



A ROADMAP TO COMMUNITY SAFETY: A GUIDE FOR LOCAL LAWMAKERS



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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Design Credit: Naeem Holman, Movement for Black Lives

Movement for Black Lives

The Movement for Black Lives is a national network of more than 150 leaders and organizations creating a broad political home for Black people to learn, organize and take action. M4BL includes activists, organizers, academics, lawyers, educators, health workers, artists and more, all unified in a radical vision for Black liberation and working for equity, justice and healing.

Civil Rights Corps

Civil Rights Corps is a non-profit organization dedicated to challenging systemic injustice within the United States' legal system—a system that is built on white supremacy and economic inequality.

The organization uses impact litigation, policy, and strategic communications to dismantle criminal-legal injustice, create new paradigms for keeping people safe, and shift power to community-led movements, particularly those led by Black, Brown, and poor people who are most affected by this legal system.

Civil Rights Corps supported the Movement for Black Lives by co-leading—along with Essie Justice Group—the drafting of *The BREATHE Act*, including the federal, state, and local versions.

Essie Justice Group

Essie Justice Group, the country's leading organization of women with incarcerated loved ones, is taking on the rampant injustices created by mass incarceration. Because mass incarceration is a race and gender justice issue, this California-based organization of multi-cultural organizers is led by and centered on the leadership of Black women.

Essie's award-winning Healing to Advocacy Model is made for the 1 in 4 women with an incarcerated loved one. In Essie cohorts, women and gender nonconforming people come together to heal, build collective power, and drive social change. The revolutionary impact of women with incarcerated loved ones is notable in Essie's role as central architect of *The Breathe Act*. Essie Justice Group is a member of the Movement for Black Lives.




INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

In 2020, state and local policymakers increasingly recognized that our country needs a paradigm shift in public safety—that to create real safety, including and especially for Black communities, we must invest robustly in preventative approaches and the root needs of community members.

Unfortunately, many policymakers are unsure exactly how to proceed next. When pen hits paper, they could benefit from concrete models and examples—and on learning processes that can better involve and serve those communities that have been most harmed.

This Policy Guide is specifically designed for local policymakers, policy advocates, and other stakeholders at the town, city, parish, and county levels to begin funding non-carceral safety approaches that mirror provisions within *The People's Response Act*, as introduced by Congresswomen Cori Bush, Ayanna Pressley, Jan Schakowsky, and Pramila Jayapal, and , created by the Movement for Black Lives and championed by Congresswomen Ayanna Pressley and Rashida Tlaib. This Policy Guide offers a model for how states can begin making non-carceral, life-affirming safety investments now, as well as institutionalize these investments so that they are sustained over time.



If you are a policymaker or advocate who wants to do any of the following, this Guide is for you.

- Increase safety in your community
- Make long-term, sustainable investments in community safety
- Target non-carceral safety spending at community needs
- Build a structure to ensure cross-sector collaboration surrounding safety goals
- Expand community leadership over safety priorities and approaches
- Work meaningfully with Black-led organizations and directly impacted individuals

BACKGROUND ON *THE BREATHE ACT*

In the seven years that have passed since the police killing of Michael Brown and too many more Black men, women, and non-binary people, communities have emphatically demanded real, transformative change in public safety policy. When the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, and Ahmaud Arbery sparked more than 600 demonstrations in summer 2020, [the Movement for Black Lives](#) responded with a policy that could meet this moment.

Facing these ongoing tragedies and fueled by these clear, urgent demands for change, the Movement for Black Lives—with technical support provided by [Essie Justice Group](#), [Civil Rights Corps](#), and [Black Lives Matter](#)—responded by drafting its first legislative proposal: [The BREATHE Act](#).

The Breathe Act is rooted in the [Vision for Black Lives](#), the Movement for Black Lives' policy platform. The Vision for Black Lives platform launched in the summer of 2016 and is the result of a year and a half-long process in which over fifty organizations representing thousands of Black people from across the country came together to lay out a detailed policy agenda.

***The BREATHE Act* is a proposed federal bill inspired by the Vision for Black Lives and is the most comprehensive and progressive policy framework in recent U.S. history.**

Through proposals that span housing justice, education justice, environmental justice, health justice, voting rights, reparations, economic justice, and the criminal-legal system, the framework sets forth a policy answer to this question: “What will it take to keep Black people safe in the United States?” And in its 130-page proposal, *The Breathe Act* provides a comprehensive roadmap that would ensure the safety and well-being of all people.


In total, *The BREATHE Act* framework is broken into four parts that:

- Divest from incarceration and policing, including a robust suite of federal criminal-legal system policy changes—including approaches that would decriminalize our approach to drugs and immigration;
- Invest in new, non-punitive, non-carceral approaches to community safety that lead states to shrink their criminal-legal systems;
- Allocate new money to build healthy, sustainable, and equitable communities, including via sweeping investments in children, education, fair and affordable housing, family support, environmental justice, and ensuring all people economic dignity; and
- Hold political leaders to their promises while enhancing the self-determination of Black communities, such as through protecting voting rights and building a pathway to reparations.

In summer 2021, one of *The BREATHE Act*’s four sections was introduced in Congress.

On June 28, 2021, Members of Congress Cori Bush, Ayanna Pressley, Pramila Jayapal, and Jan Schakowsky introduced *The People’s Response Act*, which includes the central features of Section 2 of *The BREATHE Act*—bold investments in non-carceral, non-punitive, life-affirming approaches to safety, as well as the creation of a new agency within the Department of Health and Human Services that can catalyze these funding flows. **But the message of this Guide is that local policymakers need not wait: starting today, actors at the city, county, and regional levels can begin advancing their own versions of *The People’s Response Act* and *The BREATHE Act* policies that undergird this approach.**

This Policy Guide is designed to help local policymakers and advocates transform their approaches to community safety while investing in real, human-centered safety that affirms the lives and dignity of all people. First, though, this Guide will provide a more in-depth summary of what *The People’s Response Act* includes—and how this bill could fuel non-carceral safety approaches on the ground.



THIS BILL BEGINS A POLICY JOURNEY THAT IS ESSENTIAL FOR SHIFTING OUR CURRENT PARADIGM—MOVING THE CONCEPT OF “SAFETY” FROM A PRIMARILY CRIMINAL-LEGAL INSTITUTION AND FUNDING REGIME TO A NEW FRAMEWORK THAT ROOTS SAFETY IN PUBLIC HEALTH.”

BACKGROUND ON THE PEOPLE’S RESPONSE ACT

The People’s Response Act is a bill whose content speaks to its unique history—a firm grounding in movement demands. The bill makes paradigm-shifting investments in non-carceral, life-affirming safety approaches while building a new infrastructure for community safety that operates fully outside of the criminal-legal system.

At a high level, *The People's Response Act* contains the following policy proposals from *The BREATHE Act*:

- Establishing a direct grant for community-led organizations that are implementing non-carceral safety approaches that range from violence interruption, safe passage to schools, and non-carceral crisis response to behavioral health, healing justice, and youth programs;
- Establishing grant programs that fund state and local governments to begin making robust, holistic investments in non-carceral safety—while prioritizing jurisdictions that enact policy changes to shrink criminal-legal harm, that use a participatory approach, and that have a particularly high need (i.e., high rates of poverty or incarceration); and
- Creating a new Division of Community Safety at the federal Department of Health and Human Services, whose purpose is to fund, coordinate research on, and coordinate interagency work on non-carceral safety approaches—all while remaining accountable to a Community Advisory Board that includes individuals who are directly impacted by criminal-legal harm.

