

**WORKGROUP TO STUDY GUN VIOLENCE**  
**MINUTES**  
**March, 19 2025**

• Members Present

Krystal Oriadha, Council Member District 7, Co-Chair  
Perry Paylor, Deputy State's Attorney, State's Attorney's Office, Co-Chair  
Barry L. Stanton, ACAO  
Tyrone Collington Sr., Chief, Police Chiefs' Association  
Zachary O'Lare, Deputy Chief, Police Department  
Elana Belon-Butler, Director, Family Services  
Terence Clark, Director, Department of Corrections  
Dr. Matthew Levy, Health Officer, Health Department  
Brittany Vazquez, Program Manager, Division of Behavioral Health, Department of Health  
Shawne Waddy, Victim Coordinator, Police Department

• Members Absent:

Juanita Agnew, The Jayz Agnew Foundation  
Dr. Tyreese McAllister, Ayanna J. McAllister Legacy Foundation  
Steven Upathanbhakul, Assistant Sheriff, Office of the Sheriff  
Melissa Pryce, Public Defender  
Carlesa Peterson, Assistant Director, Department of Social Services

• Others Present:

Nay Archie, Victim Services Coordinator, Police Department  
Lisa Garry, Deputy Secretary of Community Services for the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services  
Anthony King, Lieutenant, Police Department Homicide  
Shane Goudreau, Lieutenant, Police Department Homicide

• Staff Present

Sandra Eubanks, HHSPS Committee Director  
Rhonda Riddick, HHSPS Committee Aide  
Tiffany Hannon, Chief of Staff to Council Member Oriadha

# Gun Violence Workgroup

## Minutes

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### • **Welcome & Opening Remarks**

Council Member Oriadha identified herself as a representative of District 7 and served as Co-Chair of the Task Force. She called the meeting to order at approximately 11:06 a.m., expressing appreciation to attendees for their continued efforts over the past few months. She emphasized the importance of the Workgroup's recommendations and noted that the meetings are public, recorded, and posted on the Council website, along with any presentations, agendas, and minutes. This ensures transparency and public access to all information discussed. Co-Chair Oriadha invited her Co-Chair to provide opening remarks.

Deputy State's Attorney Perry Paylor introduced himself and expressed his honor in serving as Co-Chair alongside Council Member Oriadha. He commended everyone on the call, especially law enforcement, for their collaborative efforts in contributing to notable declines in key crime statistics across Prince George's County. He concluded by encouraging everyone to continue their intense work.

### • **Review of Minutes for the March 18, 2025, meeting**

Co-Chair Perry moved to approve the minutes as presented, with a second by Chief Collington.

- **Presentation:** Navarra Archie, MPS, CA, VASII, Service Coordinator  
Major Crimes Division – Homicide  
Prince George's County Police Department

The presentation provided an overview of the newly expanded Victim Services Program within the Prince George's County Police Department's Major Crimes Division. Reimagined in July 2024, the program aims to offer support and connect victims, witnesses, and families affected by violent crimes, especially gun violence and homicides, to essential services.

#### **Victims Services Program PowerPoint Overview:**

##### **1. Mission of the Program**

- Reimagined in July 2024
- Originally focused on homicides, it has now expanded to include all violent crimes.
- Goal: Provide triage and support to victims, witnesses, and next of kin through local, state, and national resources.

##### **2. Victim Rights**

- Victims receive a brochure outlining their rights under Maryland law:
  - Right to be seen, heard, and treated with dignity.
  - Right to be informed of investigation progress.
  - Right to attend all court proceedings.
  - Information shared is limited to non-sensitive data to protect ongoing investigations.

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### 3. Services for Victims of Gun Violence & Homicide

#### Primary Partners:

- CAFY - Community Advocates for Family and Youth
  - **Services Provided**
    - Crisis and case management
    - Court accompaniment
    - Counseling (individual and group)
    - Legal services (civil matters such as protective orders, immigration, landlord-tenant, etc.)
    - Community education and senior support
  - **Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center**
    - No in-house resources but a strong referral network
    - Statewide advocacy organization
    - Offers court accompaniment and legal support
    - Partnership for therapy (first six sessions free, then sliding scale)
    - Support group for homicide survivors
    - Active legislative advocacy

### 4. Support for Domestic Violence-Related Gun Violence Victims

#### Key Resources:

##### Family Justice Center (FJC) – “The One-Stop Shop”

- Located at Upper Marlboro Courthouse
- Houses 20-30 partner organizations
- **Services Provided:**
  - Legal aid (guardianship, divorce, custody)
  - Court accompaniment and protective order assistance
  - Victim rights education and support
  - Mental health services and support groups
  - Forensic exam rooms for sexual assault survivors
  - HIV screening, housing, financial, and transportation assistance
  - Focus on accessibility for county residents

### 5. Mental Health Resources and Partnerships

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- **Roberta's House**

- **Background:** Founded in Baltimore, now with a location near Hyattsville (Greenville area)

- **Services Provided:**

- Grief counseling for adults, children, and families
- Family therapy sessions allow shared grieving experiences
- Bereavement camps for children (weekend in August; free of charge)
- High-risk teen transformation programs
- Community outreach (school crisis responses, professional workshops, etc.)

