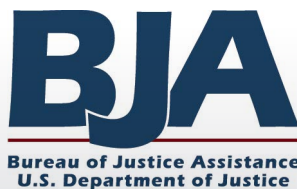




PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS (PSN)

BLUEPRINT for SUCCESS





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INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS

The Department of Justice (DOJ) Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) program is a nationwide initiative that brings together federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement officials, prosecutors, community-based partners, and other stakeholders to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in a community and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. PSN is coordinated by the U.S. Attorneys' Offices (USAOs) in the 94 federal judicial districts throughout the 50 states and U.S. territories.

PSN is customized to account for local violent crime problems and resources. Across all districts, PSN follows four key design elements of successful violent crime reduction initiatives: community engagement, prevention and intervention, focused and strategic enforcement, and accountability. An important aspect of PSN is to incorporate research and analysis to inform the decision-making process on the most effective violence reduction strategies.



**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**



**PREVENTION AND
INTERVENTION**



**FOCUSED AND STRATEGIC
ENFORCEMENT**



ACCOUNTABILITY

Historical Development

PSN was launched by DOJ on May 14, 2001. The initial PSN program was a national program that built upon evidence-based violence reduction initiatives developed in the 1990s to address serious gun crime. These initiatives included Boston Ceasefire, Richmond Exile, and a 10-city DOJ initiative known as the Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI).¹ As initially designed, PSN promoted the development and implementation of comprehensive, collaborative violent crime reduction strategies and included formula grant funding to a local fiscal agent certified by the USAOs. PSN supported the development of partnerships, targeted and prioritized enforcement, and prevention and accountability techniques. A unique feature of the program was that the grant included funding for a research partner to conduct analyses of the local violent crime problem, support and assess implementation, and, when possible, conduct an evaluation. Research was an essential element in the initial PSN program model both in understanding the violent crime problem and monitoring the implementation of a strategy and its impact on violent crime. A key phrase for this program, which still applies today, was “outcomes, not outputs.”

PSN, as initially conceived, also included extensive training on modeling and sharing best practices across USAO districts. Four interventions seemed to garner support from the field: chronic violent offender programs; gun case joint prosecution screening; focused deterrence and offender notification; and crime incident reviews.

¹ Braga, A. A., Kennedy, D. M., et al. (2001). “Problem-Oriented Policing, Deterrence, and Youth Violence: An Evaluation of Boston’s Operation Ceasefire.” *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 38(3): 195-225; Rosenfeld, R., Fornango, R., et al. (2005). “Did Ceasefire, Compstat, and Exile Reduce Homicide?” *Criminology & Public Policy*, 4(3): 419-449; Roehl, J., Rosenbaum, D.P., et al. (2005). *Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI) in 10 U.S. Cities: The Building Blocks for Project Safe Neighborhoods*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice. For more information on the research foundations of PSN, see McGarrell, Perez, Carter, & Daffron (2020), *Project Safe Neighborhoods: Research Foundations*, <https://psn.cj.msu.edu/tta/resources.html>.



In 2012, grant funding for PSN strategies moved from a formula grant to a competitive funding model through which applicant agencies were selected based on a peer review process. This model created challenges for districts to implement some of their violent crime reduction strategies, as fewer grants were awarded to PSN districts. However, the grant awards that were made were higher and resulted in valuable findings and approaches for other USAOs to consider as they updated their own violent crime reduction strategies.

In fiscal year 2018, DOJ strengthened the Department's focus on violent crime reduction efforts and modified the PSN program model. Additionally, PSN grant funding returned to a formula model through which each district received an allotment to implement portions of its strategy.

In fiscal year 2021, the Department again enhanced the PSN program, providing updated guidance to Department Components. The updated policy guidance identifies that fostering trust and having legitimacy with the community are primary principles underlying the Department's violent crime reduction strategy, and establishes the following four key PSN design elements: community engagement, prevention and intervention, focused and strategic enforcement, and accountability.

This document supports the development, implementation, and sustainability of PSN by providing a blueprint for PSN implementation that is based on almost two decades of PSN experience.

Research Summary

A team of researchers at Michigan State University (MSU) conducted a rigorous evaluation of PSN in 2010 and revealed overall reductions in violent crime, with effective implementation related to significant reductions.² The evaluation consisted of systematic case studies conducted in 10 U.S. cities and a nationwide assessment of violent crime trends comparing PSN target cities with non-target cities. Overall, the evidence showed that PSN target cities experienced reduced levels of violence compared to non-PSN target cities and compared to PSN target cities in PSN districts with lower levels of implementation. Controlling for socioeconomic

EVOLUTION OF STRATEGY FOCUS

Initially, PSN focused on gun crime. Recognizing the link between gun crime and gangs, in 2006 DOJ provided additional competitive funding through the Comprehensive Anti-Gang Initiative (CAGI), which provided funding for 12 jurisdictions to develop comprehensive strategies for addressing gang-related gun crime. PSN teams also were encouraged to develop strategies geared toward reducing gang violence. As PSN evolved in 2018, the focus expanded to include violent crime generally and Districts were given greater flexibility to define the focus of their efforts (e.g., gun crime, gang crime, domestic violence). Addressing gun violence remains a central aspect of PSN.

PSN RESEARCH AND IMPACTS

(1) In U.S. cities with populations greater than 100,000, a high rate of PSN prosecutions was associated with a 13.1 percent decrease in violent crime. In contrast, cities with a low rate of PSN prosecutions experienced a 7.8 percent increase in violent crime during the same period. (2) The 10 cities that were included as case studies experienced declines ranging from 10 to 42 percent on measures such as homicides, firearm homicides, and total gun crimes. (3) "The overall pattern was clear in both the PSN and CAGI evaluations. Where effectively implemented, the strategy was associated with significant declines in violent crime."

—Edmund McGarrell, lead researcher of the PSN and CAGI evaluations

² McGarrell, E.F., Corsaro, N., Hipple, N.K., & Bynum, T.S. (2010). "Project Safe Neighborhoods and Violent Crime Trends in U.S. Cities: Assessing Violent Crime Impact." *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 26: 165-90; McGarrell, E.F., Hipple, N. K., et al. (2009). *Project Safe Neighborhoods—A National Program to Reduce Gun Crime: Final Project Report*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice. See *Summary of PSN Research Foundations* https://psn.cj.msu.edu/tta/MSU-Summary_Key_PSN-Findings---FINAL.pdf. See also *Crimesolutions.gov*: <https://www.crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=448>.



factors that may affect crime rates, the researchers conservatively estimated a 4 percent reduction in violent crime attributable to PSN. These findings were reinforced by a supplemental analysis of firearms homicides that found that cities with PSN teams with strong partnerships and high levels of federal prosecution of gun crimes experienced a 10.5 percent reduction in gun homicides when other cities were experiencing increases in gun homicides.