In addition, *The People's Response Act* contains:

- A Federal Health Response Unit—or a federal non-carceral first responders unit—that will respond to mass public health crises and support states and cities that declare a public health emergency;
- An interagency task force that will coordinate and promote holistic, non-carceral approaches to community safety governmentwide, including across the Departments of Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Education, Labor, and Justice, as well as the Environmental Protection Agency; and
- A competitive grant to support community-led organizations and state, local, and tribal governments to hire non-carceral emergency first responders.

The People's Response Act is not a panacea for addressing criminal-legal harm and making the bold, visionary investments that our communities urgently need. But this bill begins a policy journey that is essential for shifting our current paradigm—moving the concept of “safety” from a primarily criminal-legal institution and funding regime to a new framework that roots safety in public health. This bill is an essential step for shifting how the federal government approaches safety. Also, this bill would unlock new resources and new research that would serve to catalyze the urgent work so many local advocates and policymakers are already undertaking—and that inspires the Policy Guide to follow.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Every local jurisdiction has very different safety needs and political opportunities, meaning that no policy can work for every community. The following Guide is a blueprint, not a precise prescription of exactly what policies will most effectively address local needs. Ultimately, it is communities themselves that must guide investment decisions and implementation.

Nevertheless, there are several guiding principles that all policymakers should consider implement when crafting policies that advance non-carceral safety through *The People's Response Act* / *The BREATHE Act* model:

- **Create a funding stream targeted at non-carceral safety.** This Policy Guide is focused on non-carceral and life-affirming safety investments—a model that cares for, rather than punishes, people. And it is important that this characteristic is maintained: local jurisdictions need a long-term policy structure dedicated to bolstering safety not through criminalization, incarceration, or policing.

In implementing this idea, communities must develop a definition of “non-carceral” that meets their needs. But please see Appendix I for how *The People's Response Act* defines non-carceral safety—and note that no funding should go to police, jails, or other carceral actors. Policymakers have spent decades creating institutions that link “safety” with criminal-legal responses; this Policy Guide presents a model that bolsters safety without going through these systems.

- **Ensure robust funding over time. Non-carceral safety requires sustained funding to bear fruit.** Tokenized or one-time investments will undermine the idea that

- **Create a funding stream targeted at non-carceral safety.**
- **Ensure robust funding over time.**
- **Institutionalize community leadership.**
- **Tailor all spending to local needs.**
- **Apply a holistic definition of safety that leaves no community behind.**

non-carceral safety is a priority—and, consequently, not create confidence that this commitment is real.

We understand that localities face differing financial realities and opportunities. Please see our “Policy Implementation Guide” for ideas regarding how jurisdictions may build these structures over time; also, see the companion Federal Funding Guide for guidance on using American Rescue Plan Act resources.

- **Institutionalize community leadership.** For too long, many community members have had little say in how public safety is approached; any policy proposals must address this issue by creating mechanisms that ensure community control—not just in a voluntary or advisory capacity, but through language that enshrines robust oversight and directorial powers.
- **Tailor all spending to local needs.** There is no “silver bullet” to safety because safety is fundamentally rooted in multidisciplinary needs—health, housing, education, youth centers, and so much more. These complex needs require a comprehensive network of social supports; moreover, they need a correct diagnosis of what the “social determinants of safety” truly are in each community. Some jurisdictions may benefit from violence interruption and prevention programs. In others, the biggest safety-related need may be for street lights or housing vouchers that will address homelessness. Local jurisdictions must have a mechanism to ensure that non-carceral safety spending directly addresses local circumstances and priorities.
- **Apply a holistic definition of safety that leaves no community behind.** Centering those most likely to be victimized by both interpersonal violence and institutional harm—such as violent-policing, community divestment, and poverty—must govern policymakers’ approaches as well as their metrics for evaluation. It is an unfortunate reality that for many communities, the systems entrusted to increase community safety ultimately create a heightened risk of harm, violence, and trauma. Where community safety is seen only through the needs of property owners, businesses, or affluent geographic areas, true community safety infrastructure that leads to wellness for all will not be achieved.



POLICY GUIDE & SAMPLE POLICY

The following model is based on the *The People's Response Act* and the local BREATHE Act by the Movement for Black Lives. It provides a policy blueprint that lawmakers may use to begin building a sustainable, community-centered framework for keeping people safe.

CREATE A GRANT FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY

REQUIREMENTS:

- Funding must go to non-carceral programming
- Funding must show a preference for community-led service providers
- Funding must show a preference for community-led service providers that are representative, geographically rooted & with directly impacted leadership/staff

ELIGIBLE GRANT PURPOSES:

• VIOLENCE REDUCTION

- Violence interruption and intervention
- Abuse interruption, intervention, and prevention
- Neighborhood mediation
- Safe passage to school programs
- Afterschool and enrichment programs for youth, including programs focused on music, dance, theater, and other creative and performing arts

• SAFETY-FOCUSED INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure investments that are designed to improve community safety, including but not limited to:

- Park redevelopment;
- Streetlights;
- Public transportation;
- Community centers; and
- Grocery stores/access to food and nutrition

• PUBLIC HEALTH

- Preventative, non-punitive, non-coercive, patient-driven healthcare, including mental healthcare;



COMMUNITY-LED ORGANIZATIONS.

- Voluntary harm reduction programs.
- **HOUSING.**—Quality, accessible, and long-term supportive housing for those experiencing temporary or chronic homelessness, housing insecurity or risk of homelessness, and/or a disability or health issue, as well as for their families
- **NON-CARCERAL CRISIS INTERVENTION**
 - Non-punitive, unarmed first-responder agencies;
 - Non-law enforcement personnel and partnerships to solve problems that do not require criminal enforcement;
- **HEALING**
 - Funding for CBOs that provide healing-centered and culturally responsive engagement; and
 - Reparations for individuals who have experienced any harm from the police or mass criminalization.
- **REENTRY**
 - Educational and workforce development programs and/or pathways that work with formerly incarcerated individuals, including youth, helping them to secure secondary and/or post-secondary credentials;
- Grants for entrepreneurship & worker cooperatives operated by formerly incarcerated people
 - with criminal-legal histories.
- **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & CAPACITY-BUILDING**
 - Trainings and presentations for the local community, providing them with the information, background knowledge, and social context necessary to understand, contribute to, and otherwise engage with the CSA and its work
 - Capacity-building funding to local nonprofits, advocates, and CBOs
- **VOLUNTARY PRETRIAL SUPPORTS**
 - Text-message reminders about court dates
 - Transportation assistance to help accused persons get to and from the courthouse
 - Childcare assistance during court appointments



This Policy Guide offers a comprehensive model for sustainably funding non-carceral, non-punitive approaches to community safety. Other Sections will cover processes that further this goal in various ways, including mechanisms that identify safety needs, prioritize and distribute grant dollars, collect vital information, and administer any funds allocated.

This section specifically envisions a grant program that can leverage these other policies and practices to ensure that grant dollars are targeted and administered well. Overall, though, any grant program developed should have three main features.

- **Tailor spending to safety needs.** First, funding should directly map onto identified, community-specific safety needs. Once jurisdictions have completed a Safety Needs Assessments (see below), they should ensure that grant funding is most efficiently addressing those priorities. Consequently, flexibility is critical; rigid requirements, privileging predetermined interventions, may prevent dollars from addressing the root issues most affecting community members.

The sample language in Appendix A suggests various types of non-carceral approaches that have been successful, but this list should not prevent promising interventions that fail to meet a specific category.

- **Include a long-term component.** Many community-led organizations (CLOs) struggle with one-year or short-term grants that do not allow for long-term programming and planning. They also struggle with grant designs that have onerous reporting requirements. The Community Safety Agency administering the grant (see Section 2) should ensure that its funding structures not only match safety needs, but also have a design that maximizes their accessibility to small and grassroots CLOs. For example, grants could include provision of technical assistance that helps CLOs build capacity and meet certain obligations.
- **Allow promising ideas to expand and solidify.** Communities should collect and invest in evidence-based, non-carceral approaches that are rigorously connected to keeping people safe. However, communities should also ensure that their non-carceral funding can catalyze inspiring programs that start informally, such as grassroots interventions rooted in mutual aid that do not have a formal 501(c)3 status—or the logistical ability to meet institutional requirements.

