

# 8 WAYS CRIME IN HALTON CHANGED IN 2020

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The COVID-19 pandemic and its related lockdowns changed a lot in Halton in 2020, including the number of crimes taking place.

Here's eight significant changes in 2020 crime statistics Halton police reported during the Thursday, March 25, meeting of the police board.

- There were 2,321 fewer criminal offences reported

in Halton in 2020 (9,853) compared to 2019 (12,174). This works out to a decrease of 20.9 per cent when regional population growth is taken into account.

- There were 2,160 incidents of violent crime (e.g., assaults, robberies, attempted murders) compared to 2,150 in 2019. This actually works out to a decrease of 1.8 per cent when population change is taken into account. Police said these crimes accounted for 21.9 per cent of all criminal

offences in Halton in 2020, which is up from 17.7 per cent in 2019.

- There was a 20.4 per cent drop in property crime (e.g., break-ins, theft) from 8,150 incidents in 2019 to 6,490 in 2020.

- Other crimes (e.g., disturbing the peace, bail violations, prostitution) dropped by 35.8 per cent from 1,874 incidents in 2019 to 1,203 in 2020.

- Motor vehicle collision were 39.1 per cent lower in Halton during 2020 com-

pared to 2019, down from 10,129 to 6,170.

Property damage collisions were down from 9,098 to 5,498 (-39.6 per cent). Collisions involving injuries were down 35 per cent in 2020, dropping from 1,021 to 664 while fatal collisions decreased from 10 in 2019 to eight in 2020.

- Impaired driving apprehensions were down 2.5 per cent from 448 incidents in 2019 to 437 in 2020.

- Not all the crime stats went down in 2020. Milton

and Halton Hills had more auto thefts (84 in 2020 compared to 76 in 2019) and more impaired driving apprehensions (85 in 2020 compared to 80 in 2019).

Burlington had more assaults (212 in 2020 compared to 204 in 2019) and overall a higher amount of violent crime (391 incidents in 2020 compared to 359 in 2019).

- The crime clearance rate in Halton was 52.1 per cent in 2020, up from 51 per cent in 2019.

The clearance rate is the percentage of the total number of crimes that occur which are solved (cleared).

Halton police's clearance rate in 2019 was the highest of the 'Big 12' police services in Ontario which includes police services from Toronto, London, Ottawa, Hamilton, Waterloo, Niagara, Windsor, Sudbury and Durham. Comparable data for 2020 is not available at this time.

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# POLICE WON'T CONDUCT RANDOM STOPS

Halton police are reassuring the public that officers will not be conducting random stops of vehicles or individuals during the province's six-week stay-at-home order.

Police say at this time, despite enhanced enforcement measures given them by the government under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, they will

continue to engage, explain, educate and enforce while working with municipal bylaw officers and public health to respond to complaints.

"Our focus will remain

on education and using enforcement only as a last resort," stated a HRPS press release issued Saturday (April 17).

The new regulations are currently being reviewed

by the force.

"It is my hope and expectation that our officers will not be put in the position of having to use enforcement as a mechanism to achieve what should occur through voluntary compliance," said Halton police chief Stephen Tanner.

"We will not be stopping

vehicles or individuals randomly but will respond as required and when necessary.

"It is my hope that our citizens will continue to work co-operatively with us and with all levels of government throughout the weeks and months ahead."

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