

National OVP Network **Strategic Plan**

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2027



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Working Together to Reduce Violence and Improve Lives	4
Our Mission	5
Pillars	6
Pillar 1: Network Development and Expansion	7
Strategy	8
1.1 Develop the Field	8
1.2 Increase Membership	9
1.3 Evolve Membership Structure	9
1.4 Utilize Network Ambassadors	9
1.5 Build out Multi-Level Learning Community	9
Pillar 2: Training and Technical Assistance Coordination and Collaboration	10
Strategy	11
2.1 Assign Dedicated Jurisdictional Resources	11
2.2 Coordinate with National TTA Partners	11
2.3 Expand Strategic Partnerships	12
2.4 Build Capacity of OVPs	12
Pillar 3: Institutionalization of OVPs	13
Strategy	14
3.1 Establish OVPs as Public Safety Organizations	14
3.2 Co-Create Policy/Advocacy Platform	14
3.3 Plan for Sustainability	15
3.4 Implement Evaluation and Foster Accountability	15
Strategic Plan Timeline	16

Introduction

The National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR), Advance Peace, and our partners have helped to launch and strengthen offices of violence prevention (OVPs), offices of neighborhood safety, and similar agencies throughout the US for more than 15 years. In that time, we have seen a groundswell of support for violence reduction strategies that empower communities to create their own change one life at a time. An increasing number of Americans are catching on to what those of us in the violence reduction field have known all along: We cannot only police our way to peace.

Recognizing this growing movement, NICJR, Advance Peace, the Center for American Progress, and OVP leaders from across the US launched the National Offices of Violence Prevention Network in February 2021.

The last three years have been extraordinary, as we have grown from 21 founding members into a peer learning community of more than 60 local, state, and federal OVPs. We have also expanded our team, hiring an NOVPN Director, Coordinator, and Administrative Coordinator to deepen our support for Network members and position our community for continued growth.

As a part of this growth, we are excited to share the first-ever NOVPN Strategic Plan.

Although this multi-pronged strategy spans the next calendar three years, the NOVPN team has already begun implementing key elements—including laying the groundwork for the creation of the Violence Reduction Management Institute and an Offices of Violence Prevention (OVP) Toolkit, building out training and technical assistance (TTA) coordination for Network members with other national providers, and partnering in the institutionalization of offices.

We have come a long way. We are so grateful for all of you who have been part of the journey, and we are excited to share our vision for the years ahead.



Working Together to Reduce Violence and Improve Lives

We are the National Offices of Violence Prevention Network.

