

## 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:

- Typically describe their work in terms of community violence intervention and prevention, with a focus on gun violence 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 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 civilian-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
- 2020–Present: an additional 36 offices established; many others in the process of being established
- 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 National Office of Gun Violence Prevention

### 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.

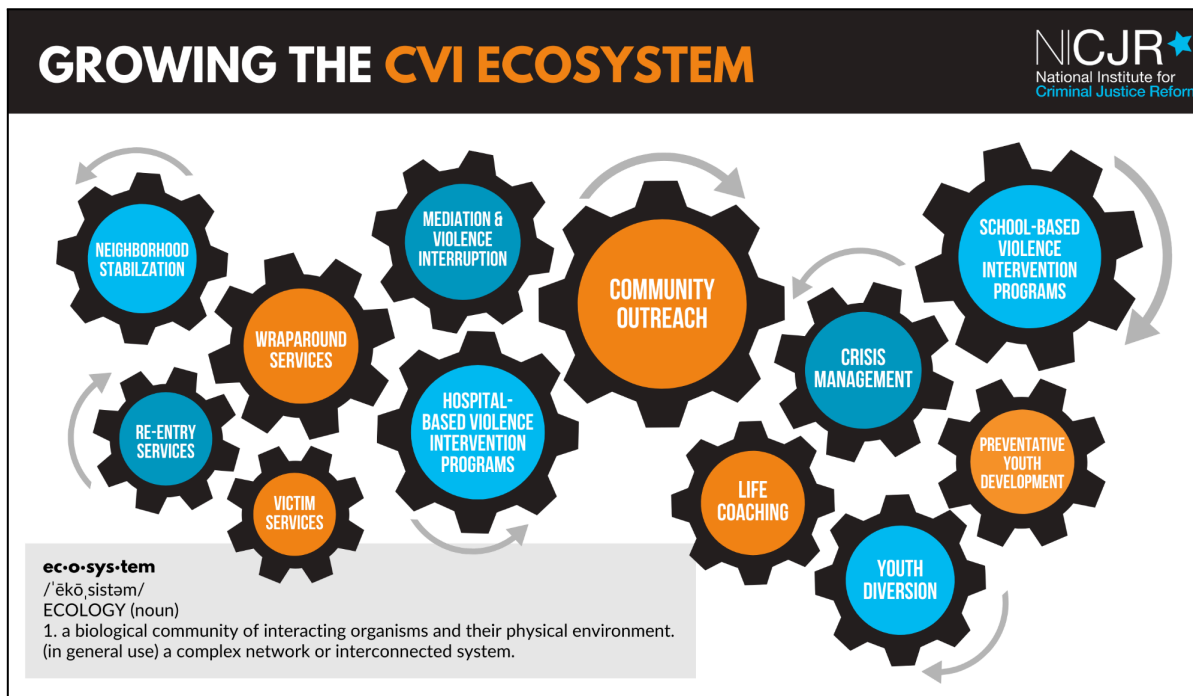
- Lead inter-agency coordination that encourages a “whole-of-government” approach to violence prevention and intervention.
- Coordinate comprehensive and data-informed planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- Fund and support community-based organizations (CBOs) and community-led efforts in equitable 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, Federal Grants



## 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 well over 50 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. The NOVPN also supports the creation of new OVPs in jurisdictions interested in developing such agencies, and the Network partners with the White House's National Office of Gun Violence Prevention to facilitate access to OVPs.