

FOR RELEASE
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Government of Yukon tables Missing Persons Act

The Government of Yukon today tabled Bill No. 13, the Missing Persons Act, which will enhance the RCMP's ability to investigate missing persons cases in the territory.

Currently the police have limited tools at their disposal in cases of missing persons unless there is evidence of criminal activity. The new legislation will help them access vital personal information that may advance an investigation via a court process.

Following the Truth and Reconciliation calls to Action and the launch of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in August 2016, the missing persons legislation is an important part of the government's response to this complex issue. First Nation governments, Aboriginal women's groups, RCMP and the judiciary were all consulted in 2016 and responded positively to the proposed legislation. These stakeholders supported moving forward and expressed a desire to be involved in the development of the legislation.

Additional engagement took place between July 4 and September 11 of this year. Various community groups, targeted stakeholders and the general public were asked for input. An online survey held during that time received 55 responses.

The majority of the comments received were supportive of missing persons legislation, with most concerns focused on the need to respect Yukoners' right to privacy. The Government of Yukon is committed to preserving those rights, and developed the legislation to balance the information that will assist the RCMP with an individual's rights to privacy.

Quotes

"Time is of the essence when a loved one is missing. The Missing Persons Act will provide the police with a court process to seek an order that will enable them to investigate more quickly and efficiently. It will allow access, when necessary, to information like telephone, banking, travel, and health records that may help locate a missing person—while also balancing personal privacy."

—Minister of Justice and Attorney General Tracy-Anne McPhee

Quick facts

- According to the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR), more than 70,000 Canadians go missing each year.
- In 2016, 125 Yukoners (54 adults, 71 youth and children) were reported missing.
- While most children and youth in Canada are classified as runaways, most adults who go missing are gone for unknown reasons (source: NCMPUR).

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