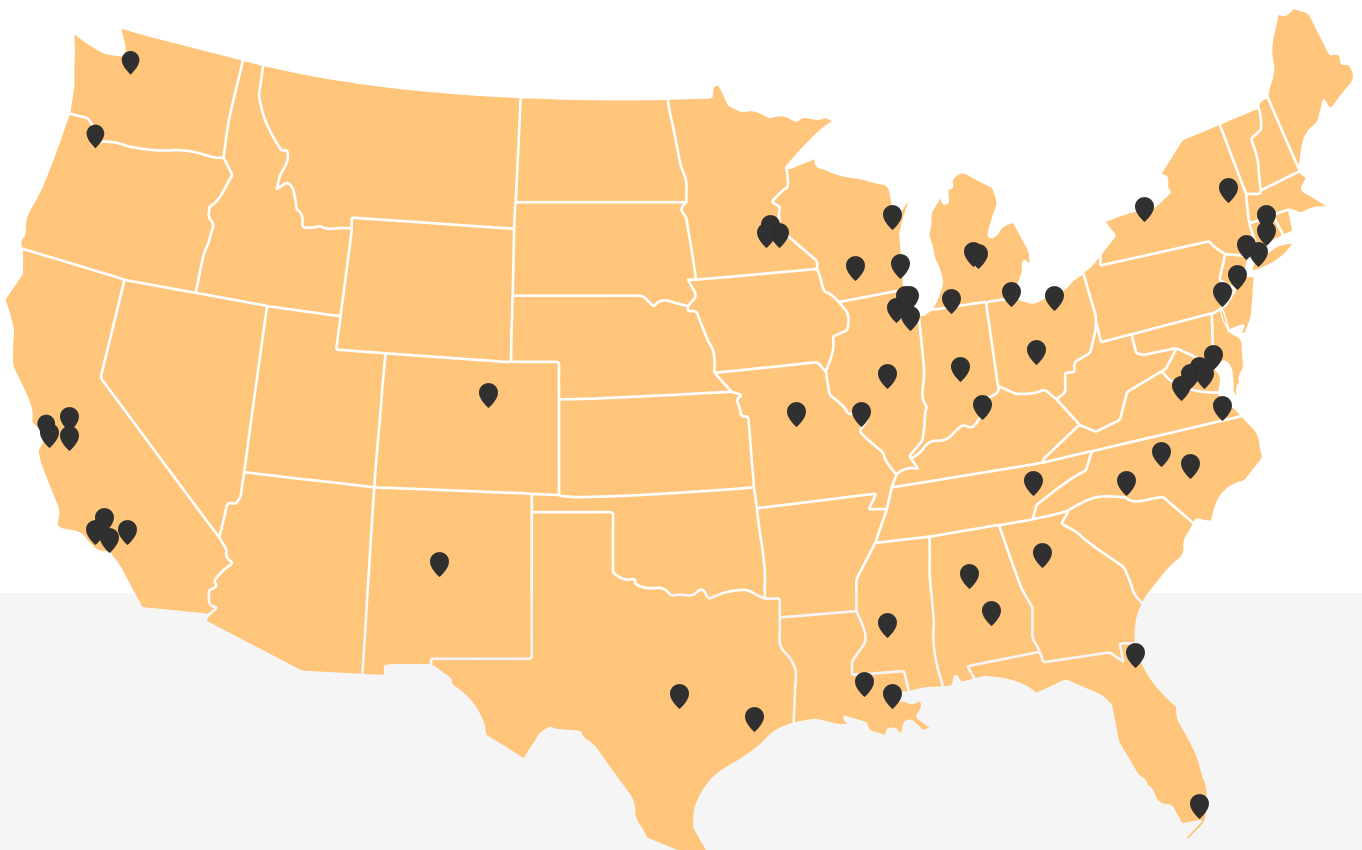
The Network...

- **Connects people** - Brings together changemakers from across multiple disciplines and geographies to share violence reduction ideas and results
- **Enables shared learning** - Deepens collective knowledge through the sharing of both successful and unsuccessful experiences
- **Sets collective goals and measures** - Aligns members around shared key performance indicators and theories of change
- **Supports leadership** - Provides skill-building opportunities, with an understanding that leadership is about much more than being in a position of authority
- **Accelerates progress toward impact at scale** - Facilitates fast-cycle learning to understand what works and brings together key stakeholders who can achieve systems-level change

Our Mission

Our mission is to increase the expertise and effectiveness of local and state offices of violence prevention and other similar agencies by growing a national learning community that employs evidence-informed and innovative strategies to reduce violence in culturally relevant ways.

With over 60 member offices in June 2024, the National OVP Network continues to grow. As membership grows, so has our vision for the future.



Pillars

Through successful implementation of this plan, the NOVPN strives to grow the depth of member engagement, develop member expertise, and increase Network membership to the 100 local municipalities with the highest rates of gun violence in the country by December 31, 2027. This goal will be measured by the number of active network members (at the local, state, and federal levels), as well as members' engagement with membership benefits.

More broadly, the Network will (1) foster interactions among members and subject matter experts that support individual leaders in continually expanding their capacity to create results for the jurisdictions that they serve, (2) nurture systems design thinking, and (3) facilitate members' ability to continually reach goals together.



Pillar 1

Network Development and Expansion

- Develop the Field
- Increase Membership
- Evolve Membership Structure
- Utilize Network Ambassadors
- Build out Multi-Level Learning Community



Pillar 2

Training and Technical Assistance Coordination and Collaboration

- Assign Dedicated Jurisdictional Resources
- Coordinate National TTA Partners
- Expand Strategic Partnerships
- Build Capacity of OVPs



Pillar 3

Institutionalization of OVPs

- Establish OVPs as Public Safety Organizations
- Co-Create Policy/Advocacy Platform
- Plan for Sustainability
- Implement Evaluation and Foster Accountability



Pillar 1: Network Development and Expansion

The growth of subject matter expertise among existing OVP directors and staff and the creation of a leadership pipeline are essential to the evolution of the NOVPN. This requires rigorous programming and support to ensure that leaders achieve their desired impacts in the communities that they serve.

