Police Association of Ontario

Ontario Residents Strongly Support Cash Bail for Repeat and Violent Offenders, New Poll Finds

Toronto, ON – (May 12, 2026) The Police Association of Ontario (PAO) released new survey results demonstrating strong public support for cash bail, particularly in cases involving repeat and violent offenders. The findings reflect both Ontario and national trends, reinforcing that bail reform is a pressing issue across Canada.

According to a recent national poll conducted by Earnscliffe on behalf of the Police Association of Ontario, 71% of Canadians support cash bail for repeat and violent offenders. Majorities also back important changes to surety rules, including prohibiting individuals with a criminal record from acting as a surety (72%) and limiting the number of people one can act as a surety for (70%). The majority of Canadians (60%) also agree that upfront cash bail for violent and repeat offenders will make communities safer, further highlighting the urgent need for reform.

Focusing on Ontario, nearly three-quarters (72%) of residents support cash bail for repeat and violent offenders, and 65% support cash bail for everyone charged with a criminal offence. Two-thirds (65%) of Ontarians say the system is not strict enough when it comes to deciding whether repeat and violent offenders should be released on bail, and well over half (62%) agree cash bail would make communities safer.

“These results show that Ontarians—and Canadians from coast to coast—recognize the importance of ensuring community safety and support meaningful changes to our bail system,” said Mark Baxter, President of the Police Association of Ontario. “The message is clear: the public wants stronger safeguards in place when it comes to releasing repeat and violent offenders.”

The Police Association of Ontario continues to advocate for evidence-based reforms that prioritize public safety while respecting the rights of all Canadians.

See here for full survey results and methodology.

About the Police Association of Ontario (PAO)

The Police Association of Ontario (PAO) is the recognized voice for over 33,000 sworn officers and civilian police personnel from 46 police associations across Ontario. Dedicated to advocacy, representation, and support, the PAO provides its members with vital resources, education, and a strong presence in legislative and policy discussions. Founded in 1933, the PAO has played a pivotal role in shaping the policing profession in Ontario, advancing safe workplaces, fostering healthy labour relations, and prioritizing the mental health and well-being of its members. For more information, visit www.pao.ca.

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For media inquiries, please contact:
Kiki Cloutier, Director, Communication and Public Affairs
Police Association of Ontario
E-mail: kiki.cloutier@pao.ca
Cell: 416-885-4651