To ensure that these grassroots ideas, programs, and community leaders are fully engaged, individuals pioneering these approaches should be interviewed during the Safety Needs Assessment and creation of the Safety Action Plan. Moreover, localities should create mechanisms—including capacity-building resources and fellowships for community members who do not yet have an organizational structure—that give these pioneers financial support to continue and scale their models, if they desire. They should also eliminate unnecessarily long and onerous request for proposal (RFP) requirements.

A sample grant program for CLOs is below; a description of the Community Safety Agency, referenced here, is available in Section B.

See Appendix A for sample policy language.

ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY SAFETY AGENCY TO OVERSEE NON-CARCERAL SAFETY INVESTMENTS.

- To administer the CLO grant, every jurisdiction should have an entity that is wholly dedicated to non-carceral safety. In some jurisdictions, this entity may be a designated office or agency within local government. In other jurisdictions, this entity may be fully independent from government—though government can provide grants or other funding.

- Local stakeholders should guide the exact model used. Importantly, though, lawmakers should ensure that these features are present:
- The entity should be permanent, so that it can manage multi-year grants and priorities, and have access to ongoing funding.
- The entity should be exclusively focused on non-carceral, non-punitive investments—using definitions of “non-carceral” and “non-punitive” that community stakeholders decide, but result in a structure that is fully outside of policing and other carceral entities. For these purposes, “community stakeholders” should particularly include individuals from communities that have been disproportionately policed, surveilled, arrested, incarcerated, and otherwise impacted by the criminal-legal system. These stakeholders should particularly include members of marginalized groups, such as low-income, Black, Indigenous, Latinx, disabled, immigrant, trans, and gender non-conforming individuals, as well as people living in neighborhoods that experience disproportionate levels of criminal-legal involvement.
- The entity should be able to manage the following responsibilities:
 - Conducting needs assessments related to community safety (i.e., “Safety Needs Assessment”);
 - Designing an investment plan addressing these needs (i.e., “Safety Action Plan”);
 - Vetting new projects, programs, and service providers;
 - Distributing grants to select programs and projects;
 - Evaluating projects and programs;
 - Providing capacity-building and technical assistance to organizers, advocates, and CLOs; and
 - Ensuring community participation in all decision-making processes and needs assessments.
- The entity should have capacity to, in particular, support certain populations that have unique or acute safety-related needs, such as by creating offices that address the safety needs of survivors, youth, people returning from incarceration, homeless individuals, and people experiencing crises.

Across the country, many jurisdictions have begun creating offices that take this non-carceral approach to safety. Dozens of jurisdictions now have Offices of Violence Prevention; the National Offices of Violence Prevention Network has a tool that allows users to find local examples. These Offices of Violence Prevention are generally not the full “Community Safety Agency” that

we describe here; these offices often have a narrower scope (i.e., focusing only on violence interruption or non-carceral crisis response); more ties to carceral entities; and fewer requirements surrounding participatory processes and community control.

See Appendix B for sample policy language.

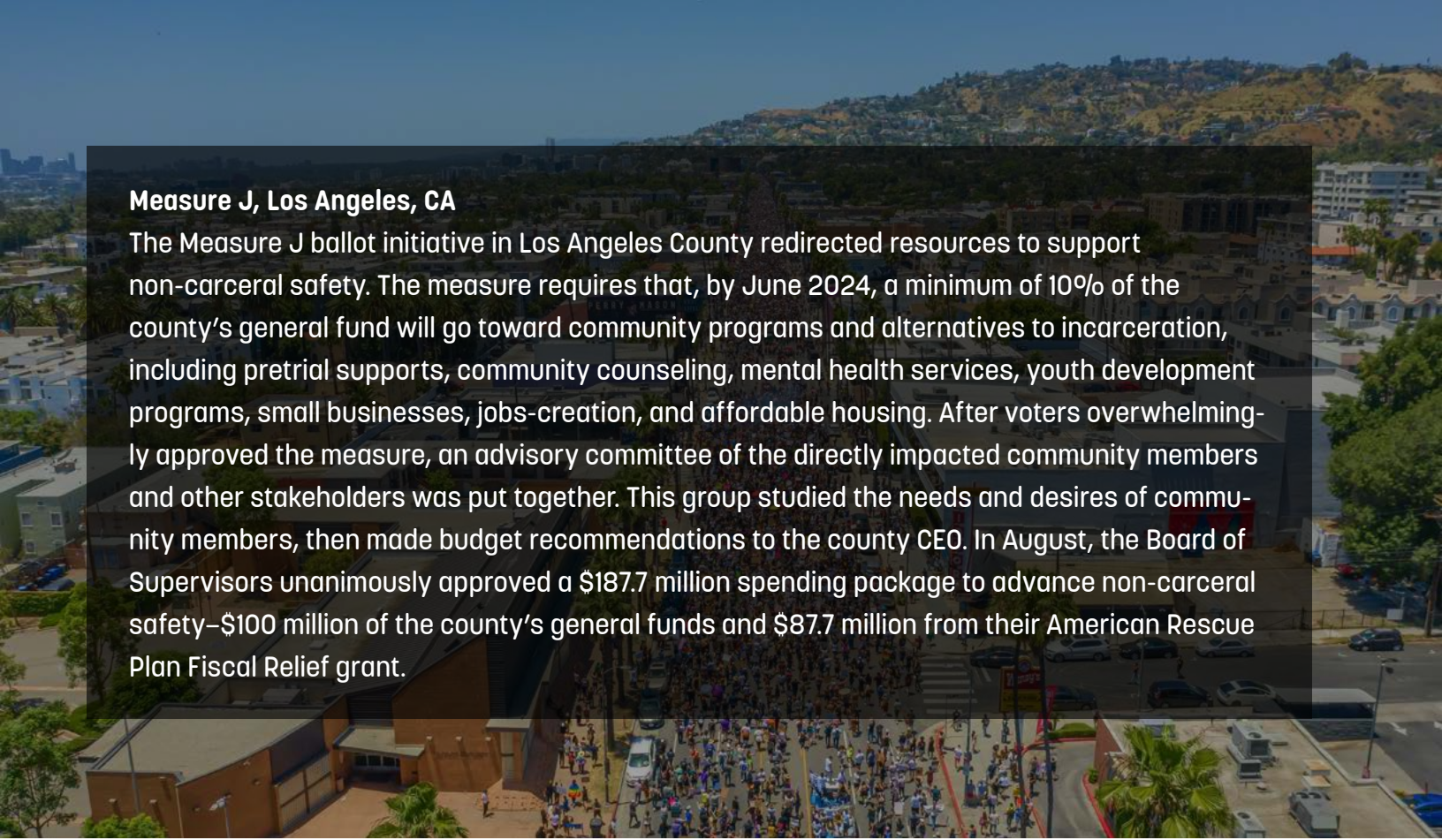
ENSURE ROBUST, ONGOING FUNDING FOR THE COMMUNITY SAFETY AGENCY.

The Community Safety Agency (CSA) must have access to robust—and increasing—funding over time. Without this funding, the Agency cannot invest in long-term priorities, build long-term relationships, or gain necessary buy-in from advocates who may justifiably be wary of “fly by night” reforms. Advocates must see that the jurisdiction is committed to non-carceral safety, not meeting a moment or making a token gesture.