The research also indicated that effective implementation of PSN was a key factor in reducing violent crime across the 94 districts. Key factors in implementation included community engagement, prevention and intervention, focused and strategic enforcement, and accountability. These factors comprise the Four Design Elements of the current PSN program model. Additionally, PSN recognizes that the effective implementation of these elements require strong partnerships and effective project management. Indeed, the findings regarding the importance of effective implementation for violence reduction serve as a foundation for the PSN Design Elements.

BUILDING A STRONG PSN INITIATIVE

Strategic Planning

Strategic plans are a critical component of high-functioning teams as they help to focus efforts and aid in implementation and determining impact and effectiveness. A strong strategic plan starts with a solid assessment and analysis to better understand issues, needs, gaps, strengths and weaknesses. A strategic plan that identifies goals to accomplish and provides a systematic plan for how they will accomplish their goals is essential. Such plans will support PSN teams over the “life cycle” of the PSN, including but not limited to grant-funded projects. That is, a strategic plan should outline activities and responsible persons from initial stages of forming the team and establishing partnerships, through developing strong partnership and collaboration strategies, analyzing the violent crime problem, selecting target enforcement areas (which could expand into regional areas depending on the violent crime assessment) and strategies, implementing strategies and interventions, and assessing and evaluating impact. Ultimately, the plan should build capacity for violence reduction and public safety that can be sustained if resources diminish.

PSN team members are encouraged to be involved in the creation and assessment of the strategic plan. Such input is especially important as new team members and partners come on board because it can help create shared understanding of the goals and purpose of the PSN strategy. Having all partners understand the “why” behind the PSN strategy is an essential step in gaining commitment and, ultimately, in effective implementation. This collaboration can be organized by PSN’s Four Design Elements.

FOUR DESIGN ELEMENTS



Community Engagement

Meaningful engagement between and among communities, law enforcement, prosecutors and other stakeholders is an essential component of an effective violence reduction strategy. Absent community trust, support, and legitimacy, violence reduction strategies are likely to have only short-term, limited, or no effect, and may create divisions between law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and the communities they serve. Ongoing engagement that involves open communication builds relationships, trust, and shared values between community members and law enforcement.

Community engagement involves convening stakeholders—to listen, learn, gain perspective, increase mutual understanding, and to collaborate around shared values of justice and improving public safety. This aspect of community engagement could involve bringing together federal, state, local and Tribal law enforcement officials,



prosecutors, and a broad array of community stakeholders to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in an area and to develop comprehensive solutions to address them. Engaging the community in this way can help local residents understand law enforcement’s efforts to address violent crime and enhance public safety, help the community heal after experiencing trauma associated with violent crime, and ultimately build trust.

Another aspect of community engagement involves establishing and sustaining relationships with neighborhood associations, block groups, schools, the faith community, and a variety of social service organizations and other community partners. Examples of this type of community engagement include youth outreach and school-based prevention, community participation in call-in meetings, community celebrations, peace walks, and reentry initiatives. In several districts, local law enforcement and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) agents engage the community as they collect ballistics evidence following shootings. As another example, law enforcement agencies in some jurisdictions organize support groups for the surviving relatives of homicide victims.

Community engagement also includes establishing and maintaining effective partnerships. The types of collaborative partnerships established should relate to the strategic goals and objectives of the PSN team. For example, a focus on domestic violence will benefit from partnerships with family justice centers, domestic violence shelters, and victim services. Addressing the issue of retaliatory violence may include partnerships with a local trauma center and community outreach workers who seek to identify and intervene in ongoing street disputes. Mental health providers may be a key component for working with repeat violent offenders. Because communication is a key element of building partnerships, meetings with partners should be regular and impart a clear purpose and agenda, with tasks assigned, meaningful roles for all participants, and updates on progress.³

**DISTRICT: NE
REGION: MOUNTAIN PLAINS
PSN PILLARS: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT,
PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

The District of Nebraska PSN team has made tremendous efforts in juvenile and community engagement through the years of both formula and competitive funding cycles. The Omaha 360 Violence Intervention and Prevention Collaborative has been a key piece by bringing together community members and other stakeholders to focus attention on gang and gun violence. Other notable efforts are the Police Athletics for Community Engagement (PACE) program, a youth athletics league with more than 4,000 youth and families participating, and Dusk to Dawn, a youth violence prevention program in partnership with the University of Nebraska Medical Center. The District’s efforts have been recognized at the 2018 PSN National Conference for *Outstanding Individual Contribution to the PSN Program* and at the Innovations Suite Researcher-Practitioner Fellows Academy.

Given the national reach of the PSN program, there is no “one size fits all” model for organizing the PSN initiative but there are common themes and processes for effective community engagement. Training and technical assistance (TTA) is available through the PSN TTA program to support PSN teams in their community engagement efforts, including for example: assistance on outreach and messaging strategies, engaging hard-to-reach communities, and working with traditionally marginalized communities.



Prevention and Intervention

Effective U.S. Attorneys are problem solvers invested in addressing violent crime using all the tools at their disposal. This includes, to the extent practicable, maintaining relationships with and between law enforcement agencies and community organizations so that these groups can connect people in need to social services, economic opportunities, reentry programs, or similar

³ Community engagement that is inclusive and considers perspectives from a range of stakeholders is important, and thoughtful engagement plans can help avoid perceived favoritism and related issues.



resources. Indeed, prevention and intervention can both build upon and contribute to community engagement. These relationships can foster collaborative approaches to the specific problems faced by particular communities and help reduce violent crime experienced in these communities.

While focused and strategic enforcement is essential for disrupting patterns of violent crime, sustaining the violent crime reductions depends on prevention and intervention strategies. Knocking down rates of violence without a prevention and intervention strategy will likely see those crimes resurface and possibly increase. Effective prevention and intervention strategies can be as focused as street outreach to high-risk individuals and offering victim services to shooting victims and victims of intimate partner violence, or as broad as youth sports programs or neighborhood revitalization. Street outreach to individuals most likely to commit violence, and hospital-based interventions that connect shooting victims with service providers are examples of community violence intervention (CVI) strategies. Reentry programs, particularly those targeting violent offenders, can be an important strategy, as individuals returning from prison offend at high rates. Indeed, research consistently shows that two-thirds of offenders return to prison within three years. This places a premium on crafting successful reentry programs.

Prevention requires partnerships. Although a USAO, local prosecutor, or local law enforcement agency can support prevention, typically prevention strategies involve a broad range of community partners and service organizations. As discussed above, prevention should be part of the overall PSN strategy and should help identify the necessary partners and connect them to training, technical assistance and grant funding opportunities.