- **Eligibility:**

- **Primarily for Maryland residents**
- **Limited services for D.C., VA residents due to licensure restrictions**
- **All clinicians are licensed (some interns in training)**

- **My Covenant Place**

- **Newly formed partnership**

- **Key Differences:**

- Focuses solely on homicide cases
- Offers trauma-informed workshops for both families and professionals
- Yoga and meditation included

- **Services Provided**

- Individual counseling and group support (in-person and telehealth)
- Mental health assessment and tailored treatment plans
- Focus areas: anxiety, depression, night terrors
- Holistic approach to referrals and care

- **Referral-only access through the Victim Services Coordinator**

6. **Services Provided by the Victim Services Coordinator**

- Referrals to nonprofits and state agencies
- Crisis intervention and triage
- Legal advocacy, protection order guidance

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- **Financial assistance**

- Relocation support
- Home security (cameras)
- Basic needs (e.g., furniture)

- **Victim rights education**

- Overall goal: Minimize long-term trauma from victimization

7. **Recent Program Enhancements (Post-July 2024)**

- **New Homicide Brochure:**

- guides families after notification
- Timeline, contacts, available services, and next steps

- Experience Camps:

- Free, week-long camp for grieving children (late August)
- Emotional education, coping skills, fun activities
- Post-camp follow-up

- **Roberta House Camps:**

- Weekend camp (early August) for grieving children

8. **Grant Funding Plans (Forthcoming)**

- Purpose: Enhance continuity and depth of services

- **Goals if Awarded:**

- Remove session limits for free counseling
- Cover crime scene clean-up and funeral cost
- Assist with child-related needs (e.g., diapers, formula)
- Create a support budget to prevent service lapses

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Ms. Archie concluded by emphasizing the importance of open communication. She noted that she is accessible via email for any questions or collaborative opportunities and welcomed the chance to work together in the future.

- Q & A

Co-Chair Oriadha asked about counseling services for parents who have lost children, clarifying whether this refers to homicide generally or specifically to gun violence. She inquired about the sessions' frequency and format (group or individual) and whether the services were free.

In response, Ms. Archie explained that:

- My Covenant Place offers free counseling sessions.
- Roberta's House offers the first three sessions free, with a sliding scale fee of \$5-\$20 afterward.
- Maryland Crime Victims provides six free sessions
- CAFY provides three free sessions; after that, it is \$30 per individual session or \$120 per family session.

Ms. Archie explained that the frequency of support group meetings varies by organization.

- Maryland Crime Victims previously held groups monthly, then biweekly, and now appears to be back to monthly meetings.
- Roberta's House hosts various support groups that meet at different intervals, some weekly, others monthly, depending on the group.
- My Covenant Place does not offer support groups, only individual counseling.
- Currently, only CAFY, Maryland Crime Victims, and Roberta's House provide support groups.

Ms. Archie explained that resource contact information, including for CAFY and Roberta's House, is included in a brochure, and a PDF version will be updated and shared with the Workgroup members. She noted that many professionals often collaborate with grieving parents and feel unsure where to direct them for mental health support, so having the information centralized would be helpful.

In response to her approach to sharing the information with the families, she explained that families are in contact 24 hours before a homicide, including on weekends. The initial outreach is focused on offering support without overwhelming them and acknowledging their trauma. She follows up through texts or calls based on the family's comfort and, by the second day, begins guiding them through key steps like medical examiner procedures and funeral arrangements. Counseling resources and crisis support, including text lines and 24/7 hotlines, are introduced once basic logistics are addressed. Ms. Archer remains involved until the case transitions to the State's Attorney's Office, ensuring continuity by briefing the coordinator. Even after the transition, Ms. Archer provides support during the critical early months.

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Ms. Archer explained that any form of victimization falls within the scope of their services, including cases like the tragic incident involving Zoe. While they are always notified of homicides and gun crimes, notification for other cases, such as fatal collisions during police chases, can vary. Ms. Archer expressed that if notified, she could still provide support and explore options like contacting the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board since a crime occurred during the incident. She noted that the key factors are being informed about the incident and being able to respond appropriately.

Ms. Archer explained that both Roberta's House and Camp Experience offer annual camps for children impacted by trauma, typically held in August.

