

# YORK UNIVERSITY- SECURITY SERVICES REVIEW CONSULTATION BRIEF

## OBJECTIVES OF THIS BRIEF

- Provide community members with background context, and information so that they are encouraged to participate and provide meaningful input into the consultation process.
- Assist in the process of arriving at concrete recommendations for action.

## PRINCIPLES

- The review is guided by an anti-racism, justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion lens.
- Flexibility is a key principle and multi-channel options for consultation will be offered, including written submissions, focused meetings, and town halls, with offerings in bilingual and accessible formats.
- Inclusive, respectful and collaborative dialogue and diversity of thought will be encouraged, and individual confidentiality will be maintained in the final report.
- It is appreciated that safety on campuses is a shared priority for everyone; how an individual feels safe is shaped by several factors specific to one's lived experiences and intersectional identities.
- It is also appreciated that individuals hold complex, intersectional identifiers where multiple affinities may apply (e.g., race, ability, religion, and gender). No one term can capture and adequately describe this complexity. For practical purposes, this review will use terms referred to in current anti-racist, equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and human rights work but individuals should be allowed to self-identify themselves in words that have meaning for them.
- The work of security services and other actors who are responsible for campus safety is challenging and complex, governed by provincial and municipal legislation and regulations. The final security services model will need to consider the provincial and municipal context within which York University operates.
- Arriving at meaningful recommendations and actions for change will require focused consultations and alignment on the development of key recommendations and actions that address safety through an anti-racism, justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion lens.
- To enable alignment and understanding of diverse views, the review period will include ongoing education, information, and dialogue through the principles of restorative justice, including hosting of education sessions and providing updates for the community on the review website and at consultation meetings.

## CONTEXT

### Why is the University undertaking a security services review?

- In June 2020, the University engaged in consultations on anti-Black racism with Black community members to gather concrete suggestions for change, which culminated in the release of the [\*Action Plan on Black Inclusion: A Living Document for Action\*](#).
- During the course of these meetings, participants shared many experiences and feelings; those included a lack of personal and emotional safety, daily experiences of racial harassment, exclusion, discrimination, lack of representation, lack of respect, and barriers to academic and career advancement. Student-participants felt they did not see themselves reflected in the faculty, instructors, staff, administration and curriculum. They shared their experiences of racial profiling and surveillance while on campus and feelings of a lack of support. Suggestions on how to reduce systemic barriers and create greater inclusion were also shared.
- The safety section of York University's *Action Plan on Black Inclusion* states: *"As part of our commitment to review campus security and explore alternative models for community safety, ensure that the lens of equity, diversity and inclusion is central, and that the process will include community consultation (e.g., townhalls, focus groups) with Black community members."* The issues identified were centered on uniformed security services and the interface with police.

### Wider social context

- This review is being conducted in the wider context of heightened national and international concerns of systemic and societal racism in law enforcement and particularly mental health and crisis response:
  - Increasing protests locally, nationally, and internationally against anti-Black racism in the delivery of policing services, and calls for systemic reforms, including the implementation of alternatives to policing, and in some cases calls for new models to respond to crisis and mental health calls.
  - Measures are being undertaken to address racial bias in campuses. Several formal reviews of security services, including reviews of special constable and campus safety models, have been initiated at colleges and universities across North America, including in Ontario and locally in the Greater Toronto Area.
  - Stepped up actions across jurisdictions and sectors that are engaging in reviews and reforms to their delivery of policing and/or security services, including alternate forms of delivery of some services (e.g., mental health response services).

- At its June 2020 meeting, Toronto [City Council adopted 36 decisions related to policing reform](#) to address systemic racism and better address the needs of individuals experiencing mental health crisis. These decisions included areas of public safety, crisis response and police accountability. At its meeting on August 18, 2020, the Toronto Police Services Board approved 81 decisions on police reform including the reforms requested by City Council.