Other community-based prevention and intervention strategies, many of which may be supported by other grant programs, can be a remarkable resource for PSN teams and communities. For example, BJA's Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program (BCJI) includes a strong emphasis on community engagement to build and sustain prevention and intervention strategies. These include a wide variety of strategies ranging from youth engagement and mentoring, to reentry services, and neighborhood revitalization. Similarly, BJA's Smart Policing Initiative (SPI) is built on collaborative policing principles, in which outreach and community engagement are critical to sustaining crime reduction initiatives. BJA's smart policing and smart supervision programs often include prevention intervention strategies. BJA's Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP) provides support to states, localities, and tribal governments to improve the community response to substance use disorder. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) supports a number of funding opportunities aimed at preventing gang violence. These opportunities focus heavily on community

**DISTRICT OF GA-N
REGION: SOUTHEAST
PSN PILLARS: PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION,
FOCUSED AND STRATEGIC ENFORCEMENT**

As part of its PSN strategy, the Northern District of Georgia implemented the Credible Messenger Model. Credible Messengers are individuals who can relate to and intervene with high-risk juveniles and adults who are soon to be released to PSN target enforcement areas. Credible Messengers' ability to relate to high-risk individuals is based on their roles within the community and their personal histories, which can include past involvement with the criminal justice system. For the Credible Messenger Model, the USAO has partnered with the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice, the Georgia Department of Corrections, and the Georgia Department of Community Supervision. This model serves as both a crime-prevention and a reentry strategy. The Credible Messengers Model is part of a broader adult reentry program in the district. Since April of 2021, 37 participants have been released from incarceration. Of those participants, 97 percent have had no violence arrests since release, 92 percent have had no gun charges, none have had any gang arrests, 70 percent have had no felony arrests, 89 percent gained employment, and 92 percent have unified with their families.



involvement, through initiatives such as mentoring youth and conducting street outreach to gang members. OJJDP also operates the National Gang Center, a training and technical provider. Lastly, the executive branch has expanded available grant funding to support community violence intervention strategies.⁴ These and other community programs can be supported and leveraged by PSN teams to broaden the comprehensive violence reduction strategy.⁵



Focused and Strategic Enforcement

To address violent crime, PSN initiatives often focus strategic enforcement on small groups of

problem people or places. Violent crime is often driven by a small group of prolific offenders; they are often involved in gangs, neighborhood crews, and violent street groups and are typically concentrated in hot spots and small “micro-places” (e.g., a street segment with abandoned homes; a problem bar, gas station or convenience store; or an open-air drug market). Critical elements of strategic enforcement include understanding your crime problem and resources, leveraging technology and analytics, developing and implementing enforcement strategies, and educating the local community and stakeholders about the focused initiative.

Understanding the Problem

Strategic enforcement begins with analysis of the local violent crime problem. Federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement partners, including prosecutors, probation and parole authorities, and others, must collaborate to identify the best available intelligence and information that will help to assess the violent crime and the offenders who drive that violence. The problem analysis can help pinpoint crime drivers and assess the extent to which local violent crime is associated with factors such as domestic violence, youth or adult offenders,

DISTRICT: LA-M REGION: SOUTH CENTRAL PSN PILLAR: FOCUSED AND STRATEGIC ENFORCEMENT

This year, the Middle District of Louisiana has continued to have tremendous success with its Crime Gun Intelligence Center (“CGIC”) and Joint Endeavor initiatives led by the ATF. The CGIC includes state and local law enforcement, the District Attorney’s Office, the District Attorney’s Office Crime Strategies Unit, and the USAO. The CGIC and Joint Endeavor partnerships are responsible for the referral of 17 gun cases to the USAO this year. In collaboration with Baton Rouge’s engagement in the BJA National Public Safety Partnership (PSP) initiative, the district has identified three law enforcement sub-zones that are worthy of focused enforcement because of shots fired and gang activity: Baton Rouge City Police zones 2D1 and 4G3 and East Baton Rouge Sheriff’s Office zone 7B15. The District Attorney’s Office Crime Strategies Unit is tracking crime activity in these two areas, specifically shots fired data. The USAO is identifying and seeking federal referrals of cases related to these two sub-zones.

Through this data-driven and strategic approach, the PSN team is able to identify the offenders driving violence in the district through data and law enforcement intelligence.

DISTRICT: MI-E REGION: MIDWEST PSN PILLAR: FOCUSED AND STRATEGIC ENFORCEMENT (ANALYTICAL TOOLS)

The Eastern District of Michigan has used spatial analytic techniques to identify high-risk locations. For example, Risk Terrain Modeling (RTM) and related spatial techniques are used to identify the small number of repeat micro-places involved in shootings. In Detroit, RTM techniques indicated that street blocks with a combination of gas stations, bars or liquor stores, and indicators of illegal drug activity were at considerably higher levels of risk for a shooting. This type of assessment can inform a variety of targeted and proactive enforcement activities intended to prevent future shootings.

⁴ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/04/07/fact-sheet-more-details-on-the-biden-harris-administrations-investments-in-community-violence-interventions/>

⁵ PSN TTA can assist PSN teams in identifying grant-funded programs as well as developing a comprehensive strategy for securing support and sustaining efforts.



gangs, reentry, street disputes, and illegal drug markets. The initial problem analysis should be complemented by community input and ongoing strategic and tactical intelligence to not only equip law enforcement to respond to emerging violent crime issues but also to increase a community's understanding of law enforcement activities. This is an area where research partners and crime analysts can support law enforcement. It is also where community input is key to building trust between law enforcement and community stakeholders.

Leveraging Technology and Analytics

PSN teams improve their enforcement strategies by increasing their reliance on promising technologies. For example, Crime Gun Intelligence Centers (CGICs) and ATF's National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) technology can enhance investigations and collection of intelligence on gun-related crimes. NIBIN can link ballistics evidence across gun crime incidents to support investigation, prosecution, and proactive enforcement and prevention.

Advanced analytics can also support targeted and prioritized enforcement, such as risk assessments, as part of chronic violent offender programs, and social network analysis (including NIBIN information) to help identify violent street groups at highest risk for being involved in future shootings. Techniques such as Risk Terrain Modeling can help assess the micro-places in a community at highest risk for shootings and robberies.

Enforcement Strategies

Once the factors driving violent crime in the particular PSN area are identified, law enforcement should consider various short- and long-term evidence-based and evidence-informed strategies to reduce them⁶, recognizing that these efforts may vary significantly across districts of different sizes, with different balances of rural and urban areas, and depending on the nature of violent crime there. These strategies include chronic violent offender programs supported by federal-local joint prosecution screening, focused deterrence, and targeting of repeat violent crime locations. The focused deterrence approach is both an enforcement and an intervention strategy that aims to intervene with the highest-risk groups and individuals⁷ to prevent future violence and follows up

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF TECHNOLOGY

One of the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic has been recognition of the role of technology in fostering communication and collaboration. Harnessing technology for virtual communication offers opportunities for efficient project updates as well as training that can reach large numbers of stakeholders involved in PSN.

