

BC hires 36 new sheriffs to ease courtroom backlog

Union says there have been over 100 jobs cut

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VANCOUVER (NEWS1130) - The BC Government is hiring 36 new sheriffs to help ease the backlog in courtrooms across the province.

Dean Purdy with the [union](#) says with all of the gang violence in BC right now, it's too dangerous not to have proper security.

"We've seen on many occasions where judges around the province have refused to run their courtrooms without the presence of a deputy sheriff to provide security," he explains. "I think the government realized that operating the courts in this unsafe manner wasn't sustainable."

A few trials were cancelled in Vancouver earlier this year due to the shortage, and the Attorney General was blasted after an arson sentencing case was delayed.

Fifteen of the 36 new sheriffs will be working in Vancouver, where two judges have complained about the shortage in their courtrooms.

"We're hoping that it will help and speed up the process. We know that there's a number of high-profile trials that are coming up in the fall, and it's something that the government knew they had to address," says Purdy.

He says the new hires don't make up for all the job cuts over the last few years.

He also wants to see sheriffs' maximum salaries bumped up so fewer sheriff will take higher paying jobs with the police or RCMP.

Purdy says there have been more than a hundred job cuts over the last few years so the province still has a long way to go to address the shortage.