

**Topeka Police Department
Public Policy Agenda 2019/2020
&
2020 Violent Crime Reduction Strategy**





TOPEKA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Bill Cochran, Chief of Police
320 S Kansas Avenue Suite 100
Topeka, KS 66603

Tel: (785) 368-9551
www.topeka.org

Dear Community Members,

As a longtime Topekan, I am keenly aware of the growing community concern that violent crime involving firearms continues to be in our community. I want to assure you that I share this concern and it remains a priority area of focus for the Topeka Police Department.

In 2018, the city of Topeka experienced fifty-three shooting incidents with a total of sixty-four victims. In 2019, the city has experienced seventy-five shooting incidents with eighty one victims to date.

In 2020, we are committed to the implementation of a new violent crime reduction strategy with the targeted intent to reverse this upward crime trend that has had such a dire impact on this community. This new strategy's foundation is rooted in the utilization of new ballistic evidence technology, the enhanced cooperation with local, state and federal prosecutors in prioritizing gun crime prosecutions, as well as the development of community resource partnerships to provide social services to more holistically address the needs of our citizens who find themselves locked in the cycle of violence.

In this document you will find a detailed overview of department initiatives from 2019 as well as a detailed plan as we move forward into 2020.

The Topeka Police Department is dedicated to making this a safer place to live, work and play. Together we can make it happen.

Chief W. Cochran



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Topeka Police Department's Public Policy Agenda

Public Policy Statement: The Topeka Police Department's public policy agenda address major interests and concerns of the department's membership and community members on contemporary criminal justice and social issues such as; education, behavioral health, the community and crime reduction. These public policy agendas also serve as a tool to help direct the focus and the efforts for the agency and our membership as we move into the new year.

Education: Mentoring and developing future leaders of Topeka

A priority of the Topeka Police Department is to work collectively with schools, business and community partners to ensure the youth of Topeka are provided every opportunity to grow up in a safe and nurturing community. We will continue 2019's efforts plus the expectations of 2020.

2019 Initiatives	2020 Expectations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established the Youth Education Officers to teach Law Enforcement at TCALC (Topeka Center for Advanced Learning and Careers) and freshman at all three TPS High Schools. • SROs began implementing mentorship programs within TPS Middle Schools. • SRO partnership with Hayden Catholic High School. • Re-established TPDs role with PAL, flag football, youth basketball, youth baseball/softball and chess team. • Police Pals with 3 TPS elementary schools. • Established an advanced internship program with students from Southern Mississippi, Lincoln and Washburn University. • Established a mentorship program at Florence Crittenton focusing on at-risk teenage girls and young women. • Established a partnership with WU Athletics to enhance the OK Program and Youth Outreach Officer. • Conducted 2 Citizen Academies. • Conducted Crisis Intervention Team training for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a 3rd Youth Education Officer at the High Schools to teach sophomores. • Expand the mentorship program with Florence Crittenton. • Formalize the mentorship program in the middle schools. • Complete certification of 2 SROs through National Association of School Resource Officers to be train the trainers. • Expand the PAL efforts to include boxing. • Conduct a summer Internship program with students from Washburn, Emporia State, Fort Hays State, Pittsburg State and South Mississippi State Universities Criminal Justice Program. • Conduct 2 Citizen Academies.



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<p>Officers and community partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided de-escalation, armed intruder response and Safe Church training to community members. 	
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Behavioral Health: Community and Officer Safety

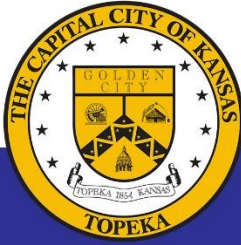
The Behavioral Health Unit is a community effort that involves members of the Topeka Police Department, mental health providers, consumers and their family members working together to provide the best possible outcomes during a mental health crisis. We will continue 2019's efforts plus the expectations of 2020.