DISTRICT: UT REGION: MOUNTAIN PLAINS PSN PILLAR: FOCUSED AND STRATEGIC ENFORCEMENT

In May of 2018, the USAO for the District of Utah, with its state partners (the Weber County Attorney's Office, the Ogden Police Department, and the Ogden/Weber Major Crimes Task force), instituted a focused and strategic enforcement initiative in Ogden, Utah. As part of this initiative, prosecutors and law enforcement targeted the prosecution of violent offenders under the PSN program. During the first year of the initiative, which started in May 2018, Ogden City saw a reduction of Part 1 crimes (violent and more serious felony offenses) by 20 percent compared to 2017. Crime rates in 2018 and 2019 continued to fall, though a little less dramatically, demonstrating the need for persistent effort. Since the inception of the program, prosecutors have indicted 115 individuals on firearms and drug-trafficking charges, and many plead out quickly in state court out of fear of being prosecuted federally.

⁶ Resources for considering evidence-based and -informed strategies include the Office of Justice Programs' Crimelutions.gov, <https://crimelutions.gov>; PSN Research Foundations document, <https://psn.cj.msu.edu/tta/PSN%20Lit%20Review%20-%20Updated%20May2019.pdf>; Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy, <https://cebcp.org/>; National Public Safety Partnerships, <https://www.nationalpublicsafetypartnership.org/#home>

⁷ Prolific violent offenders and/or gangs are responsible for committing the vast majority of violent crimes. See Braga, A. A., Kennedy, D. M., Waring, E. J., & Piehl, A. M. (2001). Problem-oriented policing, deterrence, and youth violence: An evaluation of Boston's operation ceasefire. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 38(3), 195-225; Farrington, D. P. (1995). The development of offending and antisocial behavior from childhood: Key findings from the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines*, 36(6), 929-964.



with enforcement if the intervention does not achieve the desired result. Targeted interventions with victims can interrupt patterns of retaliation and repeat victimization. Violent crime is dynamic and patterns can shift over time, but having processes for ongoing problem analysis, data tracking, and intelligence sharing is necessary to consider whether strategies should be revised.

Each enforcement strategy must include a mechanism for making careful assessments as to whether particular offenders should be prosecuted in the federal system or whether other jurisdictions might provide a more certain or appropriate sanction. This evaluation should also ensure that PSN partners bring federal prosecutions only where they have confidence in how the underlying investigation was conducted. Each district's strategy should also recognize the breadth of the type of prosecutions that can help disrupt violent activity, focusing more on ensuring the law enforcement intervention is aimed at the most significant drivers of violence, and not aimed at enforcing particular statutes or bringing specific criminal charges. And, consistent with an overall data-driven approach, strategies must remain flexible as threats to public safety evolve over time.



Accountability

PSN represents a major investment of funding, technical assistance resources, human capital, and other resources at both the national and

local levels. Ultimately, PSN partners seek to reduce the level of violence in our communities, not to increase the number of arrests or prosecutions as if they were ends in themselves. But measuring that outcome can be difficult. A district's PSN team should assess any steps they can take to gather information about the incidence of violence and the effectiveness of the steps we take to address it. For example, state, local, and tribal counterparts should be encouraged to collect and share relevant intelligence and crime data, to recruit the aid of outside researchers who can help analyze the impact of competing approaches to reducing violence crime,

ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH PERFORMANCE METRICS

Performance metrics can include "process" metrics that focus on how the team is functioning, "output" metrics that focus on activities, and "outcome" measures that relate to the ultimate goals of the PSN team. PSN grantees submit performance metrics to BJA on a quarterly basis. Many of these metrics can be used to assess how the PSN team is functioning. For example, how involved are key partnering agencies? Output measures can include indicators such as violent crime related arrests and prosecutions, referrals for federal prosecution, and adjudication. They can also include prevention output metrics such as the number of youth involved in a prevention program and the frequency and duration of the youth involvement. Outcome measures typically involve violent crime incidents, perhaps the number of fatal and nonfatal shootings. Periodic review of these metrics can help the PSN team assess whether all the key partners are involved and whether the level of involvement is satisfactory. The output metrics help address the question of whether we are doing what we said would do (e.g., is the initiative targeted and with adequate dosage to have an impact on public safety?). Assuming strong partnerships and an adequate level of outputs, we can ask if we are having our intended impact on violent crime. If the answer is yes, this can be important feedback to support long-term sustainability. If the answer is no, we may need to reassess our strategy or the level of intensity.

DISTRICT: MT REGION: MOUNTAIN PLAINS PSN PILLAR: ACCOUNTABILITY

The USAO leadership, the Billings and Missoula Police Departments, and MSU have worked to develop a violent crime case review process to provide information to the PSN leadership and tactical teams. This process evolved into a matrix to provide objective information to guide criminal investigations. Each local law enforcement agency also provides monthly data to the USAO to ensure as close to real-time violent crime tracking as possible. For the second straight year in Missoula County, murders, robberies, and aggravated assaults decreased as law enforcement continued investigating and prosecuting meth trafficking, firearms offenses, and armed robberies through PSN. Overall, violent crime decreased 25.7 percent, to 246 crimes, since PSN was launched in May 2018, and there were 85 fewer violent crime victims than in the 12 months before PSN began.



and to develop mechanisms for evaluating these kinds of data and research on an ongoing basis. Indeed, these are important tools that can help us more meaningfully review our strategies to tackle violent crime.

The Critical Role of Implementation & Sustainability

As noted in the introduction, PSN effectiveness relies heavily on effective implementation. In turn, effective implementation and documentation of impact is key to sustaining impact over time. The PSN team is encouraged to include in its strategic plan a plan for long-term sustainability. It is necessary to plan for sustainability from the early stages of a PSN project. Fortunately, there are principles and best practices for sustainability to build upon; some are described below.

