

2007 NORTH CAROLINA GANG PREVENTION INITIATIVE

USE OF GANG PREVENTION FUNDS

Enacted by the General Assembly of North Carolina, 31 July 2007

SECTION 16.5.(A)

Of the funds appropriated in this act to the Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, Governor's Crime Commission, the sum of four million seven hundred sixty thousand one hundred ninety-five dollars (\$4,760,195) for the 2007-2008 fiscal year shall be used to provide grants for street gang violence prevention, intervention, and suppression programs.

SECTION 16.5.(B)

The Governor's Crime Commission shall develop the criteria for eligibility for these funds. The criteria shall include a matching requirement of twenty-five percent (25%), one-half of which may be in in-kind contributions, and presentation of a written plan for the services to be provided by the funds. Funds shall be available to public and private entities or agencies for juvenile or adult programs that meet the criteria established by the Governor's Crime Commission.

SECTION 16.5.(C)

The Governor's Crime Commission shall report to the chairs of the House of Representatives and Senate Appropriations Committees and the Chairs of the House of Representatives and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Justice and Public Safety by April 15, 2008, on this program. The report shall include all of the following:

- (1) The grant award process.
- (2) A description of each grant awarded.
- (3) The performance criteria for evaluating grant programs.
- (4) A list of State grants awarded in the 2007 grant cycle.

Executive Summary

The General Assembly has wrestled with how best to eradicate criminal activity by street gangs and has directed the Governor's Crime Commission to focus on patterns of gang activity and on the organized nature of street gangs; these together are the chief source of terror created by street gangs. The Legislature determined that the prevention of violent gang activity and efforts to prevent a gang's ability to recruit members are effective means of addressing the issues created by gangs in North Carolina.

In the final days of their 2007 session, the North Carolina General Assembly appropriated more than \$4.76 million to the Governor's Crime Commission, Department of Crime Control and Public Safety to combat street gang violence through the development and comprehensive implementation of prevention, intervention and suppression programs in North Carolina.

This action comes on the heels of an ever increasing level of gang activity over the past ten years. During its last session, the General Assembly found North Carolina to be in a state of crisis created by violent street gangs whose members threaten, terrorize, and commit a multitude of crimes against our communities. The increasing concern over the rise in gang activity, gang membership and gang-related crime has most recently manifested itself in a wave of gun violence involving drive-by shootings.

The Violence Policy Center, a Washington-based gun control advocacy group, reported 549 drive-by shootings occurring in the United States between July and December 2006. From those 156 deaths and

465 injuries occurred. Indeed, nineteen drive-by shootings were recorded in North Carolina, the sixth highest in the Nation. Twenty-three percent of those killed or injured were younger than 18, fifty-five percent were at a residence when they were shot and twenty-two percent of the drive-bys involved shooting at another vehicle

The Governor's Crime Commission recently identified 400 gangs with more than 5,000 members across North Carolina in the state's GangNet database. For the first time a gang was "defined" as an "ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons with a common interest, bond or activity; characterized by the commission of, or involvement in, a pattern of criminal or delinquent behavior." Efforts to adopt a statutory definition stalled in the waning hours of the Legislature due to concerns with constitutional issues and an estimated multi-million dollar prison construction expenditure that would result from the current language.

A 2005 report by the N.C. Criminal Justice Analysis Center indicated the presence of at least 387 gangs across the state with 8,517 members, up from 332 gangs with 4,068 members identified in a 1999 report. These figures probably understated the problem because some North Carolina law enforcement organizations were reluctant to admit gangs were operating in their jurisdictions.

