

2024-2025



Police Resource Outreach Supporting Education (PROSE) CLU3M - Modern Policing



Meet Constable Kelsie Annaert Brantford Police Service - School Resource Officer



Together, we are learning how to identify some contemporary and emerging challenges that police face in carrying out their responsibilities

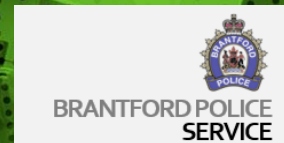
- ✓ I can envision what it is like to think like a police officer
- ✓ I can recognize various challenges with the decision-making of police officers during an investigation
- ✓ I can identify key skills of police officers to respond to modern social challenges





Modern Policing

- Minds On:
 - Public Impressions of Canadian Criminal Code
- Action:
 - Think Like a Police Officer – Exploring Discretion
- Consolidation:
 - Impressions of Police Discretion





Minds On:

- Public Impressions of Canadian Criminal Code



Minds On: Public Impressions of Canadian Criminal Code



The U.S. and Canada both follow common law, but their criminal systems are quite different.

- Canada has one national Criminal Code, while the U.S. has different criminal laws in each state.
- In the U.S., only the government can prosecute crimes. In Canada, private individuals can also bring charges.
- The popularity of American media (e.g. streaming platforms) often create confusion among Canadians with their understanding of the Criminal Code.





Let's try navigating some true and false statements regarding Canadian Criminal Code (C.C.C.)...

1. A minor convicted of a violent criminal act can be tried as an adult in Canada.
2. Hate speech based on race, religion, etc., is illegal in Canada.
3. Joyriding is a criminal offense in Canada.
4. All jury trials are not criminal cases; civil cases can also be tried by jury.
5. A false accusation of an offense is a crime in Canada.



Minds On: Public Impressions of Canadian Criminal Code



Now, let's consider which of the following statements are misconceptions about CCC...

1. You can talk your way out of a ticket.
2. You must pay for anything you break in a store.
3. Police must always read Miranda rights.
4. You can use force to protect your property.
5. Verbal agreements are not legally binding.
6. You can sue for anything.





Action:

- Think Like a Police Officer – Exploring Discretion



Ontario Justice Education Network: Policing and Society



Ontario Justice Education Network (OJEN)

- OJEN is a charitable not-for-profit, non-governmental organization, that develops educational tools that introduce young people to the justice system, help them understand the law, and build their legal capability
- OJEN's Policing & Society resources equip students with strategies to explore diverse perspectives on policing through interactive activities that include police responsibilities, discretion, and international policing systems





“Modern policing is not just about enforcing laws—it’s about building trust, understanding communities, and using discretion wisely to serve justice with compassion.”

**— Adapted from themes in *Policing and Society*,
Ontario Justice Education Network**



Policing & Society: Police Discretion



Discretion:

- The power or right to decide or act according to one's own judgment; freedom of judgment or choice

Police Discretion:

- The ability of officers to make decisions in certain situations based on rules, experience, and context – especially dealings with youth
- Officers may respond differently to the same situation because of their background and other factors (e.g. experience with previous calls)
- Discretion is often used in the field, where factors like safety and surroundings matter.



Policing & Society: Police Discretion



Some Common Examples for Police Using Discretion:

- Speeding: Sometimes a police officer may let a driver go with just a warning after hearing their explanation. Other times, the officer may decide to give a ticket.
- Breaking curfew: A young person might get a warning and be allowed to leave. In other cases, they could be arrested for not following bail conditions.
- Vandalism (like graffiti): An officer might give a warning and let the person go, or they might arrest them for causing damage.



Factors that Impact Police Discretion



Some Factors that Impact Police Discretion Include:

- Environmental factors
 - Socio-demographic characteristics
 - Level and type of crime in the community
 - Community police relations
- Organizational factors
 - Level of Experience
 - Policies and procedures
 - Dimensions of policing (e.g. strategic and/ or tactical factors)
- Situational Factors
 - Weapon involvement
 - Victim – harm, role
 - Group/gang crime



Activity: Police Discretion Scenarios



Working in small groups (3-4), explore the four scenarios that illustrate how police officers respond to calls.

- ✓ Refer to the scenario factors and flow charts to guide your thinking on the possible outcomes
- ✓ Consider how the various factors may impact the outcomes

Scenario 1: Theft in the Local Electronics Store

Scenario 2: Theft in the Local Pharmacy

Scenario 3: Breach of Curfew

Scenario 4: Robbery Suspect



Activity: Let's Review Scenario # 1 Together





Consolidation:

- Impressions of Police Discretion



Consolidation: Impressions of Police Discretion



Now, that you have explored some decision-making scenarios with modern policing and discretion, please review the following reflection prompts in your groups:

- Identify an example of decision-making from the scenarios that your group found predictable?
- Offer an example of police discretion that your group found challenging within the scenarios
- Provide an example of a policing skill that your group found interesting in response to the challenges within the scenarios
- Please be prepared to explain why your group found the examples predictable, challenging, or interesting





“As a police officer, you have to balance the need for justice with empathy and understanding. It’s a delicate balance, but one that we strive to achieve in every interaction.”

— Officer Sarah Adams

