

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUE

Background: In PA, an estimated four people are killed each day due to firearm-related injuries, with many more survivors.ⁱ According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an estimated 1,941 individuals died as the result of firearm-related injuries in 2022. PA's firearm-related fatality rate in 2022 was 14.96 per 100,000 population – close to the national average (14.46), but much higher than the Northeast Region's (7.76). While gun violence is a national and statewide problem, it disproportionately impacts people and communities of color. Black individuals, who make up 11% of PA's population, represent two-thirds of gun violence survivors treated in hospitals.ⁱⁱ Black Pennsylvanians are also 21 times more likely to be murdered with a firearm than White Pennsylvanians.ⁱⁱⁱ

Tragically, gun violence is now the leading cause of death among children and teens in the United States.^{iv} PA lost 1,151 children and young adults between the ages of 10 and 19 to gun violence incidents between 2011 and 2020.^v The rate of gun deaths is highest among young adults between 20-24 years old in PA.^{vi} While overall levels of violence and delinquency among youth have decreased steadily in recent decades, gun violence and gun involvement are growing problems that disproportionately impact PA youth, especially youth of color. A 2024 report published by the Kaiser Family Foundation documented surging levels of firearm-related fatalities among youth in states across the U.S., including PA, and that two out of three firearm-related deaths among youth in 2022 were attributed to gun assaults.^{vii}

At the same time, needs for behavioral health services have continued to rise statewide and at every level of care, with particularly acute needs among youth and young adults. The intersections of mental illness, substance use disorders (SUD), disabilities, and other co-occurring issues within the criminal justice and public safety systems are well-documented. Research also shows links between behavioral health and crime victimization, suggesting

individuals with serious mental illness and other behavioral health concerns are more likely to experience violence.^{viii} Resource limitations and workforce challenges, combined with rising demand, have severely strained both public health and public safety systems, often causing individuals with behavioral health issues to fall through the cracks.

After a period of significant increases in violent crime, PA is seeing progress in the fight against gun violence. In 2023, homicides decreased by 17% statewide, with several cities reporting even larger reductions.^{ix} Philadelphia's homicides dropped by 23% compared to the previous year and has maintained this reduction into 2024; a recent analysis of homicides in major U.S. cities found that Philadelphia led the nation with the greatest decline in homicides per capita.^x These statistics and trend suggest that the Commonwealth's comprehensive approach to reducing gun violence is making important headway. They also highlight the need for continued support of effective and coordinated state and local strategies focused on prevention, intervention, and response. Byrne State Crisis Intervention Program (SCIP) funds, coupled with resources recently secured in PA's FY 2024-25 state budget, play an integral role in maintaining that momentum and building safer communities across the Commonwealth.

Applicant Agency Mission & History: For more than 45 years, the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) has supported justice system improvements, victim services and compensation, and other initiatives responsive to the needs of practitioners, communities, and the Commonwealth. PCCD also serves as PA's State Administering Agency (SAA), and has extensive experience successfully administering a wide range of programs, funding streams, and initiatives aligned with our mission and strategic priorities. This includes supporting efforts to improve outcomes for individuals with behavioral health needs interacting with the justice system as well as supporting investments in community-led efforts to prevent and reduce gun violence. PCCD's governance structure consists of an overarching

Commission, two training boards, the School Safety and Security Committee (SSSC), and seven Advisory Committees¹. The Commission and its related Advisory Committees are comprised of subject matter experts, practitioners, and community members who are well attuned to the public safety-related problems facing the Commonwealth. PCCD funding is guided by its Strategic Framework, developed every five years to set goals, objectives, and guiding principles for PCCD's collective efforts. PCCD also houses an Office of Gun Violence Prevention, established through Executive Order and resourced through state funding.

Nexus to FY 2022-23 SCIP Funding: PCCD's funding priorities have historically supported a wide range of state and local efforts in preventing, reducing, and intervening in crime and violence. The agency also has a strong track record of advancing collaborative, multidisciplinary approaches that bring together criminal justice, behavioral health, and social service system partners to increase adoption of evidence-based practices. In its initial application to BJA for FY 2022-23 SCIP funds, PCCD articulated two overarching goals that would shape planning discussions and decisions: 1) advance crisis intervention programs that target the risk factors likely to lead to gun violence and 2) implement projects that support emerging issues and priorities adopted within its SCIP Funding Framework. PCCD coordinated FY 2022-23 SCIP funding through its Commission (i.e., the BJA-required Crisis Intervention Advisory Board [CIAB]), and utilized an advisory workgroup consisting of Advisory Committee Chairs, designees, and other stakeholders to shape PA's inaugural SCIP Funding Framework. PCCD's federally approved FY 2022-23 SCIP Funding Framework highlights three priority areas as well as underlying objectives and deliverables: (1) Improve