How We Will Measure Progress and Success:

- Incremental growth of number of member offices
- Incremental expansions of regional convenings
- Facilitation of 10 learning exchanges / site visits
- Increase of opportunities for in-person engagement
- Streamlined data reporting
- Completion of network evaluation
- 80% of OVP directors surveyed believe that membership in the Network has grown their expertise
- OVP managers graduate from the NICJR Violence Reduction Management Institute

Pillar 1: Strategies

1.1 Develop the Field

With the exponential growth of offices of violence prevention across the country comes the need to professionally develop those who have been appointed to lead these offices and those who are in the pipeline to succeed them. It is with this in mind that NICJR will launch the first-of-its-kind Violence Reduction Management Institute (VRMI). Focused on intensive management training, a fellowship and learning community, and post-graduation employment support, the VRMI will prepare those who are interested in advancing the work of violence reduction within their local communities with the skills needed to be effective in agency administration.

Translating theory into practice for both elected executives and newly-appointed OVP staff members, the NOVPN team will deliver an OVP toolkit to serve as a guidebook for those who are interested in creating an office or are in the beginning stages of implementing an office. The contents of this guidebook will evolve alongside the work of OVPs.

The NOVPN will utilize regional convenings to present OVP staff with case studies of real-world challenges connected to the work of violence prevention and intervention as a part of in-person regional convenings. This learning technique will give Network members the opportunity to hone their decision-making skills, become more open-minded, enhance their curiosity, employ systems design thinking, and build self confidence.

The expansion of regional convenings from three to six per year will deepen Network member connectedness and facilitate regional alignment around strategic initiatives.

The creation of a variety of online forums will allow team members to share information with each other in as close to real time as possible, brainstorm solutions to problems, and foster a culture of communal care.

The NOVPN team will design the framework for and support in-person learning exchanges between jurisdictions. These exchanges will give OVP directors the ability to send one staff member annually for a week to another member's office for the purpose of professional development.

While the core charge of OVPs is to reduce gun violence in the jurisdictions they serve, the NOVPN team is dedicated to being responsive to the evolving TTA needs of OVPs and the communities they support. With this in mind, the team will be expanding its provision of generalized and specialized TTA. Generalized TTA is rooted in thought partnership, best practices, policy, and data. Specialized TTA is hyper-localized to the jurisdiction, resulting in team members becoming intimately familiar with what violence looks like on the ground. The expansion of these types of TTA will include NOVPN team members, national TTA partners, and local TTA experts.

Pillar 1: Strategies Continued

1.2 Increase Membership

Growing the membership of the NOVPN will be primarily accomplished through: (1) recruitment of existing offices of violence prevention who are not current members, (2) re-engagement with inactive members, and (3) partnering with jurisdictions where no office of violence prevention exists that have rates of gun violence that are above 15 per 100,000 people. This will include local- and state-level engagement.

1.3 Evolve Membership Structure

The NOVPN team will introduce a tiered membership structure with varied types, benefits, and membership requirements to ensure active Network participation and strong support for members as the Network grows.

Relatedly, data-driven decision making is critical not only to the success of individual member offices but necessary as the NOVPN evaluates its level of effectiveness in supporting the collective and as Network-wide goals are set. Routine data submissions associated with violence reduction will become a requirement for all member offices.

1.4 Utilize Network Ambassadors

As OVPs become more common, public awareness, education, advocacy, and advisors are required to drive the sustainability and institutionalization of these offices. As such, the NOVPN team will recruit a core group of individuals who will serve as feedback conduits, strategic advisors, content collaborators, and regional connectors. These Network Ambassadors will be critical partners in the growth and development of the field.

1.5 Build out Multi-Level Learning Community

The diversity of the Network is broad, ranging from offices of one to offices with more than 50 staff; agencies charged with gun violence reduction to those responsible for traffic calming; and OVP staff members with no experience in public administration, executive-level work, and portfolio management to those with decades of such experience.

