

## **Ontario's Office of the Chief Coroner**

The Inquest Unit of the Office of the Chief Coroner appreciates the opportunity to address the concern highlighted by this recommendation. Time-to-inquest has been unacceptably long for the last several years, largely due to a three-fold increase in the number of mandatory inquests, continued resource strain on our criminal justice partners who do the inquest work and made somewhat worse by the COVID-19 pandemic restricting in-person inquests.

Our goal is to reduce our caseload to pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2025 and shortly after that, be able to complete inquests within two years of the death in typical cases (where there aren't other unavoidable causes for delay). We believe these goals are realistic. Our strategy to meet these goals is to develop specialized inquest teams managed centrally through the Inquest Unit. These teams will be devoting 100% of their time to inquests. The expertise these teams will apply to inquests will make the inquest process much more efficient. Further, the centralized nature of inquest planning will result in less redundancy in inquest recommendations and better strategy for tackling important safety issues.