

New uniform identification tags for Edmonton Police Service Officers

Frequently Asked Questions

The Edmonton Police Service is set to begin transitioning officer uniform identification tags to register number only. This replaces the current identification tag, which is register number and surname.

The following are some frequently asked questions about the transition and what it means for the citizens of Edmonton.

Why is EPS making the switch?

Clear identification is essential for fostering community trust and maintaining accountability. However, the use of member's names has become an officer safety issue as instances of doxing, the malicious public release of private information, leading to harassment and threats against officers and their loved ones, have increased.

What is a register number?

Register numbers are a unique identifier for each member and is assigned to an officer at the beginning of their career. The number stays with them throughout their tenure as a sworn member.

Prior to 1996, register number was the primary means of member identification. This changed when EPS could no longer get a vendor to produce metal register tags, so the transition was made to names, and then eventually surname with register number on a cloth tag sewn directly on the uniform.

How will this impact transparency?

Clear member identification is crucial for building community trust. While this change helps EPS ensure officer safety, it does not compromise accountability and transparency. Register numbers can easily be used for reporting public complaints and commendations reporting and internal follow-up on interactions. There are no impacts to any of these processes by making the switch.

Is an officer required to give me their name if I ask, or only their register number?

This change is not meant to take away from the personalization of interactions members have with the public. If asked, officers are required to provide their register number, but in situations that are not elevated by emotion or threat, they are encouraged to also provide their name.

Are officers required to wear identification tags at all times?

Yes, officers are required to have their identification tags visibly displayed on their uniform.

Is this compliant with the *Alberta Police Act*?

The *Police Act* does not specifically mandate the use of identification tags, only the approval of uniforms and insignia.