- **Communication** is essential to PSN success and PSN sustainability. Although it is common for a jurisdiction to understand that it has a “violent crime problem,” the specific dimensions of that problem may not be well understood. For this reason, strategic communication and messaging and regular communication about violent crime in the district—what it is and how it is being addressed—(“homicide notifications” to all members about the basic facts of each homicide almost in real time, for example) are important both to focus attention on the problem and also to make partners aware of the major facts of each case. It is also important to focus communication internally; not only should a PSN team communicate to the public about its goals, objectives, methods, research, and impacts, it should communicate this information at multiple levels within the police agency, prosecutor’s agency, and within other partnership agencies and organizations, so that everyone is informed continually of what PSN is doing and why.
- The **Research Partner** can play an important initial role in this process by documenting the nature of the violent crime problem in a district, as well as the ongoing, emergent nature of the violent crime problem. A final evaluation that identifies program strengths and areas for improvement will also support long-term sustainability.
- **Training** is an important component of sustainability as it ensures that the core principles of interventions are broadly understood and can be implemented by a large number of individuals. PSN sites should integrate training about PSN, and about the specific prevention and intervention strategies, in police recruit academies, roll call and in-service trainings, training for new prosecutors and defense attorneys, and training for community members and stakeholders, as a few examples.
- Often, PSN sites develop a series of **multilevel and multiagency working groups** that focus on specific problems such as prevention, reentry, drug rehabilitation, and coordination with other non-criminal justice system partners. Such groups assist sustainability efforts through building collaborative relationships and cooperative working routines. They also contribute to the routinization of efforts and expectations.

Typically, funded projects treat sustainability as a “given,” assuming their efforts will continue, without devoting specific attention to how to ensure that the efforts continue. When PSN teams treat sustainability as a desired outcome, similar to violence reduction outcomes, they are much more likely to devote focused planning efforts and resources to sustainability, and they are more likely to achieve desired long-term impacts.

PSN TEAM MEMBERS

As noted above, PSN builds upon a number of strategic partnerships. Once partnerships are established, it is important to devote time and resources to maintaining and nurturing them. Having an idea about what various partners can bring to the PSN initiative is as important as being open to new ideas that partners may bring. Key members of a successful PSN team include:



U.S. Attorney

The U.S. Attorney provides critical convening power for reducing violent crime in partnership with affected communities. The U.S. Attorney can gather leaders from other partner agencies (e.g., prosecutor’s office, probation and parole, local and state police, and corrections), as well as key federal partners (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF); Drug Enforcement Administration; Federal Bureau of Investigation; and the U.S. Marshals Service), to develop a common understanding and unified approach to violence reduction efforts under PSN, and to solicit community input and engagement. As the chief federal law enforcement officers in their districts, U.S. Attorneys should meet regularly with state and local counterparts, coordinate investigative and enforcement efforts, and convene stakeholders to discuss ongoing work to improve public safety.

PSN Coordinator

A project manager or “PSN Coordinator” is critical to an effective PSN initiative, particularly for managing the multiagency partnerships involved in PSN. There is no one actor with authority over all the partnering agencies and community partners, making it critically important to have a PSN Coordinator who communicates and coordinates well with other agencies. An Assistant U.S. Attorney (AUSA) has typically been the designated PSN Coordinator and often works with the Law Enforcement Coordinator (LEC) to provide project management. The AUSA and LEC could also work with a project manager from the local law enforcement agency to coordinate the PSN initiative.

The PSN Coordinator has multiple responsibilities, including day-to-day project management and identifying and coordinating TTA opportunities and support. Working with PSN team members and other relevant staff, the PSN Coordinator should draft a team structure (see discussion below) and implementation process. This includes initiating and guiding the strategic planning process, scheduling team meetings, and ensuring that strategies are implemented, communicated, and coordinated with other key internal and external representatives (e.g., fiscal agent, community outreach specialist, law enforcement coordinator, research partners, victim-witness specialist, and other community partners).

Law Enforcement Coordinator

The LEC often works directly with the PSN coordinator to provide project management of the PSN initiative. The LEC is also tasked with facilitating and promoting coordination, communication, and cooperation among federal, state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies. This involves acting as an information resource on federal laws and programs and functioning as a liaison between various law enforcement stakeholders. The LEC often identifies training opportunities, disseminates information about training, and may facilitate training within the district.

Community Outreach Specialist

A Community Outreach Specialist helps to foster community relationships and can help facilitate engagement with community groups in violent crime reduction efforts. A community outreach specialist in the USAO can support the PSN Coordinator and LEC’s through active engagement with community stakeholders to strengthen relationships between the USAO and federal law enforcement partners and the community. This may involve building on relationships established by local law enforcement as well as forging new relationships as part of a comprehensive community engagement strategy.

Fiscal Agent

The fiscal agent is responsible for managing the grant funds and procurement process. The fiscal agent works closely with the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to accept the award formally, develop and manage an



accounting system for tracking expenses and expenditures, answer fiscal questions from the partners, and ensure fiscal and performance reporting to BJA.

Research Partner

Some PSN teams contract with a Research Partner (RP). The RP should take an action research approach in which he or she helps analyze the local violent crime problem, suggests potential evidence-based and evidence-informed strategies for consideration by the full PSN team, assists in tracking performance metrics, provides ongoing assessment and feedback, and, ideally, conducts an evaluation. RPs typically come from local universities, private or public research organizations, or local or state agencies such as the State Statistical Analysis Center. Local or state law enforcement agencies may have crime analysts who can provide some of these functions, and ideally RPs will work closely with law enforcement agency analysts. However, successful documentation and evaluation of PSN initiatives typically require more than reliance on existing crime analysis resources. The RP may be able to develop metrics and provide reports on the “organizational efficacy” of the PSN partnerships. The RP can also help PSN teams in the development of their strategic plans. Having partners believe that they are working together to address key community problems and ultimately contributing to community health will help ensure the sustainability of the PSN initiative.

Victim-Witness Specialist and Service Providers

PSN teams should also consider incorporating victim-centered programs when developing strategies, as partnering with available victim services organizations is crucial to reducing violent crime. A good start is partnering with the victim-witness specialist in the USAO (including, in many jurisdictions, a victim-witness unit or office), as well as victim assistance specialists in local, county, and state law enforcement and prosecutor’s offices. Doing so brings expertise on such issues as fostering cooperative, trust-building relationships with victims and the larger community; understanding the effects of victimization and trauma on families, officers and prosecutors, and communities; understanding specific types of violent crime, such as domestic violence and sexual assault; intervening to prevent retaliation; and related issues.

Further, partnering with victim services providers, both within criminal justice agencies and in the community, is crucial to any violent crime reduction strategy. This involves working with local organizations that can help PSN teams address the traumatic effects after a violent crime has been committed. Examples of such organizations include statewide and local domestic violence and/or sexual assault coalitions; grief, loss, healing, and/or trauma centers; family justice centers; population-specific centers (e.g., LGBT+, immigrant, or formerly incarcerated); mental health centers; holistic, restorative justice programs; and any local organizations serving underserved and/or at-risk populations. The PSN TTA team (see below) can help PSN teams identify and partner with such victim services organizations.