2019 Initiatives	2020 Expectations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded the Crisis Co-Responders partnership with Valeo to cover all three shifts and 10-hour coverage on weekends. • Established the City of Topeka ID Card Project to help individuals obtain a formal form of identification. • Community Outreach Vehicle which plays a role in providing resources to the unsheltered population and those in a behavioral health crisis. • Partnered with Valeo, TRM and City of Topeka officials to provide housing for the unsheltered. • Expanded Tactical Communications training in the academy from 8 hours to 16 hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Homeless Outreach Team that focuses on the unsheltered, allowing BHU officers assigned a co-responder to focus more on their specialty. • Expand de-escalation training to include “Train the Trainer” to enhance our ability to train officers. • Equip new Field Operations vehicles with the Officer Alert System. • Add another officer to the BHU Conduct formal Peer Support team training.

Community: Police-Community Relations

A guiding philosophy the Topeka Police Department utilizes to promote an organizational strategy that supports partnerships with members of the community which leads to a problem-solving approach to improve the quality of life in neighborhoods across the City of Topeka. We will continue 2019's efforts plus the expectations of 2020.

2019 Initiatives	2020 Expectations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted monthly Coffee with a Cop events within various neighborhoods. • TPD partnered with other government and community organizations in the Team Up Clean Up. • Implemented a downtown security plan that included education of business owners, a downtown Community Office and proactive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure the Community Police Unit with a Problem Oriented Policing focus. • Conduct a quarterly community meetings in each Zone that will engage NAs, NIA, and other community partners. • Provided Fair and Impartial Policing to the Public. • Facilitate two Citizen Fun days where the public has the ability to participate in the MILO Range “Police



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<p>policing measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TPD employees appointed or nominated to numerous boards and foundations throughout the community. • Partnered with ArtsConnect to paint a 350 foot mural that involved over 200 community painters to create “The Common Ground” 	<p>Decision Maker”, DUI training and Firearms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a media relations program with the Latino community.
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Crime Reduction: Reduce Violent Crime and Strengthen Trust

The expectation of the Topeka Police Department is to create a safe environment for people to work, play and live in the city of Topeka. We will continue 2019’s efforts plus the expectations of 2020.

2019 Initiatives	2020 Expectations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TPD began working with the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) on a multi-year violent crime reduction study focused on response to non-fatal shootings. • The FOB and CIB are focusing on conducting stronger follow-up investigations for gunshot calls. • The COB focused on registered offender checks, burglary and narcotics operations. • Integrated TFOs into day to day crime efforts. • Established a narcotics task force involving area law enforcement agencies. • Rejuvenated the Neighborhood Watch Program to include a new virtual approach involving “Neighbors by Ring”. Neighbors by Ring is an app that allows citizens to share their own home surveillance videos with their neighbors and police. • Initiated the “See Topeka” camera mapping program. A voluntary program where citizen can register their camera systems to aid in criminal investigations. • TPD organized a city-wide rebrand of the Neighborhood Watch Program. The rebrand includes new signs in neighborhoods across Topeka. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a crime reduction research project with PERF – Police Executive Research Form. • Provide Tactical Communication Training to the Public as well as in the Citizens Academy to demonstrate the verbal component of gaining voluntary compliance from suspects. • Conduct public presentations on active shooter and personal safety. • Fully implement the VINE (Victim Notification Network) Program. • Restructure the Narcotics Unit and increase staffing. • Train officers in NIBINS system and establish a partnership with the KBI and ATF to utilize that intelligence. • Implement the 2020 Crime Reduction Plan Implement Problem Oriented Policing to address crime issues.



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2020 Violent Crime Reduction Plan

The 2020 Violent Crime Reduction Plan has three primary goals:

1. Change the community's norms regarding violence,
2. Provide alternatives to violence when groups and individuals in the community make risky behavior decisions, and
3. Increase awareness of the perceived risks and costs of involvement in violence among high-risk young people.