### **Enhanced efforts to increase accountability and transparency**

- This review is also important in the context of findings by the Ontario Human Rights Commission and by the Supreme Court of Canada. It is recommended that law enforcement institutions make every effort to demonstrate publicly how they are actively providing fair and consistent services and how they are mitigating against bias and racism, particularly for Indigenous, Black, and other racialized and marginalized communities.
- In 2019, based on long standing concerns of racial discrimination in law enforcement, including in private security activities, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) released its detailed policy guidance entitled: *‘Policy on eliminating racial profiling in law enforcement’*
  - This policy highlights that racial profiling as a systemic reality – rather than a few isolated incidents – is an unquestionable fact
  - This fact has been affirmed by courts, human rights tribunals and government-commissioned reports
  - In 2019, the Supreme Court of Canada in *R v Le* (SCC 34 at para 97; [2019] SCJ No 34 (QL) [*Le*]) stated, “We have arrived at a place where the research now shows disproportionate policing of racialized and low-income communities.”
  - Canadian surveys and studies and police-related data sources show that Indigenous, Black, and some other racialized people have been subject to disproportionate policing including in relation to practices such as stops, searches, arrests, and use of force
  - In a detailed companion to its Policy, the OHRC documents the harms caused by racial profiling to individuals and communities in its consultation report on racial profiling, *‘Under Suspicion: Research and consultation report on racial profiling in Ontario’* (2017)
  - The policy also indicates that racial profiling may inadvertently influence all practices of law enforcement organizations including practices such as call centre referrals, officer deployment, stopping individuals, seeking identification, search practices, arrests, use of force, and decisions to charge individuals

- The OHRC policy affirms racial profiling is illegal, and that all law enforcement organizations have a duty to proactively meet their legal duties to uphold the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and cannot ignore concerns about racial profiling, even if there have been no formal complaints
- While campus security activity is more limited in scope than that of municipal and provincial law enforcement agencies, there are many campus security activities that overlap with policing activity, and which routinely involve calling on local police to address issues.

### **York Security Services and Community Safety**

- The Community Safety Department was established in 2016, and at that time the York Security Services was moved into the department. This was done as part of the University's revisioning efforts for Security Services to align with the wider context of community safety and as part of a comprehensive package of services aimed at campus safety. It was also part of the University's response to the METRAC audit conducted in 2010, which recommended a more community-centric and holistic safety approach and leadership. This community safety model has been adopted by some other universities in Canada.
- The Community Safety Department Strategic Plan—[Safer Together](#), was launched in 2019 and includes four key pillars: prevention, response, communications, and evaluation. These pillars, together, reflect a comprehensive approach to safety.
- Over 7,000 staff, faculty and students were consulted in the development of the strategy.
- Several key values were recurrent themes in the consultations: accessibility; inclusion; intersectionality; community centric; collaboration; risk/threat assessment; community engagement; and approaches that are tailored to the diverse and unique needs of each campus. These values have been embedded in each of the four pillars, and together form the framework for the Strategic Plan.
- In addition, the strategy highlighted the importance of meeting the needs of York's complex and diverse demographics from an anti-racism, justice, equity, diversity and inclusion lens and from an intersectionality perspective, to address safety through the perspective of anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Black racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, ableism, homophobia, gender-based violence and other forms of discrimination.

#### **Intersectionality:**

- The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination such as racism, sexism, and classism combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.

- The acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and oppression and everything and anything that can marginalise people must be considered: gender, race, class, sexual orientation, physical ability, etc.

## TERMS OF THE REVIEW & CONSULTATION PROCESS

### Scope and Process

- This Review aims to follow through on the commitment made in the safety section of the University's [Action Plan on Black Inclusion: A Living Document for Action](#) and on the vision of the Community Safety Strategic plan to articulate a vision of Security in this wider anti-racist, inclusive, equitable, and community-centric context.
  - This is not simply a performative review for its own sake. It is intended to have impact on the very real issues and concerns related to security services and community safety at York and result in a concrete action plan with timelines for implementation
  - A final report will be submitted to the Vice-President Finance and Administration (VPFA) and Vice-President People, Equity, Culture (VPEPC); it will outline evidence-based specific recommendations for an alternative security services model including implementation considerations and strategies
- The terms of reference of the review include examination of:
  - An alternative security services model including implementation considerations and strategies
  - The role and utility of uniformed and non-uniformed services in supporting campus safety with consideration of hybrid models, partnerships with security and external agencies such as police and crisis response
  - Improvements that can be made to the University's current security services through improved education, policies, procedures, recruitment, data collection processes
  - Innovative approaches to delivering security services on York's campuses, including whether some of the services currently provided by York Security Services would best be delivered by other non-uniformed first responders or in partnership with others (e.g., for wellness checks, mental health crisis calls) and/or partnerships with security services).
  - The consultation process will include formal written submissions, interviews, meetings with key equity-deserving stakeholder groups within

the University, consultation with the President's Safety Council, focus groups and town halls.