Additional Federal, State, and Local Partners

Probation and parole agencies are also valuable partners. The state department of corrections, local (county) jails and pretrial services, the juvenile justice system (courts, detention, probation, corrections), and federal probation are important partners in many PSN teams. Depending on the local context, tribal law enforcement can be an important partner. Some PSN teams have included the defense bar, and many make efforts to brief the judiciary on the PSN team and strategies.



Community Partners

Numerous community stakeholders can support PSN, including representatives from schools, social services, community health centers, prevention programs, reentry and transitional housing programs, local government, employers, neighborhood associations, and the faith community. PSN Teams should be prepared to work with community partners who have different levels of trust and different relationships with law enforcement. This requires a multi-faceted approach to community engagement that recognizes the fact that every community is unique. As referenced previously, engagement with community stakeholders that is inclusive and considers perspectives from a range of stakeholders is important. It could also reduce unintended community tensions and concerns of perceived government favoritism toward or endorsement of a particular entity and/or representative, which are prohibited by federal statutes.

THE PSN TEAM STRUCTURE

The PSN leadership team should consider how to structure the PSN team and the frequency of meetings that will occur for planning and decision-making. Some PSN teams utilize a formal structure with different working groups, whereas others utilize a less formal approach. As with other aspects of PSN, the approach will vary based on local factors such as the geographic focus of the PSN initiative, available resources, and the nature of the local violent crime problem. There is no one “PSN team model.” The following are examples of how some Districts have structured their efforts.

Executive Leadership Group

As the name implies, the Executive Leadership Group consists typically of the U.S. Attorney and the other chief executives at the federal, state, and local levels, and, where applicable, tribal law enforcement, prosecution, and corrections partners. This group may meet on a monthly or quarterly basis to share progress updates, assess strengths and gaps, allocate resources, and make other strategic decisions to support the PSN program. This group will “motivate” the team and set the policy focus for what is to be accomplished. Depending on the focus of the PSN team and circumstances within the district, non-law enforcement organizations or entities are often valuable members of a PSN Leadership Group. In light of legal constraints, USAO’s must consider how to avoid showing favoritism towards particular entities when determining whether to include non-law enforcement as formal members of the PSN team, as well as document the specific and important contributions particular agencies will make to the PSN strategy.

Working Group

The Working Group is typically led by the PSN Coordinator and consists of key leaders from partnering organizations. The working group may meet on a weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis. The working group will monitor crime patterns in the target enforcement area(s), develop and revise strategies, assess implementation, and manage strategic and tactical responses to violent crime. The working group may be directly responsible for reentry, intervention, victim services, and prevention strategies, or it may coordinate with appropriate partners providing such services. These are the people active in the specific interventions to reduce violent crime.

The Working Group may include some of the following subcommittees or teams:

- **Street Enforcement Team**

The Street Enforcement team may include violent crime response teams from the lead local enforcement agency, federal-state-local task forces, and/or specialized units such as a gang or narcotics unit. The Street Enforcement team is typically an ongoing team engaged in daily crime-fighting activities.



- **Joint Prosecution Team**

A Joint Prosecution team typically involves representatives from the USAO working with local prosecutors to screen gun crime cases to determine the appropriate prosecution venue for a particular defendant. Depending on the size of the jurisdiction and the number of gun- and gang-related arrests, the Joint Prosecution team may meet daily, several times per week, or weekly.

- **Shooting Review Team**

This team typically involves street-level officers, investigators, federal agents, prosecutors, and, in many jurisdictions, probation and parole officers. The Shooting Review team analyzes violent crime incidents to determine patterns (e.g., is it gangs/groups, drug markets, retaliatory violence, youths, domestic violence, chronic repeat offenders, or problem places driving violence?). The information gained from the reviews provides both strategic (i.e., overall violence reduction strategies) and tactical intelligence, which provides information on specific offenders to target and considerations for specific strategies to interrupt crime, such as retaliatory shootings. Again, depending on the frequency of violent, gun, and gang crime, the Shooting Review team may meet several times a week, weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. The shooting review team could be combined with a strategy team from the Working Group in a single regular meeting. Alternatively, the results from the Shooting Review team could provide valuable information to a strategy team.

- **NIBIN Team**

PSN teams increasingly rely upon timely intelligence from the ATF NIBIN. NIBIN intelligence should inform the other teams described above. In some jurisdictions, regular NIBIN meetings share intelligence such as gun crime incidents that are linked through ballistics and support prosecution efforts and strategic and tactical responses to violent crime. This group reviews the characteristics of gun cases on a regular basis and should meet often, perhaps weekly. Where available, this will include the resources of a CGIC.

- **Chronic Violent Offender Team**

Many PSN initiatives include a Chronic Violent Offender strategy. Such a strategy typically involves a systematic approach to identifying repeat violent offenders who may be subject to proactive investigation or reactive prioritization at the time of arrest and prosecution. The Chronic Violent Offender team may be subsumed into one of the above teams and it may also be part of a regular review process such as Gunstat review teams that review offenders to determine if they pose a risk of current violence, typically based on recent or sustained violent crime histories, gang affiliation, and indicators of recent criminal activity. Such offenders are then subject to a variety of interventions that range from arrest to service provision, as appropriate.

- **Victim Services**

Victim Outreach and Services may be integrated in some of the other teams or may be organized as its own team. The focus typically ranges from improving services to all crime victims, addressing victim trauma, working with individuals experiencing repeat victimization, intervening with violent crime victims in trauma centers, and working with victims to enhance victim cooperation with police and prosecutors, among a variety of victim related services.

- **Community Outreach and Engagement**

The Community Outreach team often focuses on building and enhancing community engagement. This may include outreach to neighborhood associations, schools, the faith community, businesses, and similar



community stakeholders. As noted above, these partnerships should be driven by goals and strategies and may include domestic violence service providers, public health and mental health providers, local trauma centers, and neighborhood associations in targeted hotspots. In some PSN teams, street outreach workers work with high-risk individuals through mentorship, linkage to services, and intervention to de-escalate disputes and prevent retaliation. Community outreach may also include efforts to revitalize neighborhoods or eliminate or reduce crime attractors through place-based strategies. Community engagement is likely to be ongoing and may build upon existing or new community partnerships.

STREET OUTREACH WORKERS

A number of PSN teams and related violence reduction efforts include street outreach workers. Although the specifics of these programs vary from community to community, they typically involve community members who provide a variety of services to high-risk youth and young adults. These roles may include mentorship, linkage to other service providers, and dispute resolution.

Effective community engagement and partnerships can build what researchers call “collective efficacy.” This refers to neighbors looking out for one another and for the good of the neighborhood. Communities with high collective efficacy have low levels of crime. Through community engagement and police-community trust, collective efficacy can be strengthened and the public safety gains achieved through PSN targeted enforcement can be sustained.