We recommend dedicating two funding streams to the CSA. First, a specified percentage of local revenues. Second, the balance of any savings that accrue when local criminalization and incarceration decrease. We would also note that jurisdictions should consider directing a substantial portion of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. (For specific guidance surrounding ARPA funds, please see our companion [ARPA Policy Guide](#)). We also recommend finding ways to ensure that these funding streams are maximally guaranteed over time, such as through directly amending the city or county charter.

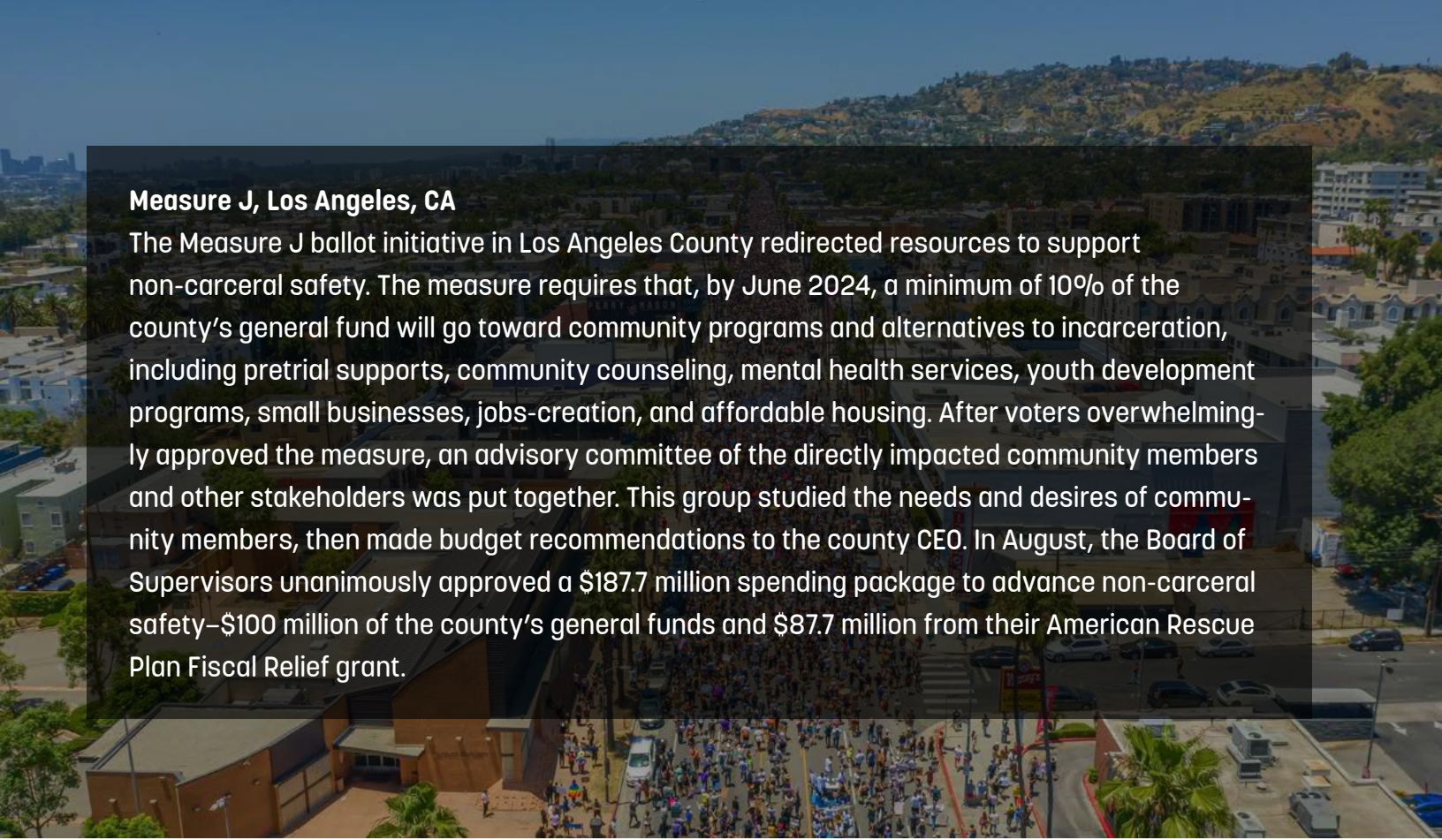
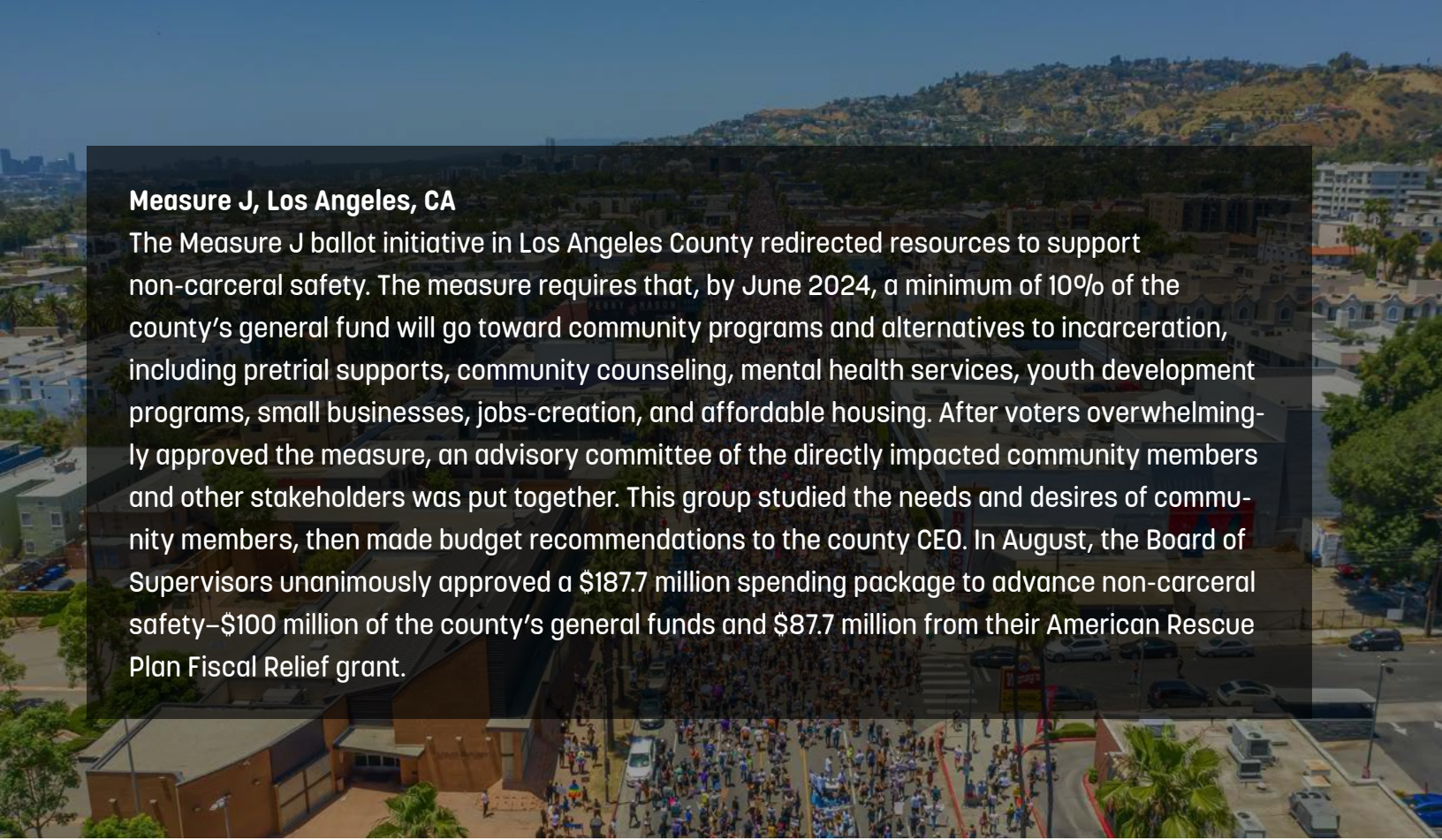
Every jurisdiction will need to pursue a political path that meets its local needs and opportunities. The following examples, though, show two approaches that local policymakers have taken to begin making these non-carceral investments.





