

Embracing Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Office

Halton Regional Police Service

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Halton Region - Quick Facts¹

Halton's Growing Population



The Region's 2020 population was approximately 610,000 and is growing at more than double the provincial average.

- Halton is the fastest growing region in the GTHA.
- Halton's population is expected to grow to nearly 660,000 by 2023 and approximately 820,000 by 2031.
- Milton was the sixth fastest-growing municipality in Canada, increasing by 30.5 per cent between 2011 and 2016.



Between 2011 and 2016, Halton welcomed over 20,000 new Canadians from all over the world.

- Nearly half of newcomers came from five countries – China, India, Philippines, Pakistan and Egypt.
- Two-thirds of newcomers were admitted as economic immigrants.
- 27 per cent of newcomers were sponsored by family.
- 6 per cent of newcomers were admitted as refugees.

Inside Halton Homes



A quarter of Halton's population is a visible minority:

- Over 40 per cent of Milton's residents are a visible minority
- Over 30 per cent of Oakville's residents are a visible minority
- 16 per cent of Burlington residents are a visible minority
- 7.4 per cent of Halton Hills residents are a visible minority



17 per cent of residents speak a home language other than English or French.

- About 6 per cent speak both English and a foreign language, the most common being Mandarin.
- The top five foreign mother tongues spoken by Halton residents are Urdu, Arabic, Spanish, Mandarin and Polish.
- More than 7,000 Halton residents do not speak English or French, a 40 per cent increase since 2011



Halton Region is ranked first among the 49 Census Divisions in Ontario in respect to household income.

- Halton's average household income rose by 4.2 per cent to \$103,000 between 2005 and 2015.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion at the HRPS

Integrating the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) throughout the Halton Regional Police Service (HRPS) emphasizes the importance of creating a workforce that reflects the community we serve and is sensitive to the needs of our diverse region.

The foundation for all EDI work carried out by the HRPS was the adoption of our Bias-Free Policing policy, which was developed to eliminate discrimination in all its forms and affirm our support to adhere to the principles of equity and fairness embodied in the Canadian Bill of Rights, Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Ontario Human Rights Code, Police Services Act (Ontario) and the Halton Regional Police Service Strategic Plan.

Beyond the adoption of our Bias-Free Policing policy, we recognized that an investment in our diverse and vibrant membership was a necessary prerequisite to any authentic EDI work with members of our community. Several key initiatives have been developed to strategically guide and enhance our organizational culture, members' professional development, and our ability to effectively serve our residents.

Our commitment to meeting the needs of our members and external community is what drives us in the development of our EDI strategy to ensure it is not only effective but sustainable.

¹ Based on 2016 Census Data from Statistics Canada and from Community Development Halton.



Key EDI Priorities



Inclusive Workplace



Professional Development



Collaboration & Engagement



Education & Outreach

History of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office

EDI work has been a long-standing priority for the HRPS and was traditionally overseen by our Regional Community Mobilization Bureau.

In 2020, the EDI Office was developed to provide a central point of oversight and strategic direction for all related work and future programming and services. In recognition of this important work, the EDI Office reports directly to the Office of the Chief of Police. The creation of this specialized office further focused our commitment to EDI work and to providing policing services that best suited the needs of our ever-changing community.

The EDI Office has engaged with internal and external stakeholders to identify the top EDI priorities of the HRPS. These priorities were identified to maximize the impact on our community and members while also integrating with our existing strategic plan goals. They include:

- building an inclusive workplace;
- professional development;
- increasing collaboration and engagement; and
- enhancing service delivery through education and outreach.



Inclusive Workplace

We understand the benefits and importance of providing an inclusive workplace that is free of all barriers, respects all backgrounds, and values lived experiences. When our members can come to work and be their true authentic selves, it drives increased engagement and fosters collaboration that can deliver the best policing services to our community.