Target Areas

Thirty-four counties have been targeted as potential recipients of grant funds due to the high degree of gang and gang-related criminal activity within their communities. With the assistance of crime statistics from the State Bureau of Investigation, the Governor's Crime Commission has identified the following perceived "hot spots" of concentrated gang activity. Statistical information is drawn from serious violent offense, drug trafficking and gang-related crimes committed during the first six months (January-June) of 2007. Data was collected on the preceding six month period (July-Dec 2006) to establish a base-line for comparison concerning increased gang activity. Although this is not an exclusive solicitation, first consideration will be given to applications from these counties:

Alamance	Nash
Bertie	New Hanover
Buncombe	Onslow (Jacksonville)
Catawba (Hickory)	Orange
Chatham (Siler City)	Pasquotank (Elizabeth City)
Cumberland	Person (Roxboro)
Davidson (Lexington)	Pitt
Durham	Randolph (Asheboro)
Forsyth	Richmond (Rockingham)
Gaston	Robeson
Gates	Rockingham (Reidsville)
Guilford	Rowan (Salisbury)
Harnett	Sampson
Iredell (Statesville)	Union
Johnston	Vance
Mecklenburg	Warren
Montgomery	Wake

Eligibility Criteria

The Governor's Crime Commission has been tasked with establishing identification and selection criteria for the fair allocation of funding to top gang growth areas within the state. Grants will be considered on the basis of the following:

- Application may be made by either public or private entities, for either adult or juvenile gang programs. Collaborative efforts are highly encouraged and should maximize the efficient use of resources in the coordination of community, law enforcement and professional services. A Memorandum of Understanding is required.
- Applicants are required to provide a written plan explaining the services to be provided with grant funds, specifically dedicating approximately 75 percent toward gang prevention and intervention and 25 percent toward gang suppression.
- Programs must be based upon a data-driven, strategic planning and management process that integrates human and financial resources with a proven strategic framework.
- Applicant programs are statutorily required to provide a 25 percent match. Up to one-half of the match may be provided in the form of “in-kind” contributions.
- All grantees must complete a gang assessment survey provided by the Governor’s Crime Commission. All grantees must also conduct a final assessment at the end of the grant cycle.
- Grantees shall keep statistical data and provide such cost and implementation reports as required by the Grants Management Section of the Governor’s Crime Commission.
- A Memorandum of Understanding must be signed by all participating county or municipal law enforcement agencies agreeing to develop a countywide Gang Task Force for the purpose of gathering and sharing intelligence with all law enforcement agencies within the applicant county and surrounding counties where possible.
- Gang suppression personnel may be considered with a maximum of \$60,000 per agency for one detective or two patrol officers.
- The Governor’s Crime Commission believes that GangNet will increase documented intelligence that can be shared among multiple jurisdictions and agencies simultaneously. All law enforcement agencies shall establish policies and procedures to identify all gang members entering their jails and enter such information into GangNet as the authorized system for documentation. All pertinent employees must undergo GangNet training provided free of charge by the Governor’s Crime Commission.
- All grantees shall submit a project summary at the end of the project cycle. Details of the summary will be made available by Governor’s Crime Commission, and some agencies will be asked to present their summaries to the full Commission and/or the General Assembly at a future date.
- All post release programs must have a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the North Carolina Department of Corrections. All pre-trial programs must have a signed

endorsement from the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge, the Chief District Court Judge, and the District Attorney's Office of the affected judicial district.

- Any non-profit agencies applying under this grant must have a current certification as a 501(c)(3) entity by the North Carolina Secretary of State Office in their possession at the time of application. Non-profit applicants also shall attend the Threat Assessment and Vulnerability training course provided free of charge by the Governor's Crime Commission. This course must be completed prior to the start of the grant.
- All non-profit agencies receiving grants under this priority must strictly follow the established reporting guidelines for all progress and implementation reports as outlined at: <http://www.ncgccd.org/planning/cji/nptreat.pdf>

STRATEGIES: Prevention, Intervention and Gang Suppression

The award recipient must develop an integrated plan for identifying and harnessing existing resources and implementing a multi-strategy anti-gang initiative that includes gang prevention, intervention, and gang suppression.

Research shows that gang members commit violent, property, weapons, and drug offenses at dramatically higher rates than those who are non-gang members. Gangs include both juvenile and adult members, and gang offenses range from relatively minor offenses committed by small groups in specific locations to serious crimes coordinated by broad networks over a large area. The same response applied to each situation is destined for failure.