¹ Children's Advocacy Center Advisory Committee (CACAC); County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee (CAPPAC); Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC); Indigent Defense Advisory Committee (IDAC); Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Advisory Committee (JJDPAC); Mental Health and Justice Advisory Committee (MHJAC); and Victims' Services Advisory Committee (VSAC).

crisis intervention services and supports across behavioral health, civil legal, and other settings, with a focus on reaching people and communities experiencing gun violence; (2) Improve coordination of services and responses to gun violence victimization; and (3) Address the intersections of domestic violence and intimate partner violence with gun violence.

Since approval of the FY 2022-23 SCIP Funding Framework by BJA in August 2023, PCCD released a competitive solicitation to award Local and Under \$10K Share funding to municipalities across the commonwealth. PCCD also released three solicitations to award funds for three State Share projects: (1) A statewide crisis intervention/response services gap analysis and strategic planning initiative; (2) A statewide assessment of the needs of gun violence victims/survivors in communities across PA in order to develop and pilot a new strategy to coordinate outreach and service delivery in an area with chronic and/or increasing levels of gun violence; and (3) New qualitative research examining PA counties' implementation of Act 79 of 2018, which established new requirements and procedures for firearm relinquishment in cases of Protection From Abuse (PFA) orders and convictions of misdemeanor crimes of domestic violence within 24 hours. To date, PCCD has received approval from BJA for 10 FY22-23 SCIP subawards totaling \$2,971,694.

PCCD will utilize FY 2024 SCIP funds to complement ongoing work funded by FY 2022-23 SCIP and other federal and state sources, as well as address emerging areas of need and resource gaps identified through an FY 2024 SCIP strategic planning process. These efforts will advance evidence-based programs, improve access to care for people with behavioral health needs interacting with the justice system, and reduce gun violence.

SCIP Funding Priorities & Objectives: PCCD intends to utilize its existing FY 2022-23 SCIP Funding Framework as a starting point for the development of the BJA-required FY 2024 SCIP Program Plan and Budget. As with its FY 2022-23 Framework, PCCD will utilize

a Committee of Chairs to inform the development of the FY 2024 SCIP Program Plan and Budget for consideration by the Commission (serving in its role as the CIAB). Additionally, the Commission, several Advisory Committees, and other advisory bodies have recently developed strategic plans that reflect the specific needs and strategic priorities for aspects of the agency's work. PCCD will utilize these plans, as well as available data and stakeholder feedback, to help inform the FY 2024 SCIP Program Plan and Budget.

PCCD staff – in consultation with members of the Committee of Chairs, Crisis Intervention Advisory Board (e.g., Commission), and other key stakeholders – will develop a comprehensive Program Plan and Budget (“Funding Framework”) articulating funding priorities and objectives. PCCD is mindful of the need to ensure diverse perspectives are present at decision-making tables and will work to ensure full compliance with the letter and spirit of SCIP membership and consultation requirements as part of its FY 2024 SCIP Funding Framework development. As an example, PCCD has utilized stakeholder feedback surveys as a mechanism to invite additional input from individuals and organizations.

Subgrant Award Process and Timeline: PCCD will use FY 2024 SCIP funds to advance crisis intervention programs targeting risk factors most likely to lead to gun violence. PCCD will implement projects that support emerging issues and priorities adopted within its SCIP Funding Framework (to be finalized in March 2025). PCCD intends to coordinate FY 2024 SCIP funding through its Commission (i.e., the BJA-required Crisis Intervention Advisory Board), and utilize an advisory workgroup consisting of Advisory Committee Chairs, designees, and other stakeholders (as needed) to shape the SCIP Funding Framework.

In accordance with PCCD's application management policy, each recommended award will be reviewed by PCCD staff and subject matter experts, presented for action at relevant Advisory Committee meetings, and presented to the Commission during publicly accessible

quarterly meetings.² In alignment with the FY 2024 SCIP requirements, upon approval by the Commission, recommended subawards will be reviewed by BJA for final approval.

