



News from the Emergency Management Committee Chair (6/10/22)

Governor Newsom Launches New Initiative to Protect Californians from Gun Violence

[The Office of Governor Newsom announced](#) a new campaign to make California schools and communities safer through a community-based outreach campaign to promote Gun Violence Restraining Orders also known as “red flag” laws.

“Gun violence is an epidemic – too many Americans are forced to live in fear because of inaction,” said Governor Newsom. “In California, we are taking action with common sense gun safety measures that get guns out of our communities and keep people safe.”

Red flag laws allow for the temporary removal of guns and ammunition from individuals who are at risk of harming themselves or others. They empower loved ones, or law enforcement, to intervene and temporarily prevent someone in crisis from accessing firearms.

California [issued](#) 3,007 Gun Violence Restraining Orders from 2016 to 2020. In 2020, the state issued 1,284 restraining orders, 15-times greater than the 85 issued in 2016.

This new \$11 million, 18-month campaign, administered through the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services, will focus on outreach and education about California’s red flag laws to communities most at risk for gun violence.

The campaign includes:

- \$5 million in grants to local community-based domestic violence groups for community outreach.
- \$5 million for statewide outreach to communities most at risk of gun violence including education efforts, research and multilingual outreach.
- \$1 million for education and training for district attorneys and law enforcement groups.

Governor Newsom released a [fact sheet](#) detailing California’s nation-leading record on gun safety. The Governor also [thanked President Joe Biden](#) for his leadership on gun safety and joined him in calling on Congress to pass gun safety legislation.

California’s ‘Red Flag’ Law Utilized for 58 Threatened Mass Shootings

[UC Davis reports](#) in the wake of the shooting in Uvalde, Texas, that left 19 children and two teachers dead, legislators in Washington, D.C., and across the country are debating “red flag” laws or extreme risk protection orders, or ERPOs.

Such orders, known in California as gun violence restraining orders, or GVROs, are in place in [19 states and the District of Columbia](#).

A new study from the [Violence Prevention Research Program](#) at UC Davis examines case details and mortality records from the first three years of California's [GVRO law](#), which went into effect on Jan. 1, 2016.

The “red flag” law allows law enforcement, family and household members, some co-workers, employers and teachers to work with a judge to temporarily remove access to firearms and ammunition from people at significant risk of self-harm or harming others.

To read the summary of these findings, [click here](#). To view the research published on June 2nd in [Injury Prevention](#), [click here](#).

13 Mass Shootings over the Weekend Leave More than a Dozen Dead and Over 70 Injured

[CNN reports](#) more than a dozen people were killed and more than 70 injured in at least 13 mass shootings this weekend in the United States. Some were at graduation parties, a nightclub, a popular entertainment district or a strip mall.

The bloodshed comes as the nation grieves a spate of killings this past month, including a massacre at [an elementary school](#) in Texas; a deadly assault at [a medical facility](#) in Oklahoma; a racist rampage at [a supermarket](#) in New York; and an attack on [a Taiwanese church service](#) in California.

The US has suffered at least 246 mass shootings in 2022 – far more than there have been days so far in the year, according to the [Gun Violence Archive](#). That's the same number of mass shootings in 2021 through June 5.

The country is on pace to match or surpass last year's total, which is the worst on record, according to the data compiled by GVA.

In 2020, there were 161 mass shootings through June 5; in 2019, that number was 154. The non-profit and CNN both define a mass shooting as one in which at least four people are shot, excluding the shooter.

In *Socorro, Texas*, five people were wounded after a shooter fired into a crowd gathered for a high school graduation party, Police Chief David Burton said. All five wounded are teenagers, including two who were in critical condition, he said.

In *Summerton, South Carolina*, one person was killed and at least seven others were wounded [at a graduation party](#).

In *Philadelphia*, [at least two people were killed and 11 others hit by gunfire at a bustling entertainment district](#). A third person who died might have been one of the shooters, police said.

In *Chattanooga, Tennessee*, [two people were killed and 14 were wounded](#) at or near a nightclub.

