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Ontario's pandemic premium pay should not be extended to municipal police personnel, says provincial association

TORONTO, May 6, 2020 / CNW / -- The Police Association of Ontario (PAO), and its 47 local member associations who represent over 18,000 sworn and civilian police personnel across the province, would like to thank Ontarians for doing their part to stop the spread of COVID-19 since the provincial emergency orders were implemented in March.

"Ontario's municipal police personnel are dedicated to keeping our communities safe in all circumstances and states of emergency – 24/7/365," said Bruce Chapman, PAO President.

In late April, the Ontario government announced they would be providing a pandemic premium payment of an additional \$4.00/hr for long-term care, health care and corrections personnel who work directly in acute care and confined situations during this health crisis. Shortly thereafter, the premium's eligibility was expanded to include paramedics, respiratory therapists, public health nurses, and mental health and addictions workers in hospitals and congregate care settings. These professionals are often working in settings where the risk and/or rate of infection is much higher than average.

"The PAO agrees that this supplement should be provided to the deserving health care workers who are directly involved in fighting this pandemic, but we do not believe it needs to be extended to our 18,000 municipal police personnel members at this time," said Chapman. Each police association across the province bargains its collective agreement with their local police service board, and the PAO's 47 member associations are committed to honouring those mutually agreed upon contracts. "Ontario's sworn and civilian municipal police personnel expect no more, and no less, than their contracts dictate," he added.

That being said, the PAO is appreciative of the provincial government's support for Ontario's police personnel during this health crisis, such as providing them with adequate supplies of proper personal protective equipment (PPE), emergency child care if needed, and priority COVID-19 testing to ensure they are not potentially contributing to any community spread.

"The PAO has and will continue to advocate strongly for our members' health and wellness while they work hard to protect Ontario's communities during this unprecedented time," concluded Chapman.

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About the Police Association of Ontario

The Police Association of Ontario (PAO) is the official provincial representative body for 18,000 sworn and civilian police personnel from 47 local police associations across Ontario. A unifying voice for advocacy in policing, the PAO provides its member associations with representation, resource and support.

Contacts:

Sarah Coulter, Communications Manager
Sarah.Coulter@pao.ca | 416.569.7577

Website: PAO.ca

Twitter: @PoliceAssocON

Facebook: @PoliceAssociationOfOntario