



## **BILL 4: *Public Safety and Emergency Services Statutes Amendment Act, 2025 (No. 2)***

### **Alberta Sheriffs Police Service**

#### **Overview**

Alberta's government continues to advance the establishment of the Alberta Sheriffs Police Service (ASPS) — a new, independent police service that builds on the proven expertise of the Alberta Sheriffs. The ASPS was formally created in July 2025, with its first chief of police appointed, marking a major step toward a modern, made-in-Alberta policing option.

The government is now making further legislative amendments needed to prepare the service for operation.

#### **Amendments to the *Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act (POCBA)***

A clear and functional labour relations model is required before the ASPS can begin hiring employees. It determines which bargaining agents can represent staff, how disputes are resolved and ensures labour relations rules are consistent across the policing system. The proposed legislation ensures ASPS police officers fall under the *Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act (POCBA)*, which governs labour relations for municipal police services in Alberta.

Under the *Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act (POCBA)*:

- Police officers must be represented by a police association, rather than a union, if they choose to bargain collectively.
- Disputes are settled through binding arbitration.
- Professional discipline remains outside collective bargaining, as it is addressed under the *Police Act*.

This framework reflects best practices across Canada and recognizes the unique role of police officers in maintaining public safety and upholding the rule of law. It ensures ASPS police officers have the same workplace protections and collective bargaining rights as their municipal counterparts.

#### ***Non-police employees***

No legislative changes are required for future ASPS civilian employees, as they would fall under the *Public Service Employee Relations Act (PSERA)*, which is the standard labour relations framework for most provincial Crown corporations.

Together, these frameworks provide the flexibility to manage a diverse workforce while maintaining stability and alignment with existing public-sector labour relations models.

#### **Amendments to other labour, workers' compensation legislation**

Amendments to the *Public Service Employees Relations Act* and *Labour Relations Code* will exclude ASPS police officers from these acts. This is consistent with municipal police officers.

Amendments to the *Employment Standards Code* will exclude ASPS police officers from most of this legislation once they are subject to a collective agreement. This is consistent with municipal police officers.

The definition of police officer in the *Workers' Compensation Act* will be amended to include ASPS police officers so that they are eligible for workers' compensation presumptions for psychological injuries. ASPS police officers will also be considered first responders under the act and their families will be eligible for an Alberta Heroes' Fund

for First Responders payment. The Heroes' Fund provides a one-time, tax-free payment of \$100,000 to families of first responders who die as a result of their duties.

### **Amendments to the *Police Act***

The legislation expands eligibility so permanent residents can become ASPS police officers.

This change broadens Alberta's recruitment pool, helping the ASPS attract qualified and skilled candidates from diverse backgrounds and is consistent with municipal police services.

The proposed legislation would also require municipal police commissions develop their diversity and inclusion plans with a focus on merit and increased community engagement, aligning their practices with those being established for the ASPS.

These updates will reinforce the government's commitment to a professional, community-focused policing system that reflects Alberta's diversity while maintaining the highest standards of competence and integrity.