

Establishing an Office of Neighborhood Safety

Rationale, national landscape, implementation considerations

Daniela Gilbert

Director, Redefining Public Safety

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Rationale

- Embed community safety solutions into fabric of government but outside criminal justice system
- Create a hub and infrastructure for nonpunitive approaches to public safety
- Support sustainability of new interventions and continuity of investments that strengthen community safety

National Landscape

An increasing number of jurisdictions are creating offices of violence prevention or neighborhood safety:

Baltimore, MD

New York City, NY

Charlotte, NC

Oakland, CA

Chicago, IL

Philadelphia, PA

Clay, Duval & Nassau
Counties, FL

Portland, OR

Indianapolis, IN

Richmond, CA

Los Angeles, CA

San Bernardino, CA

Louisville, KY

South Bend, IN

Los Angeles County, CA

Stockton, CA

Milwaukee, WI

Washington, DC

Minneapolis, MN

Washington State

Structure and Funding

Offices are situated in a range of places in government:

- Mayor's Office
- City Manager's Office
- Public Health Department
- Select state-level offices

Various sources of funding

- General fund
- Special tax
- Grants (federal, state, local, foundation grants)

What do these offices do?

- Hub for all nonpunitive approaches to public safety
- Support a range of group and gun violence interventions, programs, and activities
- Life coaching, transformative mentorship, safety planning, employment assistance
- Direct services and/or grants to community-based organizations
- Gender-based violence prevention, intervention and response
- Collaborative policy development
- Community engagement and collaboration
- Implement or coordinate diversion and reentry programs

Office of Neighborhood Safety – Richmond, CA

- Established 2007, based in City Manager's Office
- Had highest homicide rate in CA when established, 8x national average
- Specific focus on reducing gun violence, injuries and deaths
- Neighborhood Change Agents conduct data-informed street outreach
- Intensive, personalized support for highest risk individuals via the Peacemaker Fellowship® / Advance Peace model
- From 2007-2019, 65% decrease in homicides

Office of Violence Prevention – Milwaukee, WI

- Established 2008, based in City Health Department
- Responding to a homicide spike in 2015, coordinated with and gathered feedback from over 1,500 youth and adult residents to develop community-driven violence prevention framework, their Blueprint for Peace
- Use credible messengers to de-escalate and interrupt violence, connect people to services, conduct case management, staff hospital-based intervention, and trauma response
- Conduct ongoing community engagement and communication efforts with priority neighborhoods, community stakeholders, youth, faith-based networks, and others
- From 2015-2019, nonfatal shootings and homicides by firearm were trending down

Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement – Baltimore, MD

- Established in 2020
- Mission: Empowers community partners and city agencies to play a more active role in the co-production of public safety and prevention of violence through a trauma-responsive, healing-centered, and equity-based approach

Three pillars:

- **Public health approaches to violence:** Gun violence prevention, victim services, youth justice, community healing, re-entry
- **Community engagement and interagency coordination:** Neighborhood engagement and capacity building, inter-agency coordination, building key partnerships
- **Evaluation and accountability:** Strategic key performance indicators, performance management, policy and research

Key Considerations

- Direct services and/or contractual relationships
- Critical role of credible messengers
- Ongoing partnership with community
- Scope commensurate with resources
- Prioritizing accountability and sustainability

Resources and References

- <https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/alternatives-to-policing-community-violence-intervention-fact-sheet.pdf>
- https://cf.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/ONSblueprint-121620.pdf?_ga=2.242111298.1536158542.1644857769-1888873038.1611763607
- <https://nicjr.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/National-OVP-Landscape-Scan-Jan-2022.pdf>
- <https://www.advancepeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/AP-Richmond-Impact-2019.pdf>
- <https://urbanmilwaukee.com/2021/10/13/data-wonk-why-is-milwaukees-murder-rate-increasing/>
- https://monse.baltimorecity.gov/sites/default/files/MayorBMS_Draft_ViolenceReductionFrameworkPlan.pdf
- https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/105302/implementing-youth-violence-reduction-strategies_0.pdf

Q+A and Discussion

Daniela Gilbert

dgilbert@vera.org