



Office of the President

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President's Safety Update to the York Community
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The safety and well-being of the members of our University community is critically important. We are a university that strives to provide an environment where students, faculty and staff of diverse social, cultural and academic values are allowed to develop and prosper.

As you may know, I initiated a third-party review of safety at York. After an open bidding process, the Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC) was selected, with a mandate to identify ways to improve York's environment, both physical and cultural.

During the audit process, our University took action and worked hard to enhance security initiatives and measures. We established the residence watch officer program; devoted more staff to our campus escort programs for any community member to use between campus locations; upgraded the blue light emergency phones; revised the Code of Student's Rights & Responsibilities; and increased our monitoring abilities across campus. We also created the Sexual Assault Initiatives Committee, to bring together key groups to offer services to survivors, and to coordinate support.

This past June, following a comprehensive evaluation, METRAC issued the York University [Safety Audit Report](#). The report captured many of the strengths related to safety programs on campus, as well as the approach and rationale for the existence of these programs. However, one of the most prominent themes from the METRAC Safety Audit was the need to develop a more pronounced culture of safety and security for all community members.

The senior administration recognizes the importance of safety on our campuses, and is dedicated to a thorough review and implementation of the recommendations. I appointed Gary Brewer, vice-president finance and administration, to lead the Management Safety Audit Implementation Committee, comprised of members from the senior administration. The Committee is developing an effective action plan to address all of the recommendations from the safety audit. The committee met twice in the summer, and a matrix has been created to monitor the progress of all of the recommendations. To ensure transparency, members of the community are welcome to access the [matrix](#).



In addition to the creation of the Management Safety Audit Implementation Committee, we have begun to implement other measures:

- The Office of the President, in conjunction with various offices and student groups, has developed a safety awareness initiative, highlighting the safety services and resources that are available on our campuses. As part of that, a [Safety Awareness](#) website has been created, linking all safety services on a common page.
- The Office of the Vice-President of Students has created a brochure to be distributed to our neighbouring communities regarding off-campus guidelines on how to promote a safe and engaged community.
- A Community Safety Council (CSC), which will advise the president on all matters concerning safety at York University, has been created. The CSC will be considered the York University community-based forum for the discussion of safety issues and concerns with a broad representation from across the University and will work proactively to improve safety in all aspects of campus life.
- Security Services has initiated a review of its staffing levels for recommendations to the senior administration.
- goSAFE is undergoing a review, and the goSAFE map is being updated to more accurately reflect pick-up and drop-off locations; the map will be printable in black and white.
- York's emergency messaging system, including the mass notification system, is being reviewed.
- A campus sign plan is in place to upgrade all interior signs in buildings across our campuses. To date, more than half of our campus buildings have been upgraded in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

As the implementation phase moves ahead, we are already focusing on future initiatives, such as the expansion of the Positive Space Program. But this is only the beginning. We are committed to working collaboratively with the entire York community to enhance the quality of life for those who study and work on our campuses. I would encourage you to visit the [Safety Audit](#) website for more information on York University's detailed action plan to METRAC's recommendations.

As a University, we understand that the safety of our community is important, which is why we are reviewing our current safety initiatives and looking to implement additional measures. To keep you informed as we move forward, I will provide a further update in December.

Mamdouh Shoukri
President & Vice-Chancellor

