

STATE OF VERMONT

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 05-22

[Governor's Violence Prevention Task Force]

WHEREAS, April 19, 2018, I issued Executive Order, No. 03-18, establishing a Governor's Community Violence Prevention Task Force as a forum for honest, respectful, and fact-based discussions about how Vermonters can reduce the risk of violence in our communities, including identifying root causes and developing open conversations about behavior, mental health, firearm safety, restoring civil discourse and personal responsibility; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force submitted its final report to me on May 31, 2019, and was disbanded with the expiration of the Executive Order on December 31, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force's final report suggested multiple initiatives to prevent large-scale violence and mitigate its effects in our state, many of which have been proposed to the Legislature and taken up, including increased funding for early mental health interventions and initiating behavioral threat assessments in Vermont schools; and

WHEREAS, while Vermont is one of the healthiest and safest states in America, like the rest of the country, Vermont is experiencing staffing shortages in critical professions, including public safety and law enforcement, social work, and health care, at the same time it is facing spikes in rates of violent crime, organized drug crime and overdoses, and mental health crises; and

WHEREAS, on August 17, 2022, I issued my Public Safety Enhancement and Violence Reduction 10-Point Action Plan, a framework to address Vermont's recent increase in violent crime, including gun crimes, drug trafficking and domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, on September 1, 2022, I appointed a Director of Violence Prevention to bring focus, clarity and discipline to a longer-term prevention strategy that prioritizes early interventions for children and families; and

WHEREAS, the Director of Violence Prevention will lead a reconstituted Violence Prevention Task Force made up of Executive Branch officers responsible for law enforcement and prosecution, and social service interventions; and

WHEREAS, the Violence Prevention Task Force is directed to implement specific and measurable community violence prevention policies and strategies across state government, with an emphasis on preventing gun crimes in schools and in community settings.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, I, Philip B. Scott, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor, do hereby create the Governor's Violence Prevention Task Force as follows:

I. Composition and Appointments

The Governor's Violence Prevention Task Force shall consist of senior executive branch officials, including the Governor's Secretaries of the Agencies of Human Services, Education and Digital Services; the Commissioners of Public Safety, Mental Health, Corrections, Children and Families and Health; the Chief of the Criminal Justice Division of the Office of the Attorney General; and the Executive Director of the Office of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs, or designee.

The Task Force will be chaired by the Director of Violence Prevention.

The Task Force is directed to work cooperatively and collaboratively across the Executive Branch enterprise to accomplish its charge.

The Task Force should consult, as appropriate and necessary, with the Vermont School Safety Center, the Vermont Association of Chiefs of Police, the Vermont Sheriff's Association, the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, the Criminal Justice Council, the Defender General, the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and other community stakeholders and private sector professionals identified by the Task Force, for information, insights, and advice.

II. Violence Prevention Task Force Charge and Process

The Task Force shall:

- A. Coordinate policy implementation across state government to help address violence against others in schools and communities;
- B. Identify needed reform of existing criminal justice laws, regulations, policies, and programs and propose – and advocate for – legislative and programmatic changes to better deter and prevent violent crimes and hold offenders accountable;
- C. Coordinate federal funding opportunities to better prevent community violence, facilitate better use of ERPO implementation/enhancements and significantly improve school safety and school violence prevention; and
- D. Perform other duties with respect to violence prevention initiatives as the Governor may direct.

The Violence Prevention Task Force will be advisory to the Governor and will report to him regularly on its view of the effectiveness of violence prevention policy.

The Violence Prevention Task Force shall receive administrative, and staff support from the Office of the Governor and data support from the Agency of Digital Services, the Agency of Human Services, and the Department of Public Safety.

III. Effective Date

This Executive Order shall take effect upon execution and shall expire December 31, 2026.



WITNESS my name hereunto subscribed and the Great Seal of the State of Vermont hereunto affixed at Montpelier this 5th day of October, 2022.

A blue ink signature of Philip B. Scott, written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line.

Philip B. Scott
Governor

By the Governor:

A black ink signature of Brittney Wilson, written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line.

Brittney Wilson
Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs

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