In *Phoenix*, one person was killed and eight others wounded at a strip mall. The slain victim was a 14-year-old girl, police said. In *Mesa, Arizona*, two people were killed and two others wounded.

In *Omaha, Nebraska*, one person was killed and three others were wounded.

In *Chesterfield, Virginia*, one person was killed and five others were wounded.

In *Macon, Georgia*, one person was killed and three others were wounded.

In *Saginaw, Michigan*, three people were killed and two people were wounded. In *Grand Rapids, Michigan*, one person was killed and three people were wounded. In *Ecorse, Michigan*, five people were wounded.

In *Hempstead, New York*, one person was killed and three others were wounded.

Uvalde Voices Pleaded with Congress for Action on Gun Control: ‘We’re Bleeding Out, and You’re Not There.’

[*The New York Times* reports](#) Kimberly Rubio, whose 10-year-old daughter Lexi was killed during the mass shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, pleaded with members of Congress on Wednesday to enact new gun control laws, using her own fresh pain to demand action.

“We seek a ban on assault rifles and high-capacity magazines,” Ms. Rubio said, her voice shaking after recounting the last time she saw her daughter and the panicked moments before she learned that Lexi was dead. “We understand for some reason, to some people — to people with money, to people who fund political campaigns — that guns are more important than children.”

“So at this moment, we ask for progress.”

Ms. Rubio’s emotional entreaty, delivered as her husband sat silently weeping beside her, came during a hearing on gun control legislation that is stalled on Capitol Hill amid Republican opposition, and as negotiators in the Senate grasp for a bipartisan deal that could break the stalemate.

Lexi’s parents were joined by Dr. Roy Guerrero, the sole pediatrician in the small town of Uvalde and an alumnus of Robb Elementary, who testified in tragically graphic detail about what the AR-15 used in the massacre had done to the bodies of fourth graders. Testifying in person on Capitol Hill, he railed against lawmakers who have failed to act in the face of a rising tide of gun violence in America.

“We’re bleeding out,” he told the committee, “and you are not there.”

Dr. Guerrero recalled seeing two children “whose bodies had been so pulverized by the bullets fired at them over and over again, whose flesh had been so ripped apart, that the only clue as to their identities were the blood-spattered cartoon clothes still clinging to them.”

Miah Cerrillo, a fourth-grader who survived the carnage at Robb by covering herself in a classmate’s blood and pretending to be dead, shared her ordeal in a prerecorded video, too traumatized to appear in person.

“He shot my friend that was next to me,” she said of the gunman who slaughtered 19 students and two teachers at her school, speaking quietly and with little evident emotion. “And I thought he would come back to the room.”

Miah’s father, who appeared at the hearing in person on his daughter’s behalf, left the hearing room in tears.

The emotional testimony unfolded hours before the House was scheduled to vote on a package of gun control measures, including legislation that would prohibit the sale of semiautomatic rifles to people under the age of 21 and ban the sale of magazines that hold more than 10 rounds of ammunition. The bills are all but certain to go nowhere in the evenly divided Senate, where solid Republican opposition means that they cannot draw the 60 votes needed to break through a filibuster.

This is How Handguns and Assault Weapons Affect the Human Body

[Cap Radio reports](#) bullets from weapons such as handguns typically pierce straight through a target, medical experts say. By comparison, weapons such as the AR-15s used in many mass shootings, can liquefy organs because of their much higher projectile speeds.

"Assault weapons ... cause a condition called cavitation, meaning that as the projectile passes through tissue, it creates a large cavity," said Dr. Ian Brown, a trauma surgeon at UC Davis Health in Sacramento, California. "And that does a ton of tissue damage, both initially at the impact, and then even further as that tissue begins to necrose, or die off."

The damage is much greater in children, as the surface area of their organs and arteries are smaller, said Dr. Joseph Sakran, the director of emergency general surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore.

Where the projectile lands is critical, added Dr. Eric Savitsky, an emergency medicine specialist at UCLA Medical Center.