Measure J, Los Angeles, CA

The Measure J ballot initiative in Los Angeles County redirected resources to support non-carceral safety. The measure requires that, by June 2024, a minimum of 10% of the county's general fund will go toward community programs and alternatives to incarceration, including pretrial supports, community counseling, mental health services, youth development programs, small businesses, jobs-creation, and affordable housing. After voters overwhelmingly approved the measure, an advisory committee of the directly impacted community members and other stakeholders was put together. This group studied the needs and desires of community members, then made budget recommendations to the county CEO. In August, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a \$187.7 million spending package to advance non-carceral safety—\$100 million of the county's general funds and \$87.7 million from their American Rescue Plan Fiscal Relief grant.



Department of Community Safety, Brooklyn Center, MN

The challenges that Brooklyn Center, Minnesota faced in creating a Department of Community Safety and Violence Prevention can be a useful lesson for lawmakers. After passing a resolution to create a department that would oversee pilot grants to unarmed civilian responders for mental health crises and non-moving traffic violations, the city is finding it difficult to find adequate funding. If funded, the Traffic Enforcement Department would be a group of unarmed civilians tasked with responding to most minor traffic offenses. While officers would still respond to all felony and moving-related traffic offenses, it would greatly limit interactions with armed officers for offenses like having an expired registration or broken taillight. While the proposed changes contain a promising vision, existing roadblocks underscore the need for identifying and securing a source of long-term funding that can provide for robust investments in community safety at the same time as when policymakers are advancing the policy ideas.

Disclaimer: These models are not meant to be endorsed as a perfect policy. Jurisdictions should consider local needs and conditions to build upon, rather than replicate these structures.

See Appendix C for sample policy language.

ENSURE FUNDING PREFERENCES FOR REPRESENTATIVE COMMUNITY LED ORGANIZATIONS.

Addressing the decades-long pattern of government grants that have systematically under-invested in Black, brown, and other communities of color, local governments must ensure that non-carceral safety dollars are maximally flowing to representative CLOs. To this end, we recommend adding a preference for using community-led service providers—and prioritizing organizations that genuinely reflect the racial, gender, and other diversities of their communities.

See Appendix D for sample policy language.

CENTER INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED BY THE CRIMINAL-LEGAL SYSTEM.

When staffing their Community Safety Agencies or any offices funding non-carceral safety programming, local jurisdictions should fully recognize and appropriately value the lived experience of people who have directly experienced criminal-legal and related harms. To accomplish this goal, policymakers may want to consider explicitly adding hiring preferences, creating advisory boards with statutory power (see Section F), and incorporating participatory processes into every stage.

See Appendix E for sample policy language.

ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD WITH STATUTORY POWER.

Local jurisdictions must ensure that the Community Safety Agency is ultimately led by community members, including and especially those people who have been most impacted by criminal-legal harm, their families, and their neighborhoods. To this end, we recommend creating

a Community Advisory Board (“Board”) with a required composition that draws heavily from these groups. Moreover, we recommend ensuring that this Board has teeth to:

- Design the process for decision-making during grantmaking and Safety Action Plan development;
- Provide final approval to the Safety Action Plan; and
- Monitor Safety Action Plan implementation.

All Board members must receive financial compensation for contributing their time.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD	
WHO IS THE COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD?	<p>Not fewer than half must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who have personal experience with the criminal-legal system, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals who have been detained or incarcerated; • Individuals who are currently on community supervision; • Individuals who have been arrested or cited by law enforcement; • Individuals who have been directly impacted by police violence or other forms of violence; and • Immediate family members of individuals who have been directly impacted by police violence; and • Advocates or grassroots practitioners working to advance educational equity, health equity, housing equity, environmental justice, racial justice, gender justice, disability justice, or Indigenous justice
WHAT WOULD THE COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD DO?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing the process for decision-making during grantmaking and Safety Action Plan development • Provide final approval to the Safety Action Plan • Monitoring Safety Action Plan implementation • Producing an annual report
WHAT’S THE REQUIRED RESPONSE?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not later than 60 days after the Agency receives the Advisory Board report, the Agency must submit a reply that details: • Steps the Agency has taken or will take to implement the Board’s recommendations; or • For any recommendations not implemented or planned to be implemented, an explanation as to why such recommendation was infeasible or conflicted with the Agency’s statutory obligations.

See Appendix F for sample policy language.

ESTABLISH TARGETED OFFICES TO SUPPORT SPECIFIC POPULATIONS AND SAFETY NEEDS.

Some populations—including harm survivors, youth (especially LGBTQIA+ youth), people returning from incarceration, people experiencing homelessness, and people experiencing crises—have specific needs related to community safety. We recommend that the Community Safety Agency ultimately have dedicated structures (i.e., dedicated personnel or offices) to particularly serve these groups.

Jurisdictions may want to build these dedicated offices over time. However, we would note that many jurisdictions already have offices that are currently addressing these issues via criminal-legal lenses. In these places, policymakers should consider shifting their existing offices to the new Community Safety Agency, as this Agency will bring a much-needed non-carceral, community-oriented ethos to the underlying work.

See Appendix G for sample policy language.

USE A PARTICIPATORY MECHANISM TO CREATE A NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN.

Local jurisdictions must ensure that non-carceral safety spending directly addresses localized needs. To this end, we recommend requiring that the Agency conduct a “Safety Needs Assessment” at regular intervals. This assessment should use a participatory process to identify the core, systemic needs that are driving criminal-legal contact locally, including both contact with police officers (i.e., traffic stops) and the underlying needs of individuals who are incarcerated in local jails. Then, based on this information, the Agency should produce a Safety Action Plan that recommends funding priorities based on these identified needs.

When conducting their Safety Needs Assessments and collecting data, local jurisdictions may want to consider ways that they might partner with universities. In the past, cities have taken this approach to address numerous issue areas that include homelessness, health, and family engagement. For example, Philadelphia partnered with the University of Chicago on a “Homeless Youth Needs Assessment”; San Mateo and Santa Clara counties partnered with Stanford on a “Family Engagement Needs Assessment”; and NYU Langone Hospital partnered with the Sunset

Park, Red Hook, Lower East Side, and Chinatown neighborhoods on a “Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan / Community Service Plan.” Each plan considered the services currently being provided to address the targeted issue, as well as recommendations for filling any gaps identified. We would also note that jurisdictions may learn from “participatory budgeting” programs that directly let residents determine where government dollars flow. Local governments could pilot safety-focused participatory budgeting through their Community Safety Agencies.

When developing the Safety Action Plan, localities may include programs and services run by CLOs, such as violence interrupters; vouchers and other programs managed by the local government; and infrastructure investments by the local government. The funding priorities named in the Safety Action Plan should reflect both the needs identified and the availability of other funding sources.

A few examples of needs assessments are included here; jurisdictions could conduct similar processes for determining safety needs.

- **Philadelphia Homeless Youth Needs Assessment, University of Chicago:**

The purpose of the provider Survey, (one of the three surveys in the report linked) was to gather information about the services available to runaway and homeless youth in Philadelphia County, including how those services are funded, and to identify any gaps in service provision.

- **North and Western Maryland Agriculture Needs Assessment, University of Maryland:**

The University of Maryland Extension (UME) conducted an agricultural needs assessment for the seven counties in northern and western Maryland in 2017. They focused on issues concerning regional agriculture, identify agricultural and educational needs.