Objectives:

The primary goals will be achieved through the following objectives:

1. Keep guns out of the hands of people who are legally prohibited from owning them.
2. Prevent future shootings by deterring people from illegally carrying firearms today.
3. Encourage proper gun safety and care by owners.
4. Implement evidence-based policing strategies to identify the small number of offenders who are responsible for the majority of the gun violence.
5. Enhance ballistic technology efforts.
6. Intelligence-based policing to identify threats and intervene before an incident occurs.
7. Work on straw purchase of firearms as well the selling, giving or lending of firearms to those prohibited by law.
8. Work with City, County and Federal Attorney Offices to prioritize the prosecution of criminal cases involving firearms.

Initiatives: Evidence shows, the best strategies to reduce urban gun violence have three things in common: focus, balance and fairness.

- Focus - Effective strategies focus narrowly on the “hot people” or the “hot spots” driving most of the violence,
- Balance - They balance the threat of punishment with prevention, i.e. real efforts to help even the highest-risk people change their lives without going to prison, and
- Fairness - To be most effective, they need to be perceived as fair and they need to have support and legitimacy within the communities most affected by violence.



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The 2020 Violent Crime Reduction Plan will focus on five primary initiatives:

1. Shooting Review Team: Law Enforcement, Community Resources and Research.
2. Strategies Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE)
3. Implement Crime Gun Intelligence (CGI)
4. Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) Project
5. Evidence Based Policing

1. Shooting Review Team: Law Enforcement, Community Resources and Research.

The Shooting Review Team is a partnership between Law Enforcement (Officers, Detectives and Command Staff) Criminal Intelligence and Criminal Analysis professionals.

- a. The Shooting Review Team will meet weekly. The focus will be on treating every shooting as if it was a homicide. The team will also focus on accountability as well as sharing information across agency and jurisdictional lines.
- b. Community Resources - Does the case require something other than a law enforcement response? If so, the Shooting Review Team will identify which community partners need to be engaged.
- c. The Shooting Review Team will utilize crime analytics and predictive research to address the area(s) in which the crime(s) occurred, suspect information, witnesses as well as any known associates. The Team will also focus on mapping shooting locations for predictive measures.

Chief's Note: The goal of the Shooting Review Team is to be able to answer three questions:

- Who are the key individuals driving the violence in the city right now?
- Who is the most violent group/gang in the city?
- What are the main primary drug areas in the city i.e.: apartment complexes, hotels/motels, blocks or neighborhoods?

The overall mission of the Shooting Review Team is to extract key offenders and disrupt and dismantle the most violent groups and individuals in the community. The Shooting Review Team will work to:

- Identify groups and individuals involved in criminal activity.
- Combat crimes in which a firearm is used in the commission of a crime.
- Share intelligence with investigative units to bring cases to a closure.

2. Strategies Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE)



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SAVE is a community strategy including law enforcement and social service providers to deliver necessary services for identified youth and join in a united effort of anti-violence for the Topeka community.

- a. TPD will help facilitate the research process.
- b. Aid in sharing information with the public about what is happening in our communities.
- c. Facilitate discussions with individuals in the community who are prone to violence.
- d. Facilitate additional efforts within the Topeka community to help address violent crime.

Chief's Note: In the US, the strategy that has worked the best to reduce urban gun violence is “focused deterrence;” sometimes referred to as the Group Violence Initiative or Ceasefire. It does not work perfectly, and it does not work every time, but it works better, on average, than anything else out there.

It's essential to create a partnership between police, prosecutors, key community members and key service providers. The partnership identifies individuals and the groups driving ongoing violence in the city. After that, those with credibility communicated directly with the highest-risk people through group “call-ins” and “custom notifications”.

The purpose is to let them know that they have been identified as someone likely to shoot or be shot, offer them community support and assistance, and warn them that future violence will not be accepted and that local law enforcement will take necessary steps to address individuals and groups, if the violence does not stop.

3. Implement Crime Gun Intelligence (CGI)

CGI focuses on local and federal partnerships to provide a more comprehensive violent crime suppression strategy.

