

Family, Gender-Based and Intimate Partner Violence

Supporting Pathways to Safety for Victims

Policy Opportunities

Family violence (FV), gender-based violence (GBV), and intimate partner violence (IPV) is a critical issue in Peel. The Province should move forward with declaring FV/GBV/IPV an epidemic in Ontario. Comprehensive legislation at the provincial level is required to help integrate the current fragmented system to better support the needs of residents.

Funding Solutions

Effective support to victims and families impacted by FV/GBV/IPV requires enhanced sector capacity and stable operational funding for programs and services that support victims' pathways to safety. This includes emergency housing and transitional supports for victims and their families as they escape from abusive or unsafe environments. Additional funding, provided to the sector in a streamlined and sustainable manner, is critical to reduce the fragmentation of existing services, address urgent needs and prevent tragic outcomes.

Background

In Peel, FV/GBV/IPV are increasing, leading to health, social and criminal justice concerns for victims and impacted communities. In the most severe instances, FV/GBV/IPV can result in traumatic outcomes such as homicides. While police data offers some insight, many incidents remain unreported, masking the true extent of this problem. However, available data for Peel does highlight troubling trends.

Fragmented and underfunded system

Addressing FV/GBV/IPV is a key focus of Peel's Community Safety and Well-being Plan (CSWB). Despite collaborative efforts with local partners to enhance safety pathways and address system integration challenges, fragmented and insufficient funding hampers efforts to address urgent and growing needs in Peel.



Mississauga and Brampton (Peel Regional Police Data):

- 617 IPV strangulation charges in 2023
- 6 family and intimate partner homicides in 2023
- Highest number of priority service calls were FV/IPV-related in 2023
- Nearly 80% of victims in 2022 were women

Caledon (Ontario Provincial Police Data):

- 76% of IPV and FV dispute victims in 2023 were women
- 11 intimate partner sexual assaults reported in 2022
- 29.9% increase in IPV and FV disputes from 2020 to 2023

To stabilize and strengthen FV/GBV/IPV services, provincial funding must be accessible and sustainable. Increased funding is needed for service integration and capacity building, particularly in healthcare, housing, and legal services.

Provincial Legislation and Support

While Peel Region is encouraged by recent progress to enact legislation declaring FV/GBV/IPV an epidemic, a provincial policy framework is required to address challenges across the FV/GBV/IPV sector and support community agencies and service providers. A framework should:

- Facilitate intra- and inter-sectoral as well as intergovernmental collaboration.
- Enhance service integration at the local level.
- Enable consistent navigation of referral pathways and resources.
- Enable enhanced and predictable funding for service delivery and supports.

Investing in Emergency and Transitional Housing

Access to emergency and transitional housing is critical for victims escaping FV/GBV/IPV and human sex trafficking. Peel's shelter system operates at substantially over capacity, highlighting the urgent need for more resources. The recent opening of Armagh House, Brampton's first transitional housing for women and children fleeing violence, quickly reached capacity, underscoring the need for further investment. This can be accomplished through increased provincial funding for emergency and transitional housing to ensure safety and support for victims.

Partnering with Peel Region

Peel Region is committed to collaborating on targeted provincial legislation to address the FV/GBV/IPV crisis. Initiatives such as OntarioSTANDS are promising, supporting comprehensive efforts, including the CSWB Family Violence Action Table and the Break the Silence campaign. Securing stable provincial funding and improving service integration will enhance the sector's capacity, ensuring consistent support for victims and their families in Peel's communities.

