



ALLEGHENY COUNTY

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Fitzgerald Announces \$50 Million Commitment to Violence Reduction Initiatives

PITTSBURGH – County Executive Rich Fitzgerald today announced the county will be committing \$50 million over the next five years on a comprehensive and well-coordinated public health approach to community violence reduction.

“We are extremely fortunate in this region to have so many different organizations and entities that engage and active when there is a need and addressing violence in our community is certainly no exception,” said Fitzgerald. “With this financial commitment, we are approaching this issue broadly while also coordinating efforts to ensure that our approach is a comprehensive one. Just as importantly, this effort is intended to be coordinated at the county level but implemented locally. The organizations receiving funding, and the people who do the work, are best suited to determine how to make an impact in their community.”

The funding will be used for contracts resulting from two Requests for Proposals (RFP) issued last year by the Department of Human Services, with input from the Health Department’s Office of Violence Prevention, that sought evidence-based approaches to be implemented in highly-impacted communities in Allegheny County.

The [RFP for Countywide Support for Violence Prevention](#) sought partners to assist our broader strategy, including identifying a countywide convener to bring together and coordinate efforts among all relevant stakeholders and also funds county-wide prevention efforts that can be centrally, rather than locally, operated. Contracts awarded for this RFP include:

- Neighborhood Resilience Project for countywide coordination
- Social Contract for operation of shooting review boards in which relevant stakeholders come together on a regularly recurring basis to systematically determine why a given shooting (fatal and non-fatal) occurred, identify trends and use these data to inform prevention and intervention.
- Reimagine Reentry for hospital-based intervention in which trauma responders and outreach workers visit the bedsides of gunshot victims in hospital trauma centers to connect at-risk young men to necessary services and stop the spread of violence by interrupting retaliation.
- Center for Victims, Community Empowerment Association for coordination of victim and family supports connecting gunshot victims and their loved ones to mental health services and survivor support groups.
- Also funded will be capacity building and implementation of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), which uses blight reduction, strategic lighting placement, and vacant building and lot remediation as tools to reduce the opportunity to commit violent crime.

The [RFP for Community Violence Reduction Plans from High-Priority Areas](#), sought strategies aimed at reducing community violence in highly impacted municipalities outside the City of Pittsburgh and asked stakeholders to create a community violence reduction plan and select an agency to carry it out. The RFP asked stakeholders to create a community violence reduction plan and select a local agency

to oversee and coordinate the partners involved in carrying out that plan. The local, coordinating agency is referred to as the community quarterback.

The county will fund existing projects in these communities as well as fund the implementation of the following initiatives:

- [Cure Violence](#) treats the spread of violence like a disease and disrupts it through credible violence interrupters, prevents it by connecting those most at-risk to services via outreach workers, and changes community norms around violence. The program focuses on those at highest risk of victimization from or perpetration of gun violence, primarily older youth and young adults ages 15 through 34.
- [Becoming A Man \(BAM\)](#) is a school-based program that employs full-time licensed counselors who work with at-risk young men in grades 6 through 12, five days a week, through cognitive behavioral therapy, peer support and future orientation.
- Programs like the [Rapid Employment and Development Initiative \(READI\)](#), a paid transitional jobs program that is primarily focused on violence prevention by identifying those most at risk for involvement with violence.

Efforts for the RFP were focused on Allegheny County communities, outside of the City of Pittsburgh, most impacted by gun violence; accordingly, the following contracts were awarded to the following organizations which will serve as the local, coordinating agencies, also referred to as the community quarterbacks:

- Focus on Renewal (Stowe, McKees Rocks)
- Penn Hills School District
- South Pittsburgh Coalition for Peace (South Hilltop, Mount Oliver)
- Greater Valley Community Services (Woodland Hills School District – Braddock, East Pittsburgh, North Braddock, Rankin, Swissvale, and Turtle Creek)
- Steel Rivers Council of Governments (Mon Valley – Clairton, Duquesne, Homestead, and McKeesport)
- Community Forge (Greater Wilkinsburg Area)

Given the need that exists within the City of Pittsburgh, the city is directly funding its own set of community violence prevention efforts under the [Plan for Peace](#). The county stands ready to assist the city with its efforts.

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