Executive EDI Committee

Recognizing the importance of demonstrating a commitment to EDI in our leadership ranks, the Executive EDI Committee was developed. The Executive EDI Committee is made up of members who have direct oversight and responsibility for critical areas within the Service impacting EDI, and is comprised of individuals representing the Office of the Chief, Human Resources, Training, Community Mobilization, District Command, the EDI Office, and the Halton Regional Police Association.

The Executive EDI Committee is responsible for:

- Providing strategic direction to embed EDI across the whole organization;
- Ensuring visibility and accountability at the leadership level to establish EDI goals and objectives;
- Providing another mechanism for sharing employee feedback and addressing concerns;
- Improving reporting on EDI initiatives to assist in future decision making;
- Guiding the development and direction of other sub-committees focusing on EDI initiatives;
- Ensuring ongoing messaging across all areas of the Police Service related to the advantages when EDI is leveraged; and
- Liaising with internal members and external community partners from diverse backgrounds to better understand the EDI needs of the Police Service.

Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI) Inclusion Report

In 2017, the HRPS partnered with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI) to administer an anonymous survey to our members. The objective was to assess the demographics of our organization and how inclusive and equitable our members felt the culture, policies, and processes within the Service were. While the survey revealed some encouraging statistics, it also established a critical baseline for future EDI work the HRPS is now undertaking.

Through the tracking of applicant demographics and information obtained through the CCDI survey, we are able to take a more strategic approach to eliminate gaps and barriers within our current application process. In doing so, we ensure that we are attracting individuals from all backgrounds who wish to pursue a career in the policing sector.

Since 2017, our Police Service has continued our commitment towards formal engagement with our members, revealing valuable insights on how the culture of the Service is progressing towards a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive environment.





Multi-Faith Support Team

As the region of Halton continues to grow and the representation of various faiths, religions and cultures increases within our communities, so too does the religious and cultural diversity of our Service.

Our Multi-Faith Support Team (MFST) is comprised of volunteer members of the community who practice different faiths. The MFST is designed to provide moral, spiritual and religious support to members of the HRPS and their families in times of need.

Professional EDI Consultations

The HRPS continues to leverage the expertise of external consultants and those who specialize in the areas of EDI. This ensures that our Service remains aligned with best practices related to EDI and provides an opportunity to facilitate independent engagement with our members. This consultative work has been undertaken with a view towards informing a long-term strategy that will serve as a road map for future EDI efforts undertaken by our Service.

Internal Support Networks

Our Internal Support Networks (ISNs) are structured to provide members from identified groups and their allies or supporters, the opportunity to regularly meet and discuss issues affecting them. By bringing people together, the ISNs are able to create a supportive and inclusive work environment for all our members. These meetings also allow members of the ISNs the ability to work with the EDI Office to develop objectives, strategies and programs that ultimately support the goals and initiatives of the Service. At this time, the HRPS has Black, South Asian, LGBTQ2S+ and Women's ISNs.



LGBTQ2S+ Support

Through collaboration between the LGBTQ2S+ Internal Support Network and the EDI Office, the HRPS has undertaken a commitment to supporting our LGBTQ2S+ members and community. We have prioritized this work by:

- Partnering with local organizations to participate in Pride Events across Halton region;
- Providing enhanced training for our members;
- Conducting policy reviews;
- Increasing gender-neutral facilities in all HRPS buildings; and
- Developing a framework / guideline for those transitioning in the workplace.

We have dedicated ourselves to being leaders when it comes to standing up for the rights of all those who identify as being part of the LGBTQ2S+ community.

Organizational Health Portal

The HRPS is committed to creating a healthy organization for all our members; one in which employee wellness is prioritized. Over the past several years, we have developed resources which collectively support the personal and professional well-being of all our members. As a result, we have developed the new Organizational Health Portal that provides our members with a single location to access information related to:

- Wellness
- EDI
- Internal Support Networks
- Related Policies
- Human Resources





Professional Development

By leveraging the expertise in our Training Bureau and relationships with external stakeholders such as the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI), we provide consistent and ongoing professional development opportunities for our members to ensure that they are competent and capable when navigating EDI issues. Building empathy and understanding of the needs and concerns of the diverse community we serve provides a critical foundation towards ensuring all of our members are equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to effectively police.