- Camp Erin
  - A weekend camp for youth ages 6-17
  - No cost to families
  - No capacity issues
- Camp Experience
  - Begins interviewing children around September or October for the following year
  - Families are placed on a waitlist if necessary and receive support services
  - Expect to refer more children earlier in the process

Ms. Archer responded to questions raised about whether there were any exclusionary criteria for the camps or victim services mentioned. The response clarified that both camps are intended for children who have lost a loved one due to homicide, but other than that, there are no additional exclusions.

Ms. Archer clarified that children involved with the Department of Juvenile Services are not excluded from accessing support services or camps as long as they meet the core criteria. She further stated that Roberta's House would be a strong resource because it offers a high-risk teen program to help youth process emotions and develop coping strategies.

Co-Chair Oriadha shared a desire to stay connected, particularly regarding incidents involving residents of District 7. She mentioned establishing a fund specifically to support funeral costs and services for children who have tragically passed away, emphasizing that this resource is available for District 7 families, and wanted to make the Police Department's Victim Coordinator aware.

- **Focus Topic Discussion:**
- **Victim Services**

Co-Chair Oriadha mentioned that the focus is on service-related recommendations. The members were reminded that each person has a tab in the shared document for inputting suggestions and

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that a color-coded system (green, yellow, red) will be used later to prioritize or rule out recommendations.

- **Expanding the Statewide Victim Compensation Program**

Co-Chair Oriadha introduced the first recommendation: expanding the statewide victim compensation program to cover mental health care, relocation expenses, and lost wages for gun violence survivors and their families. She noted that this would come with a moderate to high cost but could have a significant impact.

Co-Chair Oriadha expressed that the recommendation stemmed from real cases involving families who experienced trauma after a child was murdered at home and struggled to find support for temporary relocation.

Deputy Chief Olare shared that in cases of homicide or when a household is at continued risk, they sometimes use CAFY or the State's Attorney's Office to place families in hotels or relocate them for safety. He noted that this is done case-by-case, depending on factors like motive, ongoing disputes, or perceived threats. He added that relocation can also be offered in non-homicide cases where homes are repeatedly targeted.

Co-Chair Paylor emphasized the importance of ensuring bilingual services within housing relocation efforts. He highlighted a commitment to cultural competence and the need to effectively communicate and meet the diverse needs of community members in real-time.

Co-Chair Oriadha highlighted the safety-based relocation efforts and the need for more comprehensive, community-based support.

- **Establish Trauma Recovery Centers in Communities with a High Rate of Gun Violence**

Co-Chair Oriadha introduced a recommendation to establish trauma recovery centers in communities with high rates of gun violence. These centers would provide wraparound medical care, counseling, case management, and legal support. She noted that hospitals offer some support but are interested in embedding these services directly in communities.

Co-Chair Oriadha discussed the importance of continued and potentially expanded funding for community-based violence interrupter programs, like those run by Hope in Action in the County. She noted that D.C. has more violence interrupters in the field, which could contribute to a more significant impact. The goal is to ensure enough full-time paid interrupters are deployed in key areas to reduce violence effectively and hire individuals with intentional backgrounds and the ability to connect with the community.

- **Expand Mental Health Support for Gun Violence Survivors and Strengthen Crisis Response Teams**

Co-Chair Oriadha expressed a recommendation to expand mental health support for gun violence survivors and strengthen crisis response teams, highlighting the need for accessible mental health

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services. She raised the need for fully staffing 24/7 crisis response teams, asking for information on the current staff levels and availability, particularly for victim service coordinators.

Deputy Chief Olare explained that Ms. Archer is the only person in the Police Department who contacts the victim's family. He further stated that they have assistance in the evening with CAFY if needed, but will get back to the Workgroup with further clarification.

Co-Chair Paylor provided information about the current staffing in the State Attorney's Office, noting that there are sixteen victim coordinators, seven full-time employees, and nine grant-funded positions. He also mentioned that the office has had as many as twenty-two coordinators at full capacity, but is currently down six.

Co-Chair Oriadha discussed the possibility of expanding victim services beyond the Police Department by providing resources to other entities or non-profits with the capacity to support victims.

Chief Olare suggested that the Police Department could serve as the primary point of contact due to its awareness of all victims in the county. The idea would be for a liaison to manage the initial triage and direct victims to appropriate services.

Co-Chair Oriadha emphasized the need to assess how much the county currently supports these non-profits and ensure adequate resources are provided, as there have been complaints about relying on organizations without proper funding.

Co-Chair Oriadha emphasized the importance of understanding the number of victim service coordinators across various county agencies and ensuring coordination. Co-Chair Paylor noted the need to consider the municipalities' independent departments, as they also provide services.

- **Identify Next Steps**

Co-Chair Oriadha encouraged everyone to continue reviewing the recommendations document and add any new ideas. She also noted the upcoming presentations from the Department of Juvenile Services.

- **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2025.

- **Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:05 p.m.