



December 17, 2024

Sent via email

Hon. Doug Downey  
Attorney General  
Ministry of the Attorney General  
720 Bay St, 11th Floor  
McMurtry-Scott Bldg  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2S9

## Re: Third Party Review of the Provincial Offences System

Dear Attorney General Downey,

I am writing on behalf of the [Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario \(AMCTO\)](#) to inform you that AMCTO supports AMO's call for a third-party review of the provincial offences system.

For over 85 years, AMCTO has maintained a productive relationship with government by helping ensure the professional expertise and local understanding of our members is utilized to improve existing and/or new legislation, policy and programs in service of Ontarians.

Despite prior legislative amendments to the *Provincial Offences Act (POA)* and municipal consultation opportunities, many of the same issues remain with the current POA system. They are creating operational, administrative and financial burdens on municipalities who are providing court and collection services on behalf of the Province. Municipalities cite challenges such as a growing court case backlog, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, difficulty collecting outstanding fines, and shortage of Justices of the Peace.

With respect to collection, AMO finds there is currently an estimated \$2 billion in unpaid fines across the province, a financial impact on both municipalities and the provincial government. They identified a lack of judicial resources as the root of various challenges within the *POA* system. AMO recognizes the legislation is not working how it is intended and there is a need to address challenges beyond fine collection. Per the document attached, AMO is calling on the provincial government to commit to a third-party review of the Provincial Offences System.

AMCTO supports this call.





Our members, which includes court service managers, are on the frontline of service delivery. They need modern Provincial Offences legislation and the right tools including for enforcement and fine collection. As such, we would be pleased to bring forward our members' concerns and proposed solutions as part of the requested third-party review.

On behalf of our members and the sector, we therefore request that the Province undertake this important initiative so that we can ensure the efficient and effective administration of justice in Ontario.

Sincerely,

[Originally signed by]

Paul Shipway CMO, AOMC, Dipl.M.A.  
President, AMCTO

Cc: Hon. Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Deputy Minister, Martha Greenberg, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Deputy Attorney General, David Corbett, Ministry of the Attorney General  
Robin Jones, AMO President

Sent by e-mail to: [Doug.Downey@ontario.ca](mailto:Doug.Downey@ontario.ca)

August 15, 2024

The Honourable Doug Downey  
Attorney General  
Ministry of Attorney General  
720 Bay Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, Ontario, M7A 2S9

Dear Attorney General Downey,

AMO members from across the province are experiencing significant challenges with the provincial offences system. It is simply not operating as smoothly or efficiently as it could be. Judicial resources seem to be at the root of most problems. While criminal courts may be rightly given prioritization for finite resources, the result for municipalities is a sizeable and growing provincial offence court backlog.

Municipalities take their responsibility to fulfill administration of justice seriously, but lack any tangible influence on the system. Ontarians are far more likely to engage with the provincial offences court than they are to engage with a criminal court through parking tickets, speeding tickets, and municipal by-law charges. A poorly functioning provincial offences system undermines confidence in the justice system in this province.

In addition to the provincial offence court backlog, municipalities have had difficulty collecting outstanding fines and also lack key enforcement and collection tools. Based on consultation with court managers, there are currently an estimated \$2 billion in unpaid fines across the province. This has a negative financial impact on both levels of government.

We understand that many of the solutions to address challenges in the provincial offences system have been around for a long time and there hasn't been a comprehensive review of the system in over a decade. The system is not functioning as intended and so AMO is calling for third-party review of the provincial offences system.

We would be pleased to meet on this important topic and to work together on solutions that work well for both orders of government.

Sincerely,

[Originally signed by]

Colin Best  
AMO President

cc. The Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
David Corbett, Deputy Attorney General  
Martha Greenberg, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing