



## **SASKATOON POLICE SERVICE**

**TO:** Shirley Greyeyes, Chairperson  
Board of Police Commissioners

**FROM:** Cameron McBride  
Office of the Chief

**DATE:** 2025 March 07

**SUBJECT:** Annual Missing Persons Reporting  
January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024

**FILE #:** 2,007-2

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### **ISSUE:**

As part of our annual reporting process the Saskatoon Police Service (SPS) provides statistics on missing persons in Saskatoon including the number of reports, the location of where they were reported missing, the number of habitual runaways, and the proactive steps to prevent people from going missing. This report includes statistical information from January 1 to December 31, 2024.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That this report be received as information.

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY:**

Goal 2 of the 2024 Business Plan for SPS identifies the need to maintain core policing operations and address community concerns that affect public safety. Some of the underlying conditions that contribute to the high incidence of missing person complaints in our community include addictions, homelessness, mental health, and poverty. Successful missing person investigations involve partnerships with various agencies and community groups that are in contact with and offer support to missing persons.

SPS remains focused on reducing the number of habitual runaways and missing persons. As part of this strategy the Missing Person Unit (MPU) works with group homes and Social Services in an attempt to identify why youth run, case plan, and to connect them with supports where possible. In partnership with Egadz the Missing Person Unit continues to promote the Missing Youth Sask App/Risk Assessment Tool which is approved for use by Social Services in group

## **“PUBLIC AGENDA”**

homes city wide. There has been a strong correlation between use of the app in the Egadz operated homes and a decrease in missing person complaints made to SPS.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Throughout the course of this reporting period the MPU, with assistance from the Strategic Planning Advisor, compiles various statistics relating to missing person reports in our community. The following report provides the statistics categorically; presenting them in a clear and concise manner while illustrating the nature of missing person investigations in the city of Saskatoon.

### **GENERAL OVERVIEW:**

In 2024 the SPS received 3,590 missing person reports. In comparison to 2023 this was a decrease of 680 reports, or an overall decrease of 15.9%.

Of significance, this is only the second time in the past decade that missing person reports received by SPS decreased on an annual basis.

In 2024 youth reports also decreased by 809 reports or by 24.1% overall versus 2023. However, adult reports increased by 15% during this same time period. Eloped Mental Health Patients are those individuals that have left a hospital or psychiatric unit against medical advice and without being discharged. The following chart shows the comparative numbers from 2023 to 2024:

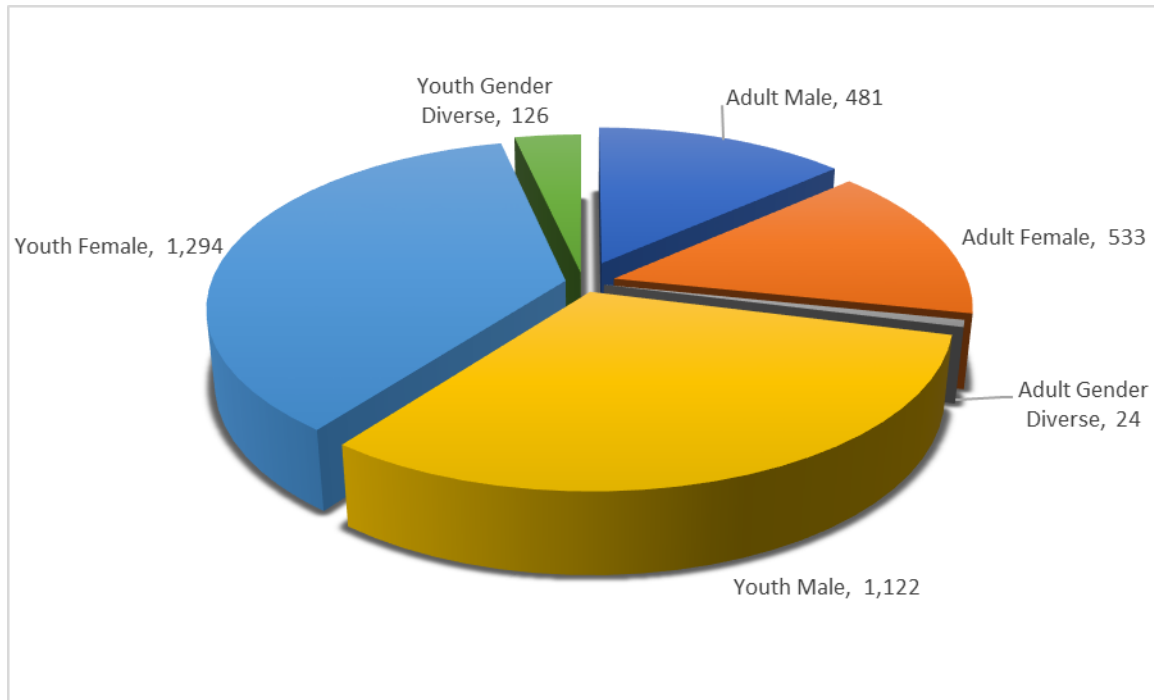
	Youth	Adult	Eloped Patients	Grand Total
<b>2024</b>	2,542	1,038	10	3,590
<b>2023</b>	3,351	903	16	4,270
<b>Difference</b>	<b>(809)</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>(6)</b>	<b>(680)</b>
<b>% Change</b>	<b>-24.1%</b>	<b>15.0%</b>	<b>-37.5%</b>	<b>-15.9%</b>

The above data is consistent with an overall reduction in missing person calls for service received in Communications for 2024:

	2024	2023	Difference	% Change
<b>Calls for Service</b>	5,480	6,843	-1363	-19.9%

## “PUBLIC AGENDA”

### Breakdown of Missing Person Subjects by Age and Gender, 2024



	Female	Male	Gender Diverse	Grand Total
Youth (under 18)	1,294	1,122	126	2,542
Adult	533	481	24	1,038
Grand Total	1,827	1,603	150	3,580

### **REPORTED MISSING PERSONS:**

In the 2024 reporting period there were 3,580 missing persons, not including the eloped mental health patients. Of the 3,580 missing persons, 1,827 (51%) were female, 1,603 (45%) were male and 150 (4%) were gender diverse. Police received 2,542 youth missing person reports in 2023 which accounted for 71% of all reported missing persons.

#### **Female Youth**

Female youth (under 18 years old) represented 36% of all reported missing persons.

#### **Male Youth**

Male youth (under 18 years old) represented 31% of all reported missing persons.

## **Gender Diverse Youth**

There were 126 missing person reports for youth that identified as gender diverse. Gender diverse youth accounted for 3.5% of all reported missing persons.

### **HABITUAL MISSING PERSONS:**

A **Habitual Missing Person** is an individual who has been reported missing two or more times within a specific period. In this reporting period habitual missing persons accounted for 2,639 missing person reports or 74% of all missing person reports. 407 of the 1,327 individuals reported missing in 2024 were habitual. This means 31% of the persons reported missing accounted for nearly three quarters of all reports to SPS.

Female youth comprised the largest portion of habitual missing persons, accounting for 1,125 reports. In comparison, male youth comprised the second largest proportion of habitual missing persons, accounting for 967 reports. Gender diverse youth accounted for 115 of missing person reports. In total the 2,207 habitual missing youth reports accounted for 87% of all missing youth reports and 62% of all missing person reports in 2024.

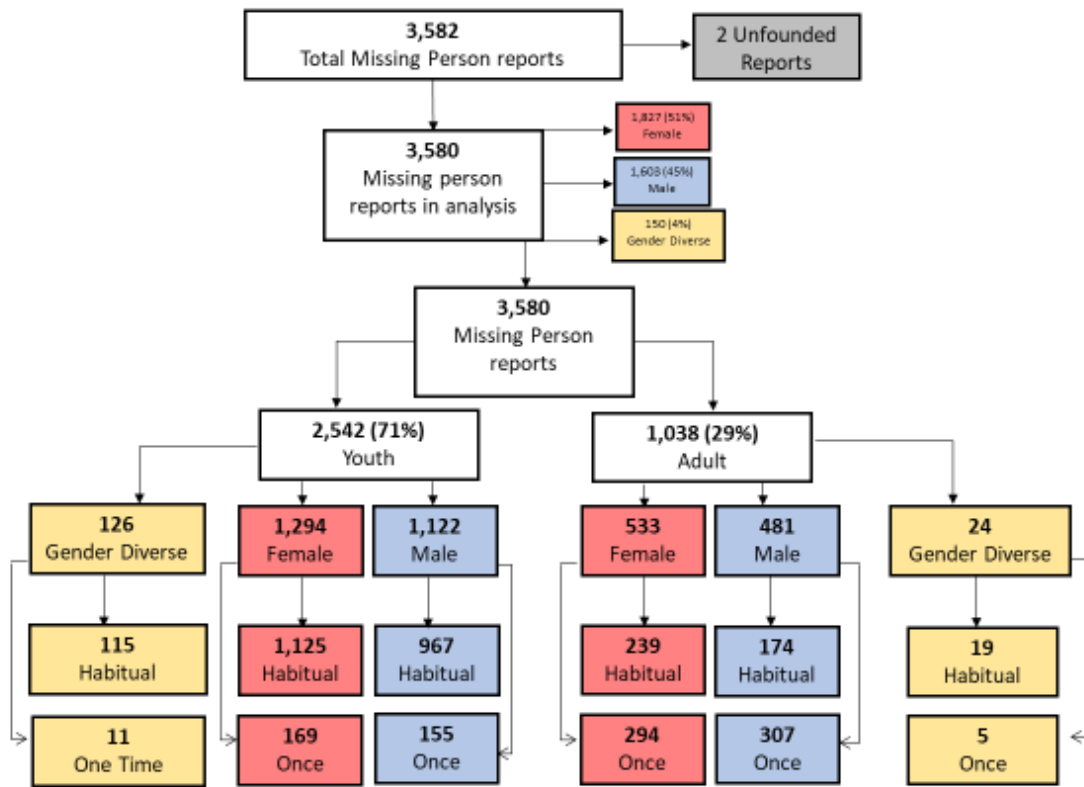
**Despite these high numbers habitual missing youth reports declined by 737 or 25% versus 2023.**

There were 432 habitual missing adult reports in 2024 accounting for 42% of all missing adult reports and 12% of all missing person reports.

The following table provides specifics on the gender and age classification of habitual missing person incidents:

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Habitual</b>	<b>One Time</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
<b>Female</b>	Youth (Under 18)	1,125	169	1,294	36%
	Adult	239	294	533	15%
<b>Male</b>	Youth (Under 18)	967	155	1,122	31%
	Adult	174	307	481	13%
<b>Gender Diverse</b>	Youth (Under 18)	115	11	126	4%
	Adult	19	5	24	1%
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2,639</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>3,580</b>	<b>100%</b>

## “PUBLIC AGENDA”



### LOCATIONS:

In this reporting period, missing person reports were generated from 880 known locations. The top 10 most common addresses accounted for 38% of missing person reports.

Top 10 Most Frequent MP Locations	Number of MP Reports	% of Total MP Reports
Location 1	330	9.2%
Location 2	266	7.4%
Location 3	223	6.2%
Location 4	103	2.9%
Location 5	96	2.7%
Location 6	84	2.3%
Location 7	82	2.3%
Location 8	71	2.0%
Location 9	62	1.7%
Location 10	61	1.7%
<b>Total of Top 10 Locations</b>	<b>1,378</b>	<b>38.4%</b>

## **LONG TERM MISSING PERSON INVESTIGATIONS:**

The SPS currently has 19 long-term missing person investigations. All of these investigations are open investigations. Long-term missing person files remain open until the individual is located allowing for ongoing review and the submission of new information for investigative follow-up. No new long-term investigations were generated in 2024. Of the 19 missing person investigations, 14 are male and 5 are female. Further to that, 12 are Caucasian (4 females, 8 males), 4 are Indigenous (1 female, 3 males), 2 are Middle Eastern (both males) and 1 is African American/Jamaican (male).

All of the long-term missing person investigations have been entered into the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police website for public access (<http://www.sacp.ca/>) and Crime Stoppers.

During 2024, the Missing Person Task Force Sergeant continued to work with the National Center for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR). NCMPUR is operated by the RCMP and assists law enforcement with their missing persons and unidentified remains investigations. In 2024 NCMPUR assisted SPS with an analysis of open investigations and provided a number of recommendations which were received by the Missing Person Task Force Sergeant.

NCMPUR offers a number of services to law enforcement. Some of the services offered include publication to Canada’s Missing, participation in the National Missing Person DNA Program (NMPDP), and assistance with international investigations. SPS has formally engaged NCMPUR services on all of its long term investigations.

One of the main services offered to law enforcement by NCMPUR is the National Missing Person DNA Program. Biological samples can be submitted to NCMPUR in order to generate DNA profiles of the missing person and or family members in an attempt to help identify remains found in Saskatchewan and or across the country. During the course of the year, the Missing Person Task Force Sergeant submitted 4 files to NCMPUR to have DNA profiles generated. Of the 19 long term files DNA has now been submitted on 18 files. Family has refused to participate on the remaining file.

## **Saskatchewan Association of Cold Case Investigators (SACCI)**

The Saskatchewan Association of Cold Case Investigators (SACCI) has been meeting formally as a legal entity since 2012. SACCI brings together Cold Case Investigators from across the province including the Coroner’s Office to discuss historical cases and brainstorm strategies for the benefit of unsolved investigations. In 2024 members of the SPS MPU attended training offered by the Calgary Police Service that focused on family liaison duties and best practices.

## **Saskatchewan Missing Person Partnership (SMPP)**

The Missing Person Task Force Sergeant continues to participate as an active member of the Saskatchewan Missing Person Partnership (SMPP).

## **“PUBLIC AGENDA”**

Established by the Government of Saskatchewan in 2005 the SMPP is a unique, collaborative approach between community agencies, Indigenous groups, police agencies, search and rescue, and government ministries. The SMPP is chaired by the Ministry of Justice and aims to share education and awareness resources to prevent people from going missing, help coordinate policies and legislation and to support agencies that provide services for families of missing persons.

The meetings held at the beginning of the year focus on planning for Missing Persons Week that occurs at the beginning of May. In 2024 the MPU also assisted the SMPP with updating the Agency Response Guide. This guide is publicly available and is intended to assist agencies in assisting and supporting the families and friends of missing persons.

### **Missing Persons Week**

Missing Persons Week was April 28 – May 4, 2024. The theme was “Stories not Statistics” and featured a number of events held across the province including a Candlelight Vigil, documentary film screenings featuring missing persons and MMIWG survivors, and a community forum on the impact of missing persons on various communities.

In Saskatoon the SPS Equity and Cultural Engagement Unit and Victim Services partnered to host a Calling Home Ceremony at SPS Headquarters that featured a Pipe Ceremony and come and go tea. Representatives from the SPS attended the opening news conference in Regina and accompanied families on the Walk to Honour the Missing from Wascana Place to the Missing Persons Oak Tree.

The SPS conducted and contributed to online events that brought attention to missing person investigations. They included but were not limited to:

May 1, 2024: Search Announcement: Mackenzie Trottier Investigation  
<https://www.facebook.com/SaskatoonPolice/videos/1391019738962433>

May 3, 2024: Facebook post featuring the Kandice Singbeil podcast *Deals, Debts, & Death*  
<https://www.facebook.com/SaskatoonPolice/videos/1712016039284760>

### **PROACTIVE INITIATIVES:**

#### **Community Collaboration**

The SPS continues to work collaboratively with community organizations that provide essential residences, care homes and support services within Saskatoon. SPS works together on the issue of persons “missing from care” by routinely connecting with organizations, including the Salvation Army, Hope Restored Canada, Quint Saskatoon, Sanctum Group, St. Mary’s Emergency Shelter, Saskatoon Tribal Council, YWCA, Egadz, John Howard Society, Eagle’s Nest, Complex Needs Emergency Shelter, Prairie Harm Reduction, Ranch Ehrlo and CUMFI.

## **“PUBLIC AGENDA”**

### **Operation Runaway**

Operation Runaway was developed in the spring of 2017 as an interagency community partnership initiated by Egadz, in collaboration with the SPS, Ministry of Social Services, Saskatoon Health Authority Mental Health and Addiction Services and other community supports. The project was intended to provide an integrated, supportive and client-centered approach to assist youth who are reported missing or are running away.

During 2024, members of the SPS MPU continued to attend and participate weekly in the Operation Runaway “circle” meetings. This involvement has the potential to enhance police relationships with habitually missing youth and has improved inter-agency cooperation. In addition, MPU members have been able to refer at-risk youth to this program, which is a crucial first step for connecting youth with supports and creating opportunities that strengthen self determination.

Following a successful test project in the Egadz operated My Homes efforts continue to have other group homes adopt the Missing Youth Sask App, which is a risk assessment tool to assist workers navigating the decision-making process in relation to whether to report a youth missing. Between 2021 and 2023 the My Home locations using the App experienced a reduction of 227 reports (41.3%) while overall habitual youth missing person incidents increased by 55.8% during the same period.

In early 2024 the Missing Person Task Force Sergeant attended a meeting with Social Services and various group home leadership in Saskatoon urging them to consider adopting the App. In May 2024 another group home began using the App. Reporting then decreased from 565 incidents in 2023 to 265 incidents in 2024. There remains a strong correlation between use of the App and reporting.

### **Relationship Building**

The MPU continued to reach out to and build relationships with a number of community organizations and businesses such as Egadz Outreach Workers, Ministry of Social Services, the Lighthouse/ Mustard Seed, Friendship Inn, Saskatoon Food Bank, Saskatoon Crisis Intervention Service, Saskatoon Indian & Metis Friendship Centre, Saskatoon Health Authority (Brief & Social Detox), and the Bridge. Investigators also continued to build relationships with Canada Border Services Agency, US Customs and Border Protection, US Dept of Homeland Security, Interpol, National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains and various Canadian police agencies. Collaboration with these organizations has proven to be invaluable when it comes to locating missing persons.

### **Missing Person Family Liaison**

Saskatoon Victim Services continues to support our investigations and the families of the missing through the Missing Person Family Liaison position. The position has been instrumental in helping forge positive relationships with the families of missing persons and helping to facilitate open and honest communication between the families and investigators. During 2024, Victim Services assisted families in a number of active investigations as well as historical investigations.



## **SPS INTERNAL COLLABORATIONS:**

In addition to conducting investigations to locate missing persons the MPU also reviews each case and assesses the individual circumstances surrounding the person being reported missing. If through investigation additional risks or concerns are identified other sections of the Service are contacted for assistance and their expertise.

### **Major Crime Investigations**

Each missing person report that is received by the Service has the potential to escalate into a major case investigation or homicide. The Mackenzie Trottier investigation is an example of this. Mackenzie was first reported missing on December 30, 2020. The file was transferred to the Major Crime Section and after extensive investigation SPS began searching the Saskatoon landfill for evidence relating to her disappearance. On August 1, 2024 a full recovery of Mackenzie's remains were made. The Major Crime Section also continues to actively investigate a number of other incidents that began as missing person reports.

### **Patrol Missing Person Constables**

There are eight patrol members across four platoons assigned as Missing Person Constables. They are responsible for conducting the initial missing person investigations until the file is resolved or transferred to the MPU. The Patrol Missing Person Constables receive in-service training provided by the MPU at the beginning of the calendar year. The training aims to develop investigative skills, enhanced knowledge of effective risk assessments and provides education on available community resources. Throughout the year, the MPU provides ongoing support and guidance to Patrol during complex investigations and offers mentoring on best practices.

### **Public Relations and Strategic Communications**

During 2024, the Public Relations and Strategic Communications Division assisted MPU with numerous media requests for public assistance and also in working with the various media outlets in the city. In 2024 there were over 60 media releases issued for missing persons. Alert fatigue is an ongoing concern for investigators and SPS continues to evaluate the criteria and policy for issuing a media release.

The Public Relations and Strategic Communications Division also helps prepare the social media content/approach to be taken during Missing Person Week.

### **Saskatoon HUB**

In cases where missing person investigations were concluded and there continued to be an acute elevated risk identified for individuals and/or families, the MPU made referrals to HUB. HUB continued to be a valuable asset in providing an immediate and coordinated mobilization of resources that target factors such as addictions, mental health concerns, housing, absent education plan, need for income assistance or criminal justice system matters.

### **Police and Crisis Team (PACT)**

On top of the high volume of calls that PACT responded to for people suffering from mental health and addictions crises, they were also invaluable partners to the MPU. PACT initiated missing person investigations after identifying vulnerable people that otherwise may have gone unreported. Through information sharing agreements, lifestyle history, risk and protective

## **“PUBLIC AGENDA”**

factors, family and other supports were identified, resulting in numerous missing people being located. Finally, PACT provided follow-up support for individuals that were located and found to have continued concerns for their welfare.

### **VICE and Integrated Child Exploitation (ICE) Sections**

The MPU investigators are trained in the use of social media as an investigative tool. Investigators use this knowledge to reach out to and communicate with those that are missing, especially the youth. During some of the investigations, youth have been identified as being sexually exploited or appear to be at risk for sexual exploitation and or human trafficking. These cases are then referred to the appropriate units (for example ICE, Sex Crimes, Vice-Human Trafficking) for their continued investigations.

The SPS Vice and Human Trafficking Unit also participates in Operation No Go which is a collaborative multi-agency approach to assisting persons who are involved or at risk of being involved in sexual exploitation or human trafficking.

In October 2023 SPS Victim Services secured 2.5 years of federal (Justice Canada) funding for Victim Services to create a Human Trafficking Response Team. Their work began in 2024 and included 2 full time positions in Victim Services. National data from CCJS shows that young persons are the most commonly trafficked victims in police reported cases of Trafficking in Persons.

### **CONCLUSION:**

In 2024 missing person reports to the SPS decreased for only the second time in a decade. The reduction of 680 reports was significant. The reduction was driven primarily by youth and habitual youth reporting with habitual youth reports decreasing by 25% versus 2023. The MPU will continue to work closely with our community partners and other agencies to ensure investigations are conducted as effective and efficiently as possible while seeking positive outcomes for missing persons and their families.

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