

Office of Violence Prevention Fact Sheet

Purpose

Offices of violence prevention, also known as offices of neighborhood safety and other names, often frame their missions as applying a public health approach to violence reduction.

These offices:

- Often describe their work in terms of community violence intervention and prevention, with a focus on gun violence reduction and an application of strategies to intervene in or prevent violence for community members at highest risk of engaging in or being the victim of gun violence.
 - *Violence intervention* strategies focus on imminent acts of violence.
 - *Violence prevention* strategies address the underlying causes of violence and thus have a longer timeframe for impact.
- Are responsible for:
 - Refining and monitoring the violence problem,
 - Identifying factors that contribute to and protect against violence locally,
 - Developing and testing strategies, and
 - Advancing widespread adoption of those strategies.
- Shift focus to the health, safety, and well-being of entire communities.
- Are premised on the notion that community safety should not be the exclusive province of policing and the criminal justice system; investments should be made in community-based interventions, prevention, and community development.
- In some cases, have a broader focus on expanding community-led programs and strategies for community safety beyond gun violence reduction.

History

- 1994: First OVP established in Chicago (closed shortly thereafter; reopened years later)
- 2005: [Richmond, CA](#), office established (only OVP in the country at the time)
- 2006–2008: [Los Angeles, CA](#); [Portland, OR](#); and [Milwaukee, WI](#), offices established
- 2017–2019: 11 additional offices formed
- 2019: First state-level Office of Gun Violence Prevention established in Pennsylvania (later re-established in 2024)
- 2020–Present: Over six dozen additional offices established, for a total of more than 100 OVPs across the country
- 2021: [National Offices of Violence Prevention Network](#) established
- 2022: Passage of Bipartisan Safer Communities Act; introduction of funding through DOJ's BJA for community violence intervention and prevention initiatives
- 2023: Creation of White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention (closed in 2025)
- 2024–2025: Legislation enacted in Maryland, Maine, and New York to establish/modify State OVPs, bringing the nationwide total to 17 state OVPs
- 2025: NOVPN and NICJR released the [Offices of Violence Prevention Toolkit](#), a first-of-its-kind resource designed to support and strengthen OVPs nationwide

- 2025: As of June 30, 78 OVPs have joined the NOVPN

Key Roles of an OVP

- Granted executive-level authority to serve as the accountability partner for all agencies in the delivery of public safety.
- Partner with local, state, and federal law enforcement in the delivery of public safety.
- Regularly convene and coordinate government and community stakeholders involved in violence prevention and intervention efforts.
- Lead inter-agency coordination that encourages a “whole-of-government” approach to violence prevention and intervention.
- Coordinate comprehensive and data-informed planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- Fund and support community-based organizations (CBOs) and community-led efforts in equitable and strategic ways.
 - Community violence intervention (CVI) is an approach that uses evidence-informed strategies to reduce violence through tailored, community-centered initiatives.
 - CBOs have been doing CVI work for cities across the country for years.
 - OVPs can enhance this work through funding, coordination, and capacity-building.
 - In some instances, an OVP may house CVI programs and staff and may provide services ranging from life coaching to diversion programming and reentry services.

Typical Local-Level OVP Administration Position

- Mayor’s Office
- City Manager’s Office
- City Administrator’s Office
- Health Department

Typical OVP Budget Source

- General Funds
- Special Tax
- State and Federal Grants

COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION (CVI) ECOSYSTEM

NICJR★
National Institute for
Criminal Justice Reform



National Offices of Violence Prevention Network

The National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) and its partners have helped to launch and strengthen offices of violence prevention (OVPs), offices of neighborhood safety, and similar agencies throughout the US for more than 15 years.

In light of the rapid growth in these offices and the value of peer learning in this area, NICJR, Advance Peace, the Center for American Progress, the Vera Institute of Justice, and OVP leaders from across the US announced the launch of the [National Offices of Violence Prevention Network](#) in February 2021. Since its founding, the Network has grown from 21 agencies to over 80 members, including multiple state-level offices of violence prevention, and local OVPs launched with NOVPN support.

The NOVPN serves as a learning community with the goal of significantly increasing the expertise and effectiveness of member agencies. The Network hosts convenings; provides trainings and presentations on effective violence reduction practices; coordinates cross-OVP learning exchanges and site visits; offers leadership and management development; and builds member agencies’ capacity in data collection and reporting, fund development, and communications/media relations.