Training

Through training and other professional development opportunities, our members are better able to develop specific, valuable skills to navigate EDI issues they face both internally and externally. This knowledge also allows our members to be more capable of engaging with the diverse population living in the region of Halton.

The EDI Office has enhanced connectivity and collaboration with the Training Bureau through a Liaison Officer who is responsible for the development, implementation, and documentation of EDI training.

Each year, a training plan is developed by the EDI Office in collaboration with the Training Bureau. This training plan outlines the goals and objectives for the year and how specific professional development opportunities will be embedded into key areas of the Service. Professional development is conducted with new sworn and civilian members, during annual requalification training, the EDI Teams, Community Mobilization Bureau Officers, and through monthly EDI Training opportunities for all members of the Service.

Racism, Racial Discrimination and Human Rights Training

In 2020, all sworn, civilian and volunteer members of the Police Service participated in training developed by the Ontario Human Rights Commission focusing on identifying and providing approaches to preventing racism and racial discrimination. This training continues to be provided as a foundational learning opportunity for all new members of the Service.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Teams

EDI Teams were created to provide an additional opportunity for our members to participate in ongoing and enhanced professional development opportunities.

The EDI Teams are comprised of individuals from our Service who have the most day-to-day interactions with the public and other members. The EDI Teams, located at every HRPS District, are responsible for:

- Acting as liaisons to the EDI Office to bring awareness to issues that may negatively impact our members and the community;
- Promoting diversity and inclusion work within the Service;
- Providing an opportunity for informed decision-making and training;
- Attending community events on behalf of the Service; and
- Promoting and participating in ongoing related training opportunities.

Members of the EDI Teams participate in regular training to expand their knowledge and ability to act as a resource within their own area of responsibility.





Cross-Cultural Awareness

One of the most effective ways to promote diversity and inclusion is by building a deeper understanding of different cultures and backgrounds. A lack of communication and knowledge in this area can aggravate cultural differences between individuals and groups. To mitigate this risk, the EDI Office has developed ongoing cross-cultural communication which is disseminated to all Service members. This communication consists of recognizing and providing information about dates of significance related to various religions or cultural celebrations throughout the year.

This ongoing cross-cultural communication helps our members develop additional skills, insights and personal awareness to be respectful, inclusive and effective when performing their functions as a HRPS member and interacting with the community.

Additional information is accessible to our members through the Religious & Cultural Diversity for Policing in Halton Region Guide that is provided to all new recruits as part of their training.

EDI Speaker Series

To create innovative learning experiences for our members, our EDI Speaker Series was developed. The EDI Speaker Series provides an opportunity to introduce experts or those with extraordinary lived experiences to inspire our members to expand their perspectives on equity, diversity and inclusion. The goal of this Speaker Series is to enhance awareness surrounding equity, diversity and inclusion challenges, and bolsters our commitment to ongoing professional development.



Collaboration and Engagement

To best respond to the needs of the diverse community we serve, we must first understand what those needs are. The HRPS has committed to addressing community concerns and developing new programs and initiatives through collaboration and engagement. This involves including the community and external stakeholders in meaningful dialogue to help drive change both within the Service, and also in how we deliver policing services in Halton.





Youth Advisory Council

In 2021, the HRPS launched its inaugural Youth Advisory Council, which consists of youth between the ages of 14 and 18 years. This Youth Advisory Council is an unparalleled opportunity for our members to learn from the diverse perspectives and lived experiences of youth residing in Halton. These youth help guide our current/future work, and allow us to better meet the needs of our community.

Goals of Youth Advisory Council:

- Be a source of positive change through inclusion and collaboration with local youth and the HRPS;
- Highlight our Service's commitment to youth development and leadership;
- Ensure we have a point of reference within the community to guide us in future programming and services aimed at youth;
- Help address barriers to Police and youth engagement;
- Promote volunteerism within the community and the Service;
- Create youth ambassadors who can promote the work we are doing within the community; and
- Assist the HRPS in the development of EDI initiatives/programming.

