



Department of  
Community Wellness and Safety

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Mayor

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## Category B, Subcategory B-2: Evidence-Based Violence Intervention and Outreach Programs

Executive framing: This application is a City of Milwaukee systems strategy and frontline workforce investment. It takes the best violence interruption assets already operating in Milwaukee and converts them from parallel effort into coordinated field execution. The problem is not a lack of activity; it is fragmentation: uneven coverage, inconsistent practice, and incompatible data that prevents the ecosystem from operating as one.

DCWS will serve as the governance and integration layer that makes interoperability real: standardizing contracts and expectations, aligning a single data dictionary, and using VRPHAST operational data to task teams to micro-hotspots and peak risk windows with precision (down to facility-level nodes). In parallel, DCWS and Milwaukee Public Schools will deploy a prevention pathway that targets eight MPS school communities using violence, truancy, and GPA measures, with continuity reinforced through the eight geographically paired UNCOM youth centers closest to those schools. Milwaukee County DHHS will provide nationally leading, best-in-class training (ROCA “Rewire CBT” and PCITI) so city- and county-affiliated violence interrupters operate from a shared baseline of methods, terminology, and expectations.

The result is a unified operating model across primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention: earlier engagement, faster de-escalation, stronger post-incident follow-through, and shared measurement that is comparable across partners.

This proposal does not fund new CVI initiatives. It converts proven, existing capacity from constrained part-time coverage into full-time operational readiness, expands reach across micro-areas and peak risk windows, and standardizes the CVI ecosystem so partners can interoperate under one disciplined model. The work includes (1) full-time stabilization of frontline hours, retention, and continuity, (2) a Milwaukee-wide Standard of Practice, (3) VRPHAST-informed micro-hotspot tasking, (4) a shared reporting backbone built on a single data dictionary, and (5) a prevention pathway with Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), augmented by UNCOM youth centers closest to the identified schools to preserve continuity within the same micro-areas.

This approach is intentionally upstream and downstream. Downstream, it reduces response latency and increases follow-up persistence in active micro-hotspots. Upstream, it embeds credible messenger capacity earlier through schools and proximate community spaces to prevent escalation before it becomes violence.

## **2.1.1 Applicant Mission (1750 characters max)**

The City of Milwaukee's Department of Community Wellness and Safety (DCWS) serves as the backbone of Milwaukee's community violence intervention ecosystem. Our mission is to reduce firearm violence and its ripple effects through a unified public health and public safety approach, building the conditions for consistent, evidence-informed prevention and intervention across community-based settings.

DCWS does not duplicate direct service; we engineer the system that allows credible messenger and hospital-linked work to perform at scale. We set shared standards, align contracts and expectations, govern a common data dictionary, and coordinate partners so intervention is timely, disciplined, and measurable. We support evidence-informed engagement and stabilization pathways for people at elevated risk of violence and retaliation through coordinated community-based interventions and trusted partner networks. In community settings, we strengthen street outreach, mediation, and post-incident follow-through, and we partner with schools and youth centers to extend prevention upstream.

Our work is grounded in the prevention continuum and public health best practice: interrupt conflict, reduce recurrence, and increase protective factors through reliable relationships, structured follow-up, and coordinated deployment to the micro-areas and time windows where risk concentrates. The result is a unified operating model that converts activity into outcomes through interoperability, accountability, and shared measurement.

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## **2.1.2 Organizational Experience (2250 characters max)**

The City of Milwaukee's Department of Community Wellness and Safety (DCWS) operates as the coordinating backbone for Milwaukee's violence intervention ecosystem. DCWS manages evidence-informed violence reduction work through city contracting, performance oversight, data governance, and cross-partner coordination—aligning multiple agencies and providers to shared standards, shared documentation, and consistent field execution.

This application is built on partners with demonstrated experience and capacity aligned to the operating model described in Section 2.1.3.

Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) Comprehensive Injury Center: MCW operates 414 Life and supports VRPHAST, bringing deep experience in evidence-informed violence intervention, structured follow-up, and multi-sector incident review that converts event patterns into actionable operational data for coordinated response.

WestCare Wisconsin: WestCare is an established provider experienced in managing staffed, field-based community initiatives with the supervision, compliance, workforce support, and administrative infrastructure required for reliable delivery. WestCare's Milwaukee operations provide a durable platform for street outreach and critical response functions.

Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS): MPS is Milwaukee’s largest youth-serving system and brings the operational access, student services/safety coordination, and internal data systems needed to support targeted prevention in school communities and surrounding neighborhoods.

UNCOM: UNCOM is a network of neighborhood youth centers with citywide geographic coverage and long-standing experience engaging young people and families in community settings, providing consistent, proximate spaces for continued support.

Milwaukee County DHHS: DHHS is a major public health institution with experience convening cross-agency partners and coordinating countywide initiatives, including workforce development and training logistics. DHHS will coordinate nationally leading training to standardize practice across city- and county-affiliated violence interrupters.

No subawards beyond the partners listed above are anticipated.

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### **2.1.3 Services and Programming Proposed (2250 characters max)**

This application leverages the City of Milwaukee’s capacity to coordinate existing infrastructure into a single, high-reliability violence interruption system. DCWS functions as the governance and integration layer—standardizing contracts, field protocols, deployment logic, and measurement—so street outreach, schools, and youth centers operate from one common operating picture instead of parallel lanes. The objective is interoperability: consistent expectations, synchronized tasking, and comparable data that convert activity into measurable violence reduction.

