



Cobourg Police Service

Office of the Chief of Police

107 King Street West
Cobourg, Ontario
K9A 2M4

(905) 372-6821 Administration
(905) 372-8325 Fax

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Statement from Chief Paul VandeGraaf Re: overdose prevention site

We are aware community members plan to host an overdose prevention site on private property in the Town of Cobourg. Police will respond accordingly should we be called to the property and enact a collaborative response as required, considering several factors, including criminal offences, provincial offences, and municipal standards.

Substance use disorder is a public health issue that requires a coordinated and collaborative approach. The Cobourg Police Service follows the 2020 Federal Crown's directive on the possession of controlled substances. We do not arrest individuals for simple possession of illicit drugs alone, focusing on more serious cases raising public safety concerns.

Further, we support a four-pillar model: prevention/education, harm reduction, treatment, and enforcement. Supporting harm reduction approaches like supervised consumption and treatment sites in communities can help prevent overdoses and increase access to health and social services. Establishing these sites must be done in a conscientious manner that does not result in unintended consequences negative to communities in terms of criminal activity. I support the process of considering the establishment of a sanctioned safe consumption site through the process and guidelines established by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

We remain committed to the safety of our community and will respond to calls for service as usual.

I have provided links below for your information:

Federal Crown's position on the possession of controlled substances - <https://www.ppsc-sppc.gc.ca/eng/pub/fpsd-sfpg/fps-sfp/tpd/p5/ch13.html>

Health Canada: Consumption and Treatment Services: Application Guide - https://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/opioids/docs/CTS_application_guide_en.pdf

Government of Canada: how to apply for a supervised consumption site - <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-use/supervised-consumption-sites/apply.html>