

[First Reprint]

**SENATE, No. 3309**

---

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**218th LEGISLATURE**

---

INTRODUCED JANUARY 15, 2019

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator JOSEPH F. VITALE**

**District 19 (Middlesex)**

**Senator LINDA R. GREENSTEIN**

**District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)**

**Assemblyman LOUIS D. GREENWALD**

**District 6 (Burlington and Camden)**

**Assemblywoman ELIANA PINTOR MARIN**

**District 29 (Essex)**

**Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON**

**District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

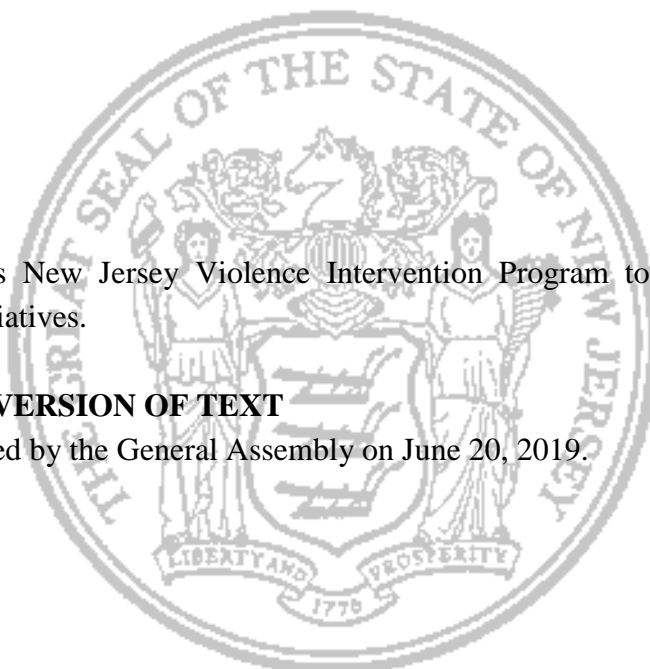
**Senators Turner, Ruiz, Assemblymen Johnson, Benson, Assemblywomen Timberlake, Jones, Assemblyman Spearman, Assemblywomen Speight, Tucker, Assemblyman Holley, Assemblywomen Murphy, McKnight, Assemblyman Caputo, Assemblywomen Mosquera, Lopez, Jasey and Quijano**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes New Jersey Violence Intervention Program to fund violence reduction initiatives.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As amended by the General Assembly on June 20, 2019.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/21/2019)**

1 AN ACT establishing a competitive grant program to fund violence  
2 intervention strategies and supplementing Title 52 of the Revised  
3 Statutes.

4  
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
6 *of New Jersey:*

7  
8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 a. In New Jersey, community violence is a public health crisis  
10 that disproportionately impacts underserved communities of color and  
11 firearm violence specifically is a major component of that violence;

12 b. Each year, New Jersey suffers more than 1,000 interpersonal  
13 shootings and, in 2016, African American and Latino men constituted  
14 90 percent of the total firearm homicide victims in the State;

15 c. A few New Jersey cities suffer the vast majority of homicides  
16 in this State, most of which are committed with a firearm, and in 2015,  
17 more than half of the <sup>1</sup>**[state's]** State's<sup>1</sup> total homicides occurred in  
18 the cities of Camden, Jersey City, Newark, Paterson, and Trenton;

19 d. This violence results in enormous trauma, lifelong health  
20 impairments, immeasurable human suffering, and significant economic  
21 costs;

22 e. The direct costs of firearm violence in New Jersey are over  
23 \$1.2 billion per year including healthcare expenses, law enforcement  
24 and criminal justice expenses, costs to employers, and lost income, and  
25 when reduced quality of life attributable to pain and suffering is  
26 considered, the overall economic cost of firearm violence is \$3.3  
27 billion per year;

28 f. The vast majority of victims and perpetrators of violence are  
29 young men of color who are at heightened risk for exposure to  
30 violence because of a number of risk factors, including lack of  
31 educational and economic opportunity, unaddressed mental health  
32 needs, substance abuse issues, unstable housing situations, and  
33 previous exposure to violence;

34 g. Research indicates that in most cities in the United States less  
35 than a half percent of a given city's population is responsible for the  
36 vast majority of violence and effectively intervening with this high risk  
37 population is essential to addressing and preventing interpersonal  
38 violence;

39 h. Historically, community-based violence intervention strategies  
40 have demonstrated remarkable success at reducing <sup>1</sup>**[homicides]**  
41 shootings<sup>1</sup> and other incidents involving the use of firearms in heavily  
42 impacted communities and when properly implemented and  
43 consistently funded, these programs produce impressive life-saving  
44 and cost-saving results in a short period of time;

**EXPLANATION** – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is  
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

<sup>1</sup>Assembly floor amendments adopted June 20, 2019.

