



AGENDA REPORT

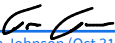
TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Holly Joshi
Chief of Violence Prevention

SUBJECT: DVP Grant From the Bureau of
Justice Assistance

DATE: October 21, 2024

City Administrator Approval


Jestin Johnson (Oct 31, 2024 19:43 PDT)

Date: Oct 31, 2024

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution:

- 1. Accepting And Appropriating A Grant From The Bureau Of Justice Assistance's Community-Based Violence Intervention And Prevention Initiative In An Amount Not To Exceed Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000) For The Period Of October 1, 2024, To September 30, 2027; And**
- 2. Adding Three (3) Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Case Manager I Positions In The Department Of Violence Prevention Through September 30, 2027, In An Amount Not To Exceed One Million Two Hundred Seventy-Nine Thousand Two Hundred Seven Dollars (\$1,279,207); And**
- 3. Authorizing The City Administrator To Oversee The Distribution Of Up To Four Hundred Sixty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$465,000) In Grant Funds As Stipends And Incentives To Support Residents In Meeting Basic Needs And Reducing Risk For Violence; And**
- 4. Authorizing The City Administrator To Adjust The Allocated Funding For The Same Purposes Within The Limits Of The Grant Award.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed resolution, if adopted, will allow the City Administrator to do the following:

1. Accept a three-year, \$2 million grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance to expand the DVP's capacity to deliver intensive life coaching services as part of the City's *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy.
2. Add three (3) full-time Case Manager I positions in the Department of Violence Prevention (DVP) through September 30, 2027, enabling the DVP to hire three additional *Ceasefire-Lifeline* life coaches.

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3. Authorize the City Administrator to oversee the distribution of up to \$465,000 in stipends for life coaching clients to incentivize their completion of life coaching goals that reduce their risk of violence and strengthen their support systems.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The City of Oakland implements the focused deterrence strategy known as *Ceasefire-Lifeline*, an evidence-based, data-driven, and cross-sector strategy for reducing group-related shootings and homicides by focusing social services and enforcement efforts on individuals who are most likely to be victims or perpetrators of gun violence in the near term. Oakland first implemented the *Ceasefire-Lifeline* model in 2012 and experienced a drop in homicides from 126 in 2012 to 68 in 2018, a nearly 50% reduction. Researchers who evaluated the strategy from 2012 to 2017 attributed 31.5% of the reduction directly to *Ceasefire-Lifeline*. In 2019, however, shootings and homicides began to increase again. Oakland ended 2023 with 120 homicides, nearly double the number from 2018. An audit completed in December 2023 by the California Partnership for Safe Communities (CPSC) and National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) revealed that *Ceasefire-Lifeline* had not been implemented with fidelity since 2019, lacking adequate staffing resources, service intensity, and focus on the highest-risk individuals. Under new leadership, the City of Oakland has recommitted to implementing the model with fidelity, and the DVP and Oakland Police Department (OPD) completed departmental reorganizations in February 2024 to achieve this goal.

The DVP implements the prevention and intervention (“Lifeline”) components of the strategy by relentlessly pursuing individuals at greatest risk to engage them in intensive services that support changes in mindsets and behaviors to avoid future violence. Violence interrupters relentlessly pursue individuals at the highest risk for gun violence, locating them and building relationships with the goal of connecting them to intensive DVP services. Violence interrupters also maintain a high-visibility presence in impacted communities, building relationships, identifying and mediating group conflicts, and preventing retaliatory violence. Life coaches work closely with participants to identify factors driving their participation in violence, develop and implement strategies to reduce risk, and build the safety nets and supports needed to increase protective factors. Life coaches also connect participants to organizations funded by the DVP to provide resources, including housing, employment, and relocation services. This intensive program model requires life coaches to have daily communication with their participants over a period of at least 12 months to facilitate positive behavior change.

The audit conducted by CPSC and NICJR identified approximately 350 individuals who are most likely to be victims or perpetrators of gun violence in Oakland in the near-term. Evidence suggests that up to 70% of these individuals will engage in services if relentlessly pursued, which equates to 240 individuals in Oakland. Life coaches must maintain small caseloads of 8-10 clients to ensure they can provide the daily contact and intensive services needed to support this population, requiring the DVP to employ 24-30 life coaches to fully implement the *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy. The DVP currently employs ten life coaches who have the capacity to serve 80-100 individuals annually. Life coaches hired by the DVP often come from community organizations funded by the DVP due to the City’s competitive pay and benefits. External grant funding is required to expand the DVP’s current capacity and meet the annual service need.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

The proposed resolution will accept a three-year, \$2 million grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Community-Based Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative to increase the DVP's capacity to deliver intensive life coaching services to *Ceasefire-Lifeline* clients.

