



2024 Annual Report

Office of Gun Violence Prevention

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Introduction

As directed by C.R.S. § 25-20.5-1206(2), on or before November 30 of each year, the Office of Gun Violence Prevention in the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment shall report on the activities it has conducted in the previous 12 months. The report must include information about the awareness and education campaigns conducted by the office; effective gun violence intervention programs identified and conducted by the office; any federal grants or other funding the office applied for and whether the office received those grants or other funds; and a general summary of new and relevant research included in the office’s resource bank and the nature of research assistance provided by the office.

Executive Summary

Established in 2021, the Office of Gun Violence Prevention has made substantial progress on the responsibilities outlined in the founding legislation. In addition, the office has forged strong relationships and partnerships across state agencies, including the Office of Suicide Prevention, the Attorney General’s Office, the Office of School Safety, and the Department of Public Safety. The office is a member of the Governor’s Crime Prevention Cabinet Working Group, composed of leadership from multiple state agencies collaborating to make Colorado one of the top 10 safest U.S. states.

The office’s purpose is to coordinate and promote effective efforts to reduce gun violence and promote research regarding causes of, and evidence-based responses to, gun violence. Responsibilities include:

- Increase the awareness of, and educate the general public about, state and federal laws and existing resources relating to gun violence prevention, including the following:
 - The availability of and process for requesting an Extreme Risk Protection Order.
 - How to report a lost or stolen firearm.



- Safe and responsible gun ownership, including safe storage best practices and increasing awareness of compliance with relevant law.
- Conduct awareness campaigns directed toward gun owners, parents and legal guardians of children, and professions that provide services to people and communities disproportionately affected by gun violence.
- Administer a grant program, subject to available money, to award grants to organizations to conduct community-based gun violence intervention initiatives that are primarily focused on interrupting cycles of gun violence, trauma, and retaliation by providing culturally competent intervention services.
- Create and maintain a resource bank where all Coloradans can learn about firearm injury and explore data-driven solutions.
- Identify and apply for available federal grants and other funding to further its work to prevent gun violence.

Office of Gun Violence Prevention’s highlights during the reporting period:

- The "Let’s Talk Guns, Colorado" campaign achieved over 36.3 million impressions statewide. The campaign website attracted over 104,000 unique visitors seeking information on gun violence prevention resources and laws.
- The grant program allocated approximately \$446,897 to 18 organizations focused on community-based gun violence prevention and intervention.
- The office collaborated with the Injury and Violence Prevention Center at the Colorado School of Public Health to create the state’s first gun violence prevention resource bank.
- The Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative, in partnership with the office, published the first Colorado Firearm Injury Prevention Survey.
- The office received \$1,122,173 from the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice to enhance its grant program and develop new training materials on Extreme Risk Protection Orders for health care and mental health professionals.



Awareness and education campaigns

The department aims to reduce gun violence and firearm injury through the development and implementation of programs designed to educate Coloradans on existing resources relating to gun violence prevention, including the following:

- Safe and responsible gun ownership/storage best practices, including increasing awareness of compliance with state and federal law.
- The availability of and process for requesting Extreme Risk Protection Orders.
- The process to report lost or stolen firearms, including reporting requirements in state law.
- Available mental health and substance misuse resources and the process to refer people to needed mental health and substance use treatment services, including suicide prevention.

The office expects to positively impact the lives of all Coloradans, particularly priority audiences, in order to interrupt the cycles of gun violence and accidental injury in our state. These priority audiences include the following:

- Gun owners.
- Loved ones living in homes with gun owners.
- Professionals who provide services to people and communities disproportionately impacted by gun violence, i.e., suicide prevention professionals, law enforcement and criminal justice professionals, educators, medical and mental health care providers, domestic violence prevention/intervention professionals, and youth violence prevention/intervention professionals.

During the reporting period, the Office of Gun Violence Prevention launched “Let’s Talk Guns, Colorado,” the office’s first statewide education and awareness campaign to help reduce gun violence and promote firearm safety across the state. The



campaign is intended to increase awareness and understanding among Coloradans about state and federal laws and existing resources relating to gun violence prevention. Campaign topics include a range of gun safety laws and best practices related to the safe storage of firearms, how to report a lost or stolen firearm, and how to request an Extreme Risk Protection Order.