Recognizing this diversity in design, resources, and challenges, the NOVPN team will establish micro learning communities and roll out focused learning opportunities for specific populations such as directors with less than one year of experience, state-level offices, jurisdiction types, jurisdictions with similar demographic and political makeup, offices with a single staff person, and more.

Pillar 2: Training and Technical Assistance Coordination and Collaboration

The provision of integrated and coordinated TTA for NOVPN members has been an ongoing request of directors. This type of support ensures the effective management of time and funds, reduces the likelihood of duplicative or contradictory TTA, and brings to the table partners who are best suited to provide specific TTA.

How We Will Measure Progress and Success:

- Number of NOVPN-coordinated national partner TTA engagements
- Increase of strategic partners
- OVPs' perception of TTA partnerships' effectiveness in supporting them



Pillar 2: Strategies

2.1 Assign Dedicated Jurisdictional Resources

With Network membership growing from 21 inaugural OVPs in 2021 to 60 by June 30, 2024, and a goal of continued growth to more than 100 unique member OVPs by the end of 2025, there is a critical need for dedicated office-level resources. This is why the NOVPN team is building out a staffing and support structure for NOVPN members that is scalable, provides consistency, and supports office continuity.

Eventually coming into alignment with the six regions that will be created over the period of this strategic plan, this support model will also enhance the NOVPN team's ability to assess TTA needs, employ cross-regional development, and curate timely and relevant virtual convenings.



2.2 Coordinate with National TTA Partners

Too often, OVP staff members have discussed an oversaturation of TTA being provided to their offices and to the community-based organizations that they support, with no real coordination to reduce redundancy, conflicting training delivery, and the appearance of fiduciary irresponsibility.

Given this, NOVPN will deepen existing strategic partnerships with national and local TTA providers, establish new relationships where necessary, and create a TTA database for its members. We will also develop a vetting process for national and local TTA partners, to ensure that all TTA partners align to the Network's values and quality standards.

Additionally, NOVPN members seeking TTA will be able to take advantage of the Network's TTA Assessment tool to identify the best national and/or local options for their evolving needs, partnering with NOVPN staff not only to determine TTA needs but also to prioritize them appropriately to assist with managing budgetary and/or other resource constraints.

Pillar 2: Strategies Continued

2.3 Expand Strategic Partnerships

The [Surgeon General's landmark announcement](#) acknowledging firearm violence as a public health issue served as a catalyst for many companies in the private and public sector who had not previously been involved in violence reduction. As a result, the NOVPN team has been engaged by companies and institutions looking for guidance and strategic partnership as they enter the field.

Therefore, the NOVPN team will establish multisector and multidisciplinary strategic partnerships with entities at the national, international, and local levels. This will include but not be limited to private and public sector partners such as corporate entities and institutions of higher learning. NOVPN considers a strategic partnership one in which there is mutual organizational collaboration and access to resources and expertise directly connected to the reduction of violence in member jurisdictions. NOVPN will also create a vetting process for determining formal partnerships.

2.4 Build Capacity of OVPs

The launch of an OVP is often quickly followed by a search for someone to manage the office and questions about what needs to happen after that person is identified. With this in mind, the NOVPN team will introduce time-limited, specialized TTA to newly created offices and those that have been in existence for less than a year. Over the course of six months, this specialized TTA will focus on executive leadership, cross-functional team management, communications, financial management, and data – five primary areas required to garner community and political buy-in for the majority of OVPs.

The NOVPN team will draw upon Violence Reduction Management Institute graduates, strategic partners, and its own team capacity to provide this on-the-ground support, which will translate directly into members' ability to deliver both short- and long-term violence reduction results.





Pillar 3: Institutionalization of OVPs

An institutionalized OVP, as defined by the NOVPN, is an office codified into law either by charter or legislative statute that receives annual general fund dollars for its budget. Many OVPs lack this level of security, and as a result, office sustainability is uncertain. By prioritizing the establishment of OVPs as public safety agencies that use a public health approach, leveraging evaluation outcomes, and creating a policy platform, the NOVPN team can equip these offices to become permanent facilitators and supporters of community violence intervention ecosystems.

