

# St. Thomas Police Service

## Corporate Communications



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## Limiting Social Media Comments

### KEY MESSAGING

- After much deliberation, the STPS has decided to limit and disable comments on some of our social media platforms.
- Social media is an extremely valuable tool to engage with the community, to get our messaging out and to control an operational narrative. It increases the visibility and understanding of issues affecting our community. We have become a leading police service with our style of daily media releases, videos and public awareness bulletins.
- While we have attempted to moderate and review the comment sections for each post, our social media accounts are not monitored 24/7.
- We have noticed an increase in comments that target victims of crime, accused individuals, other social media users and STPS members. We will not contribute to an unpleasant toxic online environment.
- We have seen a number inappropriate comments that violate basic ethical standards, and that are purely posted with malicious intentions to harass and victimize. We have seen spamming, hate comments and unfounded or unsubstantiated commentary. It has always been our intention and policy to preserve a respectful and healthy space to inform our community on matters of public safety. STPS Social Media sites will not be used as a platform for toxicity.

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- Some comments include hate, abuse, threats, harassment and misogyny. As your Police Service, our vision is that every person in St. Thomas is safe and feels safe.
- We will continue to offer meaningful and robust ways for the community to connect with us, including through our STPS website general email platform, our face-to-face community engagement events, surveys, and other dedicated interactions throughout the year.
- The STPS believes that every interaction is an opportunity to improve trust and confidence in the services that we provide. The willingness of the community to trust the police is based on the belief that our actions reflect your values. Anyone with concerns about police conduct or professionalism is encouraged to call 519-631-1224 and ask to speak to a supervisor. As well, public complaints about police conduct can also be made independently to the Law Enforcement Complaints Agency (LECA): <https://leca.ca/>
- Please note, that our social media accounts are not monitored 24/7. If you have an emergency, call 911. If you have a non-emergent matter for police response, please call 519-631-1224 or use our online reporting tool at <https://stps.on.ca/services/services-online-reporting/>. For any anonymous reports, please contact St. Thomas-Elgin Crime Stoppers by calling 1-800-222-TIPS or online at <https://stthomascrimestoppers.ca/>