



ROYAL NEWFOUNDLAND CONSTABULARY
PUBLIC COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

Royal Newfoundland Constabulary
Public Complaints Commission
Annual Report
2025-26

Message from the Commissioner

In keeping with the requirements of a Category 3 Entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, I am pleased to present the Annual Activity Report on behalf of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Public Complaints Commission for the period April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026.

This Annual Report was prepared under my direction, and I accept accountability for the actual results reported.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Twila Reid", is displayed on a light gray rectangular background.

Twila Reid
Commissioner

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Overview

The Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Public Complaints Commission (the RNCPC or the Commission) operates pursuant to Part III of the **Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Act, 1992** (the Act). The Commissioner is appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council and serves on a part-time basis, supported by a team consisting of a full-time Manager, a full-time Administrative Assistant/Legal Secretary, two Investigator positions, a Chief Adjudicator and 12 Adjudicators, and an alternate Commissioner(s) for conflicts. The Commission functions as an independent, quasi-judicial body. The Commissioner and the adjudicators make considered and reasoned decisions at arms-length from Government, and the Commission is required by section 39 of the Act to report at least annually to the House of Assembly.

The Commission is located at 120 Conception Bay Highway Suite 114 Villa Nova Plaza Conception Bay South. The office is open to the public. Where possible, Commission hearings are conducted from this location.

The Commission provides civilian oversight into public complaints made regarding the conduct of members of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC). Members of the public or police officers who are dissatisfied with the public complaint decisions of the Chief of Police may appeal to the Commission.

The process made available by the Commission is designed to be a user-friendly and inclusive avenue for the public to express dissatisfaction with the conduct of RNC police officers. The Commission is normally reactive, acting on written and signed complaints from persons claiming to be adversely affected by RNC police actions. Occasionally, the Commission may independently make recommendations to the RNC respecting matters of concern or interest to the public relating to police services. The Commission is committed to providing equitable and gender affirming services in accordance with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's commitment to Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+).

Mandate

The Lieutenant-Governor in Council shall, on the recommendation of the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, appoint a panel of persons to act as adjudicators to conduct hearings into complaints made against police officers. It is the responsibility of the Commissioner of the RNCPC to determine which matters are referred to the adjudicators for hearing. The Commission does not present separate Lines of Business as they are reflected in the Mandate.

Vision

An environment where the public has access to established mechanisms of review of complaints concerning RNC police conduct.

Primary Clients

The primary clients of the RNCPC are those people who are party to a complaint. Subsection 26(7) of the Act identifies those that are party to a public complaint as the Chief, the complainant and the police officer against whom the complaint was made.

Complaints Process

Chief of Police Investigation and Reports:

After a complaint is received by the RNCPC, a copy is sent to the Chief of Police of the RNC. The subject of the complaint is then informed of the substance of the complaint. A complaint may also be submitted at any RNC detachment office. The detachment office will forward such complaints to the RNCPC.

The Chief of Police designates a member of the RNC Professional Standards Section to conduct an investigation into the complaint. Rarely, the Chief of Police refers the matter back to the RNCPC without an investigation by the Professional Standards Section.

Upon completion of the Professional Standards Section investigation, an investigative report will be forwarded to the Chief of Police within three months of the complaint being filed or received, not including the time during which the complaint may have been suspended.

The Chief or Deputy Chief of Police shall consider the complaint, and may:

- (a) With the agreement of all parties, reach an informal resolution to the complaint;
- (b) Dismiss the complaint;
- (c) If the complaint concerns the policies or procedures of the Constabulary, take whatever action is considered appropriate, if any, or;
- (d) Discipline the police officer(s) who is/are the subject of the complaint.

The complainant and the police officer(s) who is/are the subject of a complaint shall be informed in writing of the dismissal of the complaint, or of the discipline imposed and the reasons for that dismissal or discipline.

Review by the RNCPCC:

A complainant or police officer who is not satisfied with a decision of the Chief of Police may contact the RNCPCC to request a review of the decision. The parties have 15 days to file an appeal. When an appeal is filed with the RNCPCC, the RNCPCC must conduct their own independent investigation.

