

Ontario Increasing Oversight of Towing Industry

*Provincial Task Force to Look at Improving Safety, Consumer Protections
and Industry Standards*

NEWS

June 29, 2020

TORONTO — The Ontario government is establishing a task force to improve provincial oversight of the towing industry. The task force will help develop a regulatory model that will increase safety and enforcement, clarify protections for consumers, improve industry standards and consider tougher penalties for violators. The government is taking this action in response to concerns raised about incidents of criminal activity and violence in the towing industry.

Details were provided today by Premier Doug Ford, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation, and Sylvia Jones, Solicitor General.

“The party’s over for the bad actors who are engaged in violence and criminal activity in the towing industry. We’re going to keep working with our police partners to bring these criminals to justice,” said Premier Ford. “Setting up this task force will help us bring together experts to develop ways to better protect drivers, operators and inspectors.”

The task force will review a number of topics related to the towing industry, which could include provincial oversight of safety, consumer protection, improved industry standards, training and background checks.

As part of the review, the task force may consider opportunities for increased protections for consumers against the first-to-scene unethical business practices, insurance savings through a crackdown on insurance fraud rings or improved consumer choice for payments and repairs. The province is also reviewing ways to improve our transportation system by clearing accidents more quickly which would minimize lane reductions and reduce congestion on our highways.

“Most tow truck operators in Ontario are responsible and play a critical role in keeping our roadways safe. However, like all people of Ontario, our government is concerned about the recent reported incidents of violence in the towing industry,” said Minister Mulroney. “We are committed to ensuring a higher standard for the tow truck industry and are looking at ways to provide greater oversight of the industry to keep our roads and highways among the safest in North America.”

“When Ontarians are stranded on the side of the road, they need to know their calls will be answered by towing service providers who act safely, ethically and within the law,” said Solicitor General Jones. “The task force will help us determine tougher standards for the industry as part of our government’s commitment to build safer communities.”

Membership of the task force will include representatives from the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of the Solicitor General, the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, the Ministry of Finance and the Ontario Provincial Police. Once the task force has developed proposals for discussion and comment, it will be consulting with industry, municipalities, and public safety experts.

“Since I first tabled a Private Members’ Bill over five years ago calling for better oversight on our roads, the violence and extortion within the towing industry has rapidly escalated,” said Gila Martow, MPP for Thornhill. “I look forward to the seeing strengthened provincial oversight of the tow truck industry so we can keep everyone safe.”

QUICK FACTS

- There are approximately 1,600 tow truck companies registered in the Ministry of Transportation’s Commercial Vehicle Operator’s Registration (CVOR) program. A valid CVOR certificate is required to operate a tow truck.
- The [Consumer Protection Act](#) contains specific tow and storage services rules to help protect consumers who need a tow or roadside assistance in Ontario. The Ontario government is currently reviewing the Act and consumers can provide input through [a survey](#) until July 17, 2020, on a number of issues, including towing.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Learn about consumer protection for drivers](#)

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MEDIA CONTACTS

Ivana Yelich
Premier’s Office
Ivana.Yelich@ontario.ca

Christina Salituro
Minister Mulroney’s Office
Christina.Salituro2@ontario.ca

Lee Alderson
Communications Branch
MTO.media@ontario.ca
416 327-1158

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