

What Is *The Police Act*?

The Police Act is the provincial legislation that oversees enforcement services in Saskatchewan, including municipal police agencies, and special constables, such as Community Safety Officers. It lays out a framework for how they will conduct themselves, what equipment they will carry, what powers they have, and how they will use them.

Why Is SUMA Concerned About *The Police Act*?

Most legislation is redone every 10 years or so, to make sure it reflects current circumstances. *The Police Act* is over 30 years old, and while it has been amended periodically, it has never been reviewed holistically in that time. The perception of public safety has shifted significantly over the past three decades and it is no longer acceptable to simply view it as a punitive measure. With the significant rise in mental health and addictions crisis playing a part in many calls, it makes sense to consider this when responding and ensure that there is an individual trained in this particular area. In short, we want our already short-staffed police forces to be able to focus on **only** policing, while cooperating with other agencies that may be more qualified and available in specific areas. A collaborative-based approach would allow that.

What Need to Change?

We are particularly interested in seeing a more holistic approach taken to policing, with the involvement of mental health professionals, social workers, community-based organizations, and others who may be more suited to respond to certain types of calls. Some of this is already underway through initiatives like The Police and Crisis Team (PACT) and the hub approach. However, these additions are not adequately addressed and guided through legislation.

What Is SUMA Asking For?

- For the Government to open and review the Police Act, in consultation with SUMA and other stakeholders.
- For the Government to make the needed changes to the Police Act to better reflect policing in today's world.