

North Carolina Office of Violence Prevention 2024 Year End Report

Developed by:

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About The Office

On March 19, 2023, Gov. Roy Cooper signed Executive Order 279, making North Carolina the first state in the South to establish a statewide Office of Violence Prevention (OVP).

Mission: Reduce violence, harm from violence and firearm misuse in North Carolina

Vision: A North Carolina where all communities have the tools, resources and expertise needed to create and maintain safety and well-being

Approach: Foster collaboration across sectors and leverage the public health approach to support local communities in deploying evidence-based programs and strategies

The creation of OVP has played a key role in facilitating collaborative work between NCDHHS and NCDPS and coordinating efforts across state and local agencies to implement a whole of government approach to preventing and reducing violence.

OVP works closely with relevant parties, including city and county governments, law enforcement, medical, public health and educational institutions, and community organizations, to develop impactful partnerships at both the state and regional levels.

Core Functions

Connecting: Enable access to resources, information, subject matter experts, etc., to support violence prevention work

Convening: Provide opportunities for networking to foster peer-to-peer learning and community collaboration

Collaborating: Work together with local, state and national entities to increase collective impact through whole of government coordination

Training: Prepare communities to effectively implement evidence-based strategies and measure impact

Homicide Trends in North Carolina

Homicide rates in North Carolina peaked during 2021. Rates have been decreasing since then in 2022 and 2023.

Year	Homicide Deaths	Pop	Homicide Rate
2015	586	10,031,646	5.8
2016	712	10,154,788	7.0
2017	685	10,268,233	6.7
2018	643	10,381,615	6.2
2019	716	10,488,084	6.8
2020	867	10,453,812	8.3
2021	950	10,567,100	9.0
2022	916	10,695,965	8.6
2023*	898	10,835,491	8.3

*2023 data are provisional and subject to change

2024 Accomplishments

Infrastructure

- Staffing
 - Sierra Scott was hired in early spring and moved into the role of Acting Director for OVP. She has worked to build out and maintain administrative infrastructure for the office, expand partnerships, and move forward programming.
 - OVP hired two violence prevention program coordinators who will be responsible for moving forward community violence prevention training and technical assistance activities across the state.
 - OVP, NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), Division of Public Health's Injury and Violence Prevention Branch (IVPB), and the Governor's Crime Commission (GCC) have collaborated to fund and hire a firearm epidemiologist who will work across both departments (NCDHHS and NCDPS). This epidemiologist has been trained to access and utilize the public health and criminal justice data at the IVPB and GCC with an emphasis on firearm related injuries and death. Eventually, she will be integrated as a part of the OVP team and a majority of her role will focus on helping the office raise awareness of state data resources for local communities, make it more accessible, and provide technical assistance on the interpretation and application of data to inform prevention programming.

- Funding
 - Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative (CVIPI) Sub-award

- OVP received a 3-year sub-award from the Governor’s Crime Commission’s (GCC) Bureau of Justice Assistance CVIPI grant. This is a 3-year \$750,000 award that will conclude in September 2026. These funds are being utilized to hire staff and expand OVP’s community violence prevention training and technical assistance programming.
 - Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)
 - Allowable uses for Federal VAWA STOP funding was expanded to address firearms and Domestic Violence. In response, the Governor’s Crime Commission (GCC), OVP, and NCDHHS collaborated and met with a variety of partners to explore opportunities enhance existing prevention and intervention efforts based on this expanded scope.
 - This resulted in the Governor’s Crime Commission allocating three VAWA grants totaling \$74,000 to the N.C. Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and the Conference of District Attorneys. The investments will help train judges and prosecutors, support victims of domestic violence, and evaluate how well these programs are working to keep firearms out of the hands of domestic abusers.
 - The Commission also voted to prioritize domestic violence firearm homicide reduction programs going forward in its yearly allocation of VAWA funds, with up to \$935,000 prioritized for domestic violence firearm homicide reduction programs.

Community Violence Advisory Board (CVAB)

- The CVAB has continued to meet on a bi-monthly basis. The Board supported the development of the OVP community violence strategic plan and planning for the North Carolina Violence Prevention Conference.

Strategic Planning

- OVP released the community violence prevention strategic plan in November 2024. The plan was developed in collaboration with the CVAB and several state partners including the NCDHHS, and the GCC. This plan will guide OVP’s efforts to address community violence over the next three years.

Collaborations

- Video Training Project
 - OVP, IVPB, RTI, the UNC Injury Prevention Research Center, and the NC Public Health Association partnered to develop a training video on community violence intervention (CVI) in North Carolina. This training provided background and an enhanced understanding of what community violence intervention strategies are and how they are being implemented throughout the state.

- Philanthropy White Paper
 - OVP and NCDHHS worked with the NC Office of Strategic Partnerships to develop the “Opportunities for Philanthropy to Support Violence Prevention and Reduction” white paper. This document provides an overview of violence prevention and reduction activities, followed by a summary of opportunities for philanthropy to collaborate with OVP, NCDHHS and other partners working to prevent violence in our communities. This document was disseminated and presented during a meeting with staff and board members of philanthropy organizations to discuss aligned state government and philanthropy interests related to preventing and reducing violence in North Carolina communities.

Statewide Convening

- OVP hosted the NC Violence Prevention Conference in Raleigh November 19 – 20, 2024. This event provided a learning and networking opportunity for around 200 leaders and employees of organizations planning, implementing, or supporting community violence prevention programs and activities. The content included a mix of keynote presentations, panel discussions, and breakout sessions. There was a closing reception held at the Executive Mansion where the CVAB members were recognized and award certificates of appreciation for their service.

Continuing Efforts and Future Outlook

As reflected in the accomplishments listed, over the past year OVP has been able to make significant progress in establishing an infrastructure for this office while also working to meet the dynamic needs of practitioners and frontline workers across our state working to address and prevent violence in local communities. Moving into the new year, the OVP team will be focused on planning for implementation of the community violence strategic plan, providing more training and convening opportunities for localities, continuing to strengthen the infrastructure for the office, and identifying and leveraging funding to support communities and agencies in their violence prevention work.

Appendices

- A. [Executive Order 279](#)
- B. [CVAB Meetings](#)
- C. [Community Violence Strategic Plan](#)
- D. [CVI Training Video](#)
- E. [Philanthropy White Paper](#)
- F. [NC Violence Prevention Conference Recap](#)