Documents must be made available upon request and witnesses can be required to answer questions.

Following an investigation by the RNCPCC, the Commissioner may:

- (a) Dismiss the complaint and confirm the decision of the Chief of Police; if the Commissioner does not confirm the decision of the Chief of Police, but is satisfied that the subject matter is frivolous or vexatious, the complaint has been abandoned or withdrawn, or that there is insufficient evidence supporting the complaint to justify a public hearing, the Commissioner shall decline to take further action on the complaint;
- (b) With the consent of the parties, effect an informal resolution/mediation of the complaint; or
- (c) Refer the matter to the Chief Adjudicator for a hearing before an independent Adjudicator.

Adjudicator's Hearing:

When a hearing before an Adjudicator is ordered, the complainant and the officer(s) involved will be notified in writing of the date and place of the hearing. Each party has a right to attend and take part in the hearing and to be represented by counsel. The hearing will be open to the public unless the Adjudicator otherwise determines. All parties will receive a copy of the Adjudicator's decision.

A Complaint against the Chief of Police:

When a complaint has been made against the Chief of Police, the complaint shall be immediately taken up by the Commissioner as if that complaint were an Appeal to the Commissioner as outlined above.

More information on the RNCPCC can be found on www.gov.nl.ca/rncpcc.

Highlights and Partnerships

Professional Association:

The RNCPPC is a proud member of the Canadian Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (CACOLE). CACOLE is a national non-profit organization of individuals and agencies involved in the oversight of police officers in Canada. CACOLE is dedicated to advancing the concept, principles and application of civilian oversight of law enforcement throughout Canada and abroad. The RNCPPC has been involved since the establishment of CACOLE in 1997. Being a member of CACOLE keeps the RNCPPC apprised of the latest trends in civilian oversight, both in Canada and abroad.

CACOLE members represent diverse organizations - municipal and provincial police boards and commissions, First Nations, provincial and federal oversight agencies, ombudsman offices, police associations and professional standard bureaus. Additionally, CACOLE members work with organizations in justice, rights, and advocacy agencies and representatives of community agencies and police services from Canada, the United States, Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Portugal and other European countries.

For more information, please visit CACOLE's website at: www.cacole.ca.

Activities:

On April 9, 2025, members of the RNCPCC met with staff of the Serious Incident Response Team of Newfoundland and Labrador (SIRT NL) for an information sharing session. Topics related to the overall complaint processes and mandates were discussed.

From June 2 to 4, 2025, a representative from the RNCPCC attended the annual CACOLE conference, which was held in Fredericton, New Brunswick. This year's topics included: evidence-based practice, legal developments impacting police and police oversight, documenting in police oversight investigations, transparency in police oversight, civilian oversight in the age of artificial intelligence, legislative reform, and the intersection of professional standards and serious incident response team investigations.

On June 25, 2025, representatives from the RNCPCC attended Indigenous Cultural Diversity Training through First Light NL. This training opportunity was beneficial to the RNCPCC as it recognizes the importance of having a more in-depth understanding about the culture of Indigenous groups within Newfoundland and Labrador.

On July 31, 2025, a representative of the RNCPCC met with the Professional Conduct Navigator for the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Newfoundland and Labrador. This meeting provided a valuable opportunity for the RNCPCC to explore best practices, share insights, and reflect on ways to further strengthen and enhance the services provided to complainants. Discussions focused on improving accessibility, communication, and overall support throughout the complaints process, with the goal of ensuring a more responsive and client-centered approach.

On August 22, 2025, members of the RNCPCC presented to the RNC cadet recruits. The presentation was held at the RNC training facility in St. John's and provided the cadets with an overview of the RNCPCC as well as discussion related to oversight in this province and across Canada.