"From a survivability and morbidity perspective, what the bullets hit, whether (bullets are) small caliber or large calibers, is the primary determinant of patient outcomes," he said.

For further information on what it is like being admitted to the hospital after being shot, what recovery looks like for survivors, and more, [visit the full article](#).

‘Ghost Gun’ Found on Menifee High School Student Who Made Social Media Threats, Police Say

[The Orange County Register reports](#) police in Menifee arrested a 17-year-old Heritage High School student after they said he sent threatening messages to other students and found him with what is believed to be a “ghost gun.”

The student was arrested early on Sunday as he was returning to his home, police said in a statement. When they searched the teen, officers found a pair of brass knuckles and the gun on him.

Police went to the student’s home after they got a call earlier that morning about the threatening messages, which he allegedly sent through social media.

The messages did not specifically target Heritage High or other students, but were apparently threatening enough that others who saw them on social media called police.

The student was not publicly identified. Police said he did not appear to have a previous criminal record. He was booked in Riverside County Juvenile Hall.

He has not been charged yet, but could face charges for criminal threats and possessing the brass knuckles and the unregistered gun.

Captain Dave Gutierrez said the handgun did not have a serial number on it that would make it traceable by police, which is what earned the weapons the “ghost guns” moniker.

The gun appeared to have been built out of a kit. Such kits are available online and allow anyone to build a gun from pieces bought separately.

California law enforcement leaders have become increasingly concerned about weapons built in this way [that are appearing more frequently at crime scenes](#) and in the hands of people who shouldn't have them.

It's not clear how the 17-year-old got the gun.

“At this point we don't know whether or not he bought the stuff (to assemble the gun) or not,” Gutierrez said.

California's Latest COVID-19 Surge May be Slowing, Early Data Suggests

[The Los Angeles Times reports](#) there are initial signs that California's latest wave of coronavirus cases may be slowing, although it'll take more time to be certain.

California reported an average of 13,800 new [coronavirus cases a day](#) over the past week, according to data released Friday, down 12% from the previous week. That's 247 cases a week for every 100,000 residents. A rate of 100 cases a week for every 100,000 residents is considered a high rate of viral transmission. The trend is the first week-over-week decrease in cases in two months.

One big question, however, is whether reporting delays from the Memorial Day weekend are contributing to the decrease. It's still possible that gatherings from the holiday weekend and during the summer will worsen transmission levels.

Some experts note that test positivity rates are still rising. San Francisco's is more than 12%, while the rate in L.A. County was 5% as of Friday.

“This all means that the current wave has not gone away,” Dr. George Rutherford, a UC San Francisco epidemiologist and infectious-disease expert, said in a briefing Friday afternoon.

“We do, however, have [sewage data](#) that would suggest that there's some drop-off here in San Francisco, Davis, San Jose,” Rutherford said, referring to levels of coronavirus in wastewater. Still, there is conflicting data elsewhere in Silicon Valley, he said, with case rates fluctuating in other spots of Santa Clara County.

In L.A. County, no sewer systems reported a doubling of coronavirus levels in the last week, although coronavirus levels in sewage water still remain high, L.A. County Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer said in a recent briefing.

Los Angeles County reported a 4% week-over-week decrease in average daily coronavirus cases, according to a Times analysis of data released Monday, with the case rate falling from about 4,600 cases a day to 4,400. That's the equivalent of 308 cases a week for every 100,000 residents.

“We will continue to monitor this closely to see [whether or not we’ve plateaued](#),” Ferrer said.

To read how other parts of the state are doing, as well as opinions from experts, [visit the full article](#).

SoCal COVID Cases Rise as Rest of Nation Plateaus; FDA Authorizes Novavax Vaccine for Emergency Use

[ABC 7 News reports](#) in the Northeast, COVID-19 cases appear to be in a plateau, but what does that mean for Southern California?

A former White House COVID advisor told Eyewitness News what he predicts for the summer and fall as a Food and Drug Administration advisory panel voted to recommend emergency use authorization for the two-dose Novavax for Americans 18 and older.