1 i. Large reductions in violence have been seen in cities that  
2 centrally coordinate multiple violence reduction strategies, including  
3 New York City; and

4 j. Providing consistent funding and support to the evidence-based  
5 violence reduction initiatives is an essential part of New Jersey's  
6 comprehensive response to interpersonal firearm violence and given  
7 the extremely high cost of firearm violence, public investment in these  
8 solutions is very likely to generate significant savings for New Jersey  
9 taxpayers.

10  
11 2. The New Jersey Violence Intervention Program is  
12 established in the Office of the Attorney General, in the Department  
13 of Law and Public Safety. The purpose of the program is to invest  
14 in effective, evidence-based violence reduction initiatives focused  
15 on the highest-risk individuals in communities disproportionately  
16 impacted by community violence, with a particular emphasis on  
17 firearm violence.

18 Specifically, the Office of the Attorney General shall establish,  
19 advertise, and administer grants through the New Jersey Violence  
20 Intervention Program, conduct program evaluation to determine the  
21 effectiveness of the violence intervention programs, submit and post  
22 reports to provide transparency regarding the effectiveness of the  
23 programs, and hold public forums to gather community input  
24 regarding the programs.

25  
26 3. a. The Office of the Attorney General shall award funds from  
27 the New Jersey Violence Intervention Program on a competitive basis  
28 to municipalities, health agencies, law enforcement agencies, and non-  
29 profit organizations that serve communities with disproportionately  
30 high rates <sup>1</sup>and numbers<sup>1</sup> of homicides and other incidents involving  
31 the use of firearms, as determined by the Office of the Attorney  
32 General. The grants shall be used to:

33 (1) implement, expand, or enhance <sup>1</sup>**the**<sup>1</sup> coordination between  
34 evidence-based violence reduction initiatives, such as hospital-based  
35 violence intervention programs, street outreach programs, and focused  
36 deterrence strategies, which have demonstrated effectiveness at  
37 reducing rates of homicides and other incidents involving the use of  
38 firearms;

39 (2) support the development and delivery of intervention-based  
40 strategies by entities that <sup>1</sup>**engage directly with those** provide  
41 targeted services to<sup>1</sup> individuals <sup>1</sup>**identified as being in need of such**  
42 **services, to enable person involved in or**<sup>1</sup> at risk of <sup>1</sup>being victimized  
43 by or<sup>1</sup> engaging in <sup>1</sup>**violent acts** violence in order<sup>1</sup> to <sup>1</sup>**avoid or**  
44 **circumvent future acts of violence** interrupt cycles of violence,  
45 reinjury, and retaliation<sup>1</sup>;

46 (3) support initiatives that primarily target a reduction of violence  
47 <sup>1</sup>**and interrupt cycles of violence in the segment of the population,**

1 among individuals who have been<sup>1</sup> identified <sup>1</sup>【through the collection  
2 and analysis of objective data, **】** as<sup>1</sup> having the highest risk of  
3 perpetrating or being victimized by violence in the near future <sup>1</sup>based  
4 on the best available medical and public health research<sup>1</sup>;

5 (4) ensure that a sufficient portion of the available grant funding is  
6 provided to support programs directed at providing public awareness,  
7 outreach, assistance or intervention services to victims of firearm  
8 violence offered at community locations such as hospitals where  
9 individuals may be encountered in the immediate aftermath of a  
10 violent incident; and

11 (5) conduct annual assessments of the needs of communities  
12 demonstrably affected by <sup>1</sup>【interpersonal**】** firearm<sup>1</sup> violence to ensure  
13 program funds are used effectively.

14 b. In awarding grants, the Office of the Attorney General shall  
15 prioritize <sup>1</sup>the following<sup>1</sup> applicants<sup>1</sup>:

16 (1) a hospital which operates or is applying to operate a hospital-  
17 based or hospital-linked violence intervention programs, which  
18 provides services in a municipality that has a disproportionately high  
19 rate of firearm violence or homicide and is designated as a Level One  
20 or Level Two trauma center, under the provisions of P.L.2013, c.233  
21 (C.26:2KK-1 et seq.) and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto, as  
22 defined in subsection e. of this section; or

23 (2) applicants<sup>1</sup> operating in areas disproportionately affected by  
24 <sup>1</sup>【serious**】** firearm<sup>1</sup> violence, <sup>1</sup>and<sup>1</sup> whose proposals demonstrate the  
25 greatest likelihood of reducing the rate and number of homicides and  
26 other incidents involving the use of firearms in the community served  
27 by the applicant <sup>1</sup>without contributing to mass incarceration<sup>1</sup>.

28 <sup>1</sup>【The award applicants**】** Applicants<sup>1</sup> may apply either  
29 independently or jointly.