## ANTI-BLACK RACISM, JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

- Anti-Black racism provides a central historical context for this review, but the wider lens of EDI will also be a focus. Equity seeking groups include groups who may be disproportionately negatively impacted with respect to issues of safety and the interface with law enforcement and security agencies; these groups will be included for focused consultations along with Black community members.
- Equity-deserving groups can include those who are experiencing: anti-Indigenous racism; anti-Black racism (as noted above); anti-Asian racism; anti-Semitism; Islamophobia; homophobia and transphobia; discrimination due to ableism and mental health; gender inequity and violence; immigration status (non-status and international status); and language barriers.
- It is understood that these forms of discrimination are often intersectional in nature and individuals hold multiple, complex identities (e.g., race, gender and disability). This complexity will be taken into consideration, and with flexibility built into the review process, the equity seeking groups identified to participate in the consultations can be further expanded on as the review progresses.
- This review is intended to result in recommend actions that will provide remedies for these concerns.
- The broader York community will be invited to participate in the consultations to provide input. Specific consultations will be conducted with Indigenous, African Caribbean, Black and other equity-deserving groups.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON SECURITY SERVICES – A CLOSER LOOK

- York Security Services is a unit within the Community Safety Department. It employs approximately 70 licenced security personnel.
- York's frontline security staff is made up of licensed security personnel who are staff members of the university and governed under the *Private Security and Investigative Services Act*, which is different from most other universities and colleges in Ontario which employ Special Constables under the 'Special Constable' provisions of the Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act.
- Currently, there are three enforcement organizations that operate on York campus:
  - York Security Services whose capabilities are restricted by the provisions of the *Private Security and Investigative Services Act*, other relevant legislation such as the *Trespass to Property Act*, and York University policies and procedures

- Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) Special Constables who are deployed by the TTC on properties and facilities operated by the TTC
- The Toronto Police who are frequently called in to handle enforcement matters outside the legal and policy capabilities of York Security personnel.
- Security personnel are available 24/7 to provide conventional security services to the University's Glendon and Keele campuses, including:

**Front-line Security services:**

- the Security Control Centre which is the 24/7 central security dispatch, alarm and closed-circuit television (CCTV) monitoring hub for the University's campuses
- campus patrols by foot, bikes and vehicles
- respond to and investigate safety concerns, critical incidents and emergencies on university campuses
- administer first aid, health and crisis response to individuals experiencing illness or injury, assault, entrapment etc.
- provide emergency vehicle escort and coordination for police, fire and paramedic services
- check-in with community members working evenings, weekends or holidays, and provide escort if the goSAFE service is not available (goSAFE is a student led evening walking escort service managed by Community Safety and is separate from Security Services)
- plan for and respond to critical campus incidents in collaboration with first responders and the university community (e.g., evacuation, fire, extreme weather)
- support residence security through the Security Watch personnel who are stationed overnight in undergraduate residences
- conduct CCTV pans of the university continuously with the assistance of CCTV student staff (who work with Security Services in the Security Control Centre)

**Investigations and Safety Planning**

- Investigations and threat assessment personnel conduct safety risk assessments; develop personal safety plans for at-risk individuals; conduct non-criminal investigations and assist police with criminal investigations

**Safety Infrastructure**

- Manage automated door access to buildings on university campuses

- Install and maintain CCTV and door access infrastructure and operations for the community

### **Education, community relations, crime prevention and communication**

- Broadcast safety bulletins and emergency communication alerts
- Community Relations and Crime Prevention personnel collaborate with groups across our campuses to promote safety, undertake Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) audits, analyze statistical information to formulate crime prevention programs and services, and conduct safety planning for events on our campuses

### **Oversight of Security activity**

- Investigate and follow up community complaints, investigate the conduct of internal security staff, and conduct Use-of-Force reviews of security staff, where required.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: TOWARDS A NEW SECURITY SERVICES APPROACH**

### **PREAMBLE & CONTEXT**

**Preamble:** This review aims to facilitate prevention, campus community development and to foster fuller engagement. To achieve these goals, there are two fundamental priorities that the review seeks input on:

- How to ensure that security services are free from bias and discrimination affecting marginalized members of the campus community, particularly Indigenous, Black, other racialized members, and equity seeking groups
- How to ensure that services offered by York Security Services do not inappropriately respond to the needs of marginalized members of the campus community, particularly Indigenous, Black, and other racialized individuals, and those experiencing mental health crises who would be better served by other community safety services.