- a. CGI utilizes evidence-based technology (NIBIN) to provide a unique tool to enhance comprehensive violent gun crime strategies.
- b. When incorporated into an overall strategy, CGI has proven its value in measurable reductions in violent gun crimes through apprehensions and successful prosecution of violent offenders.
- c. CGI is a lead-generating process that provides law enforcement the opportunity to intervene and disrupt the shooting cycle.
- d. The main area of emphasis is to help law enforcement make our communities safer by disrupting the shooting cycle.
- e. CGI combines all available information on crime guns and shootings to identify and disrupt the shooting cycle.

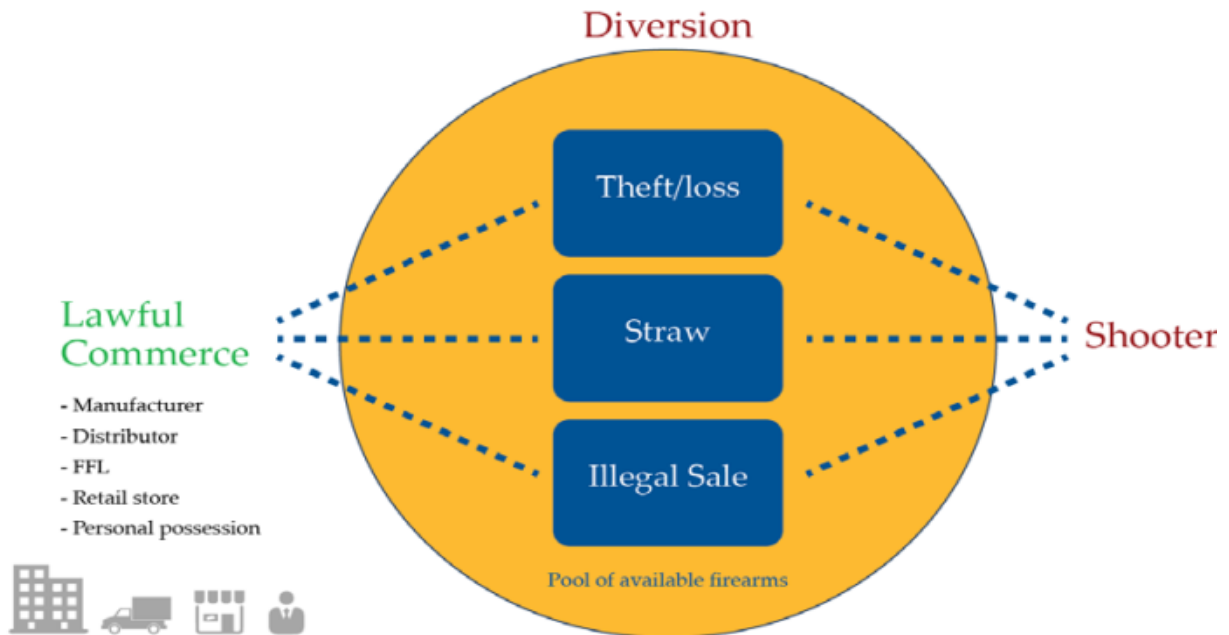


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The Shooting Cycle



- f. The use of firearms in violent crime occurs in the context of a shooting cycle. This shooting cycle begins at the point of diversion of the firearm from the normal venues of regulated commerce into the criminal market,
- g. NIBIN provides the ability to link shootings by ballistic evidence and link recovered crime guns to shootings.
- h. Developing an effective crime gun intelligence program requires commitment and cooperation. Law enforcement agencies represent the start of the crime gun intelligence process through the collection of ballistic evidence and submission to the laboratory or NIBIN site.
- i. Effective programs throughout the nation have emphasized comprehensiveness and timeliness. Evidence that goes unprocessed, delays in ballistic screening, firearms not traced, and leads not acted upon result in unnecessary delays that allow the violent offender to reoffend.



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Chief's Note: The function of the Crime Analysis Unit will be enhanced to include:

- Enhancing the unit and trained in NIBINS.
- Enhancing the technology of the unit to allow it to be more functional and operational.
- Enhancing the interaction between the Departments TFOs, Crime Analysis, Criminal Intelligence Unit and the rest of the Department.

By utilizing this information to help develop cases with evidence based technology will aid in the prosecution of individuals and groups who participate in gun violence activities.

4. Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) Project

- a. All non-fatal shooting incidents should be investigated by the homicide unit/shooting review team. These units have a strong record of case clearance and investigative experience. Additionally, this will free up time for the second shift detectives to focus on other cases.
- b. New detectives should be required to receive a formal course in basic investigations, and detectives should receive regular, ongoing training relevant to conducting investigations. TPD can provide initial training, taught by experienced detectives and partners from prosecutors, medical examiner, crime analysis, and evidence processing.
- c. Consider development of a support unit to aid in information collection and analysis. Such a unit could include crime analysis, intelligence analysts, and gang/group violence specialists, with coordination with experienced narcotics unit personnel. Information on group conflict and violence can be stored within one unit, thereby improving communication and simplifying processes.
- d. Improve supervisory review processes and timeliness of RMS data. Currently, TPD experiences significant backlog and delay of records. Timely intelligence, trends and action is impossible without timely, accurate data.
- e. Crime analysis should focus on providing both tactical (short-term) and strategic (long-term planning) trend assessments. The goals for crime analysis should be to meaningfully contribute to weekly crime meetings and to conduct in-depth analysis of violence (homicides, shootings, robberies) over the last several years.

Chief's Note: By partnering with entities like PERF, the department and the citizens of Topeka will be guaranteed that best practices from across the country will be utilized in our efforts to reduce gun violence in Topeka.



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5. Evidence-based Policing: (Initiative #5 within #4)

- f. **Hot spots policing:** focused law enforcement interventions within small geographic areas of high crime density.
- Research and implement alternative methods of hot spot analysis better suited for Topeka's distributed violence problem. While the jurisdiction may lack highly-formed, traditional hot spots, other methods to assess the impact of geography on crime exist. Examples include analysis of crime by block segments, risk terrain modeling, and methods incorporating social network analysis or distance to crime calculations. All such methods can allow a tailored response within a manageable, small geography.
- g. **Focused deterrence:** change criminal behavior through a strategic, coordinated effort of enforcement and social services.
- Leverage elements of focused deterrence in a systematic but straightforward way, to specifically include:
 - a. Form an interagency group (law enforcement, probation/parole, courts/corrections, federal partners) to establish network to prevent selected cases/individuals from "falling through the cracks".
 - b. Regularly communicate with identified individuals, whether through formal "call-ins," home visits, letters, or other direct messaging. Any communication should also come with efforts to provide any needed social services and voices of those impacted by violence.
- h. **Directed patrol:** assigning additional officers to high-crime areas, with orders to conduct proactive activity rather than respond to calls for service.
- Assign officers to high-crime areas with the sole purpose to be proactive and engage with the community. This can be done by detectives, community policing officers, or patrol. The important element is to have said officers dedicated to non-reactive activities for a fixed period of time.

Chief's Note: Though Hot Spot Policing, Focused Deterrence and Directed Patrols are not new concepts; they are concepts that have proven to be successful and effective in reducing crimes.



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Desired Outcomes/Goals:

1. Reduce the number of gun-related crimes and violent offenses committed by youth under the age of 25 years of age.
2. Decrease the number of overall gun crimes and violent offenses throughout the community.
3. Remove illegal guns on the streets and address individuals prohibited from possessing a firearm.
4. Increase the number of prosecutions for firearms related crimes at the Municipal and District Court levels.
5. Improve the quality of life for citizens in areas that have been prone to gun violence.
6. Establish an effective community model that is focused on intervention that will lead to prevention of incidents within our communities.

Measuring Success:

With any initiative it is important to measure and track whether those efforts implemented were/are successful. During the course of this Crime Reduction Plan, we will be monitoring several factors to include:

1. Tracking the number of individuals arrested for firearms related offenses.
2. Tracking the number of firearms seized as a result of criminal activity.
3. Tracking the number of indictments associated with firearms related cases at the Federal, State and Municipal levels.
4. Tracking the number of search warrants associated to firearms related cases.
5. Tracking the number of firearms related cases closed due the efforts of the plan.