This comes as we see cases across the country start to level off. Pediatric cases are also starting to decline, but that's not the situation in Southern California.

"It's concerning that cases in the West and the South are still rising. Hospitalizations, nationally, are still rising," said former COVID White House Senior Advisor Dr. Tom Inglesby with Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

He said officials are tracking the upward trends in California. In Los Angeles County, the average number of COVID-positive patients per day is 515, an increase of 118% from one month ago.

"In the fall and the winter, we will possibly see new surges that may be more serious than the ones that we're in now," he said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is now tracking a rise in BA.4 and BA.5 cases.

While the subvariants caused a notable surge in South Africa and Portugal, Inglesby said exposure to earlier omicron subvariants might have a protective effect.

"We're hopeful that the BA.2.12.1 experience will provide some collective barrier against a sharp rise in BA.4 and BA.5, but we don't know that yet," he said.

If L.A. keeps moving toward the highest community threat level, health officials are prepared to re-implement universal indoor mask mandates, which could happen later this month.

Meanwhile, the Los Angeles Unified School District announced that starting next week, required weekly COVID testing for students and employees will only extend to those with symptoms and close contacts.

With one-third of the country not vaccinated and one-third of Americans not boosted, Inglesby expects to see more waves. He said federal funding needs to be available to purchase new variant-specific vaccines.

"We need to be ready for future variants or surges should they occur. We can hope that they won't, but we need to prepare as if they will occur," Inglesby said.

He said we can expect the need for more boosters in all age groups. The next step for the Novavax vaccine is for it to head to the CDC where a panel will vote on its recommended use.

The vaccine could be available a few weeks or months after regulators approve it.

San Francisco's COVID Positive Test Rate Hits Second-Highest Level Ever

[The San Francisco Chronicle reports](#) the coronavirus test positivity rate in San Francisco, which tracks the percentage of tests coming back positive for COVID-19, topped 14% on Wednesday, according to city data. That is the second-highest rate the city has reached to date.

The seven-day average climbed up to 18.9% this January during the winter surge before dropping to 2.4% in mid-March. It has been rising steadily since and is now far higher than the statewide average of 8.9%.

A rule of thumb among infectious disease experts is that 5% is considered “too high,” according to researchers at [Johns Hopkins University](#).

San Francisco reached a pre-omicron peak of 13.4% in April 2020.

Alongside Santa Clara and San Mateo, San Francisco is the county with the highest [coronavirus infection rate](#) in the state. It reported an average of 57 cases per 100,000 residents as of Friday, the most recent day with confirmed data. That is up from about 43 per 100,000 a month ago. And that number is likely an undercount since many people now rely on at-home tests that don't usually get reported or added to official case counts.

The uptick comes as San Francisco's new budget eliminates funding for multiple community coronavirus test sites in the Mission and Bayview districts, some of the city's hardest-hit neighborhoods by the coronavirus.

Community leaders say with the city experiencing another surge of cases and hospitalizations, the results of the cuts could be devastating. There were 86 people in the hospital with COVID in San Francisco as of Wednesday — a nearly 50% increase in the past month.

Five Bay Area counties — Marin, Napa, Santa Clara, Solano and Sonoma — are in the highest risk category as defined by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. And Alameda County became the first in the state to reinstate a local indoor mask mandate, largely in response to spiking COVID hospitalizations.

Health officials in San Francisco and other Bay Area counties have so far resisted re-imposing any mitigation measures, despite waning vaccine immunity and the rapid emergence of multiple coronavirus variants.

Sacramento County Reports Fifth Probable Monkeypox Case; Second Case in Two Days

[The Sacramento Bee reports](#) officials have detected a fifth likely case of monkeypox in Sacramento County through contact tracing, the local health office announced Tuesday afternoon.

On Monday, health officials announced a fourth likely case of monkeypox was detected in Sacramento County, and a specimen was sent to the CDC for confirmatory testing.