From October 21 to 23, 2025, representatives from the RNCPCC met in Ottawa with the national oversight Heads of Agency, which are the executive leadership of civilian oversight organizations. The meetings provided a valuable forum for provincial police oversight and review bodies to learn from one another, discuss shared challenges, and exchange best practices. Key discussions focused on investigative standards in policing oversight, the development of common metrics across oversight bodies, and the use and implications of body-worn cameras. Additional topics included strengthening collaboration among agencies, building trust with diverse and racialized communities, enhancing Indigenous cultural competence, and improving crisis intervention and de-escalation training. Participants also explored approaches to delivering accessible services, the growing role of artificial intelligence in policing and oversight, and strategies to support organizational wellness and staff well-being.

On January 15, 2026, members of the RNCPC met with the Chief of Police and members of the Professional Standards Section of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary. Topics related to the overall complaint process and mandate were discussed.

The RNCPC has an “open door” philosophy whereby it is willing and available to communicate and collaborate on any issue related to its mandate.

Recommendations by Commissioner

Pursuant to the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Public Complaints *Regulations*, section 19 (3):

The commissioner may make recommendations respecting matters of concern or interest to the public relating to police services by sending the recommendations, with supporting documents, to the chief and a copy to the minister.

Over the last five years, the Commissioner has made recommendations on four Decisions. The RNC recently provided a comprehensive update, outlining 15 measures they have implemented concurrently with and in response to the recommendations made by the Commissioner. They include, but are not limited to:

- Availability of a detailed pamphlet explaining the nature, purpose, application process and conditions relating to Emergency Protection Orders for officers and victims.
- All officers are required to advise survivors on peace bonds, EPO's, shelter availability and Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol under **Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol Act** also known as Clare's Law.
- On November 9, 2023, the Intimate Partner Violence Policy was put into place.
- Substantial training opportunities have been provided to RNC members, from cadet level on. Further, members have received training on intimate partner violence (IPV) from the Intimate Partner Violence Unit (IPVU).
- The RNC has recently added a Victim Services Navigator, who provides supports, resources and options to IPV victims.
- Communications Centre staff receives standardized training in appropriate responses to all manner of calls, this includes crisis intervention and de-escalation. Where additional training is needed, it will be made available.

- Refresher training was offered to Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO's) regarding assisting members of the public who wish to make a complaint at any RNC location, most recently in March 2026.
- The Criminal Report Procedures Policy was amended in 2021 with additional steps for officers to take with investigative files.
- The RNC's Death Policy was implemented in 2021 and contains a thorough section to assist officers in the delivery of death notifications.

Complaints and Appeals

During fiscal year 2025-26, the Commission received 1,161 (758 emails, 403 phone calls) phone and e-mail inquiries from the public regarding the complaints process, as well as requesting information on policing.

The following table provides an overview of operational activities of the Commission during this reporting period.

Activity	Total
Complaints carried forward from previous years	56
Complaints filed during 2025-26	133
Total active public complaints as of March 31, 2026	80
Files concluded	81
Appeals filed to RNCPPC	11
Appeals concluded	6
Appeals carried forward from previous years	0
Total active appeals as of March 31, 2026	9
Public hearings in progress as of March 31, 2026	0
Referrals to Chief Adjudicator to conduct a public hearing	0
Appeals to the Trial Division of the Supreme Court of NL	4
Complaints transferred from Chief of Police for Investigation	0

Summary of Complaints by Type of Alleged Misconduct

Conduct

(Under subsection 3(1) of the **Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Public Complaints Regulations**)

3. (1) Conduct	Number	%
3. (1)(a) Improper/Unlawful Arrest	4	3%
3. (1)(b) Unnecessary Force	5	4%
3. (1)(c) Discourtesy	2	1%
3. (1)(d) Lack of Service	20	15%
3. (1)(e) Lack of Investigation	51	38%
3. (1)(g) Contravention of Policy	18	14%
3. (1)(j) Conduct Unbecoming	17	13%
Submitted in Error	16	12%
TOTAL	133	100%

Report on Performance

Issue: Oversight of Complaints as per Part III of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Act, 1992

As required by its enabling legislation, the Commission serves as an avenue of redress for members of the public wishing to file a complaint about the conduct of an officer or the operational policies or procedures governing the RNC. The objective for the Commission is consistent for the 2023-26 planning period and the associated indicators will be reported for each year of the planning period.

