



WOODSTOCK POLICE SERVICE BOARD POLICY

Subject:	Critical Points Policy
Policy Number:	AI-043
Effective Date:	April 7, 2025
Reviewed:	
Amended:	

Authority/Legislative References

Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, S.O. 2019, c. 1, Sched. 1

Policy Statement

Effective information sharing between the Woodstock Police Service (the “Service”) and the Woodstock Police Service Board (the “Board”) is essential for the Board to fulfil its oversight responsibilities. Clear communication is particularly important during periods of heightened organizational risk, such as when responding to large-scale events.

This policy establishes key Critical Points and outlines a framework to ensure that the Chief of Police (the “Chief”) and the Board can identify them, facilitating the timely exchange of relevant information from the Service to the Board. This process enables the Board to effectively carry out its governance role, which includes developing and updating Board policies, setting priorities, asking questions, and providing non-binding advice on operational matters.

The Board recognizes the legal limits of its authority in directing the Chief and is committed to upholding these boundaries. By law, the Board cannot direct the Chief regarding specific investigations or operational decisions. While the Board may establish objectives

and priorities for policing Critical Points, it is the Chief's responsibility to determine the appropriate methods to achieve these goals.

Nothing in this policy restricts the Service from exercising its lawful authority to respond to emergent situations in the interest of public safety.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- define the term Critical Point and establish clear, consistent criteria for identifying such points as they emerge.
- outline the type of information the Board requires from the Chief to assess potential Critical Points.
- establish the process for information sharing between the Board and the Service once a Critical Point has been identified or confirmed.
- enhance the Board's oversight of the Service in alignment with its legislative responsibilities;
- promote accountability of the Service to the Board; and
- ensure that the Chief can fulfil their duties in accordance with the law.

Policy Application

1. The Board defines a Critical Point as a matter of strategic importance that is time-sensitive and significantly heightens operational, financial, reputational, or other risks, requiring the Board's immediate attention or preparedness to act. Examples include:
 - a. credible external or internal complaints, including workplace discrimination or harassment, that suggest broader systemic issues;
 - b. events raising significant public policy concerns;
 - c. large-scale operations or events requiring advance planning and approval by the Service's Command;
 - d. situations that could materially impact the Service's relationship with

marginalized or vulnerable communities; or

- e. any other circumstance that presents an urgent and substantial risk requiring the Board's immediate awareness or action.
2. The Chief will notify the Chair or their designate if a Critical Point arises or is likely to arise, providing written details, including the nature of the situation, the risks involved, relevant operational information, continuity of service plans, any coordination with other organizations, estimated financial impact, applicable legal requirements, and any resource or policy considerations. The Chair will share this information with Board Members in strict confidence.
 3. In consultation with the Board Members and in accordance with the Board's Procedural By-Law 01-2024, the Chair will determine if additional information is required, if Board policies should be amended, or if direction should be provided to the Chief in line with the Board's oversight responsibilities. If necessary, the matter may be placed on the agenda of a regularly scheduled meeting or a special meeting of the Board may be convened. The Chief will continue to provide updates through the Chair until the Critical Point is resolved.
 4. If the Chair or a Board Member believes an anticipated event may constitute a Critical Point, the Chair may ask the Chief to assess whether it meets the definition and, if so, report accordingly or provide justification if it does not. Once the Board has set objectives, asked questions, and provided non-binding advice where appropriate, the Chief retains full autonomy to finalize and implement operational plans. If the Board later determined that objectives are not being met, it will communicate this to the Chief, who remains responsible for executing the response.
 5. The Chief will ensure that all Command and Service Members from the rank of Inspector and above receive training to recognize and report potential Critical Points. The Board will also provide training to new Board Members to help them understand the concept of Critical Points and their associated

responsibilities.

Reporting

6. Where operationally feasible and in consultation with the Chief, the Board will publicly disclose relevant details regarding Critical Points, provided that doing so does not compromise operational effectiveness, the safety of Service Members or the public, or any other operational considerations raised by the Chief.