- **Family Engagement Need Assessment in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties, Stanford University:** The assessment explored how families and providers think about families’ engagement, what resources they utilize to support young (0-8 years) children’s learning, and what resources would support a more system effort to engage parents in their children’s learning and development.

See Appendix H for sample policy language.

CREATE AN INTERAGENCY TASKFORCE TO COORDINATE AND PROMOTE NON-CARCERAL APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY SAFETY.

To build a local framework that catalyzes non-carceral safety, local jurisdictions must understand the current funding landscape—and how various policies, including those of individual agencies, are affecting community safety. To ensure this coordination, we recommend that local jurisdictions create an interagency task force charged with coordinating, promoting, and otherwise advancing non-carceral safety.

This taskforce—and the reports that are developed through its work—will allow local elected officials to solicit information, status reports, and ideas from various stakeholders that are operating within the region. This information can be used to make decisions regarding where non-carceral safety investments are needed, as well as what policy changes may be necessary to catalyze decarceral goals further. However, policymakers and advocates should note that this taskforce presents both opportunity and risk. The taskforce may afford a crucial opportunity to get the buy-in, support, and insights of agencies that would not otherwise be aligned with non-carceral approaches. And yet, this taskforce runs a real risk that carceral agencies will co-opt, skew, or otherwise alter its overarching goals or ethos. The success of such a taskforce will require strong organizing; when deciding whether and how to pursue this policy, advocates and policymakers should weigh the potential upside against these apparent dangers.

DEFINITIONS

Some potential definitions are included in Appendix I.



POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

This section goes in-depth into the processes and funding mechanisms that we recommend local policymakers explore when seeking ways to advance their Community Safety Policies. These recommendations are grounded in approaches that various jurisdictions have taken across the United States.

This section will cover the following:

- Funding & implementation guidance;
- Procedural mechanisms to create a new agency;
- Guidance on ensuring a Just Transition for workers who are currently employed in carceral institutions;
- Guidance on bottom-lines and potential pitfalls; and
- Working effectively with Black-led, Black-centered community groups.

FUNDING & IMPLEMENTATION

Community safety is an investment—an investment that will ultimately make all communities safer, more equitable, and more prosperous, but also one that requires a shift in budget priorities. Moreover, community safety requires a paradigm shift in how we deliver much-needed services. Our country has never previously funded non-carceral safety on a mass-scale; instead, we often channel resources through the criminal-legal system and require criminal-legal contact (i.e., police reporting) even to be eligible.

This section provides some guidance on ways that jurisdictions can begin this essential work.

LEVERAGE CREATIVE BUDGETING OPPORTUNITIES

Mayors generally hold the power to draft and propose their city budgets, as well as veto power over what their City Councils recommend. Mayors can draft a budget that includes funding for a Community Safety Agency, as well as long-term grant funding for CLOs. It is imperative that local lawmakers include clear and strong language guaranteeing the non-carceral character of the Community Safety Agency. See “non-carceral approach to safety” in our “definitions” section in Appendix I. This guarantee will ensure that the new Agency does not become a mechanism for increasing or being a conduit for criminal-legal system funding.

While the local budget may be amended at multiple points, the Mayor or County Commissioner(s) can play a strategic role in working alongside community members so as to advance non-carceral safety proposals and make the Community Safety Agency a reality. One specific idea includes convening diverse stakeholders—including advocates from housing, education, labor, environmental, racial justice, criminal-legal reform, and other spaces—to develop a shared “Safety Agenda” that incorporates policies across these issue areas. By developing this safety agenda, the Mayor or County Commissioner(s) can frame a wide range of policies (i.e., prioritizing some streets for streetlights, expanding behavioral healthcare) as both serving their self-evident purpose and representing a crucial investment in safety. Such a collaborative approach can mimic the “Solidarity Budget” developed in Seattle, Washington, where a diverse set of community members—including labor, transit, and housing justice groups—crafted a holistic set of recommendations that would increase safety outside of carceral systems.

USE LOCAL BALLOT INITIATIVES

In many local jurisdictions, ballot initiatives can serve a wide array of purposes, including imposing taxes, merging with another city, or amending local laws. Such initiatives can be a good way to take an idea—here, the need for long-term, non-carceral investments in community safety—directly to local voters, rather than rely solely on a local governing body. While each state



has different rules for how local jurisdictions can use ballot initiatives, the overall approach may be helpful particularly in jurisdictions where introducing the Community Safety Agency through the local governing body does not seem politically palatable—even though community members would support or are demanding this change. Measure J is one example of a jurisdiction that used a ballot amendment to enshrine non-carceral safety work. For more information about Measure J, see Section II, subsection C.

USE PILOT PROGRAMS

Many local jurisdictions may not be ready to make robust, long-term investments until they have seen non-carceral safety investments bear fruit in their jurisdictions. Pilot programs are a great way to bridge this gap, allowing jurisdictions to show success while considering long-term funding amounts and options. This model also provides local policymakers with time that they can use to identify potential funding sources, lessons learned, and design issues before making permanent changes. And pilot programs can be an effective way to use funding streams (i.e., funding from the American Rescue Plan and similar sources) that are time-bound in nature.

We recommend that pilot programs identify those areas most impacted by the carceral system (i.e., the most incarcerated or surveilled) and that are spending the most on Police or Sheriff's Department services. The pilot programs can implement the full Policy in this Guide—Safety Needs Assessment, Safety Action Plan, and robust funding of CLOs—in specific districts, cities, neighborhoods, or blocks. In Rochester, New York, city officials launched a six-month pilot program of their new non-carceral first responder team, part of a larger effort to create a Crisis Intervention Services Unit outside of law enforcement. In Alabama, state officials erected three pilot Crisis Diversion Centers across the state, designed to reduce incarceration and connect individuals experiencing crises to stabilizing resources.

LEVERAGE FEDERAL FUNDING

Many federal funding streams can go toward implementing non-carceral community safety; local policymakers can braid these streams together to both provide seed and some ongoing funding.

The accompanying American Rescue Plan Act guide explains how ARPA funds can be used to fund non-carceral safety initiatives. The existing Medicaid program is another valuable source of funding, particularly in states that undertook Medicaid expansion. Dozens of federal bills are currently being debated that could go toward non-carceral safety programming—



The People's Response Act; Breaking the Cycle Act; etc. Any policymakers who want advice navigating these funding streams should contact the people and organizations listed in the concluding section.

CREATE A REINVESTMENT MODEL

The policies outlined in this Guide will naturally reduce criminal-legal contact and thereby lead to cost savings. Jurisdictions should explore opportunities to repurpose local dollars that are currently going toward carceral infrastructure (police, District Attorneys, probation, etc.), using “reinvestment” models that track and divert this spending. Colorado, for example, made changes to parole board practices, reducing the likelihood of re-incarceration over a parole violation. The legislation then directed the general assembly to appropriate a set portion of the cost savings generated by the bill to a fund offering services to parolees.¹

STRATEGICALLY USE BUILDING BLOCKS TO SECURE THE END RESULT

In jurisdictions where it is difficult to implement the entire Community Safety Policy at one time, jurisdictions can implement building blocks that implement the full policy over a clearly defined time period. In taking this approach, policymakers should create a roadmap for implementing the full policy; each specific step taken should clearly fit within this blueprint.

¹ The Colorado legislation is not a perfect analog for the Community Safety Policy described here; however, the model illustrates one approach to calculating and repurposing criminal-legal savings.

If policymakers are implementing building blocks, we recommend considering the following components:

Block #1: Create the Safety Needs Assessment and a Safety Action Plan. Conducting a needs assessment is essential for crafting a thoughtful, high-impact framework for community safety. This assessment will guide your understanding of community needs and the types of investments that are needed to create real safety within your community. We further recommend creating the “Just Transition Plan” at this stage so as to see the funding available for this work.

