

Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Program

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Summary

Project Safe Neighborhoods is a nationwide partnership between federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors that uses evidence-based and data-driven approaches to reduce violent crime. Under Project Safe Neighborhoods, multiple law enforcement agencies cooperate and focus their enforcement efforts on the organized criminal networks and repeat offenders that are driving the crime rates in a region. Project Safe Neighborhoods also works to build trust and partnerships between law enforcement and the communities they serve through coordinated outreach, public awareness, innovative tactics, and collaborative interventions. Since its inception in 2001, Project Safe Neighborhoods has been successfully deployed to reduce violent crime in large cities and smaller communities across the country. According to a Michigan State University study funded by the Department of Justice in 2013, Project Safe Neighborhoods was associated with a 13.1% decrease in violent crime in cities with a high-rate of program participation—including double-digit reductions in total firearms crime and homicides in every city examined by the study.

Specifically, the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program Authorization Act of 2018:

- (1) Authorizes the Project Safe Neighborhoods Program for Fiscal Years 2019-2021 at \$50 million—consistent with current appropriations levels.
- (2) Requires participating entities to create and implement strategic plans to reduce violent crimes by focusing on criminal organizations and individuals responsible for increasing violence in a particular jurisdiction.
- (3) Prioritizes the investigation and prosecution of individuals who have an aggravating or leadership role in a criminal organization.
- (4) Strengthens evidence-based and data-driven intervention and prevention initiatives, including juvenile justice projects, street-level outreach, conflict mediation, the provision of treatment and social services, and improving community anti-violence norms.
- (5) Reserves 30% of funding for established regional law enforcement task forces

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- (6) Allows funds to be used for the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program, evidence base programs to reduce gun crime and gang violence, community-based violence prevention initiatives, and violence education, prevention, and intervention programs.

Federal Statutory Purpose Areas

Through the PSN task force, the USA will implement the five design features of PSN to address specific gun crime and gang violence, in the most violent neighborhoods. In FY2018, these PSN design features include:

- (1) Leadership - United States Attorneys, working with state, local and tribal law enforcement, are the cornerstone of the law enforcement response to crime in their jurisdictions, and must take the leadership role in developing and implementing a crime-reduction program to help local law enforcement address violent crime problems
- (2) Partnership - The United States Attorney must work in partnership with federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement and prosecutors, as well as the community. These stakeholders are necessary partners in this work and must collaborate to achieve success
- (3) Targeted and Prioritized Enforcement - PSN requires each district to develop data-driven strategies to target enforcement efforts in locations with significant violent crime problems and against offenders who are driving the violence
- (4) Prevention - While enforcement is a cornerstone of violence reduction, the PSN program requires a comprehensive approach that also focuses on prevention and deterrence efforts. This entails developing effective relationships with both community leaders and residents, understanding the needs and priorities of the community, and effectively communicating how law enforcements efforts are helping to reduce crime and increase public safety. Additionally, PSN encourages partnerships with local prevention and reentry programs that can help reduce violent crime by keeping at-risk populations (especially at-risk youth) from offending in the first place.
- (5) Accountability - PSN must maintain accountability by measuring results based on outcome (reduction of violent crime), as well as numbers of investigations and prosecutions. PSNs success is ultimately measured by the reduction in violent crime, specifically felonious firearm possession and use, and criminal gang violence

Match Requirements

There are no match requirements for the PSN program.

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Links to Additional Information

Bureau of Justice Assistance

https://www.bja.gov/programdetails.aspx?program_id=74