From autumn of 2023 through spring of 2024, Coloradans saw ads in print publications, while browsing the internet, watching cable or streaming tv, scrolling through social media, and visiting local markets and convenience stores. The campaign achieved over 36.3 million impressions statewide. The campaign website attracted over 104,000 unique visitors seeking information on gun violence prevention resources and laws.

A campaign website at LetsTalkGunsColorado.com (English) and ColoradoHablemosdeArmas.com (En Español) offers information on firearm storage options, safe gun ownership checklists, the process for requesting the temporary removal of access to firearms from someone who may pose a significant risk of harming themselves or others, and more.

The office also began planning for “Phase 2” of the campaign, including executing a contract with a marketing vendor. The office finalized a paid media plan for advertisements and campaign materials to be put in market from the summer of 2024 through the spring of 2025. The office and its vendor also began work to optimize and expand its campaign materials. The work is evolving to be responsive to ongoing changes in policy, including [Senate Bill 23-170](#), which expanded petitioner groups for Colorado’s Extreme Risk Protection Order law. The office received funding from the Division of Criminal Justice to educate health care and mental health professionals about Extreme Risk Protection Orders by developing a new training curriculum and an online toolkit. More information about the grant can be found in the “Federal Funding Grants” section of this report.



The office and its vendor gathered input and feedback from health care and mental health stakeholders in Colorado, including doctors, physician’s assistants, mental health specialists, psychologists, psychiatric nurses, licensed counselors and clinical therapists, clinical social workers, certified addiction specialists, clinical hospice professionals, youth substance abuse and harm reduction coordinators, and juvenile services coordinators. That input informed preliminary creative campaign strategy, tactic, and messaging planning during FY 2023-24. The next report will focus on continued education campaign activities and tactics during FY 2024-25, including renewed media placements and the creation of new campaign materials.

Gun violence intervention programs

The Office of Gun Violence Protection provided approximately \$446,897 in grant funding to support community-based gun violence prevention initiatives during this reporting period. Funds from this grant program were to be used for education, training, and community programs that promote and support community-based gun violence prevention and intervention. Grantees include:

- Bridge to Justice, Boulder, CO - The organization’s attorneys serve as a free and confidential legal resource for individuals who want to file for an Extreme Risk Protection Order. Bridge to Justice provided twelve in-person and virtual training sessions to community partners to spread awareness about the law.
- Colorado Ceasefire, Denver, CO - Outreach educates the public about Extreme Risk Protection Orders and safe storage options via news media, social media, podcasts, and delivering in-person training events across Colorado.
- Colorado Dream Foundation, Denver, CO - The foundation provided youth in the Green Valley Ranch, Montbello, and Westwood neighborhoods with academic enrichment, therapeutic services, and social-emotional learning support to decrease the likelihood of youth involvement in gun violence.



- Community Health Partnership of Teller County, Teller County, CO - This alliance hosted safe storage workshops in partnership with Safe Homes, Safer Families, and local partner organizations, which included talks from local gun violence prevention speakers and raffles for gun safes/locks.
- Community Pearl, Denver, CO - This youth-led leadership team held gun violence prevention youth forums in Southwest Denver. Youth cultivated their writing and editing skills addressing issues like youth violence, bullying, and substance misuse in their local community magazine.
- Denver Health and Hospital Authority, Denver, CO - Denver Health and Hospital Authority procured firearm lock boxes for patients, produced training materials for health care providers, and created safety education materials for patients.
- Denver Public Schools-21st Century Learning, Denver, CO - The organization hosted Girls Inc. psychoeducation and an Arts curriculum that served and promoted prosocial activities for 50 students and their families.
- Gunnison County Substance Abuse Prevention Project, Gunnison, CO - The community coalition provides youth and family training around suicide prevention projects and also used funds to partner with Western Colorado University to offer evidence-based suicide prevention training.
- Make a Chess Move, Denver, CO - The organization added youth facilitators and expanded their out-of-school programs from two to five, thus engaging more youth and community members in proactive solutions to youth gun violence.
- MindSprings Health, Grand Junction, CO - The Western Slope's largest provider of behavioral health services conducted outreach, hosting tables promoting safe storage and providing firearm locks and safes to higher-need clientele.



