
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 670 Session of
2021

INTRODUCED BY HAYWOOD, A. WILLIAMS, TARTAGLIONE, STREET, COSTA,
KEARNEY, SANTARSIERO, COMMITTA, HUGHES, COLLETT, KANE AND
FONTANA, MAY 11, 2021

REFERRED TO JUDICIARY, MAY 11, 2021

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in public safety, providing for
3 violence intervention and prevention; establishing the
4 Community-Based Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP)
5 Grant Program; imposing duties on the Pennsylvania Commission
6 on Crime and Delinquency; and making appropriations.

7 This act may be referred to as the Break the Cycle of
8 Violence Act.

9 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
10 hereby enacts as follows:

11 Section 1. Part III of Title 35 of the Pennsylvania
12 Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding a chapter to read:

13 CHAPTER 59

14 VIOLENCE INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION

15 Sec.

16 5901. Scope of chapter.

17 5902. Definitions.

18 5903. Grant program.

19 5904. Advisory committee.

1 5905. Application forms.
2 5906. Award of program grants.
3 5907. Appropriations.
4 5908. Administrative costs.
5 5909. Reports.
6 § 5901. Scope of chapter.

7 This chapter relates to violence intervention and prevention.

8 § 5902. Definitions.

9 The following words and phrases when used in this chapter
10 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
11 context clearly indicates otherwise:

12 "Commission." The Criminal Justice Advisory Committee of the
13 Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

14 "Disproportionately impacted by violence." Having any of the
15 following characteristics of a municipality or community:

16 (1) Experiencing 10 or more homicides per year for at
17 least two of the three years preceding the submission of a
18 program grant application.

19 (2) Demonstrating a unique and compelling need for
20 additional resources to address gun and group-related
21 violence within the municipality or community.

22 "Municipality." A city, borough, incorporated town, township
23 or home rule municipality.

24 "Program." The Community-Based Violence Intervention and
25 Prevention (VIP) Grant Program established under section 5903(a)
26 (relating to grant program).

27 § 5903. Grant program.

28 (a) Establishment.--The Community-Based Violence
29 Intervention and Prevention (VIP) Grant Program is established
30 within the commission.

1 (b) Purpose.--The purpose of the program is to award grants
2 to improve public health and safety in municipalities and
3 communities that are disproportionately impacted by violence by
4 supporting, expanding and replicating effective community-based
5 violence reduction initiatives through strategies that:

6 (1) Include hospital-based violence intervention,
7 evidence-based street outreach and focused deterrence
8 programs.

9 (2) Have demonstrated effectiveness at reducing gun or
10 group-related violence without contributing to mass
11 incarceration.

12 (3) Are primarily focused on providing community-based
13 violence intervention services to the relatively small number
14 of individuals within a program grantee's municipality or
15 community who are identified as being at the highest risk of
16 perpetrating or being victimized by violence in the near
17 future.

18 (c) Administration.--The commission shall administer the
19 program.

20 (d) Public notice.--The commission shall provide information
21 regarding the availability and award of program grant money on
22 the commission's publicly accessible Internet website.

23 § 5904. Advisory committee.

24 The commission shall form a grant selection advisory
25 committee that includes the following:

26 (1) Individuals who have been personally impacted by
27 violence.

28 (2) Individuals with experience implementing community-
29 based violence reduction initiatives.

30 (3) At least three members of the Department of Health's

1 Office of Health Equity Advisory Committee.

2 § 5905. Application forms.

3 The commission shall develop annual grant application forms
4 for any municipality or community-based organization serving a
5 municipality that seeks a program grant. At a minimum, the forms
6 shall contain the following information:

7 (1) The name, address and contact information of the
8 municipality or community-based organization.

9 (2) The amount of program grant money requested.

10 (3) The proposed use for the program grant money
11 requested, including clearly defined and measurable
12 objectives for the program grant money and the anticipated
13 number of individuals to be served.

14 (4) A statement describing how the municipality or
15 community-based organization proposes to use the program
16 grant money to implement a community-based violence reduction
17 initiative in accordance with the strategies described in
18 section 5903(b) (relating to grant program).

19 (5) A statement describing how the municipality or
20 community-based organization proposes to use the program
21 grant money to enhance coordination with relevant
22 stakeholders or existing violence prevention and intervention
23 programs and service providers in the municipality or
24 community, if any, to achieve maximum impact and minimize
25 duplication of services.

26 (6) Evidence indicating that the proposed violence
27 reduction initiative would likely reduce the incidence of gun
28 and group-related violence.

29 (7) Any other information that the commission deems
30 necessary and appropriate.

1 § 5906. Award of program grants.

2 (a) Review.--After review of the information provided under
3 each applicant's submitted application form, the commission
4 shall determine whether to award grant program money to the
5 applicant and, if so, the amount of the program grant money
6 awarded.

7 (b) Competitive nature of awards.--Program grants shall be
8 awarded on a competitive basis to municipalities and community-
9 based organizations that are disproportionately impacted by
10 violence.

11 (c) Considerations.--In awarding program grants, the
12 commission shall:

13 (1) Give preference to applicants whose grant proposals
14 demonstrate the greatest likelihood of reducing the number of
15 persons victimized by gun and group-related violence in their
16 community, without contributing to mass incarceration.

17 (2) Consider the geographic and demographic diversity of
18 the applicants.

19 (3) Consider the scope of the applicant's proposal and
20 the applicant's demonstrated need for additional resources to
21 effectively reduce gun and group-related violence in the
22 affected municipality or community.

23 (d) Cash or in-kind match.--

24 (1) Subject to paragraph (2), each municipality that
25 receives a program grant shall commit a cash or in-kind match
26 that is equivalent to 25% of the cost of the program grant
27 awarded under this chapter.

28 (2) The commission may waive the requirement under
29 paragraph (1) for good cause.

30 (e) Distribution by municipality.--Each municipality that

1 receives a program grant shall distribute at least 50% of the
2 program grant money to:

3 (1) one or more community-based organizations within the
4 municipality or community;

5 (2) a public agency or department that is not a law
6 enforcement agency but is primarily dedicated to community
7 safety or violence prevention within the municipality or
8 community; or

9 (3) a combination of the entities specified under
10 paragraphs (1) and (2).

11 (f) Duration.--Subject to the availability of State funding,
12 a program grant shall be awarded for a duration of at least
13 three years.

14 (g) Notice.--

15 (1) The commission shall provide written notice to the
16 applicant of the award or denial of the program grant money.

17 (2) Notice of the award of program grant money shall
18 include the amount of the program grant money awarded and any
19 conditions or restrictions on the use of the program grant
20 money.

21 (3) Notice of the denial of all or part of the program
22 grant money requested shall include the reasons for the full
23 or partial denial.

24 § 5907. Appropriations.

25 In addition to any amounts otherwise authorized to be
26 appropriated or made available to the commission, the sum of
27 \$10,000,000 is hereby appropriated for each of the three fiscal
28 years following the effective date of this section to provide
29 program grants.

30 § 5908. Administrative costs.

1 The commission may use up to 8% of the money appropriated for
2 program grants each year for the costs of administering the
3 program, which may include the costs relating to the employment
4 of personnel, providing technical assistance to grantees and
5 evaluating the impact of initiatives supported by the grants.
6 § 5909. Reports.

7 Upon completion of each grant cycle, the commission shall
8 prepare and submit a report to the General Assembly regarding
9 the impact of violence reduction initiatives supported by the
10 program.

11 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.