Specifically, this grant will fund the following:

1. **Three (3) full-time Case Manager I positions** within the DVP to provide intensive life coaching services for at least 12 months to individuals who are identified through the *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy as being at imminent risk of gun violence. Life coaches will maintain caseloads of 8-10 individuals and provide intensive support through daily contact, coaching, and service referrals. The three life coaches will serve a total of 75 individuals during the grant period, with the expectation that life coaches will support these individuals in changing their mindsets, behaviors, and contexts to significantly reduce their risk for future violence.
2. **Stipends of up to \$500 per month** for participants engaged in intensive life coaching services. Stipends are used to incentivize positive behavior change and are conditioned on participants completing their life map goals. These payments also support individuals in meeting basic needs and reducing their risk for violence.
3. **Flexible funds of \$500 per participant** that life coaches can use to facilitate life coaching engagement and goal attainment over the course of a year. Funds may be used for things such as ordering a birth certificate, buying work-appropriate clothes, or paying for meals that facilitate relationship development between the participant and life coach.
4. **A problem analysis and impact evaluation** for the *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy. Dr. Lisa Barao, a researcher from the University of Pennsylvania who has previously conducted analyses of gun violence in Oakland, will conduct a problem analysis of Oakland's gun violence from October 1, 2023, through December 31, 2024. This will provide current information on the activity and membership of street groups in Oakland, as well as demographics and risk factors of homicide and nonfatal shooting victims. At the end of the grant period, Dr. Barao's team will also conduct an outcome evaluation that examines differences in victimization, arrest, and incarceration for individuals identified through *Ceasefire-Lifeline* who participate in life coaching versus those who do not.
5. **Life coaching certification** delivered by Blooming Willow Consulting in partnership with Bright Research Group. This certification program is recognized by the International Coaching Federation and created specifically for community violence interrupters working with vulnerable populations.

The proposed resolution advances the citywide priority of **holistic community safety** by increasing the DVP's capacity to deliver life-saving intensive life coaching services to individuals at greatest risk of gun violence.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this proposed resolution will authorize the City Administrator to accept and appropriate a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance for \$2,000,000 for the term of October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2027. **Table 1** provides an overview of the approved grant budget. The grant will be appropriated into the Project (To-be-determined), Award (To-be-determined), Fund (2112), Fostering Safe and Healthy Communities Program (SC22), and Oakland Unite Organization (70211).

Table 1. Grant Budget Approved by the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

Item	Total amount
Staff	
Case Manager I (3)	\$1,279,207
Subtotal: Staff	\$1,279,207
Other	
Travel for BJA conference	\$7,796
Computers and cell phones for staff	\$9,000
Evaluation of Ceasefire impact and problem analysis	\$82,412
Life coaching certification training	\$28,125
Stipends for life coaching participants	\$465,000
Flexible funds for life coaches to use with participants	\$41,250
Mileage for staff	\$10,620
Program supplies	\$8,179
Subtotal: Other	\$652,382
Indirect Costs (9.6%)	\$68,411
Total	\$2,000,000

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

No public outreach was deemed necessary for the proposed resolution beyond the standard City Council agenda noticing procedures. However, the DVP discusses and reports on its work related to the *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy regularly with faith-based partners involved in the *Ceasefire-Lifeline* partnership group, with the Safety and Services Oversight Commission (SSOC), and with the City Council's Public Safety Committee. All of these groups strongly support the expansion of DVP life coaching services for individuals identified through *Ceasefire-Lifeline* as being at highest risk for gun violence in Oakland.

COORDINATION

The City Attorney's Office, Budget Bureau, and City Administrator's Office were consulted during the preparation of this agenda report and resolution.

PAST PERFORMANCE, EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy has been studied extensively in cities across the country and is widely viewed by experts as the most effective approach to reducing group-driven gun violence. Oakland first implemented *Ceasefire-Lifeline* in 2012 and experienced a 31.5% reduction in gun homicides that was directly attributable to the strategy. Since reimplementing the model with fidelity in February 2024, Oakland has seen significant reductions in shootings and homicides compared to last year. As of October 21, 2024, homicides were down 32%, and assaults with a firearm were down 30% compared to the same day in 2023.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Participants in intensive life coaching services will receive stipends of up to \$500 per month for completing life coaching goals.

Environmental: There are no environmental opportunities associated with this report.

Race & Equity: Grant-funded life coaches and violence interrupters will serve individuals at the highest risk of imminent gun violence, the majority of whom are African American or Latino males. Through these services, grant-funded staff will contribute to a reduction in violent victimization and incarceration among this vulnerable population.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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For questions regarding this report, please contact Holly Joshi, Chief of Violence Prevention, at (510) 920-6272.

Respectfully submitted,



Holly Joshi (Oct 31, 2024 14:04 PDT)

Holly Joshi
Chief of Violence Prevention

Reviewed by:
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