Older Adult Support

With an expanding older adult community in Halton, our Police Service has developed structures and systems to better anticipate and prepare to support this demographic. Through our Older Adult Support Officer and strategic partnerships, we are able to more effectively understand and respond to the needs of those we serve to maximize community safety and well-being.

Diversity Engagement Table

We understand the importance of communicating with our diverse community through round table discussions and consultations including our Diversity Engagement Table (DET). The DET is made up of community members and organizations that provide advice and insight on ways to improve relationships between the HRPS and those we serve.

Consisting of individuals representing more than two dozen community organizations, the DET meets multiple times a year, or as needed with the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office and Executive Command Team, to help build mutual understanding and trust between our Service and the community.

Contributing to Meaningful Conversations and Initiatives

The HRPS recognizes the importance of collaboration and leveraging the expertise and knowledge of individuals and groups living and working in our community. Our members are represented on several committees locally, provincially and nationally with the goal of advancing the work of our own Service and, equally, supporting the work of the organizations we partner with. The diverse perspectives shared through these committees and other opportunities allow our Police Service to be more strategic when addressing individual and community concerns while ensuring we are being sensitive to the needs of the diverse residents we serve.

Community Safety and Well-Being

In 2017, Halton Region and the HRPS collaboratively developed a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan that guides how we work with community partners to improve the safety, health and well-being of Halton residents. This plan focuses on four levels of intervention including social development, prevention, risk intervention and incident response which together provide a holistic process to addressing social issues through an upstream approach.

The EDI Office works closely with our Community Safety and Well-Being Team to support culturally appropriate connections to services for individuals at acutely elevated risk and to support the work being done to make Halton more inclusive for all residents.

Community Consultations and Connections

Halton is comprised of individuals and communities who have a broad spectrum of experiences with law enforcement. We have prioritized being accessible and creating opportunities for these individuals and communities to engage with the EDI Office through open and transparent dialogue.

Our partnerships with organizations who support these individuals and communities allow us to better understand their unique needs and work towards fostering new experiences and positive relationships.

Inclusive and Accessible Policing Services

The HRPS understands the importance of treating everyone in a manner that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in equal opportunity and are committed to meeting the needs of those in the community who require accessibility supports and barrier-free access to policing services in the region.

Through our Accessibility Coordinator and EDI Office, we continue to enhance the accessibility of our programs and services, including investing in enhancements to our stations and increasing supports for those who require American Sign Language and other interpretation services. This work is reflected in our Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.





Education and Outreach

The Halton Regional Police Service is committed to providing our community with the highest quality police service possible in order to meet or exceed the needs and expectations of those we serve. By ensuring all initiatives are transparent to community stakeholders, we are able to break down barriers to create a mutual understanding related to the role we play in ensuring Halton remains the safest municipality in all of Canada.



Member Accountability and Professional Standards

The HRPS is committed to providing our community with the highest quality police service possible. Public input is essential to ensuring that we continue to meet the needs or exceed the expectations of those that we serve.

The Professional Standards Bureau will liaise with the EDI Office to assist with understanding and mediation related to any complaints regarding Officer or Police Service misconduct that is believed to be based on bias.

Response to Global Events #PREVENT

Recognizing that any hate-motivated incident can have a localized impact, the EDI Office monitors all high-profile events that could increase the risk of victimization or reduce the sense of public safety to our Halton residents. Through the use of proactive patrols at places of worship or direct communication, the HRPS is able to mitigate any future risks associated to diverse groups being the target of similar or retaliatory incidents.