As noted above, there is no one structure of PSN committees that applies across all PSN teams. Examples of varying committee structures are included in the Appendix.

PSN TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

BJA supports PSN teams through a robust TTA program. The national PSN TTA program provides assistance to PSN teams on a wide variety of topics related to the Four Design Elements. For example, PSN TTA may address issues such as how to find and engage a research partner, how to develop a victim services strategy, or using innovations in police-prosecution collaboration. PSN TTA may involve facilitated peer-to-peer exchanges. Examples include exchanging information on topics such as developing a chronic violent offender program, implementing focused deterrence call-in meetings and custom notifications, applying innovative community engagement strategies, or developing and sustaining innovative PSN strategies in addressing intimate partner violence.

The PSN TTA team is led by three organizations working collaboratively with BJA.

MSU's School of Criminal Justice has nearly two decades of experience with PSN and provides TTA related to strategic problem solving and site coordination.

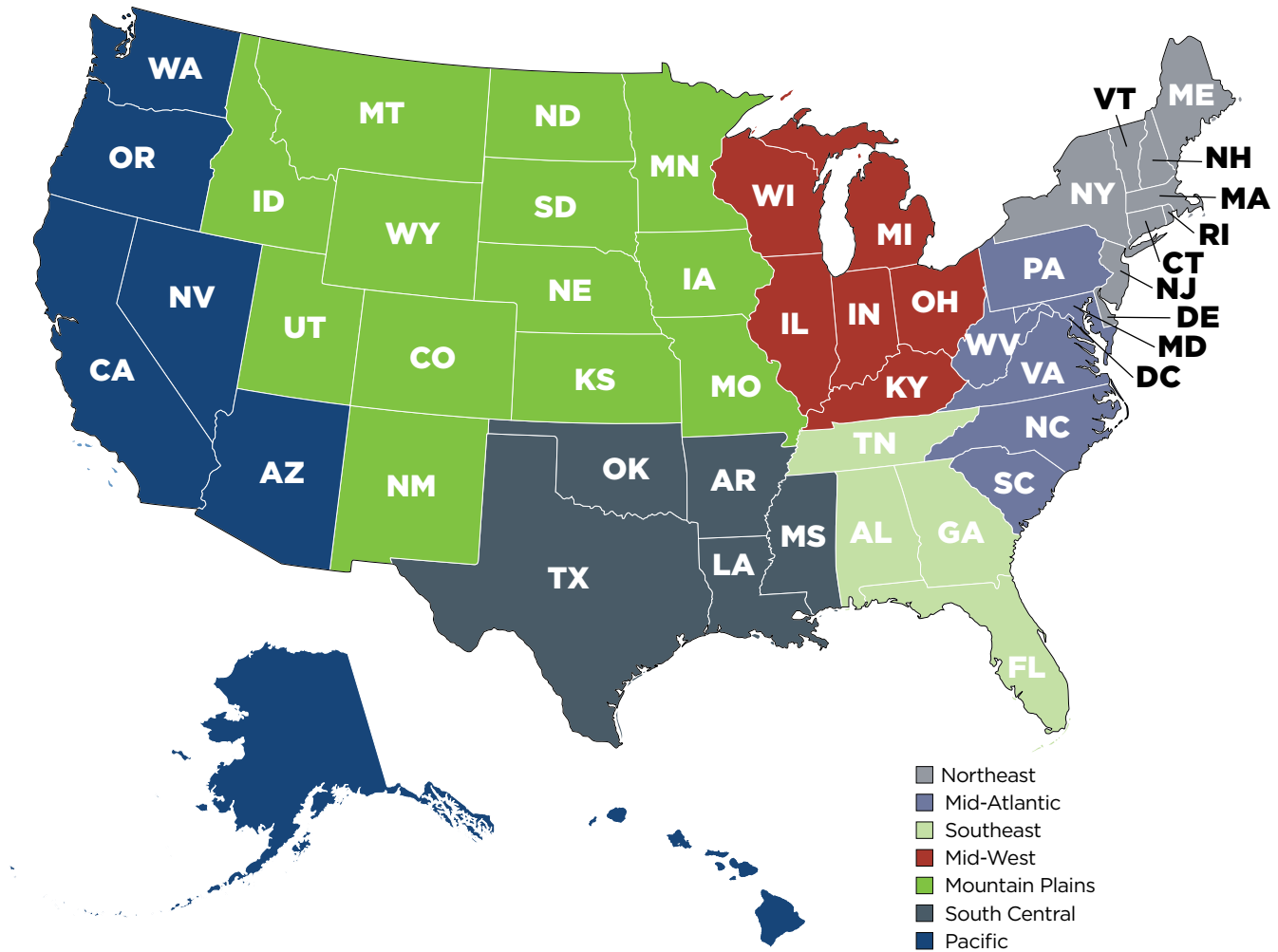
CNA builds on its extensive experience providing TTA to hundreds of law enforcement agencies on various aspects of innovation, violent crime reduction, utilization of technology, and community engagement, as well as on its partnership with the Major Cities Chiefs Association and National District Attorneys Association, to provide specialized TTA around law enforcement and prosecution strategies in support of local PSN goals.





The **National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC)** brings decades of experience in support of victims' rights and development of victims' services on a national scale. NCVC brings new TTA expertise around victims' issues and services to PSN.

Regional TTA Teams



PSN TTA is organized into seven regional teams (Northeast, Southeast, South Central, Mountain Plains, Mid-Atlantic, Mid-West, and Pacific) that serve as central and consistent points of contact for PSN teams which assist with the effective request and delivery of TTA from all three PSN TTA providers. Each regional team consists of a DOJ Support Team Member, TTA Liaison, Analyst, and Victim Services Liaison.



The TTA team's mission is to work with the DOJ, BJA, and the PSN TTA providers to ensure that the assigned region receives strategically focused TTA that is consistent with—and complementary to—each region's, and accompanying district's, violence reduction efforts and target enforcement areas. In addition, the regional TTA teams help develop a network of peers among the PSN regions so that all participants have the opportunity to learn from and mutually support one another. Accomplishing this mission will require the TTA Liaison and Analyst to serve in a facilitating and intermediary role, ensuring that federal TTA providers understand and meet local and regional needs.

Overview of TTA Logistics: Requesting, Planning for, and Receiving Assistance

The national PSN TTA team will work closely with your organization once you make a request to ensure that the TTA meets the needs and desires of you and your partners. Below we outline key activities for requesting, planning for, and receiving TTA.

• Requesting TTA

- Discuss your TTA needs with the national PSN TTA team:
 - ✓ Through your regional TTA team.
 - ✓ Through Kate McNamee, **Catherine**.
McNamee@usdoj.gov, 202-598-5248.
- Complete the online PSN TTA Request Form
 - ✓ Ideally, the PSN Coordinator submits this form after a team discussion, including agreement by the USAO. To make a request, go to:
<https://psntta.org/tta-request-form/>.

