

Clare's Law Multi-sector Review Committee Annual Report, 2023



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INTRODUCTION

Presented within these pages is the 2023 Annual Report on Clare's Law, highlighting its operation over four years in Saskatchewan. This report underscores collaborative efforts led by a Multi-sector Review Committee composed of dedicated professionals from various domains. With commitment to fostering transparency and addressing concerns related to domestic violence in Saskatchewan, this report encapsulates an overview of the protocol's performance, achievements, and key areas of emphasis.

Over the past four years, Clare's Law has demonstrated our collective commitment to ensuring individual safety and well-being. Through evaluation and collaboration, our committee has worked to strike a balance between respecting personal privacy and preventing potential harm. This report

delves into the protocol's impact, shedding light on its effectiveness in empowering individuals with information necessary to make informed decisions about their relationships.

As we navigate the intricate dynamics of domestic relationships and interpersonal dynamics, this report highlights the significance of a protocol like Clare's Law in creating safer environments. Through the dedication of professionals, agencies, and stakeholders, we continue to refine and improve the protocol's implementation, emphasizing the importance of awareness, diligence, and cooperation. In the pages that follow, you will find a review of the protocol's annual operation, contributing to a deeper understanding of its role in our society and underscoring our shared commitment to its ongoing success.

ABOUT CLARE'S LAW

The *Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol*, commonly referred to as Clare's Law, was officially implemented on June 29, 2020, making Saskatchewan the first province in Canada to enact such legislation.¹ This law enables law enforcement agencies to share pertinent information with individuals who may be facing potential risks of violence in their relationships. Since its enactment, individuals have been able to request information under Clare's Law at municipal police stations and as of April 1, 2021, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in Saskatchewan joined in facilitating access to Clare's Law, expanding its reach and accessibility to a wider population in the province.²

Modeled after similar legislation in the United Kingdom, Clare's Law aims to grant eligible individuals the right to request information about their partners' history of violent or abusive behaviour from law enforcement agencies.³ By offering access to such information, the law intends to empower individuals with knowledge to make informed decisions in their relationships and potentially identify any risks of domestic violence. Clare's Law is meant to be proactive, as opposed to reactive. It provides potential victims with important information, allowing them the opportunity to make an informed choice, before violence happens.

Domestic homicide reviews consistently show that a history of domestic violence and other related criminal activity are major risk factors for re-occurring violence. Therefore, Clare's Law is an evidence-based approach used to reduce incidents of intimate partner violence and decrease the risk of intimate partner homicide.⁴

¹ Government of Saskatchewan. June 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2020/june/29/clares-law>.

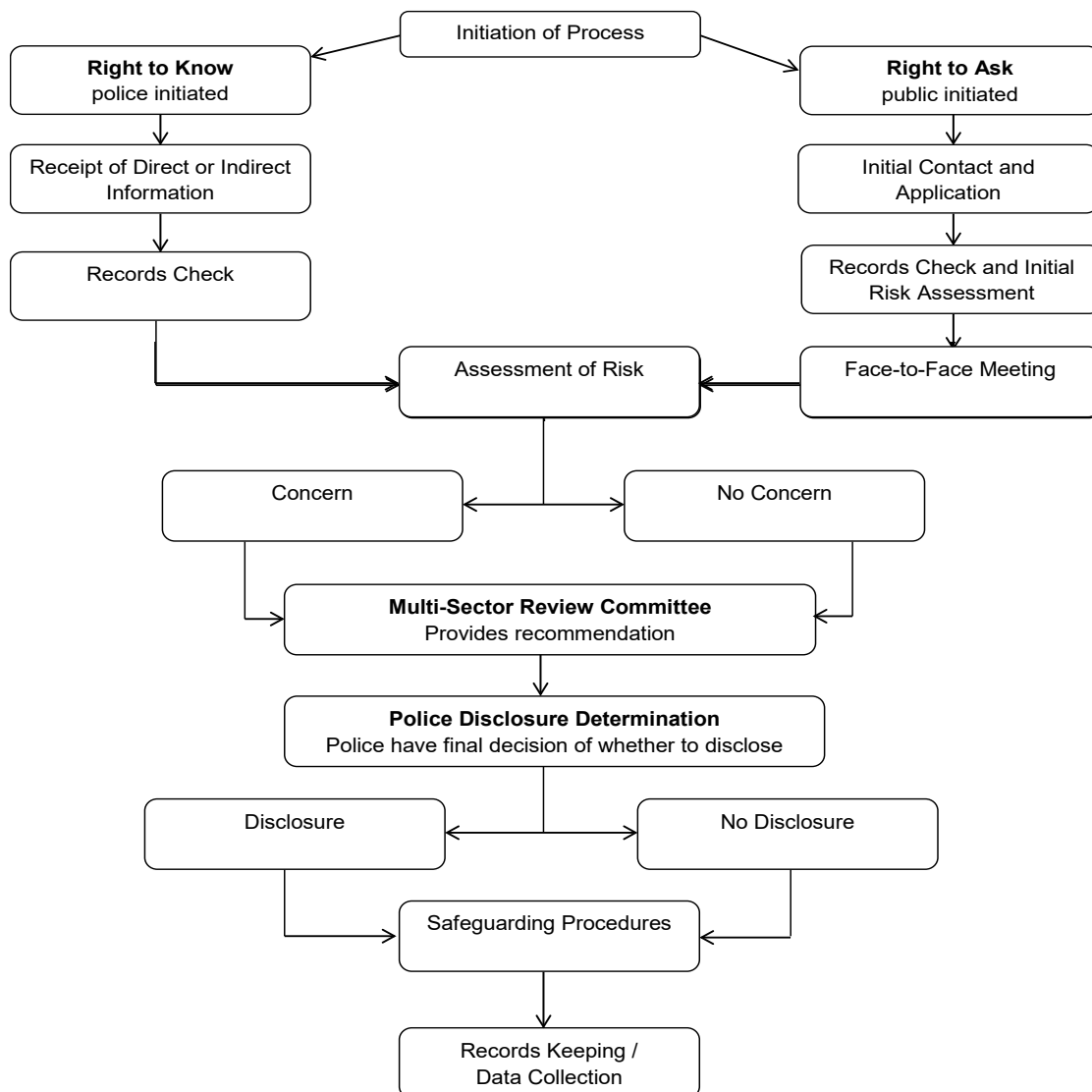
² Government of Canada. (2021). *RCMP can now participate in Clare's Law legislation in Saskatchewan and Alberta*. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2021/03/rcmp-can-now-participate-in-clares-law-legislation-in-saskatchewan-and-alberta.html>.

³ Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services of Saskatchewan. (2021). Retrieved from: <https://pathssk.org/clares-law/>.

⁴ Ibid.

PROCESS

The process for Clare's Law disclosure is a well-structured and carefully designed sequence aimed at preventing domestic violence and promoting personal safety. The process begins with an initial request made to or by the police, often prompted by concerns about a partner's behaviour. After the request is received, the police, taking into consideration safety and well-being, conduct a thorough assessment. Following this assessment, a multi-agency panel review is convened to make an informed decision on disclosing relevant information. The timeline reflects a delicate balance between the right to privacy and the need to protect individuals from harm, offering a structured approach to accessing vital information and support in potentially dangerous relationship situations.



BY THE NUMBERS

This section presents annual statistics pertaining to the implementation of Clare's Law in Saskatchewan. These statistics encompass the total volume of applications received, including those for the right to ask and right to know, reflecting the community's engagement with the protocol. The breakdown of disclosed information types sheds light on the diverse aspects addressed under the protocol. Risk level assessments provide insight into the varying degrees of potential threat identified. Furthermore, the correlation between these disclosures and subsequent connections to support services underscores the protocol's role in facilitating proactive intervention. All applicants are offered a connection to services.

	2020	2021	2022	2023
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Applications

Total Applications	6	23	20	14
Disclosure provided	5	16	16	9

Right to Ask and Right to Know

Ask	5	21	14	12
Know	1	2	6	2

Type of Disclosure

Third Party (limited disclosure)	2	8	3	2
Person At Risk	4	15	17	12

Risk Level

High	4	14	12	8
Medium	2	2	2	3
Low	0	2	1	0
None Indicated	0	5	2	3

Connected to Services

Accepted Connection to Services	5	11	13	9
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PROTOCOL FEEDBACK

Contained herein are a series of comments that shed light on the impact of the Clare's Law Protocol from clients and service providers. This annual report underscores the Protocol's role in creating safer communities and enabling informed decisions. These quotes reveal the power of providing individuals with essential information to safeguard themselves and loved ones. The testimonials emphasize the protocol's contribution to open dialogue and shared responsibility, fostering a more secure society. The Clare's Law Protocol emerges not just as a legal framework, but as a conduit for empowerment and prevention.

"Clare's Law helped me alot due to the fact that my abuser was high risk to reoffend as soon as I found that out I watched my back but he was one step ahead and it came true... I lived in hell for a few more months until he got arrested... I have spread the word as soon as I hear anything to spread awareness and partners/victims stay safe. 100% recommended Thank you so much for letting me keep my life and warn me as it almost ended with him."

"I was able to make an informed decision based on the info that I received. I think this is a good idea that people are informed so we can make a safe choice."

"...I appreciate the focus on empowerment of the person-at-risk. Giving a victim of relationship violence a measure of control over their own safety is invaluable in beginning to chip away at the power imbalance that is often present in unhealthy relationships." - Victim Advocate

CONCLUSION

This annual report underscores the importance of the Clare's Law Protocol in Saskatchewan communities. A streamlined process empowers individuals by providing crucial information, facilitating informed decisions that enhance safety. The presented statistics provide an overview of the protocol's reach, highlighting application volumes, right to know and right to ask requests, and disclosure types.

The included comments from clients and service providers emphasize the real impact of Clare's Law. These statements show how the protocol empowers individuals to take charge of their safety. The variety of

disclosure types and risk assessments highlights Clare's Law's multi-faceted approach. The direct link between disclosures and support service connections highlights the protocol's immediate impact on individuals' well-being.

Clare's Law goes beyond its legal framework to be a catalyst for empowerment, fostering a community of shared responsibility and open communication. Effective implementation of Clare's Law actively contributes to a safer society, safeguarding individuals and families.