Responding to Hate and Bias Motivated Incidents

Effectively responding to hate and bias motivated incidents is a top priority for the HRPS. All reported hate incidents are monitored by a region-wide coordinator who works in our Intelligence Bureau. This coordinator is a member of the Hate Crime Extremism Investigative Team (HCEIT) which is comprised of 15 police services across the province. Additional assistance is also provided by the District Criminal Investigations Bureau and the EDI Office who provide support when investigations have an element of hate and/or bias. Our Service recognizes the importance of a strategic and collaborative approach when responding to these types of incidents. Because of this, we have partnered with several community agencies to assist us in the enhancement of our current policies and procedures, as well as act as an additional resource by providing support to every individual or group impacted by hate in our region through the EDI office.

In an effort to stop hate and promote respect, equity and inclusivity in our community, we launched our #NoHateInHalton campaign in 2021. This campaign was launched in partnership with the Halton District School Board, the Halton Catholic District School Board, Conseil Scolaire Catholique MonAvenir, Conseil Scolaire Viamonde, Crime Stoppers of Halton, and other community stakeholders. Approximately 180 schools and learning facilities across the region participate in the campaign to bring attention to eliminating hate, reducing stigma and barriers to reporting, and to provide support for those in the community who have been negatively impacted by hate or bias. Additional anti-hate messaging is provided to members of the public on an ongoing basis which further highlights our commitment to eliminating all forms of hate in our region.





Emergency Services Introduction to New Canadians (ESINC)

We understand that new Canadians living in Halton may have had different experiences with emergency services, or may not know how first responders enhance public safety. With this in mind, our Service, in partnership with the Halton Multicultural Council and our local Fire and Paramedic Services, developed the Emergency Services Introduction for New Canadians (ESINC) Program.

The ESINC program provides the HRPS the opportunity to speak with English as a Second Language (ESL) and Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classes across the region about topics including the role of police, as well as other relevant crime prevention information. In 2021, a virtual format of our ESINC program was developed and launched, which includes several videos that are available on our website in a variety of languages including French, Spanish, Chinese, Urdu and Arabic.

In partnership with newcomer agencies across the region, the HRPS hosts an annual event at our Headquarters where we invite all new Canadians to interact with and learn more about the various emergency services working in Halton.

To learn more, visit our [ESINC webpage](#).

Community Presentations / Events

Focusing on positive interactions with the community is a priority for our entire Service. Through presentations or the attendance at community events, we create opportunities to build and foster relationships with individuals and groups across the region. These opportunities allow for ongoing outreach and education related to the role of police and how we work to break down barriers between HRPS and the community we serve.

Presentations are regularly provided through our community partnerships covering a broad range of topics related to crime prevention, traffic safety and hate/bias motivated incidents.

Police Ethnic and Cultural Education Youth Leadership Program (P.E.A.C.E.)

Annually, local youth apply to participate in our eleven-week Police Ethnic and Cultural Education Youth Leadership Program (PEACE). PEACE students work closely with HRPS members to improve their cultural proficiency, communication and leadership skills, and to gain knowledge about all aspects of policing. Topics covered include:

- Leadership and planning for your future
- Black History Education
- Local place of worship tour
- Introductions to different religions and faiths
- Indigenous Awareness
- Tour of Humanity provided by Simon Wiesenthal Centre

Recruiting

We recognize that hiring individuals from diverse backgrounds has a tremendous impact on how we deliver policing within the region of Halton. Because of this, the EDI Office works closely with our Recruiting Unit and Human Resource Services to develop targeted initiatives to attract diverse new talent. We also strategically leverage our community partners who endorse our Service in their communities.

Applicant demographics are tracked to inform more strategic and intentional approaches to identifying gaps and barriers within our current application process and to ensure we are attracting individuals from all backgrounds who wish to pursue a career in the policing sector.

Indigenous Community

Recognizing the need for all of us to take responsibility when it comes to authentic truth and reconciliation, our Service works to enhance relationships with the Indigenous Community in Halton. Through the development of meaningful partnerships, additional training opportunities for our members or commitment to better supporting individuals in conflict with the law, we are taking intentional and meaningful steps to build trust and understanding between the HRPS and Indigenous individuals and groups within our region.