If confirmed, the local cases reported this week would be the sixth and seventh cases of the virus in California since May 24. The three previous Sacramento County monkeypox cases have been

confirmed by the CDC. Local health officials have not specified whether the fourth and fifth cases were a close contact of the first, second or third case identified in the county.

“We have a small number that we’re dealing with, and we have to maintain confidentiality,” Sacramento County health officer Dr. Olivia Kasirye told reporters on Monday.

The first patient had recently traveled to Europe, and the second and third cases were identified as close contacts of that patient, county officials said in previous statements.

Kasirye has said the fourth detected presumptive case returned positive for orthopox virus, which is a subfamily of viruses that includes monkeypox and smallpox.

The first four detected cases produced mild symptoms, and the patients were isolating at home, the health officer has said. On Tuesday, county officials did not release any information about the symptoms of the fifth patient.

The CDC as of an update last Friday had confirmed 25 cases of monkeypox across a dozen states, with California and New York leading the U.S. at five cases each, followed by Florida at three.

Spread of monkeypox is linked to prolonged, skin-to-skin exposure, according to experts. Symptoms of monkeypox include fever, headache, muscle aches, backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills and exhaustion. The patient typically develops a rash, often beginning on the face then spreading to other parts of the body, normally about one to three days after fever.

The incubation period is typically one to two weeks but can range up to three weeks, and the illness typically lasts two to four weeks, according to the county news release.

Doctors and public health officials urge residents to practice safe sex. These practices may include abstaining from sex, practicing monogamy and using condoms during sex to limit exposure to the virus.

NBC 7 Investigates: Ambulances Waiting Hours to Offload Patients into Local Emergency Rooms

[NBC San Diego reports](#) when emergencies happen, seconds matter. We pay a lot of attention to how quickly ambulances get to the scene of an emergency, but picking up the patient is only half of the picture. The other half is what happens once that patient gets to a hospital.

NBC 7 Investigates discovered the trip from the parking lot into the emergency room can take hours. In some extreme cases, it’s taking more than two hours to transfer the care of a patient. Despite a wide awareness of the problem, lawmakers, ambulance providers and hospitals can’t seem to agree on a solution.

“It’s very concerning.... An ambulance gurney was really made for short response, short transport, not for the long time of being in a bed,” Jeff Behm, the managing director of Falck San Diego, the city of San Diego’s contracted ambulance provider, told us.

Behm shared some of Falck’s internal data with NBC 7 Investigates, showing how ambulances get tied up at hospitals. Each chart in the slideshow below shows the number of ambulances, hour-by-hour, that waited between 60 minutes and two hours to offload patients. Each slide shows a month, from December 2021 to April 2022.

California's Emergency Medical Services Authority sets a goal time of 20 minutes to transfer the care of patients from ambulances to hospitals. Anything longer than that is considered delayed.

"We need to be out of the hospital in under 30 minutes because we need to get back out into the system to take care of those patients," Behm said. "So any time over 30 minutes, to me, is not acceptable."

This isn't just a city problem. San Diego County keeps track of how long it takes to transfer every patient from an ambulance into the emergency room at all hospitals in the county. The county uses a system called FirstWatch, which collects data with a mobile app on board ambulances. It requires an emergency room physician or nurse to push a button acknowledging the transfer of care.

NBC 7 Investigates analyzed years of FirstWatch data. Even before the pandemic, about one in three ambulance patients waited more than 30 minutes to be admitted to the ER.

Some hospitals performed better than others. We looked at the 10 busiest in the county, based on the number of patients they see from ambulances. UC San Diego Medical Center in Hillcrest was the worst performer on average from 2018 through 2021. Nearly half of all ambulance patients waited longer than 30 minutes. Scripps Mercy San Diego and Scripps Mercy Chula Vista weren't far behind. However, Scripps Memorial hospitals in La Jolla and Encinitas both averaged around 10% of patients with delayed ambulance offload times. Sharp Memorial hospital performed third-best at 20%.