While our Guide directs the Community Safety Agency to conduct the Safety Needs Assessment, an interim solution is to have a task force undertake this work. Then, when the CSA is established, it can take over future surveys.

Block #2: Implement Systems of Non-Carceral Crisis Response. Among the many programs that are discussed in this Guide, non-carceral crisis response is one that can particularly be implemented independently. Many jurisdictions have already implemented such programs—and seen substantial success. Many jurisdictions have also established Offices of Violence Prevention, though we suggest opting for a full Community Safety Agency that has a broad purview and a fully non-carceral orientation.

Block #3: Create a Grant for CLOs. Local jurisdictions can immediately begin funding the important community safety-focused work that local organizations and community members are already undertaking. Local jurisdictions can begin by implementing the direct CLO grant through a local Department of Public Health or some other department—provided that this Department or Agency is not connected to police or any other carceral entity.

Block #4: Establish a Community Safety Agency. Once local jurisdictions begin funding non-carceral safety work and assessing community needs, establishing a CSA is a way to institutionalize and knit this work together. We recommend setting up this CSA and giving this body authority over the remaining building blocks.

Block #5: Budget for Safety. Long-term funding is essential for long-term community safety—as is a holistic and interdisciplinary approach to safety. Local jurisdictions should convene advocates to help inform a safety budget that leverages transportation, infrastructure, health, housing, education, and other funds to keep community members safe and address high-urgency safety needs. As local jurisdictions implement these building blocks, they should simultaneously begin crafting a long-term and holistic (i.e., whole budget) approach to these issues.

LOCAL MECHANISMS FOR HOW TO CREATE A NEW DEPARTMENT

The exact process for creating a new department (i.e., the Community Safety Agency) will vary by jurisdiction—including depending on whether the jurisdiction is a charter city / county or a non-charter city / county. Across the country, local jurisdictions have used a variety of different approaches reflecting these different starting points and political realities; this section provides a few models that may be useful starting points.

Rochester, New York: The City Council created an Office of Crisis Intervention Services composed of four divisions. Two of the divisions, the Family and Crisis Intervention Team (FACIT) and the Victim Assistance Unit, were previously under the supervision of the Rochester Police Department. A third, The Homicide Response Team, was in the planning stages for two years as a part of the Roc Against Gun Violence Coalition. The fourth division is a non-carceral Crisis Response Team. Since this was a new initiative, the city created a six-month pilot program to evaluate its effectiveness and strategize improvements to the program.

New Haven, Connecticut: Earlier this year, the Mayor of New Haven proposed a plan to create a new Division of Community Resilience, which would bring together stakeholders across the criminal-legal and public health spaces to work on violence prevention, prison reentry, housing and homelessness, mental health, and substance use. The plan uses \$2 million in American Rescue Plan funds and \$4 million in redirected funds from other departments.

Disclaimer: These models are not meant to be endorsed as a perfect policy and some do involve collaboration with law enforcement, which is not in alignment with the Community Safety Policy. Jurisdictions should consider local needs and conditions to build upon, rather than replicate these structures.

PROVIDING A JUST TRANSITION FOR WORKERS CURRENTLY EMPLOYED IN LOCAL CARCERAL INDUSTRIES

As jurisdictions begin implementing non-carceral safety measures and repurposing local dollars currently going toward carceral approaches, policymakers should ensure that this paradigm shift is sustainable and forward-thinking—that is, that the paradigm shift creates employment pathways for people who are currently employed by police and other carceral entities.

When creating the Community Safety Agency, local jurisdictions should consider creating an employee transition plan (called a “Just Transition Plan”) for individuals who will be impacted by decarceral changes. This plan should incorporate views from various stakeholders, including labor unions that are aligned with the non-carceral, non-punitive objectives described here. Policymakers should collect data on how achieving decarceral goals will impact various demographic groups, including considerations based on race, sex, gender, and disability. Then they should create a fair, nuanced plan for facilitating the “Just Transition” process, including: re-employment elsewhere within the local jurisdiction, subject to continued training; buy-out; career path training allowing individuals to enter a new, non-carceral field; or, for individuals who are within 5 years of retirement, the option of early retirement. Importantly, policymakers

should incorporate a wide range of views when crafting these plans, including people who are directly impacted by the criminal-legal system, community-led organizations working on criminal-legal system policy change, and other government departments.

For additional ideas, local elected officials may want to review models that have been developed in the climate field; for example, the Climate Justice Alliance model for a Just Transition, which supports individuals in industries that are tied to climate-warming gases and activities.



BOTTOM-LINES & POTENTIAL PITFALLS

As jurisdictions begin shaping their community safety policies, they will doubtless encounter divergent perspectives and complications. This section summarizes our recommendation on bottom-lines that should undergird this work—and pitfalls to avoid.

BOTTOM-LINES

Community stakeholders—namely people who have been directly impacted by criminal-legal harm—should ultimately shape the direction and bottom-lines of any Community Safety Policy enacted. However, the following bullets are a framework that the Movement for Black Lives uses to consider whether a policy is aligned with *The BREATHE Act* framework. The considerations may provide a useful guide for navigating various tradeoffs.

THE BOTTOM LINES FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY

- **No expansion of the carceral state.** Policies enacted should avoid expanding the carceral state, such as by:
 - Expanding detention, supervision, or surveillance;
 - Providing new funding for carceral actors;
 - Imposing or creating new criminal penalties; or
 - Reinforcing the logic of the carceral state, including by programs that divert people into other systems that replicate similar issues as the criminal-legal system.
- **Liberatory focus.** Policymakers should prioritize policies that expand human freedom, such as by:
 - Reducing the population in jails, prisons, and detention centers and/or under state and local supervision or surveillance;
 - Reducing the amount of contact individuals have with the criminal-legal system;
 - Reducing racial inequities in the criminal-legal system;
 - Expanding power for individuals and communities that have been harmed by the criminal-legal system; and
 - Expanding power for grassroots groups challenging the criminal-legal system.
- **Inclusivity.** Policymakers and advocates should ensure that all policy changes fully protect the interests of Black and brown communities, as well as LGBTQIA+, immigrant, undocumented, disabled, and other populations that have disproportionately experienced state harm.
- **Invest in impacted communities.** Community safety policies should particularly benefit those communities most harmed by the criminal-legal system. Moreover, those communities should have influence over directing those resources and mechanisms in law to hold system actors accountable to the intended purposes of the community safety funds and policies.
- **Movement alignment.** Ensure that the drafting and implementation processes include ongoing input from local organizations who have a track record of supporting non-carceral safety approaches and of representing communities who are disproportionately impacted by criminal-legal system harm
- **Participatory process.** A Community Safety Agenda should encourage or expand democratic participation and/or community control over how resources are spent.

AVOIDING PITFALLS

Implementing community safety policies can be a difficult process and oftentimes comes with unique hurdles. Here are some common challenges that jurisdictions have encountered, as well as some advice on navigating these situations.

- **Maintain the non-carceral focus of Community Safety Agency programming.** When local governing bodies begin to repurpose funding that is currently going to law enforcement entities, but do not plan ahead for a Just Transition, police departments often become involved in programming and services that were previously provided by CLOs (i.e., violence prevention, restorative justice, alternatives to incarceration, etc.).

While high-level intergovernmental coordination (see i.e., the Interagency Task Force on Community Safety) is essential, the Community Safety Agency and its funded programming are designed to have a non-carceral focus—a focus that can both improve the safety of and build trust from groups that have historically been targeted by police and carceral entities. Service delivery should remain fully outside of policing structures, avoiding concerns about program cooptation.