Research also shows that serious delinquency and youth gang activity are not stand-alone issues, but rather are linked to an accumulation of risk factors related to the individual, family, peer group, school, and community. To make long-term reductions in gang activity, the North Carolina General Assembly recognized the need for communities to implement a broad strategy that includes all three requisite elements of successful comprehensive an anti-gang program: prevention, intervention, and suppression.

A. PREVENTION

Gang membership prevention includes activities, programs, and services designed to reduce the flow of young people into gangs. It typically targets high-risk youth and families to receive a combination of services to meet pressing needs and provide healthy alternatives to the gang lifestyle. Gang membership prevention is also usually targeted toward young people, ages 7 to 14 years, who are high-risk but not yet gang involved. A wide range of program settings and design options may be appropriate depending on community conditions and local gang dynamics.

Gang crime prevention includes activities in the physical and social environment designed to reduce opportunities for gang-involved or gang-related crime to occur. This includes crime prevention through environmental design and "broken windows" activities such as graffiti removal, community clean-up, improvements in lighting, and blocking "through streets" where drive-by shootings occur. This also should include efforts to educate and mobilize community members to increase general awareness and reporting of gang crime and activity.

B. INTERVENTION

Active gang members and young people who are closely associated with them often have committed one or more serious offenses and are at a high risk to do so again. They typically range in age from the early teens to the early twenties and are often on probation. Some, however, while not involved with the justice system will be resistant to traditional services. One must incorporate aggressive outreach and recruitment efforts to ensure that these high-risk youth and their families receive needed services.

Gang-involved youth should be identified and referred to an intervention team composed of professionals from multiple sources such as probation, law enforcement, schools, mental health services, child protective services, and community-based and faith-based organizations. The team may assist in identifying gaps in service coverage, in geographic areas or age range served, or in risk factors and problem behaviors to be addressed.

Gang intervention requires careful planning and coordination. In addition to services and opportunities, intervention must also entail supervision and accountability. Gang intervention is typically carried out by a multidisciplinary community team that conducts outreach, shares information, develops individualized treatment plans, and conducts case management. Examples of services include help with educational and job opportunities, and meeting conditions of probation such as community service or drug treatment. While the nature of the target population makes gang intervention difficult and potentially dangerous, it is as the High Point Police Department will testify, extremely beneficial when done correctly. This becomes evident when serious offenders stop offending and no longer serve as negative role models for other youth in the community.

Intervention through prisoner reentry strategies also must provide a holistic approach in reducing recidivism rates for high-impact gang-involved offenders, returning them to the community through the use of vouchers, mentors, and community organizations (including faith-based) for the delivery of services and treatment. Gang reentry intervention programs have been shown to reduce recidivism and the severity of future offenses among gang members. Interventions also increase coordination and information sharing across agencies, and perhaps most significantly has produced intelligence that allows local law enforcement to prevent gang retaliations and other pre-planned gang-related offenses.

C. SUPPRESSION

Perhaps the single most important piece to the gang reduction puzzle is the accessibility to real time and accurate intelligence now available via GangNet to all North Carolina law enforcement agencies free of charge. Second is the ability and willingness to share that information with others. All law enforcement applicants shall therefore agree to receive training and participate in GangNet.

Informed by data and real-time intelligence, prosecution and enforcement strategies may more effectively be developed with the goal of reducing violent gang-related incidents through both reactive and proactive efforts and may coordinate with federal, state, and local law enforcement.

Communities may seek to increase the capacity of their criminal/juvenile justice system to identify and suppress gang violence and membership. Funding for **SALARIES ONLY** will be considered up to \$60,000 per application for one detective or two patrol officers.

Other innovative formal and informal community-based partnerships and juvenile/ criminal justice suppression efforts will also be considered. Since these youth are at the highest risk for gang offending, intervention activities are likely to include individualized services and suppression methods involving monitoring and case management with outreach to family members over extended periods of time.