State lawmakers like Assemblymember Chris Ward, who represents District 78 in San Diego County, recognize the problem.

"I don't have to give it a grade," Ward said. "We either know that it is meeting standards or it is not. And it is not. And it is certainly not consistently across all our hospitals or all our regions or our county, and we must do better."

Ward serves on California's Committee on Emergency Management, which recently discussed a bill that aims to lower ambulance patient offload times. Bill [AB-1770](#) would, in part, fund a public education campaign to convince people not to call for an ambulance when they don't need one. However, the bill stops short of fining hospitals for consistently long times. When pressed, Ward said he'd keep an open mind.

For further details on these findings, visit the full article.

Bridge Fire Fully Contained, Emergency Messaging Questioned

[Santa Barbara Independent reports](#) Sunday night's Bridge Fire in Santa Barbara was called fully contained Monday morning, but firefighters stayed on site to dig out any hot spots. Mapping using infrared sensors put the fire at just under 8.2 acres, and no injuries were reported. Controversy and complaints, however, are being voiced online about how some people received notification of the fire and others did not.

The cause remains under investigation, and it appears to have had a suspicious origin, according to [County Fire's tweets](#), next to the fields by the Bridge to Nowhere, properly called Salvar Road. Social media messages identified the starting place as a couch and said five people were

seen nearby. Photos of what looks like a burned-out sofa bed above Cieneguitas Road were posted on social media, too, which seems to give truth to that rumor.

While fire ordinarily runs uphill, this one moved downhill, pushed by winds of about 10 mph, rising to gusts of 20 mph, said County Fire spokesperson Captain Scott Safechuck, headed toward the homes on Cieneguitas Road. Low-flying aircraft carrying water and fire retardant were nearly over the heads of the people evacuating the area, though a drone was also spotted, endangering the air operation. About 120 individuals fought the fire, including engine, dozer, and aircraft crews, chiefs, and firefighters from the County and City of Santa Barbara.

The winds blew the smoke across the canyons and along Foothill Road as emergency alerts went out first across the wireless system and then the reverse dialing system. Sheriff's deputies and Search & Rescue volunteers went door to door, knocking and ringing doorbells to evacuate the people on Calle Caridad and Cieneguitas closest to the fire above Foothill.

Numerous complaints were made to responding agencies because the telephone alerts arrived seemingly at random. Kelly Hubbard, who leads the county's Office of Emergency Management, explained how the emergency alert systems worked. Once the fire department assesses the fire, her office and the Sheriff's Office identify and outline the area to be evacuated. The emergency alert messages first go out via cell towers in the evacuation area, but the towers, which are owned by individual carriers, broadcast the message to all the carrier's cell phones in the zone, whether or not the owner is registered in the evacuation area. Hubbard said this is further complicated by the fact that all carriers might not have a cell tower in the emergency area. Confusion arises when some people receive the message who are near the fire, but often people beyond the fire — but within the range of particular carriers' cell towers — also receive the message.

Both the Wireless Emergency Alert system and cell tower technology are in the hands of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, which is working to enable all towers to connect to all cell phones in an emergency, Hubbard said. It is the fastest way to reach the most people.

Opting for the virtues of redundancy, the county uses three systems to alert its residents, and the wireless alert is just one of them, said Hubbard. The other two are the reverse 9-1-1 dialing system and the knocks on doors by emergency personnel. Alerting the nearest neighbors is most important, Hubbard said, but once those are underway, they turn to the county websites; next are the Twitter networks of the [Office of Emergency Management](#) — in English and Spanish — [Santa Barbara County](#), and the [Sheriff's Office](#) to provide the information again.

“We are always working to improve the data that we can control,” she said, “and part of that is needing residents to update their information.” Hubbard recommended making sure all phone numbers and email addresses are correct and up to date, as well as the method of alert — such as text, phone call message, and so on — and the locations or addresses for which you want to be notified. The website [ReadySBC.org](#) contains the sign-up links.