Date	Activity
Oct. 2024-Feb. 2025	<u>PCCD FY 2024 SCIP Funding Priorities/Objectives Plan & Budget Developed.</u> Committee of Chairs, designees, stakeholders, and staff meet to develop and finalize recommended SCIP Funding Plan.
March 2025	<u>Commission Approval of SCIP Funding Plan.</u> Commission approves SCIP Funding Plan in mid-March.
April 2025	<u>BJA Approval of SCIP Funding Plan.</u> After Commission approval, PCCD submits SCIP Funding Plan to BJA for approval.
May-Aug. 2025	<u>Funding Announcements Released.</u> After Commission and BJA approval, PCCD will release various funding announcements in Egrants.
	<u>Funding Announcements Question Periods Close.</u> All questions must be submitted to PCCD by this date for consideration.
	<u>Funding Announcements Question / Response Postings.</u> All questions posed to PCCD and their responses posted on website.
	<u>Funding Announcements Close.</u> Application Deadline date (TBD). Funding Announcements close in Egrants.
	<u>Administrative Rejection.</u> Notice sent to applicants for any applications administratively rejected.
Sept.-Oct. 2025	<u>Scoring Process.</u> Applications are reviewed and considered based on alignment with <i>SCIP Funding Priorities and Objectives</i> , geographic distribution agency past performance.
Nov. 2025	<u>Advisory Committees.</u> Recommended applications are vetted by committees during quarterly meetings.
Dec. 2025	<u>Commission Meeting and BJA Approval.</u> Present recommended applications to the Commission for consideration. After Commission action, recommended subawards are forwarded to BJA for approval.
Winter 2025	<u>Subaward Projects Notified of Award</u> (<i>subject to BJA approval</i>)

B. PROJECT DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION

FY 2024 SCIP funding will help augment recent investments made by the Commission to address the intersections of gun violence and behavioral health issues in the Commonwealth. PCCD is proud of its ability to leverage and utilize various state and federal funding streams so that it can maximize the use of SCIP funds to promote system-wide enhancements and focus on the reduction of gun violence and promote initiatives that provide the support required. As

² PCCD Commission and Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public and are governed by 65 Pa. C.S. § Chapter 7 (relating to Open Meetings).

referenced previously, PCCD will continue to utilize its Commission to fulfill the BJA requirement to form a Crisis Intervention Advisory Board, informed by a group of Committee Chairs (and/or designees) and other relevant stakeholders. Collectively, this process will ensure representation of individuals from law enforcement, the community, courts, prosecution, behavioral health providers, victim services, legal counsel, and others. PCCD plans to utilize a similar structure as its Advisory Committee of Chairs to inform the development of a program plan and resulting SCIP Funding Framework. All applications that are received and recommended by reviewers will go through the standard review and action process via PCCD's Advisory Committees and, ultimately, the Commission.

As discussed, guidance for awarding funds will be supported by PCCD's SCIP Funding Framework, which will reflect a portion of the existing FY 2022-23 SCIP Funding Framework as well as priorities from other relevant strategic plans. To aid in development of this SCIP Funding Framework, PCCD will convene a group of representatives from each Advisory Committee (e.g., Committee of Chairs, designees, etc.) to ensure alignment with strategic priorities as well as representatives from PCCD's senior leadership team and other staff to help implement these activities. PCCD will ensure that appropriate representation from key stakeholder groups is embedded within each stage of the funding process.

As with the FY 2022-23 SCIP Funding Framework, PCCD will guide a three-phase planning process: (1) Planning Kick-Off & Stakeholder Feedback; (2) Identifying Priorities & Early Drafting; and (3) Refining & Finalizing PA's FY 2024 SCIP Funding Framework. To ensure broad stakeholder engagement, PCCD will develop a SCIP Stakeholder Feedback Survey and invite members of PCCD's Commission, Advisory Committees, Training Boards, Subcommittees and Workgroups, and other external stakeholders, including the general public, to share confidential input. A similar survey was employed for FY 2022-23 planning and

received 362 responses from individuals across 56 of PA's 67 counties. Recognizing the limited amount of funding available under the FY 2024 SCIP allocation, the PCCD will use this stakeholder feedback and other relevant data, information, and analyses, to help further refine recommendations for PA's FY 2024 SCIP Funding Framework.

PCCD will use FY 2024 SCIP funds to support priorities and objectives identified and listed within its SCIP Funding Framework, to be finalized in March 2025. The adopted PCCD SCIP Funding Framework will provide a common understanding of FY 2024 SCIP funds purpose and direction, including how SCIP funds intersect with and complement other funding sources administered by the Commission; identify emerging trends in preventing violence and suicide, with a specific focus on firearm-related incidents; crosswalk existing strategic priorities, programs, and initiatives already supported by PCCD and partner agencies aligned with SCIP goals and objectives, including any known gaps or areas of need; identify specific funding goals, priorities, and objectives to shape the development of SCIP funding announcements; provide a basis for measuring success (e.g., data collection, performance measurement, research and evaluation); and create a framework and provide context to inform decision-making. As referenced earlier, consistent with the FY 2024 SCIP requirements, all Commission-approved subawards will be reviewed by BJA for final approval.

