



2021 ASSEMBLY BILL 702

November 12, 2021 - Introduced by Representatives STUBBS, CABRERA, HESSELBEIN, BOWEN, HEBL, NEUBAUER, SNODGRASS, SUBECK, EMERSON, SHANKLAND, CONLEY and SINICKI, cosponsored by Senators L. TAYLOR, LARSON and AGARD. Referred to Committee on Health.

1 **AN ACT to amend** 15.01 (6) and 15.02 (3) (c) 1.; and **to create** 15.194 (2) and
2 250.25 of the statutes; **relating to:** community violence intervention and
3 creation of the Office of Violence Prevention in the Department of Health
4 Services.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill creates the Office of Violence Prevention in the Department of Health Services, establishes certain duties with respect to the office, and directs the office to award grants for community violence intervention. The bill provides that the office shall coordinate and expand violence prevention activities, and work to reduce the incidences of interpersonal violence and reduce death by homicide. To achieve this goal, the bill requires the office to accomplish all of the following:

1. Establish a violence prevention focus within DHS and any division of government that receives funding from DHS.
2. Develop collaborative relationships with other state agencies that are interested or active in the reduction of interpersonal violence.
3. Integrate violence prevention education into existing and planned state funded substance use and abuse prevention programs.
4. Support the development and implementation of comprehensive community-based violence prevention initiatives within cities and towns across the state.
5. Develop sources of funding beyond state revenues to maintain the office and expand its activities.

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6. Create a directory of existing violence prevention services and activities in each county.

7. Develop and recommend additional wrap around and support services that include both interpersonal violence and suicide prevention programs and are funded by local governing bodies.

8. Support local organizations that provide violence prevention services in seeking out and applying for grant funding in support of their initiatives.

9. With the support of DHS, develop and implement a public health strategy.

Additionally, this bill directs the office to establish and implement a program to award grants to support effective violence reduction initiatives in communities that are disproportionately affected by violence. Grants are to be awarded competitively to counties and cities that are disproportionately impacted by violence, and to community-based organizations that serve the residents of those counties or cities. Where appropriate, the bill allows two or more counties and cities to submit joint applications to provide more comprehensive solutions. Grantees are required to submit to the office at regular intervals reports that describe the grantee's progress in achieving the grant objectives.

For further information see the state and local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 15.01 (6) of the statutes is amended to read:

2 15.01 (6) "Division," "bureau," "section," and "unit" means the subunits of a
3 department or an independent agency, whether specifically created by law or created
4 by the head of the department or the independent agency for the more economic and
5 efficient administration and operation of the programs assigned to the department
6 or independent agency. The office of credit unions in the department of financial
7 institutions, the office of the inspector general in the department of children and
8 families, the office of the inspector general in the department of health services, the
9 office of violence prevention in the department of health services, and the office of
10 children's mental health in the department of health services have the meaning of
11 "division" under this subsection. The office of the long-term care ombudsman under
12 the board on aging and long-term care and the office of educational accountability

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1 in the department of public instruction have the meaning of “bureau” under this
2 subsection.

3 **SECTION 2.** 15.02 (3) (c) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:

4 15.02 (3) (c) 1. The principal subunit of the department is the “division”. Each
5 division shall be headed by an “administrator”. The office of credit unions in the
6 department of financial institutions, the office of violence prevention in the
7 department of health services, and the office of children’s mental health in the
8 department of health services have the meaning of “division” and the director of
9 credit unions in the department of financial institutions, the director of the office of
10 violence prevention in the department of health services, and the director of the office
11 of children’s mental health in the department of health services have the meaning
12 of “administrator” under this subdivision.

13 **SECTION 3.** 15.194 (2) of the statutes is created to read:

14 15.194 (2) OFFICE OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION. There is created an office of violence
15 prevention in the department of health services. The director of the office shall be
16 appointed by the governor to serve at the pleasure of the governor.

17 **SECTION 4.** 250.25 of the statutes is created to read:

18 **250.25 Office of violence prevention. (1) PURPOSE.** The office of violence
19 prevention shall coordinate and expand violence prevention activities and work to
20 reduce the incidences of interpersonal violence and death by homicide.

21 **(2) DUTIES.** The office of violence prevention shall do all of the following:

22 (a) Establish a violence prevention focus within the department and any local
23 unit of government that receives funding from the department.

24 (b) Develop collaborative relationships with other state agencies that are
25 interested or active in the reduction of interpersonal violence, including child abuse,

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1 elder abuse, violence involving youth, domestic violence, gun violence, intimate
2 partner violence, sexual assault, and violence against persons based on perceived or
3 actual sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

4 (c) Integrate violence prevention education into existing and planned state
5 funded substance use and abuse prevention programs.