Objective: By March 31 2026, the RNC Public Complaints Commission will have responded to complaints from the public as per Part III of the **Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Act, 1992**.

Indicator	Results
Complaints reviewed to ensure compliance with Part III of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Act, 1992 .	All 133 complaints filed during this period were reviewed to ensure compliance with the Act.
Number of compliant complaints accepted.	64 complaints have been accepted, with 17 complaints awaiting the Commissioner's acceptance.
Registered complaints investigated or delegated, as required.	None of the complaints filed were deemed to be outside of the Commission's jurisdiction. The remaining 64 complaints were investigated with an additional 56 complaints carried over from previous years.
All appeals investigated.	A total of 10 Appeals were received and investigated during the 2025-2026 fiscal.
Decisions on appeals rendered.	One Decision rendered, and five offers of mediation were made.
Complaints dismissed by Commissioner.	43 complaints were dismissed by the Commissioner

Opportunities and Challenges

Investigations of citizen complaints concerning police conduct present challenges not found in other kinds of regulatory investigations. Police officers exercise exclusive rights to the use of non-negotiable force. However, victims of police misconduct may feel violated because they expect police to behave protectively, professionally, and fairly, and now believe the officer behaved in an unfair or unprofessional way.

Individuals who have repeated contact with the police often have complex needs including substance use, homelessness and chronic illness. The complaint form is required by regulation and cannot be easily changed. Without an understanding of the legal framework, RNC police policies and procedures, and often belonging to marginalized communities, complainants are among the least resourced participants in the process and may benefit from intake or navigator support.

The Commission's Investigators are, by definition, impartial, neutral, and fact gatherers. Investigators must balance being empathetic to the complainant with not offering an opinion or judgment on their allegations.

To both parties, the Investigator cannot guarantee anything more than a thorough investigation, by being fair and by focusing on how the Commission's independence counters favoritism or bias and supports impartiality. This professional approach will reassure the public (even if there is no finding of fault) that the public complaints process is fair, independent and thorough and their allegations were investigated.

If the allegations are substantiated, the benefit comes not only to the complainant but also to the police agency which, hopefully, learn from the complaint and make any recommended changes to policies or procedures.

The Commission endeavours to have informal resolution and mediation options available at various stages of the complaint process. However, presently this is only formally available at the appeal stage. The RNCPC has provided informal resolution to complainants, and they have reported positive experiences from the process.

Informal resolution and mediation are beneficial as it could address and resolve certain matters at an earlier stage in the process and provide more satisfaction and confidence in the complaint process. The Commission recognizes this as an important opportunity to further support complainants and provide timely resolutions. The Commission will continue to review opportunities for informal resolutions for the benefit of all stakeholders.

As part of this year's reporting process, we provided the Chief of Police with a summary of RNCPPC recommendations from the past four years and formally requested a status update on their implementation.

Financial Statements

Expenditure and revenue figures included in this document are based on public information provided in the Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for Fiscal Year ended 31 March 2026 (unaudited).

4.1.03 RNC Public Complaints Commission

	Actual \$	Estimates	
		Amended \$	Original \$
01. Salaries.....	\$212,115	\$212,800	\$166,300
Operating Accounts			
Employee Benefits.....	\$1,942	\$1,300	\$1,300
Transportation and Communications.....	\$7,293	\$7,700	\$4,800
Supplies.....	\$907	\$1,100	\$800
Professional Services.....	\$233,509	\$372,000	\$214,100
Purchased Services.....	\$3,725	\$3,300	\$2,300
Property, Furnishings and Equipment.....	\$3,757	\$2,600	-
02. Operating Accounts.....			
Total: RNC Public Complaints Commission	\$463, 248	\$600,800	\$389,600

Contact Us

RNC Public Complaints Commission

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