

Justice and Public Safety

A British Columbia that is safe and secure for all people.

HOW WE'RE THINKING ABOUT THIS

A fair and equitable society relies on a justice system that not only keeps people safe, but ensures that people feel safe. Everyone should feel that they can go about their lives freely and without a sense of fear, in the knowledge that they will be looked after should something happen to them. The justice system should be demonstrated to enable access to justice, and should treat all people equally.

PROBLEM DEFINITION

The experience of justice and public safety looks very different for different communities in British Columbia. We must acknowledge that systemic racism exists in policing in British Columbia. 41% of women in the provincial custody system are Indigenous—and Indigenous women and girls in Canada have been murdered or gone missing at a rate four times higher than their rate of representation in Canada. Black men are incarcerated at almost three times their share of the population. The British Columbia Assembly of First Nations has stated that First Nations people find themselves simultaneously over-policed and under-protected.

We need to do more to address the underlying causes of crime—such as poverty, homelessness, colonization, the rolling back of drug decriminalization, and lack of access to basic services and supports. The Canadian Mental Health Association BC Division states that one in five interactions with Police in British Columbia involves someone with a mental health or substance use problem.

We must ensure that the right services are available to deal with each problem. Police have been tasked with responding to issues for which they are not the appropriate service provider, causing distress to both the public and to the officers. This is due, in part, to a lack of alternatives and insufficient health, mental

health and social supports.

The Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act did an excellent job of depoliticising this issue—bringing experts together, and of creating an action plan to create “policing and community safety rooted in decolonisation, anti-racism, community and accountability”. It is a pity and an insult to that Committee that the NDP has not progressed their work.

POLICIES FOR ANNOUNCEMENT

When elected, the BC Greens will:

We will transform the policing and justice systems to prioritize accountability, equity and community safety. These changes will focus on addressing systemic racism, enhancing transparency, and ensuring fair treatment for all citizens, with particular attention to Indigenous peoples, racialized communities, and marginalized groups.

- The BC Greens will disband CIRG, the Community Industry Response Group, a branch of the RCMP tasked with protecting industrial interests at the expense of public and Indigenous rights. This group has caused significant harm to police-community relationships and must be dismantled to rebuild trust.
- We will create a specialized taskforce to investigate cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women, children, and two-Spirited people. This taskforce will operate under civilian oversight from Indigenous communities, with a strong focus on women’s leadership, and follow the guidance of the *Red Women Rising* report.
- A Parliamentary Committee will be established to examine how the justice system treats Indigenous peoples, racialized communities, and homeless individuals. The goal is to identify and address systemic inequities and improve access to justice

for all.

- We will formally recognize the Conservation Service as a Law Enforcement Service and apply the same oversight mechanisms as other policing bodies to ensure accountability and public trust.
- We will repeal Bill 21, which disrupted the role of the Law Society of BC. In its place, we will reinstate the Law Society and launch a comprehensive review of access to justice in accordance with the *Futures Task Force Report* to ensure fairness and professional integrity in legal practice.

We will implement new laws and structures that promote accountability, equity and cultural competence within the police force, while ensuring public safety and mental health services are adequately supported.

- We will carry out the recommendations from the *Transforming Policing and Community Safety in British Columbia* report, which includes enacting a new *Community Safety and Policing Act*. This will lay the groundwork for a reformed policing structure and set clear guidelines for community safety and accountability.
- We will establish a new provincial police service governed by the *Community Safety and Policing Act*, ensuring that Indigenous communities have direct input into the structure and governance of their

police services.

- We will create and fund a comprehensive response system for mental health, addiction, and other complex social issues. This initiative will ensure a continuum of care and support that reduces reliance on policing for non-criminal matters.
- BC Greens will commission an independent review of prison conditions, including the use of solitary confinement, to ensure that they meet humane standards and respect human rights.
- Police education and training will be enhanced and standardized across the province to reflect key values such as cultural competence, de-escalation, and mental health awareness. This training will be integral to shifting police culture toward community-based service.
- We will require all police services to collect and publicly report disaggregated race-based and other demographic data. Comprehensive reviews of policies and procedures will be conducted to address systemic racism within policing.
- We will appoint an all-party parliamentary committee to review and modernize the *Mental Health Act*. This will ensure alignment with the recommendations of the *Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act* and better protect individuals experiencing mental health crises.
- An all-party select standing committee will be created to oversee policing and community safety in British Columbia. This committee will ensure ongoing scrutiny and continuous improvement in police practices and public safety strategies.



ICBC AND NO-FAULT INSURANCE

The BC Greens believe that people who have been injured in a car crash should be able to access care and support without having to fight the system that is meant to provide it.

The enhanced care model has not lived up to what was promised. People who have been injured in vehicle accidents should be able to rely on a system that puts their wellbeing and recovery first.

The current no-fault system is not providing this level of care. We see too many cases where people cannot access necessary medical care, or return to their study and careers, because of limitations in ICBC policy. ICBC must be empowered to focus on providing care to victims (rather than ICBC has been used as a political tool by the NDP). Anyone injured in an accident in BC should be assured that they will be treated with respect, and not subject to undue administrative burdens and barriers.

The BC Greens would amend the Legislation governing ICBC, to make clear that all reasonable costs relating to an accident should be covered. We would also amend the income replacement sections, to take into account not only current income, but earning potential, so that students and people temporarily out of the workforce are not penalized.

The BC Greens would reorient the culture of ICBC, to require it to focus on care, rather than minimizing payouts. We would require full transparency from ICBC, including having all client notes be proactively shared with the client so that people can trust the processes and the outcomes.

BC Greens would also ensure that pedestrians, cyclists and any other vulnerable road users injured by vehicles are considered fully covered by the care system.