30 <sup>1</sup>c.<sup>1</sup> The amount of funds awarded to an applicant shall not be  
31 limited to a specific amount and shall be commensurate with:

32 (1) levels of firearm violence in the community served by the  
33 applicant; <sup>1</sup>【and**】**<sup>1</sup>

34 (2) <sup>1</sup>the scope of the applicant's proposal; and

35 (3)<sup>1</sup> the applicant's demonstrated need for additional resources to  
36 effectively reduce the rate and numbers of homicides and other  
37 incidents involving the use of firearms in the community served by the  
38 applicant.

39 <sup>1</sup>【c.】 d.<sup>1</sup> A grantee may use the grant awarded to supplement, but  
40 not replace, funding that would otherwise be made available to address  
41 firearm, group, and community violence in the grantee's community.

42 <sup>1</sup>e. As used in this section:

43 "Hospital-based or hospital-linked violence intervention program"  
44 means a program that is operated by a hospital, or by a person or entity  
45 who is contracted by the hospital, and which works to end cycles of  
46 violence through the provision of intensive counseling, case

1 management, and social services to patients who are recovering from  
2 gunshot wounds and other injuries resulting from violence.<sup>1</sup>

3

4 4. a. Application for a grant shall be made in a manner and form  
5 as determined by the Office of the Attorney General. In applying for  
6 the grant, the applicant shall provide:

7 (1) a description of how the applicant proposes to use the grant  
8 funds to implement an evidence-based violence reduction initiative  
9 pursuant to the provisions of this act<sup>1</sup>;

10 (2) a description of how the applicant proposes to use the grant  
11 funds to promote or improve coordination among agencies,  
12 organizations, and any already-existing violence reduction strategies or  
13 programs, in order to minimize duplication of services and achieve  
14 maximum impact;

15 (3) objective evidence indicating that the applicant's proposed  
16 violence reduction initiative would likely reduce rates of homicides  
17 and other incidents involving the use of firearms; and

18 (4) clearly defined, measurable objectives for the violence  
19 reduction initiative.

20 b. Each applicant which is a county or municipality, including a  
21 law enforcement agency, shall <sup>1</sup>**include in its grant application plans**  
22 **to**<sup>1</sup> distribute at least 50 percent of the grant funds received to either  
23 or both of the following:

24 (1) one or more non-profit<sup>1</sup>**], community-based organizations**<sup>1</sup>;  
25 and

26 (2) a public agency or entity that is not a law enforcement agency  
27 but <sup>1</sup>**regards** includes<sup>1</sup> violence reduction <sup>1</sup>or prevention<sup>1</sup> as <sup>1</sup>**part**  
28 a major component<sup>1</sup> of its mission. An award made pursuant to this act  
29 may be used for the purpose of creating or expanding the public  
30 agency or department.

31

32 5. The Office of the Attorney General may use up to <sup>1</sup>**five**  
33 eight<sup>1</sup> percent of the funds appropriated or made available, or such  
34 percentage as may be authorized under program guidelines for funding  
35 made available to the New Jersey Violence Intervention Program  
36 through federal funding sources, for <sup>1</sup>**the costs of implementation and**  
37 **administration of** technical assistance and for the costs of  
38 implementing and administering<sup>1</sup> the program, including but not  
39 limited to employment of dedicated grants management and  
40 programmatic personnel, and annual program evaluation and analysis  
41 of the effectiveness of violence reduction initiatives. These  
42 evaluations shall be made available to the public.

43

44 6. The Office of the Attorney General shall annually hold three  
45 public hearings: one hearing in each of the northern, central, and  
46 southern regions of the State. The public hearings shall provide a  
47 forum to receive information on how the public funds are spent,

1 testimony from grant award recipients on the effectiveness of their  
2 programs and best practices, and input from the public on whether  
3 the initiatives and the grant funded programs are accomplishing  
4 their respective missions. Public input shall be used to assess  
5 whether the grant-making metrics and process for issuing grants  
6 needs to be revised.

7

8 7. The Office of the Attorney General shall report annually to  
9 the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164  
10 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature, on the activities of the program.  
11 The report shall include a listing of the grants awarded under the  
12 program, descriptions of the initiatives and impact on the  
13 communities served through the grants, and such other information  
14 as the Attorney General deems appropriate.

15 The report shall include, but not be limited to:

- 16 (1) a list of all grant applicants and approved grant applicants;  
17 (2) the amounts awarded to approved grant applicants;  
18 (3) the amount of matching funds and types of in-kind  
19 contributions provided by approved grant applicants; and  
20 (4) a status report on the activities funded by an approved grant  
21 applicant.

22

23 8. <sup>1</sup>~~1~~In addition to any moneys appropriated by the Legislature,  
24 the ~~1~~ <sup>1</sup>The Office of the Attorney General may seek money from the  
25 federal government, including but not limited to Victims of Crime Act  
26 grants, private foundations, and any other source to fund this initiative.

27

28 9. The act shall take effect on the first day of the third month  
29 following enactment.