6 (d) Support the development and implementation of comprehensive
7 community-based violence prevention initiatives within cities and towns across the
8 state, including child abuse, elder abuse, violence against youth, domestic violence,
9 gun violence, intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and violence against persons
10 based on perceived or actual sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender
11 expression.

12 (e) Develop sources of funding beyond state revenues to maintain the office and
13 expand its activities.

14 (f) Create a directory of existing violence prevention services and activities in
15 each county.

16 (g) Develop and recommend additional wrap around and support services that
17 include both interpersonal violence and suicide prevention programs and are funded
18 by local governing bodies.

19 (h) Support local organizations that provide violence prevention services in
20 seeking out and applying for grant funding in support of their initiatives and provide
21 technical assistance and support to the organizations to maximize the organizations'
22 likelihood of success with their applications.

23 (i) With the support of the division of the department responsible for public
24 health, develop and implement a public health strategy that provides for all of the
25 following:

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1 1. The use of culturally competent and community-wide risk-assessment
2 tools.

3 2. The identification of heavy utilizers of public services.

4 3. The provision of cognitive and family-based therapy.

5 4. The coordination of available services to combat the spread of violence.

6 5. Technical assistance from culturally-competent organizations or
7 individuals.

8 (j) Conduct a statewide public health campaign concerning the impact of
9 violence, strategies for violence cessation, and the use of alternative dispute
10 resolution techniques.

11 **(3) GRANTS.** (a) The office of violence prevention shall develop and implement
12 a program to award grants to support effective violence reduction initiatives in
13 communities that are disproportionately affected by violence, including gun
14 violence, group violence, suicides, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and
15 gender-based violence.

16 (b) The grants shall be used to support, expand, and replicate evidence-based
17 violence reduction initiatives, including hospital-based violence intervention
18 programs, evidence-based street outreach programs, and focused deterrence
19 strategies, that seek to interrupt the cycles of violence, victimization, and retaliation
20 in order to reduce the incidence of firearm violence. These initiatives must be
21 primarily focused on providing violence intervention services and support to the
22 small segment of the population that is identified as having the highest risk of
23 perpetrating or being victimized by firearm violence.

24 (c) Grants shall be awarded on a competitive basis to counties and cities that
25 are disproportionately impacted by violence, and to community-based organizations

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1 that serve the residents of those counties or cities. Where appropriate, 2 or more
2 counties and cities may submit joint applications to provide more comprehensive
3 solutions.

4 (d) An applicant for a grant shall submit to the office on a form provided by the
5 office a proposal that includes all of the following:

6 1. A problem statement describing the issue or concern followed by a list of
7 goals, objectives, and activities that describe how the applicant proposes to use the
8 grant to implement an evidence-based violence reduction initiative in accordance
9 with this subsection.

10 2. A statement describing how the applicant proposes to use the grant to
11 enhance the local coordination of existing violence prevention and intervention
12 programs and minimize duplication of services.

13 (e) In awarding grants under this subsection, the office shall give preference
14 to applicants whose grant proposals demonstrate to the greatest extent all of the
15 following:

16 1. A substantial likelihood of reducing violence in the applicant's community
17 without contributing to mass incarceration.

18 2. Partnership with one or more entities, including community-based
19 organizations and public agencies, provided that at least one applicant is a
20 community-based organization.

21 3. Leadership reflective of the demographics of the population being served.

22 4. Experience working with formerly incarcerated or otherwise
23 justice-involved individuals.

24 5. Experience working with persons who are currently or formerly involved
25 with interpersonal violence.

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1 (f) Each county or city that receives a grant under this subsection shall
2 distribute not less than one-half of the grant funds awarded to one or more of any
3 of the following entities:

4 1. Community-based organizations.

5 2. Indian tribes and tribal organizations.

6 3. Public agencies or departments that are primarily dedicated to community
7 safety or gun violence prevention.

8 (g) The office shall form a grant selection advisory committee that shall include,
9 without limitation, persons who have been impacted by violence, formerly
10 incarcerated persons, and persons with direct experience in implementing
11 evidence-based violence reduction initiatives, including initiatives that incorporate
12 public health, community-based, or ecological systems approaches.

13 (h) A grantee under this subsection shall report to the office, on a form provided
14 by the office and in intervals prescribed by the office, the grantee's progress in
15 achieving the stated grant objectives.

16 (i) The office may contract with an entity that has expertise in evaluating
17 community-based grant-funded programs to evaluate a grant proposal's
18 effectiveness, provided that all of the following are satisfied:

19 1. The entity uses both qualitative and quantitative methods in evaluating the
20 grant proposal.

21 2. To the extent practicable, the entity uses participatory action research
22 methods or other research methods that incorporate subject engagement.

23 **SECTION 5. Effective date.**