Southern California Fire Burns 90 Acres

[UPI reports](#) San Bernardino firefighters were able to slow the forward progress of a wildfire that started Monday near Hesperia, California, after one person was injured and the blaze burned through about 90 acres of vegetation, officials said.

More than 100 firefighters battled the blaze that burned through the night east of Highway 138 and the emergency crew continued to fight the fire into Tuesday but had it 50% contained. Officials did not release additional information on the person injured.

San Bernardino County Fire Department Capt. Jeremy Kern said weather played a factor in helping slow down the fire, which also destroyed one structure. The cause of the fire remained under investigation on Tuesday.

"Winds have died down, so fire activity has died down," Kern told the San Bernardino Sun. "But we still have a lot of open fire line to secure."

Southern California is experiencing record heat. The National Weather Service warned that extreme heat in the Apple and Lucerne valleys in Southern California will significantly increase the potential for heat-related illnesses, particularly for that outside.

Dry and windy conditions are expected to persist the remainder of the week with warm conditions, and gusty winds affecting the interior areas of Southwest California Tuesday through Sunday.

Every Second Matters: 911 Dispatch Centers Struggle to Survive

[*The Crime Report: Your Criminal Justice Report reports*](#) every second matters during an emergency, and 911 operator shortages can make wait times longer and lead to a backlog that's hard for small agencies to recover from. Excessive wait times have been reported in police departments from California to Pennsylvania, [PBS NewsHour reports](#).

In Bridgeton, a small suburb in Missouri, the city spent a year operating with less than half of the 911 dispatchers they needed before outsourcing to St. Louis County.

Bridgeton is one of many towns and cities across the country experiencing a 911 dispatcher shortage. Alabama, New Mexico, and California have all reported state-wide drops in staffing. In the United States, over 240 million calls are made to 911 each year.

The National Emergency Number Association sets the standard that 90 percent of all 911 calls should be answered within 15 seconds, but many departments are struggling to hit that mark.

Dispatcher positions are difficult to fill: the jobs have long hours and middling pay, and supporting mental health for dispatchers can be a struggle. 911 agencies also struggle to secure their funding: the National 911 Program [reports](#) that many agencies are still funded by fees on rapidly-disappearing landline phones.

In a related story, a [recent study](#) showed that program in Denver removing police from responding to certain 911 calls, known as the Support Team Assistance Response, or STAR, program, led to a 34 percent reduction in low-level crimes, [reports USA Today](#). Results of the study showed that the STAR program prevented nearly 1,400 crimes during its six-month pilot launched in June 2020.

The goal is to team up mental health clinicians and emergency medical technicians to respond to certain 911 calls, such as mental health crises, substance use disorders, homelessness and other social welfare issues, instead of police officers. Mental health advocates and law enforcement experts often agree 911 calls related to these kinds of issues do not need a police response.

Denver's STAR program consisted of two-person teams of a medic and a clinician in a van from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays in eight police precincts. According to the researchers' analysis, STAR's response to 748 calls would have meant an expected 1,047 fewer recorded crimes.

The actual reduction was 1,376 fewer offenses across the eight precincts over the six months. The 1,376 fewer offenses cost about \$151 each to reduce. Had each offense been handled in the criminal justice system, the cost would be an average of \$646.

ICYMI: Funding Opportunities Ending Soon

- **2022-23 Domestic Violence Housing First (XD) Program RFP**; *consumer protection; disadvantaged communities; health & human services; housing, community, and economic development*
 - Funded by: Governor's Office of Emergency Services
 - Deadline: **Friday, June 10, 2022**
 - Total Estimated Funding: \$22.75 million
 - **Full Grant Guidelines**: [linked here](#)
- **2021-2022 California State Library High-Speed Broadband Grant**; *education; housing, community, and economic development; libraries and arts; science, technology, and research & development*
 - Funded by: CA State Library
 - Deadline: **Wednesday, June 15, 2022**
 - Total Estimated Funding: \$1.8 million
 - **Full Grant Guidelines**: [linked here](#)
 - **Online Application**: [linked here](#)
- **Creative Youth Development**; *disadvantaged communities; education; housing, community, and economic development; libraries and arts*
 - Funded by: CA Arts Council
 - Deadline: **Thursday, June 23, 2022**
 - Total Estimated Funding: \$16 million
 - **Full Grant Guidelines**: [linked here](#)
 - **Online Application**: [linked here](#)

