

PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY (PCCD) OFFICE OF GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION (OGVP) RESEARCH AGENDA

OGVP Vision Statement:

To reduce gun violence in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania by supporting state and community decisionmakers and leaders, advancing knowledge and understanding through data and research, and investing in effective prevention and intervention strategies.

Background & Purpose

Established through [Executive Order 2019-06](#), PCCD's Office of Gun Violence Prevention (OGVP) is housed within the agency's Office of Justice Programs and is responsible for coordinating a system of focused police deterrence in neighborhoods and cities where violence is most extreme. The Office also works with other Commonwealth agencies and stakeholders on community gun violence prevention, lost/stolen firearms reporting, and other initiatives.

OGVP's work is guided by the [Report of Findings, Recommendations & Action Steps](#) developed by the Governor's Special Council on Gun Violence and published in March 2020. Among its many recommendations, the Special Council highlighted a need to enhance the quality and availability of data and research related to gun violence to inform policy and practice.

OGVP Priority - Data and Research: Collect, collate, and analyze available data and research to evaluate outcomes and make adjustments to strategy as needed.

Relevant Special Council on Gun Violence Recommendations:

- [Recommendation 19](#): Examine impact and implementation of Act 79 of 2018, which established new requirements and procedures for firearm relinquishment in cases of Protection From Abuse orders and conviction of the misdemeanor crime of domestic violence. *(pages 43-44)*
- [Recommendation 35](#): Significantly increase investments in data collection, reporting, analyses, and research focused on fatal and nonfatal firearm-related injuries and crimes. *(pages 63-64)*

OGVP Data & Research Objectives:

- Develop a research agenda for gun violence in the Commonwealth that can be used by state agencies and institutions of higher education to answer key questions and address current gaps.
- Coordinate with sister agencies and other partners to access and analyze relevant datasets that can increase our understanding of gun violence and inform action at the state level.
- Create reports and fact sheets focused on data and research priorities for publication on PCCD's website and dissemination among key stakeholders.
- Make data and findings transparent and accessible by posting datasets for download on PCCD's publicly available website (where possible).

OGVP Data & Research Priorities:

Data/Research Priority 1: Identifying and Analyzing Trends in Counties and Municipalities with High Rates of Gun Violence

Priority 1 Research Questions:

- A. How many people in Pennsylvania died from firearm-related injuries in rural, suburban, and urban counties and municipalities each year?
- B. What share of firearm-related deaths in Pennsylvania's counties and municipalities are homicides vs. suicides, and how does that correlate to different geographic, economic, and demographic variables?
- C. What is the rate of firearm-related deaths in Pennsylvania's counties and municipalities, including rates of gun homicides and rates of suicide by firearms, and how has that changed over time?
- D. In counties/municipalities with the highest rates of firearm-related deaths, what local capacity exists to respond to traumatic events/injuries related to firearms (i.e., average drive time for Emergency Medical Services, distance to trauma centers/hospitals, availability of full-time municipal law enforcement vs. reliance on PA State Police, etc.)?
- E. How do factors related to gun deaths in Pennsylvania counties and municipalities correspond with other available data related to crime and violence, such as EMS dispatches, hospitalizations and related costs, educational attainment, socioeconomic status and economic opportunity, and other local indicators of risk/impact?

Data/Research Priority 2: Evaluating Impacts of PCCD-Funded Gun Violence Reduction and Violence Prevention Initiatives

Priority 2 Research Questions:

- A. How do PCCD Gun Violence Reduction grantees' rates of firearm-related crime, violence, injury, and fatalities compare with other counties/municipalities in the Commonwealth?
- B. How have rates of firearm-related crime, violence, injury, and fatalities changed over time in counties/municipalities with PCCD-funded gun violence reduction and/or violence prevention initiatives?
- C. Which gun violence reduction and/or violence prevention initiatives appear to have had the most significant impact? What characteristics do these programs share?

Data/Research Priority 3: Analyzing Firearm-Related Arrests and Offenses

Priority 3 Research Questions:

- A. How many arrests for firearm-related cases (Uniform Firearms Act violations) occur in Pennsylvania (number of cases by disposition, sentencing/offending characteristics, etc.)?
- B. How do recidivism rates compare for individuals ordered not to have firearms compared with overall recidivism rates?
- C. What are the prevalence rates and outcomes of self-defensive firearm use?

Data/Research Priority 4: Estimating the Scope and Costs of Fatal and Non-Fatal Firearm Injuries in Pennsylvania

Priority 4 Research Questions:

- A. How many Pennsylvanians are treated each year for firearm-related injuries that do not result in fatalities?
- B. What percentage of firearm-related injuries end in fatality by county?
- C. What is the rate of firearm injury in each county in Pennsylvania?
- D. What are the rates of nonfatal firearm injury by county compared with rates of firearm-related fatalities? Rates of violent crime? Rates of firearm-related arrests?
- E. What characteristics are associated with increased risk of firearm-related injuries?
- F. What are the direct and indirect impacts, including financial costs, associated with firearm-related injuries in Pennsylvania?

Data/Research Priority 5: Intersections of Gun Violence with Domestic Violence and Intimate Partner Violence in Pennsylvania

Priority 5 Research Questions:

- A. How many temporary and final PFAs are issued in Pennsylvania and by county each year where weapons are cited as a caution indicator for law enforcement? Of these cases, how many have weapon relinquishment orders (disaggregate by temporary vs. final PFA)? (Statewide total and by county)
- B. What is the typical length of time between an order of weapons relinquishment and the actual removal of weapons from a residence? To where are firearm most frequently relinquished (sheriff, law enforcement agency, licensed firearms dealer, commercial armory, attorney, other)? (Statewide total and by county)
- C. How many weapons have been ordered relinquished pursuant to Act 79 of 2018 since the law's effective date (April 10, 2019)? What are the most common types of weapons, specifically looking at types of firearms? (Statewide total and by county)
- D. What percentage of PFA cases with orders for weapons relinquishment ultimately result in reversals (i.e., returning of weapons)? (Statewide and by county)
- E. How many domestic violence incidents captured in Pennsylvania's crime data (UCR, RMS) involve firearms? (Statewide, county, municipality)