The model is organized explicitly across primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention and is designed for both youth and adults through coordinated school-based and community-based implementation. Primary prevention is strengthened through a school-centered pathway: DCWS and Milwaukee Public Schools will use violence and truancy indicators to prioritize the highest-need school communities and implement a school-plus-neighborhood approach. Eight schools will be selected to align with UNCOM’s eight youth centers for geographically paired, continuous supports that interrupts conflict earlier and reinforces protective factors. When school-based engagement is not feasible or appropriate, UNCOM youth centers closest to the identified schools provide geographically aligned space so support remains continuous within the same neighborhood boundaries. Secondary prevention is driven by VRPHAST operational data, which identifies micro-hotspots and drives short-cycle tasking to the micro-areas and peak risk windows most in need of presence, de-escalation, and mediation; coverage and follow-up are verified through standardized documentation. Tertiary prevention strengthens post-incident follow-through to reduce retaliation and recurrence and connect individuals and families to stabilization supports.

Timeline: Jan 1 contract standardization and micro-hotspot identification begin. Feb–May MPS targeting and site readiness. March CRT and MPK transition to full-time deployment; DCWS launches a mobile documentation app beta that enforces the shared data dictionary at entry and

captures geotagging plus a simple life-threat assessment. In parallel, DCWS will integrate three years of historical temperature data (time-of-day level where available) with incident patterns to calibrate peak-risk windows, inform a monthly outreach calendar, and strengthen the predictive model the app will feed over time. May–Dec UNCOM provides space for work that cannot occur in schools; Milwaukee County DHHS coordinates ROCA “Rewire CBT” and PCITI trainings, creating a countywide baseline of standardized practice through nationally leading, best-in-class training so violence interrupters across city- and county-affiliated teams operate with the same methods, terminology, and expectations.

Staff/qualifications: This work is led by systems-capacity partners (City DCWS, Milwaukee County DHHS, MPS, and MCW) with established governance, compliance, and data functions; WestCare and UNCOM operationalize community-based delivery through experienced field supervision and site leadership aligned to DCWS standards.

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## **2.1.4 Populations Intended to be Served (1750 characters max)**

This application prioritizes Milwaukee residents and networks most affected by firearm violence—those at elevated risk of victimization, retaliation, or escalation. It serves youth and adults through coordinated school-based and community-based implementation.

DCWS and Milwaukee Public Schools will select eight MPS school communities using violence and truancy indicators and track pre/post GPA to capture gains in protective factors. Continuity is reinforced through eight geographically paired UNCOM youth centers closest to those schools, sustaining support beyond school hours without program handoffs.

For adults and high-risk networks, violence interrupters will focus on the small number of individuals and groups repeatedly associated with a disproportionate share of shootings, and those at acute risk after incidents, including close associates and conflict networks. A central barrier is that risk concentrates at hyper-specific micro-locations and routines—particular intersections, corridors, and facility-level nodes such as specific gas stations—often within predictable peak risk windows. A second barrier is fragmentation across teams and data practices, which slows coordination and weakens follow-through.

DCWS addresses these barriers through VRPHAST-informed micro-hotspot tasking to precise micro-areas and facility nodes, supported by standardized documentation and shared reporting (including geotagging and a simple life-threat assessment). DCWS will also integrate historical temperature patterns with incident data to calibrate peak risk windows and align outreach to when risk is most likely to elevate.

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## **2.1.5 Estimated Number of Wisconsin Residents Served (1750 characters max)**

From March 2025 through December 2025, Milwaukee Promise Keepers (MPK) operated four teams at 20 hours per week, serving approximately 1,773 individuals; the Critical Response Team (CRT) operated at 30 hours per week, serving an estimated 687 individuals; and 414 Life operated at 40 hours per week, serving approximately 733 individuals. Collectively, these three DCWS teams reached approximately 3,193 individuals during this period.

Grant funding will increase staffing capacity across all teams, resulting in expanded reach and improved service continuity. Increasing MPK staffing to 40 hours per week is projected to approximately double service capacity, with an estimated reach of 3,500 individuals during the grant period. Expanding CRT to 40 hours per week will increase availability during peak risk windows and strengthen post-incident follow-through, with projected reach increasing to approximately 870 individuals. Sustaining 414 Life at 40 hours per week preserves full-time capacity and continuity, contributing an estimated 730 individuals served. Collectively, projected reach across teams is approximately 5,100 individuals from March through December 2025 (recognizing some overlap across services). Expanded staffing improves temporal coverage (evenings, weekends, and post-incident periods), increases saturation in high-risk micro-areas, and strengthens relationship-based engagement and follow-up across all service models.

The grant also expands the MPS–UNCOM school-based pathway, currently implemented at Washington High School (approximately 20 students), to eight MPS high schools, serving approximately 160 students (20 per school), with continuity reinforced through geographically paired UNCOM youth centers. Measurement will utilize a shared platform with unduplicated unique identifiers, encounter-level logs, standardized definitions, and routine data quality checks to ensure accurate counting and consistent reporting across partners.