



LONDON POLICE SERVICES BOARD

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September 15, 2022

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister of Canada

The Honourable David Lametti, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

The Honourable Marci Ien, Minister of Women and Gender Equality

RE: Femicide Definition in the Criminal Code of Canada

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau and Honourable Ministers,

The London Police Services Board (LPSB) invites you to a meeting to discuss the urgent need for a criminal code definition of femicide. Femicide is commonly understood to be the killing of one or more females, primarily by males, because they are female.

The Board is aware that Prime Minister Trudeau and Deputy Prime Minister Freeland have used the term femicide to describe the killing of women, yet there is no definition of femicide in the criminal code.

Without a clear definition of femicide, the murders of women by men continue to be referred to as homicide. Homicide, derived from the Latin "*homo*," meaning man, and "*cida*," meaning killing, is therefore understood to mean the killing of men.

The term homicide is often the only term used to describe murders in Canada. When asked for specific data on the number of women and girls murdered, that number is not always available or collected, making murdered women invisible. Femicide cannot be successfully investigated as a hate motivated crime without a criminal code definition.

A woman or girl is murdered every 36 hours in Canada. According to the Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability, at least 114 women and girls have been murdered in Canada during the first eight months of 2022.

We encourage you to accept our invitation. We must shift away from counting dead women to preventing their murders.

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Tel: 519-661-5646

Email: lpsb@londonpolice.ca

We can be reached at lbsb@londonpolice.ca or 519-661-5646.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Toth'.


Susan Toth, Chair
London Police Services Board

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Megan Walker'.

Megan Walker, Member
London Police Services Board

cc: Peter Fragiskatos, Member of Parliament representing London North Centre
Arielle Kayabaga, Member of Parliament representing London West
Professor Myrna Dawson, The Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability

Attachment: London Police Services Board Memo September 8, 2022

	MEMORANDUM – London Police Services Board 22-70		
	Femicide Recommendations and Initiatives		
	TO: LPSB Members	FROM: M. Walker, LPSB Member	
	DATE ISSUED: September 8, 2022	DATE EFFECTIVE: September 15, 2022	PAGE 1 of 1

Dear Board Members,

During the June 16, 2022 Board meeting, the Board tasked me with writing a letter to the Federal Government advocating that Femicide be defined in the Criminal Code of Canada and that the Board would engage local agencies to seek active feedback and consultation on both the letter and related changes to policy.

I present the following for your consideration:

- Femicide Recommendations (September 6, 2022)
- Considering Gender-Based Violence As A Form of Hate: A Socio-Legal Examination

https://hateinquiry.bchumanrights.ca/wp-content/uploads/Considering-gender-based-violence-as-a-form-of-hate-by-Dr.-Dawson_BCOHRCs-Inquiry-into-hate-in-the-pandemic.pdf

- Draft Letter to the Government of Canada – forthcoming prior to meeting date

Megan Walker, Member
London Police Services Board

September 6, 2022

Chair and Members
London Police Services Board

Re: Community Input on Defining Femicide in the *Criminal Code of Canada*

Background:

May 19, 2022

The Board unanimously passed the following motion:

That the Board requests that a gender data breakdown be included in future hate crime statistics reports and that Ms. Walker work with Deputy Chief Betts on this report revision.

June 8, 2022

Ms. Walker met with Deputy Chief Betts and in consultation with Deputy Chief Betts, the following recommendations were proposed to the Board:

1. *While there is a common understanding of femicide as the killings of all women and girls because they are women and girls, it is recommended that the Board write a letter to the Federal Government advocating that femicide be defined in the Criminal Code of Canada.*
2. *That the Board update LPSB Policy #LE-010 Hate/Bias Motivated Crime and LPSB #LE-027 Domestic Violence Occurrences to direct the Chief of Police to include a requirement in the Chief's related procedures that officers investigating any incident in which a victim is a member of an identifiable group as defined in section 318(4) of the Criminal Code consider the motivation of the action and if the motivation reflects hate, that it be investigated as such. For greater clarity, this includes instances when women and girls are specifically targeted. Further, if it is determined not to be motivated by hate, the investigating officer indicate that in their report.*
3. *That the Board update LPSB Policy #LE-010 Hate/Bias Motivated Crime and LPSB Policy #LE-009 Criminal Investigation Management & Procedures to require the Chief include in the annual report to the Board:*
 - a. *The demographic information of known perpetrators of hate/bias motivated crimes; and,*

- b. *The demographic information of victims of homicide, specifically to reflect the sex of the victims. **Note:** this section to be updated upon a Criminal Code definition of femicide.*

June 16, 2020

The Board approved the recommendations with an amendment that the Board seek public consultation.

June 22, 2022

The Board issued its recommendations in a letter to the community asking for feedback. In the preamble to the recommendations the Board outlined that it is addressing male violence against women as a priority and as a first step would like femicide, commonly understood as the killing of women and girls because they are women and girls defined in the *Criminal Code of Canada*. The goal in defining femicide is to see it labelled and addressed as a hate motivated crime.

Feedback

The Board received input from 12 individuals or organizations. Two submissions will be addressed in camera as they include confidential information specific to individuals.

Overall, the respondents provided recommendations and support for asking the government to define femicide. Some of the recommendations are outside of the Board's mandate or scope to address femicide as a first step.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are put forward for the Board's consideration:

1. Public submissions be received, and a letter of appreciation be sent to the respondents along with a copy of the final recommendations.
2. In-camera submissions be received, and a letter of appreciation be sent to the respondents along with a copy of the final recommendations.
3. It is recommended that the input from the Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Girls be changed to be consistent with section 318(4) of the Criminal Code and be included in section two of the recommendations. The second last line of section two would be changed to "...specifically reflect the sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression of the victims."

4. The recommendations from Anova be referred to the Chief of Police and Deputy Chiefs to review the Verdict of Coroner's Jury: Inquest into the deaths of Carol Culliton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam; and to report back to the Board on any areas where operational issues addressing male violence against women would benefit from a Board recommendation or support noting some of the recommendations are outside of operational and governance capabilities.
5. The recommendation by both Anova and Ms. Christine Garinger that the Board take an intersectional approach to addressing male violence against women be incorporated into the final report to the government.

Conclusion

Femicide is currently being used to describe the killing of women and girls by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland. Yet it remains without a definition in the Criminal Code of Canada.

The Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability (CFOJA) was established on November 25, 2017, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, in response to a call from the Special Rapporteur on violence against women to document killings of women.

The CFOJA works to prevent violence against women through its data collection, resources, and strategies. Spearheaded by Professor Myrna Dawson, in collaboration with a panel of more than 40 experts, CFOJA is/has been funded by the Centre for the Study of Social and Legal Responses to Violence, University of Guelph, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the Canada Research Chair Program.

The work of CFOJA Director Myrna Dawson and her team is a valuable resource in Canada. Ms. Walker is grateful to Professor Dawson for so generously sharing her time and expertise with her.