the Hamilton Police Service that is outlined in a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Hamilton Police Service Board (HPSB). McMaster University Campus Safety Services and the Halton Regional Police Service also have an official partnership, allowing the appointment of Special Constables in the Ron Joyce Centre in Burlington.

McMaster Campus Safety Services consists of 34 staff which include 30 sworn Peace Officers, providing 24/7 support to the university, an Administrative Support member, and a Technology Group responsible for local IT infrastructure and access control.

Vision: To be a trusted partner in delivering public safety.

Mission: To serve and protect in partnership with our communities.

Our Values: Compassionate, Dedicated, Inclusive, Integrity, Innovative, Professional, Teamwork

In 2024, Campus Safety Services continued to advance inclusive excellence with a focus on employment equity by fostering equitable hiring processes and training focus. The service has a diverse staff compliment reflective of the campus community, which follows leading practices outlined in section 14 in the Ontario Human Rights Code. The team works collaboratively with the Equity and Inclusion Office (EIO) on human-rights based approaches to campus safety, which aligns with the recommendations from the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC).

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The unique position of Special Constables requires consistent training and development. Beyond the formal education process, a considerable amount of learning takes place on-the-job.

In 2024, Campus Safety Services active-duty special constables completed legislated thematic training on human rights and systemic racism, the diverse, multiracial, and multicultural character of Ontario society and the rights and cultures of the First Nation, Inuit, and Metis Peoples. This important training, as prescribed by the Ministry of the Solicitor General was completed years ahead of schedule.

Further training focused in the areas of dealing with persons with mental health and addiction, de-escalation, supervision and health and safety. Campus Safety Services continues to partner with the Canadian Police Knowledge Network (CPKN) and the Ontario Police Video Training Alliance (OPVTA). Courses from CPKN are derived from accredited police training institutions from across Canada, including the Ontario Police College in Ontario.

Further training with the Office of Equity and Inclusion focusing on anti-racism and case studies from the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario are scheduled for 2025.

REPORTING INCIDENTS AT MCMASTER

The unique position and authority of Special Constables at McMaster Campus Safety Services brings accountability to the Hamilton Police Service Board for all actions taken in relation to law enforcement powers granted under the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019 as prescribed by the Board. As a requirement of that accountability, McMaster provides this Annual Report with statistical and evaluative information including, amongst other requirements, enforcement activity.

The community is encouraged to report any concerns or incidents and information is shared appropriately with internal and external partners to respond accordingly and prevent future incidents from occurring. The service strives for proactive measures to prevent crime and enhance community safety.

Vision: To be a trusted partner in delivering public safety.

Mission: To serve and protect in partnership with our communities.

Our Values: Compassionate, Dedicated, Inclusive, Integrity, Innovative, Professional, Teamwork

In 2024, McMaster Campus Safety Services filed 5,234 incident reports compared to 5,662 incident reports filed during 2023, an 8% decrease year over year.

Training and education efforts continue in relation to Harassment and Sexual Harassment. Such incidents in 2024 saw a 34% decrease from 2023 and a 57% decrease since a high of 44 incidents in 2019. McMaster's Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office has greatly extended its outreach to students with a video module focusing on consent. This work will continue in 2025.

A short summary of the incidents reported to Campus Safety Services in 2024, classified as Criminal and Provincial Offences, is included below:

- There was a total of 446 reported Criminal Incidents in 2024.
- The overall number of Criminal Incidents decreased by 19% from 2023 to 2024.
- One hate crime incident was reported, a drastic decrease from the 11 incidents reported in 2019.
- No incidents were reported in the following categories: Breach of Recognizance/Probation, Obstruct Peace Officer, and Sexual Assaults.
- Three Criminal Incident types had major reductions from 2023 to 2024:
 - Theft and Possession of Stolen Property (195 from 296)
 - Harassment/Sexual Harassment (19 from 29)
 - Threatening (10 from 20)
- Harassment and Sexual Harassment incidents decreased by 34% from 2023, and by 57% since a high of 44 incidents in 2019.

HAMILTON POLICE – MCMASTER PARTNERSHIP

The President's Advisory Committee on Community Relations (PACCR) has brought the University and its neighbours together for close to three decades. Co-chaired by the Chair of the Ainslie Wood/Westdale Community Association (AWWCA) and McMaster's Chief Executive of Internal and External Engagement, the group includes representatives from the neighbourhoods that surround the university, landlords, Westdale BIA, Hamilton Police, City of Hamilton By-law, the Ward One Councillor, students, the McMaster University Faculty Association and other university leaders, including the Dean of Students and the Director of Campus Safety Services.

PACCR meets regularly to share information, discuss concerns, and provide a community perspective when planning for events such as Welcome Week and unauthorized street parties.

Throughout 2024, McMaster continued to invest in the "Mac 91/92" Paid-Duty Policing program, working closely with the Hamilton Police Service to hire Hamilton police officers to augment proactive patrols in the Ainslie Wood/Westdale neighbourhoods.

The number of Paid Duty Officers increases at key times of year, including Welcome Week

Vision: To be a trusted partner in delivering public safety.

Mission: To serve and protect in partnership with our communities.

Our Values: Compassionate, Dedicated, Inclusive, Integrity, Innovative, Professional, Teamwork

and later in the fall when unauthorized street parties have historically occurred. Campus Safety Services works closely with HPS in its planning for these events. Additionally, McMaster works closely with Police and the City of Hamilton to ensure proactive and coordinated communications are available to students. This work compliments the university's ongoing Good Neighbour program to remind students of the important role they play in building strong and respectful communities around the University.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix A – Letter to the Chief

Appendix B – McMaster Campus Safety Services Annual Report 2024

FB/R. Abbott

c: Ryan Diodati, Deputy Chief – Operations
Paul Hamilton, Deputy Chief – Support

Vision: To be a trusted partner in delivering public safety.

Mission: To serve and protect in partnership with our communities.

Our Values: Compassionate, Dedicated, Inclusive, Integrity, Innovative, Professional, Teamwork