



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ontario to Get Dedicated Mental Health Facility for First Responders

(PAO) March 3, 2022 – The Police Association of Ontario (PAO) is thrilled that Ontario has announced a dedicated mental health facility for first responders thanks to commitments at the municipal, provincial and federal levels.

The provincial and federal governments will each provide \$1 million for the capital planning stage of the facility, and construction is set to begin this spring, with a completion goal of late 2024.

The Runnymede Health Centre is set to build and run a rehabilitation centre dedicated to treating first responders and medical personnel for post-traumatic stress injuries. The facility will include an outpatient and assessment centre in Toronto’s west end, which will be known as Station 3434, and a 40-bed in-patient facility located on a large property in Caledon, Ont., that has been donated by the Region of Peel.

“We are extremely pleased to see that our efforts are paying off with this announcement of a dedicated facility for our first responders,” said PAO President Mark Baxter. “The PAO will continue to advocate for the mental health and well-being of our members.

“As the first of its kind in Ontario, Runnymede has an opportunity to make a real difference,” said Baxter. “When a police officer or civilian police service employee is struggling, and particularly if they have gotten to a point of crisis, they require immediate and confidential access to support services and professionals who are specifically trained to understand the unique challenges that first responders face.”

The PAO is looking forward to being a continued partner as the Centre’s programs and services are developed, the Toronto and Peel sites are built and launched, and the Runnymede First Responders PTSI Rehabilitation Centre is able to start providing evidence-based and much-needed assistance and treatment to Ontario’s policing and first responder communities.

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About the Police Association of Ontario (PAO):

Founded in 1933, the Police Association of Ontario (PAO) is the official provincial representative body for over 28,000 sworn and civilian police personnel from 45 police associations across Ontario. A unifying voice for advocacy in policing, the PAO provides its member associations with representation, resource, and support.



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