- Moffat County Public Health, Craig, CO - Moffat County Public Health provided over 500 firearm safes and distributed safe storage education, domestic violence resources, and mental health providers to the community.
- North Range Behavioral Health, Greeley, CO - The agency conducted 44 mental health training sessions and distributed gun safes and trigger locks to residents.
- Odd Duck LLC, Keystone, CO - Odd Duck distributed gun locks and safes to local firearm owners throughout Summit County.
- Poudre School District, Fort Collins, CO - The district distributed gun safes and safe storage educational flyers to parents and families of school-aged children with engagement from students, mental health staff, and the Larimer County Juvenile Gun Violence Prevention Coalition in this process.
- Shoot Indoors, Denver, CO - The shooting range conducted 60 free gun safety and storage classes, reaching up to 150-200 participants.
- Sims-Fayola Foundation, Aurora, CO - The foundation provided 177 males of color with programming to increase positive relationship skills, self awareness, and improve responsible decision-making, lessening the likelihood of youth involvement in gun violence.
- Struggle of Love Foundation, Denver, CO - The foundation distributed 400 gun locks during community outreach events and provided an outlet for youth to design their own gun violence prevention events and outreach.
- The Road Called STRATE, Aurora, CO - The organization provides intensive case management to community members at risk of involvement with gun violence. Grant funds supported biweekly educational events with teens to discuss preventing school and neighborhood violence.



The first Colorado Firearm Injury Prevention Survey was published during this reporting period. Funded by the Office of Gun Violence Prevention and conducted by the Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative at the University of Colorado School of Medicine and the Injury and Violence Prevention Center at the Colorado School of Public Health, the survey is an anonymous online questionnaire that provides comprehensive, Colorado-specific data and insight into the impact and prevention of firearm-involved harms in our state.

Federal funding/grants

The Office of Gun Violence Prevention received \$1,122,173 in funding from the Division of Criminal Justice. The office is using \$454,444 to fund 90% of a \$500,000 community grant program focused on prevention of unintentional and intentional firearm-related harm and community-based firearm violence intervention initiatives. The Office of Gun Violence Prevention is providing the remaining 10% of the funding for the community grant program. An additional \$454,445 of the funding from the Division of Criminal Justice is being used to educate health care and mental health professionals about Extreme Risk Protection Orders by developing a new training curriculum and an online toolkit for the office's Let's Talks Guns, Colorado campaign. 100% of this new work will be completed using Division of Criminal Justice funding. These projects are supported by federal grant 15PBJA-23-GG-00005-BSCI, issued by the division.

Resource bank/research assistance

The office worked with the Injury and Violence Prevention Center at the Colorado School of Public Health to create and launch the state's first gun violence prevention resource bank where all Coloradans can learn about firearm injury and its prevention. The resource bank is housed on the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment website and is designed to serve as a resource for individuals and



communities to understand what firearm injury and death look like in Colorado – and to explore solutions and approaches, informed by research, that may reduce the overall burden of firearm injuries and deaths.

Resource bank web pages and one-pagers have been drafted and cover a variety of topics, including Colorado laws and firearm harms such as suicide, community violence, mass shootings, and intimate partner violence. The resource bank also contains information about gun violence prevention approaches like secure storage, out-of-home storage, Extreme Risk Protection Orders, and lethal means safety counseling. The team has curated an external resource library as well as data sources that feed into a dashboard that will allow visitors to explore firearm-related data in Colorado. The data include mortality rates of firearm deaths, Colorado Bureau of Investigation background checks, Extreme Risk Protection Order use in Colorado, and firearm access/storage. These and other data are from law enforcement agencies, health care providers, state and federal agencies, and an independent data collection research group (Gun Violence Archives).

The office continues to update data, add new external resources to the site, and develop new original content like fact sheets, infographics, and/or toolkits focusing on gun violence topics.

Conclusion

The Office of Gun Violence Prevention is continuing its work to implement innovative data-driven initiatives, expand collaborations, fund gun violence prevention and firearm safety programs across the state, and decrease the impact of gun violence and accidental firearm injuries across Colorado. The next report will focus on activities in FY 2024-25. Activities will include continued work completed during the education and awareness campaign, administration of the grant program, and updates and additions to the resource bank.