C. CAPABILITIES & COMPETENCIES

As the Commonwealth's justice planning and policymaking agency, PCCD relies on a collaborative structure that brings together diverse stakeholders, including judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, probation and corrections officers, victim service providers, educators, treatment providers, legislators, youth, and community members. One of the agency's core responsibilities is the administration of federal and state funding programs. In FY 2022-23,

PCCD awarded approximately \$583 million in state and federal funds to support 1,857 grant projects advancing a wide range of programs across PA – more than double the year prior. PCCD has robust grants management policies and procedures in place to track subrecipient expenditures, monitor program performance, and promote fiscal accountability.

To ensure full compliance with grant management requirements of SCIP, PCCD will utilize its administrative set-aside to support Program and Fiscal staff. PCCD's *State Crisis Intervention Program Manager* is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the initiative, including coordinating with project partners and subgrantees. PCCD also utilizes the *State Crisis Intervention Program Specialist and Fiscal staff* to monitor and provide ongoing technical assistance support to subgrantees. This personnel structure has allowed PCCD to successfully implement and meet the scope of required grant-related activities for FY 2022-23 SCIP funding and will continue supports for FY 2024 SCIP-funded initiatives.

The State Crisis Intervention Program Manager will also ensure data from participating sites is collected in accordance with BJA's performance measurement requirements and will also work closely with research/evaluation partners to facilitate site-specific and project-wide performance measurement, data analysis, and evaluation efforts. The State Crisis Intervention Program Manager and Specialist are both housed in PCCD's Office of Justice Programs (OJP) within the unit of Criminal Justice System Improvements (CJSI). Assigned Fiscal Staff from the agency's Office of Financial Management and Administration (OFMA) will work closely with Program Staff in OJP-CJSI.

D. PLAN FOR COLLECTING THE DATA REQUIRED

PCCD has carefully reviewed the performance measures prescribed by BJA as part of the FY 2024 SCIP solicitation. BJA's SCIP performance measures will be incorporated within

each programmatic response selected for funding as part of PCCD's Egrants System and reported on by PCCD through BJA's Performance Management Tool (PMT). In addition, PCCD's Program staff assist in developing additional impact measures based on national research measures already required in various purpose/program areas, which sub-recipients may need to incorporate into their program designs in order to receive SCIP formula funding. PCCD prioritizes the collection of data that allows for an analysis of project outcomes related to stated objectives and reviews the performance measures of each project to ensure appropriate measures are selected and applied. Funded agencies are required to submit performance data on a quarterly basis via PCCD's Egrants System.

In addition, as with FY 2022-23, PCCD plans to leverage a portion of its FY 2024 State Share SCIP funds to support costs associated with research and evaluation. In its role as PA's Statistical Analysis Center (SAC), PCCD enjoys several partnerships with research entities, as well as in-house capabilities within its Office of Research, Evaluation, and Strategic Policy Development (ORESPD). The agency's FY 2024 SCIP Funding Framework will identify the specific portion of funds to be reserved for these research and evaluation activities, as well as address any additional statewide training, technical assistance, and/or capacity building needs identified as part of the strategic planning process.

ⁱ [Gun Violence in PA](#), CeaseFire PA, accessed May 1, 2024.

ⁱⁱ Brandon Vick, Robert Orth, and Charles Gartside, [Cost of Non-fatal Firearm Injuries in PA, 2016-2021](#), PCCD, August 2022.

ⁱⁱⁱ [Gun Violence in PA](#), CeaseFire PA.

^{iv} [Summary of Initial Findings from CDC-Funded Firearm Injury Prevention Research](#), CDC, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention, October 5, 2023.

^v [Cost of Non-fatal Firearm Injuries in PA, 2016-2021](#), PCCD, August 2022.

^{vi} Data Source: CDC WONDER, accessed May 1, 2024.

^{vii} Nirmita Panchal, ["The Impact of Gun Violence on Children and Adolescents,"](#) Kaiser Family Foundation, February 22, 2024.

^{viii} Jeanne Y. Choe, Linda A. Teplin, and Karen M. Abram, Perpetration of Violence, Violent Victimization, and Severe Mental Illness: Balancing Public Health Concerns, *Psychiatric Services* February 2008 Volume 59 Number 2.

^{ix} Data source: Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) System Data.

^x Chantelle Lee, ["Philadelphia Experiences Biggest Drop in Gun Violence Among Major U.S. Cities,"](#) Time, June 13, 2024