How We Will Measure Progress and Success:

- At least 50 OVPs are institutionalized
- 65 NOVPN members have developed a sustainability plan
- Completed impact evaluation of NOVPN

Pillar 3: Strategies

3.1 Establish OVPs as Public Safety Organizations

Across the county, jurisdictions are making meaningful investments in violence prevention and intervention strategies that strengthen neighborhood well-being while reducing the footprint of the criminal justice system.

The movement to invest in community-driven solutions builds on decades of advocacy from activists nationwide who call for an approach to public safety that does not rely solely on policing, prosecution, and prisons but addresses public safety through the lens of public health.

The NOVPN team will continue to advance this advocacy through the creation of reports and other published materials that provide persuasive and factual evidence that OVPs should be established and codified as public safety agencies at the local and state levels.

3.2 Co-Create Policy/Advocacy Platform

The NOVPN team understands the importance of co-creating and supporting local, state, and federal policy for the purposes of codifying offices of violence prevention, ensuring that the appropriate level of funding is accessible to them and community-based organizations year over year, leveraging existing systems, and creating new mechanisms to address violence as a public health issue.

As such, the NOVPN team will work with existing advocacy and policy partners such as the Community Justice Action Fund and the Center for American Progress as well as cultivate new partnerships to develop a comprehensive advocacy platform that can be employed by both local and state-level members to institutionalize their offices.



Pillar 3: Strategies Continued

3.3 Plan for Sustainability

While many offices of violence prevention have created strategic plans, blueprints, and roadmaps to substantially reduce violence in the communities they serve, few have developed a long-term sustainability plan. As a result, many offices engage in the same budgetary debates year after year or, worse, see decreased year-over-year funding.

The NOVPN team will create a reusable sustainability plan template and associated training and support at jurisdictional level.



3.4 Implement Evaluation and Foster Accountability

The NOVPN team frequently reminds Network members to make data-driven decisions to inform both their strategic and tactical approaches to violence reduction.

As a collective learning community, NOVPN will do the same: establish shared key performance indicators (KPIs) and use results-based accountability as a mechanism to assess individual member and Network-level success.

KPIs must not only be about inputs and outputs, but more importantly about the results, outcomes, and impacts associated with changing the trajectory of cities where violence is most prevalent.

The NOVPN team will partner with an external evaluator to conduct an evaluation of the Network's impact on members, making adjustments where appropriate to ensure individual and collective progress.



Strategic Plan Timeline

The following timeline maps out the first year of implementation for the NOVPN Strategic Plan. For the remaining years covered by this plan, the timeline will be updated annually.

Q1 1/2025 - 3/2025	Q2 4/2025 - 6/2025	Q3 7/2025 - 9/2025	Q4 10/2025 - 12/2025
Release of OVP Toolkit Version 1		Create Learning Exchanges Framework	
Western Regional Convening	Southeastern Regional Convening	Annual Network Convening	Midwestern Regional Convening
	Mid-Atlantic / Eastern Regional Convening		State OVP Convening
Virtual Quarterly Convening	Virtual Quarterly Convening	Virtual Quarterly Convening	Virtual Quarterly Convening
Website Updates			
Introduce New Membership Structure	Establish Network Ambassador Program		
	Launch Cohort 1 of VRMI		
	Collect Member Data		
Create Mechanism for National TTA Coordination			
	Begin Dedicated Jurisdictional Assignments		
	Establish Repository of National TTA Providers		
Establish Standing MOU for Strategic Partnership			
		Create Data Presentation Capacity for OVPs	
Begin the Co-Creation of Policy/Advocacy Platform			
	Deliver Sustainability Plan Template and Training		
Establish National Research Partnerships			

A photograph of three people (two men and one woman) standing together in a large, ornate hall with high ceilings and chandeliers. The image is overlaid with a blue tint. The man on the left is wearing a dark suit jacket over a light blue shirt. The woman in the center is wearing a black top and a white blazer. The man on the right is wearing a white button-down shirt and a fedora hat.

NOVPN Strategic Plan

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2027

A photograph of two people from behind, looking at a wall covered in many small, light-colored sticky notes. The image is overlaid with a blue tint.

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National
OVP
Network