



ABBOTSFORD
POLICE DEPARTMENT

STRENGTH IN COMMUNITY

PRESS RELEASE

Abbotsford Police Department
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www.abbypd.ca

AbbyPD Launches *Project Disengage*: A Lifeline for Those Involved—or Being Recruited—Into Extortion-Related Violence

Abbotsford, BC – December 4th, 2025 – Over the past two years, Abbotsford and many other communities have experienced several incidents of extortion-related violence, often involving threats or intimidation against individuals and businesses. In some cases, these situations have escalated into shootings or property damage. AbbyPD continues to combat these crimes through targeted investigations, community engagement, and prevention strategies under *Operation Community Shield*.

To strengthen this initiative, AbbyPD is introducing *Project Disengage*—an intervention and exit program designed for individuals currently involved in, or being recruited into, extortion-related violence. Many youths, young adults and individuals are being drawn into these crimes, often lured by promises of quick financial gain or pressured by difficult life circumstances.

Organized crime groups and traffickers have long exploited vulnerable individuals for criminal activities. Participation in extortion can lead to severe legal consequences and lasting harm—not only to those involved but to the safety of our entire community.

Through *Project Disengage*, AbbyPD is committed to intervention and prevention. AbbyPD is offering support to individuals seeking a way out of violence and crime, including specialized programs for youth, young adults, and individuals at-risk of gang involvement, radicalization to violence, and other criminal behaviors.

Our message is clear: if someone is trying to recruit you, walk away, disengage — organized crime is not the answer. **You're not alone. There is a way out.** If you want to break free from this lifestyle, AbbyPD is here to help. Anyone seeking assistance is asked to contact the *Project Disengage* Helpline at **778-880-6610** or visit www.abbypd.ca/extortion-project-disengage.

Families and friends who suspect someone is being targeted should act now—before it's too late.



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Nina Krieger Minister of Public Safety & Solicitor General

“Extortionists have no limits and will go to any length to manipulate, intimidate and exploit others for their own gain,” said Nina Krieger, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General. “Law enforcement agencies are working tirelessly to confront these threats head on, and this is reflected through Abbotsford Police Department’s intervention program Project Disengage. I want to thank AbbyPD for their dedication, leadership and collaboration in bringing these extortion threats to an end.”

Mayor Ross Siemens Chair of the Abbotsford Police Board:

“Project Disengage is the first initiative of its kind in the province and is an important step forward in Abbotsford’s efforts to address extortion-related violence at its roots,” said Ross Siemens, Chair of the Abbotsford Police Board and Mayor of Abbotsford. “Often it’s vulnerable people being exploited and coerced into this violent and dangerous activity and we are proud of the Abbotsford Police Department for taking proactive action to support those who want a way out. Violence and extortion have no place in Abbotsford, and we are hopeful that those involved in extortion-related crime connect with Project Disengage and get the help they need to safely and permanently exit this lifestyle.”

Chief Constable Colin Watson:

“Project Disengage represents a bold step forward in how we protect our community. We know enforcement alone isn’t enough—real change happens when we think outside the box and offer a way out for those caught in cycles of violence. This program is about hope, intervention, and breaking the grip of organized crime before it takes root. Together, we can turn vulnerability into opportunity and build a safer Abbotsford for everyone.”

Sergeant Paul Walker
Media Relations Officer
Abbotsford Police Department