Funding Opportunities

2022-24 Sexual Assault American Rescue Plan (AR) Program RFP

[The Governor's Office of Emergency Services](#) has created the AR Program to help rape crisis centers and sexual assault programs continue adapting to meet the emergency needs of sexual assault survivors in response to the COVID -19 public health emergency.

Funds are to be used to continue efforts to prepare for, prevent, and respond to COVID-19. Funding may support a range of in-scope activities including counseling, mobile advocacy, telehealth, teletherapy, peer support, temporary housing, rental assistance and nominal relocation expenses, supplies, equipment, and software to assist in carrying out virtual services.

The Applicant must be a governmental or non-governmental organization (NGO) serving sexual assault victims. Priority will be given to NGOs not currently funded through the Rape Crisis (RC), Victim Advocacy in Detention Facilities (KA), Campus Sexual Assault (CT), or the Child Sexual Abuse Treatment (CS) Programs.

The proposal must be submitted per the instructions in C. SUBMISSION DEADLINE AND REQUIREMENTS.

The deadline to apply for this funding is **Wednesday, June 29, 2022**. Total estimated funding available is \$3,370,077. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#).

2022-23 Transitional Housing (XH) Program RFP

[The Governor's Office of Emergency Services](#) has created the XH Program to provide victims of crime with transitional/short-term housing assistance and a range of supportive services with the goal of moving victims into safe, permanent housing.

The XH Program is designed after the Housing First model; a form of rapid rehousing adapted to move and rehouse victims of crime who are experiencing homelessness into permanent housing quickly and provide ongoing supportive services. Transitional/short-term housing is a temporary solution – usually a room or apartment – meant to be a safe space in which victims can process their trauma and build a supportive network with the goal of moving into safe, permanent housing.

Since 2017, California has implemented the Housing First Model as defined in Welfare and Institutions (W&I) Code Section 8255 to address the prevalence of homelessness in California. The Housing First Model is an approach to connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness quickly and successfully to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as treatment, or sobriety.

Applicants must have a Unique Entity Identifier (Unique Entity ID) registered in the federal System for Award Management (SAM). Applicants who do not currently have a Unique Entity ID will need to register at SAM.gov to obtain one.

See full Request for Proposal for complete requirements.

Applicants may request a partial or full match waiver (match waiver requests are not considered during the Proposal Rating process).

To request a match waiver, Applicants must submit the VOCA Match Waiver Request form (Cal OES Form 2-159) with their proposal. Up to two VOCA fund sources can be entered on one form. All sections of the form must be completed and answers to questions 6 and 7 must be specific and unique to the Applicant and Program.

The deadline to apply for this funding is **Tuesday, July 5, 2022**. Total estimated funding available is \$17.15 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#).

2022-23 Child Advocacy Center (KC) Program RFP

[The Governor's Office of Emergency Services](#) has created the KC Program for Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) to provide direct victim services to child abuse survivors and their families through a multidisciplinary team approach. These services must include victim-centered, trauma-informed forensic interviews, advocacy, direct or referral to therapy/counseling, and referrals for medical exams.

Eligible Applicants must work in conjunction with a CAC registered under the Children's Advocacy Centers of California (CACC).

To request a match waiver, Applicants must submit the VOCA Match Waiver Request form (Cal OES Form 2-159) with their application. Up to two VOCA fund sources can be entered on one form. An additional VOCA Match Waiver Request form may be necessary when there are more than two VOCA fund sources. All sections of the form must be completed and answers to questions 6 and 7 must be specific and unique to the Applicant and Program.

The deadline to apply for this funding is **Friday, August 26, 2022**. Total estimated funding available is \$8,646,426. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#).