

Thursday July 16, 2020

My name is Sharon and I am a concerned Toronto citizen.

I want to know why Toronto Police officers who have committed a crime are given paid leave instead of being prosecuted to the full extent of the law like any other citizen. I find this a completely unacceptable use of our tax dollars and demand an end to this biased practice immediately.

Due to the deficit caused by COVID-19, the City of Toronto has announced a series of cuts in the coming months to vital city services such as community housing, TTC service as well as community programming. I demand to know why these vital services are taking a hit to their funding while we continue to waste money on providing paid vacations for officers who commit crimes against the citizens they are supposed to be protecting. When we provide paid leave to criminals like Const. Michael Theriault who target racialized people, attack them and leave them permanently maimed for life, we send a broader message to other police officers that they can get away with things like this and still be paid. To this day, racialized people are far more statistically likely to be targeted for arrest and harassment by Toronto police.

Any other Toronto citizen who is convicted of even the most minor crime, lives with an endless cycle of difficulty reintegrating into society. Meanwhile, if a police officer commits a crime, they're paid for a job they are not doing, while waiting for a backlogged court system to sentence them, and they'll most likely still have a job waiting for them once they've carried out their sentence. How does this make sense? By ignoring this clear double standard you are essentially condoning violence towards racialized communities, and giving racist police officers carte blanche to harass and assault racialized people. This practice is ridiculous and racist and is an insult to our racialized communities who live in fear of the police.

You must do better.

Sharon Anidjar