• Planning for TTA

- BJA and the National PSN TTA team will review all TTA requests and determine the most suitable and effective form of assistance.
- The TTA team will work with you to ensure that the TTA is tailored to your needs and that appropriate stakeholders from your PSN team are involved in your TTA engagement.

DISTRICT: NH **REGION: NORTHEAST** **PSN PILLAR: FOCUSED AND STRATEGIC** **ENFORCEMENT** (TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE)

The Manchester Police Department requested assistance through PSN with strengthening its abilities to conduct social network analysis (SNA) to boost its crime-reduction efforts. The PSN TTA team matched the sergeant at the Manchester Police Department with experienced social network analysts at the Milwaukee Police Department to provide peer learning support. The Manchester and Milwaukee police departments met three times over WebEx between March and July. During the first meeting, the Milwaukee Police Department presented on how it uses SNA to support crime-reduction efforts. Subsequently, the Milwaukee analysts presented on integration of NIBIN data into SNA. Finally, the Manchester Police Department presented its work on SNA and received feedback from the Milwaukee team on both the approach to analysis and how it could be presented to executive staff members. Simultaneous to this peer learning effort, the sergeant from Manchester attended virtual SNA training through the Naval Postgraduate School.

- If requesting onsite TTA, you will be asked to provide a training venue suitable for the planned attendees. The TTA team will provide logistical coordination for the event and subject matter expert trainers or assessors.

• **Receiving TTA**

- Following on-site TTA, the PSN team will provide feedback on the delivery and impacts of the TTA via a PSN TTA Feedback Form.

PSN TTA Resources

The national PSN TTA team works in partnership with DOJ to customize TTA to the local capacities and needs of requesting PSN districts. TTA offerings focus on all four PSN pillars: community engagement, prevention and intervention, strategic enforcement, and accountability.

PSN TTA can be delivered in a variety of formats, including onsite training, customized assistance, and assessments; virtual learning such as webinars and consultation; peer-to-peer exchanges; and website resources and exchanges.



Contact Us

For additional questions, send an email to: psnttateam@psntta.org or contact us through our website at: <https://psntta.org/contact/>.

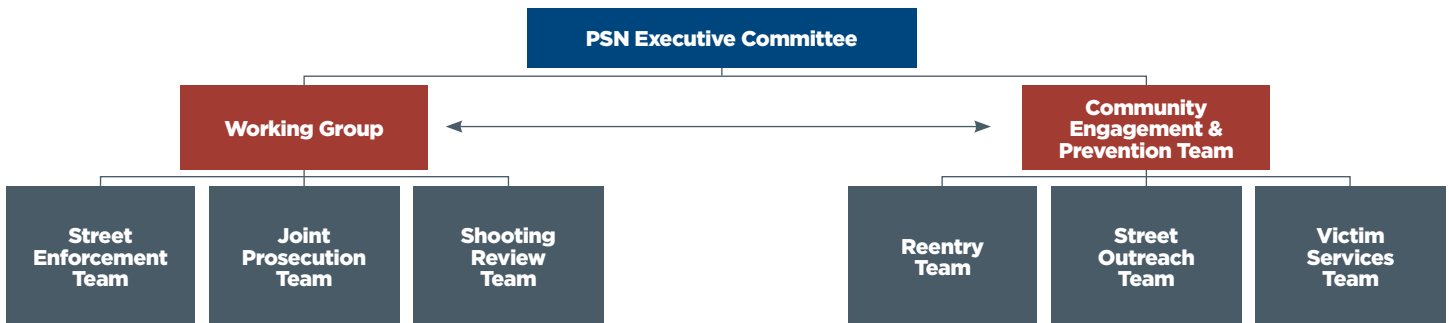
APPENDIX

PSN teams have created varying committee structures based on the goals, strategies, target areas, and the local context of the district. One factor that may influence these committee structures is the size of the district and the nature of the target enforcement area. Below are several examples based on committee structures observed across different PSN teams.

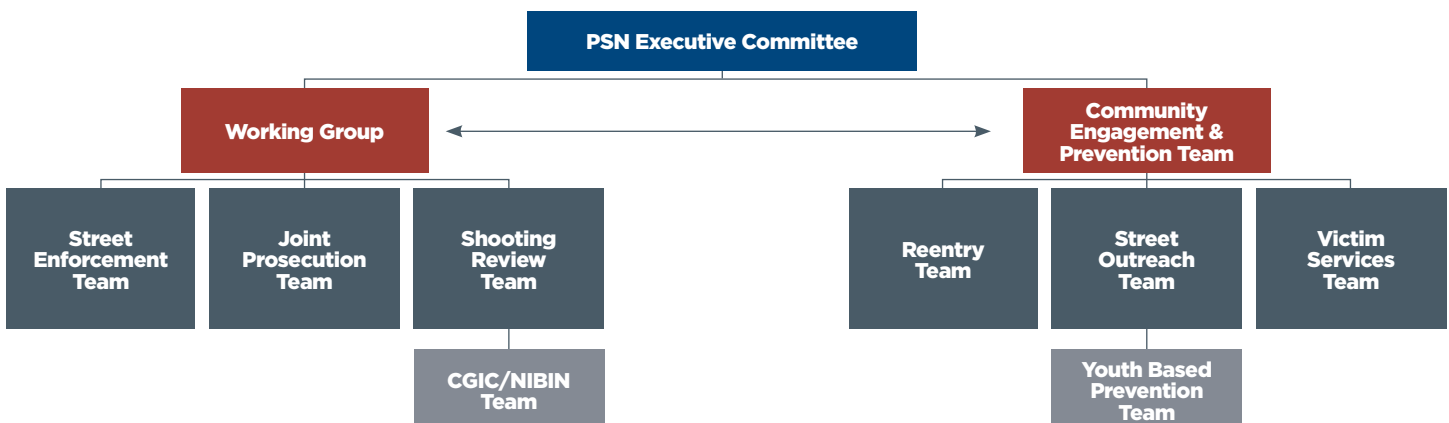
PSN COMMITTEE STRUCTURE
SMALL DISTRICT WITH TARGET ENFORCEMENT AREAS IN MULTIPLE CITIES



PSN COMMITTEE STRUCTURE
MEDIUM DISTRICT WITH TARGET ENFORCEMENT AREAS IN ONE CITY



PSN COMMITTEE STRUCTURE
LARGE DISTRICT WITH TARGET ENFORCEMENT AREAS IN ONE CITY



PSN COMMITTEE STRUCTURE
LARGE DISTRICT WITH TARGET ENFORCEMENT AREAS IN MULTIPLE CITIES

