

Provincial Offences Act and Administrative Penalties Policy Review

CONTEXT

Justice partners have highlighted the complex and evolving challenges facing the *Provincial Offences Act* (POA) court system.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Judicial resource constraints and impacts to backlogs;
- Fine collection and enforcement tools to support operating costs through revenue generation; and
- Modernizing and enabling technology to streamline courts administration.

OUR RESPONSE

- ✓ The ministry is undertaking a thorough policy review to address POA system pressures and drive strategic, sustainable modernization that benefits the public and the justice system.
- ✓ As part of this review, the use of Administrative Penalties (APs) will also be explored to assess whether there are opportunities to resolve matters outside of court.
- ✓ The scope of the review includes assessing current POA and AP frameworks, including roles and responsibilities, processes, tools, financials, technology and linkages to existing work, other jurisdictions and sector feedback.

IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Early opportunities identified for improvement include:

Streamlining Early Resolution

- Streamline the ER process for Part I provincial offences to help reduce Ontario Court of Justice backlog and focus resources on more serious matters.

Streamlining Collection Efforts

- Explore opportunities to streamline collection processes, keep costs down for drivers with outstanding fines, improve customer experience and reduce the perception of paying duplicated fees.

Exploring Alternative Systems

- Explore opportunities to resolve matters outside of court, including using APs.

Improving Financial Insights

- Increase data availability, including financial data in Annual Reports, Audited Financial Statements, and Financial Information Return Reports.

Technology modernization remains a high priority - the ministry acknowledges the urgency to make system improvements to support sustainable operations and to meet policy objectives.

ONGOING COLLABORATION

- The ministry values the feedback, expertise and operational realities of justice partners, including municipalities that administer POA courts. Support will be sought to validate findings, address data limitations, and to make meaningful progress.
- This work will be completed in phases – currently the ministry is in the exploratory phase. More details will be shared as progress is made.

Review Current State

Understanding the as-is position

Plan for Future State

Ascertaining the desired future state

Determine Deployment Strategy

What tools will be used to achieve results

Drive Timelines

Ensuring a specified timeline is assigned to achieve outcomes

Engage Partners

Continual engagement with justice partners on their roles in the plan