

Independent Investigations,  
Community Confidence

The SIU strives to maintain community confidence in Ontario's police services by assuring the public that the actions of the police are subject to independent investigations.

We are completely independent of the police and have an arms-length relationship with the government. This means that although the SIU Director reports to the Attorney General, the decision-making on cases and our day-to-day activities are independent of the government.

## what are "serious injuries"?

"Serious injuries" shall include those that are likely to interfere with the health or comfort of the victim and are more than merely transient or trifling in nature and will include serious injury resulting from sexual assault. "Serious Injury" shall initially be presumed when the victim is admitted to hospital, suffers a fracture to a limb, rib or vertebrae or to the skull, suffers burns to a major portion of the body or loses any portion of the body or suffers loss of vision or hearing, or alleges sexual assault. Where a prolonged delay is likely before the seriousness of the injury can be assessed, the Unit should be notified so that it can monitor the situation and decide on the extent of its involvement.



## Our Vision

The essence of the SIU is our conviction and belief in our role demonstrated by all.

We are always striving for understanding of SIU by community and police throughout Ontario;  
We strive for stability through shared leadership and individual empowerment in a continually changing environment;  
We believe in open, respectful communication in all directions to promote common understanding;  
We inspire excellence through teamwork;  
We invest where it matters: in our talent, tools and training;  
We are committed to being a great place to work.

## Our Mission

We are a skilled team of civilians dedicated to serving Ontario's diverse communities.  
We conduct thorough and unbiased investigations where someone is seriously injured, alleges sexual assault or dies when involved with the police.  
Our independence in seeking and assessing all the evidence ensures police accountability, inspiring the confidence of all in the work of SIU.

## Our Values

Integrity • Teamwork • Communication • Excellence • Accountable  
• Unbiased • Dedicated



# SIU

## SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT (SIU)

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*Independent Investigations - Community Confidence*

## About the SIU

In the world of civilian oversight, the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) is unique. As an independent, civilian law enforcement agency, the SIU has the power and authority both to investigate and charge police officers with criminal offences.

We are a provincial body that investigates occurrences across Ontario. This represents approximately 23,000 police officers from municipal, regional and provincial services. The SIU does not have the authority to investigate First Nations constables or Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers.



## What Can the SIU Investigate?

The SIU investigates circumstances involving police and civilians that have resulted in a **serious injury**, (which includes allegations of sexual assault), or death.

Complaints involving police conduct that do not result in a serious injury or death must be referred to other complaints processes.



## How the Process Works

It is the responsibility of the police themselves to report any incidents that may fall within the SIU's jurisdiction. However, we regularly receive and act on requests from the public. If you feel you have been involved in a police incident that resulted in a **serious injury**, you should contact the SIU.

You will be directed to an Investigative Supervisor who will determine whether your complaint falls within our mandate. If so, we will investigate your incident. Once all the facts are gathered, the Director then makes a decision whether there are reasonable grounds to lay a criminal charge against a police officer(s).



## Why Do We Exist?

Prior to the SIU, police services investigated themselves or in some instances, another police service was assigned to conduct the investigation. There was public concern about the integrity of the process in which police officers investigated other police officers, particularly in incidents of police shootings where a member of the public had been wounded or killed. Simply put, there was a lack of public confidence in a system where police policed themselves.

As a result, the SIU was formed in 1990 under a new Ontario *Police Services Act*.

The role of the SIU is not necessarily to lay charges against police officers but to investigate and to assure the community that the conduct of the police is subject to independent scrutiny.

## Our Staff

The SIU is led by a Director and made up of approximately 40 Investigators. All of our investigators are civilians (i.e. non-police officers). While some Investigators are former or retired police officers, others have a civilian investigative background. We also have Forensic Identification Technicians who work out of our in-house lab. Full-time Investigators work out of our office in Mississauga while other Investigators live across Ontario and are used on an as-needed basis.