### **A: TOWARDS ENSURING SECURITY SERVICES ARE FREE FROM BIAS AND DISCRIMINATION**

**Preamble:** Several areas of focus for campus security services across jurisdictions in North America have been raised, these include dispatching services, practices including ID requests, the handling of those visiting the campus including homeless people, arrests, searches, use of force, referral to police and disciplining processes.



## **SOLUTIONS TO THESE ISSUES THAT HAVE EMERGED INCLUDE:**

### **Transparency and accountability**

- enhance oversight for campus security services complaints and concerns
- regularly collect race-based data, analyze, action if called for, regularly report, and evaluate impact of responses and other identity data of concern, if deemed relevant
- adopt a clear and comprehensive policy and process related to the handling of complaints.

### **Fair and bias-free security work**

- review, re-imagine and clearly publicize the mission of the review, which should include providing a safe and secure campus environment free from racial and other forms of bias
- review security policies, protocols and practices to ensure equitable response, fair and bias-free treatment and enforcement including, call centre referrals; asking for identification, searches, use of force, decisions to trespass individuals, and decisions to arrest and call in police
- create specific racial profiling and EDI-focused policies, where deemed needed.

### **Recruitment and education**

- modify recruitment and hiring practices to ensure that security staff are best situated to identify and address intersectionally-racial and other forms of bias and discrimination and that they can understand the needs of diverse demographics on campuses
- report on racial, Indigenous, gender and other EDI-focused demographic make-up of security staff and leadership
- develop a comprehensive and pedagogically sound educational and development strategy to equip security staff with knowledge and skills to identify sources of bias and discrimination and address the needs of the community.

### **Community engagement and trust building**

- proactively engage with the campus community to build trust and quality of service for marginalized communities
- understand community demographic and cultural needs
- clearly communicate the differences between campus security and police
- consider changing the appearance of the current uniforms used by security personnel to avoid barriers for service to communities that have been traumatized or are triggered by police activity

- improve communication about the services that security staff provide and the scope of their enforcement.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Transparency and accountability

- What accountability measures can be implemented to ensure York Security Services are free from bias and discrimination?
- How can oversight of York Security Services be enhanced?
- What data should Security Services collect and report publicly to ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability?
- How should complaints be reported?

### Specific services and activities

- Are there any specific activities carried out by York Security Services, including the way in which they are carried out, that are of concern— from a bias and discrimination perspective?
- How can these concerns be addressed?

### Recruitment and education

- What attributes and qualifications should we be looking for when recruiting security front-line staff and security leadership?
- What types of staff education would be effective/ineffective to change attitudes and behaviours in security/policing?
- How do we ensure on-going review of practices, challenges, successes, and education with, and for those involved in security services?

### Community engagement and building trust

- What strategies should York Security Services utilize to cultivate confidence and trust with marginalized individuals on campus?

## B. THE ROLE OF SECURITY SERVICES IN THE WIDER CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY SAFETY SERVICES

**Preamble:** Campus security services have traditionally been structured on a law enforcement model and have employed staff recruited with enforcement roles and responsibilities in mind. Recently, calls are being made to reallocate resources to enhance capacities to support vulnerable communities and provide crisis support through non-enforcement services that are staffed by specialized mental health and social work professionals with experience in anti-racism and EDI.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### The role of security services in a community safety model

- What should be the primary roles and responsibilities of Security Services in maintaining safe and inclusive campuses?
- Are there any roles and/or activities carried out by York Security Services that should be modified? If so, how can this be done?
- What skills and experiences are needed to deliver the recommended roles and responsibilities for Security Services?

### Response to crises or mental health needs

- Under what circumstances would it be appropriate/inappropriate for Security Services to respond to a person experiencing a mental health crisis?
- If specially trained mental health workers are preferable in some circumstances, how should they work with Security Services and other on partners both on and off campus?
- What are the resource implications of this change, and how should they be handled?

### C. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Do you have additional thoughts or ideas regarding York Security Services that you believe should be considered in this Security Services Review which might not be covered in this document?
- Do you have suggestions on how any recommendations should be implemented?

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You can provide your input on this review at: [securityreview@yorku.ca](mailto:securityreview@yorku.ca)