- **Work with labor unions early-on in this process.** Many police employees who will be impacted by a paradigm shift—police officers, correctional officers, probation officers, and service employees and medical professionals working in jails—are represented by unions. Where possible, local policymakers should loop in union representatives and leaders who are aligned with the overall purposes of the policy early, using these individuals as key stakeholders to inform the Just Transition plans. Strong relationships and a commitment to a working partnership will minimize future opposition or miscommunication. If union officials frustrate the progress of the Community Safety Policy described here, local policymakers should continue to build a Just Transition plan with aligned correctional employees and non-carceral CLOs. Ultimately, this Community Safety Policy seeks to create a safer and better society, which includes ensuring that all workers have access to good paying and sustainable employment.
- **Plan budgets for the short- and long-term.** From a financial perspective, it may take some time to manifest substantial savings—not only from reduced carceral spending, but also from less emergency room spending and related areas. Policymakers should recognize this short-term and long-term element, leveraging federal funding and the “building block” approach as necessary to bridge this gap.



WORKING WITH BLACK-LED, BLACK-CENTERED ORGANIZATIONS

As policymakers and advocates implement Community Safety Policies, they should ensure that they are working closely with Black-led, Black-centered organizations committed to non-carceral approaches to safety. The criminal-legal system in both its design and implementation has carried out an anti-Black agenda since the inception of the slave patrols that paved the way for policing in the United States.

Given the disproportionate harm Black people have suffered as the result of the United States criminal-legal system, it is a moral imperative to partner with Black communities to change the course.

Even more importantly, policy makers should engage Black-led, Black-centered organizations who are committed to non-carceral approaches to safety because of the expertise and practical knowledge these organizations hold. The success of the policy, in its design and implementation, relies upon strong, non-tokenizing trust and partnership between Black community groups and policy makers. Here are some guiding principles that policymakers may want to consider while structuring these interactions:

- **Positionality.** Policymakers and other advocates should ensure that when they are engaging Black-led, Black-centered (BLBC) organizations, they avoid adopting a top-down approach. Respectful engagement means developing authentic relationships with community organizers, staff, or member-leaders who represent the organizations. Rooting in the value representative democracy offers—where policymakers are generative thought-partners who help make real the goals of the community they are representing, rather than that organizations are there to make real the policy goals of the policymaker—is useful.
- **Preparedness.** Before engaging a BLBC group, policymakers and advocates should do research on the organization’s vision, mission, and focus. All BLBC groups are not the same; policymakers should bring an open mind to each interaction, taking into account the organization’s unique characteristics, mission, vision, and work. Moreover, the policymaker and staff should be aware of location-based histories of oppression and harm the group may have experienced within their jurisdiction.
- **Humility.** In policy and political spaces, lawmakers and many advocacy groups place a high premium on certain evidence bases and expertise types; they should ensure that when doing this work, particularly work dismantling racial injustice, they recognize that direct experience with systemic harm and violence, community organizing, and informal direct services provision (e.g. unpaid labor typically done by Black women, femme, and gender non conforming people) is itself a form of expertise.
- **Liberatory framework.** Policymakers and advocates should avoid adopting a “savior” approach that positions themselves as key to the BLBC organization’s success. Moreover, avoiding transactional relationships with the organization in which a policymaker cuts deals or makes unrealistic promises to support their own political safety is a must. As with all transformative and meaningful policy change, courage and a certain amount of prudent risk-taking will be required.
- **Understanding how the work gets done.** Neither policymakers nor other advocates should use BLBC organizations as vehicles to do whatever work they would prefer not to—a way of using them to do the less substantive work. For example, policymakers and advocates should consider BLBC organizations as full and equal “at-the-table” partners when major decisions are being made or important conversations are taking place.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & CONTACT INFORMATION

For technical assistance when drafting and advancing your local policy, please contact:

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SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS



FURTHER READING & RESOURCES

- [Vision for Black Lives](#)
- [The BREATHE Act](#)
- [The People's Response Act of 2021](#)
- [Community Safety & The American Rescue Plan: A Guide to Using Fiscal Recovery Grants to Advance Holistic Safety](#)
- [Evidence for Non-Carceral Safety](#)

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A, GRANT FOR COMMUNITY-LED ORGANIZATIONS SAMPLE POLICY LANGUAGE

GRANT FOR COMMUNITY-LED ORGANIZATIONS

- **GRANT AUTHORIZATION.**—The Director of the Division of Community Safety shall implement a grant program under which the Director makes grants to non-carceral community-led organizations (CLOs) to serve the purposes that are described in this Section.
- **USE OF GRANT AMOUNTS.**—A grant awarded under this Section may be used for any non-carceral purpose that has a demonstrable connection to improving community safety, including but not limited to:
 - **VIOLENCE REDUCTION.**—
 - Violence interruption and intervention, which may include violence and conflict prevention and mitigation;
 - Abuse interruption, intervention, and prevention;
 - Neighborhood mediation programs;
 - Safe passage to school programs;
 - Mentorship programs; and
 - Afterschool and enrichment programs for youth, including programs focused on music, dance, theater, and other creative and performing arts.
 - **SAFETY-FOCUSED INFRASTRUCTURE.**—Infrastructure investments that are designed to improve community safety, including but not limited to:
 - Park redevelopment;
 - Streetlights;
 - Public transportation;
 - Community centers; and
 - Grocery stores/access to food and nutrition.
 - **PUBLIC HEALTH.**—
 - Preventative, non-punitive, non-coercive, patient-driven healthcare, including mental healthcare;

- Preparedness for—and protection of vulnerable populations during—public health emergencies, including emergencies related to epidemics and climate-related disasters;
- Access to non-communicable disease management programs;
- Communicable disease services;
- Non-mandatory, non-coercive, harm-reduction based Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment programs, including medications for SUD treatment and peer support programs; and
- Voluntary harm reduction programs.
- HOUSING.—Quality, accessible, and long-term supportive housing for those experiencing temporary or chronic homelessness, housing insecurity or risk of homelessness, and/or a disability or health issue, as well as for their families.
- NON-CARCERAL CRISIS INTERVENTION.—
 - Accessible methods of processing 911 calls that reduce contact between law enforcement and community members;
 - Non-punitive, unarmed first-responder agencies;
 - Non-law enforcement personnel and partnerships to solve problems that do not require criminal enforcement;
 - Programs identifying and providing skills, resources, and community engagement infrastructure designed to reduce communities’ reliance on first-responders, including through conflict resolution, de-escalation, first aid, and other community-building skills; and
 - The designation of an accessible emergency response number that can be used to dispatch non-punitive crisis and trauma intervention teams.
- HEALING.—
 - Funding for CLOs that provide voluntary, non-coercive, trauma-informed health services and healing supports for individuals and communities, so that they can recover from exposure to violence, abuse, and/or harmful interactions with police.
 - Funding for CLOs that provide healing-centered and culturally responsive engagement; and
 - Reparations for individuals who have experienced any harm from the police or mass criminalization.
- REENTRY.—

- Educational and workforce development programs and/or pathways that work with formerly incarcerated individuals, including youth, helping them to secure secondary and/or post-secondary credentials;
- Early release engagement and structures allowing system access to potential clients;
- For formerly incarcerated youth and youth exiting the foster system, reentry and/or transition supports, including transition coordinators who will ensure that youth participants:
 - Can return to school following incarceration; and
 - Have their credits transfer so that they can progress toward secondary credential attainment.
- Employment opportunities that benefit formerly incarcerated individuals, including:
 - Grants for entrepreneurship;
 - Technical assistance and financial incentives to businesses that hire formerly incarcerated individuals;
 - State-led affirmative hiring programs;
 - Subsidized and transitional employment opportunities for formerly incarcerated people, including “earn and learn” opportunities;
 - Worker cooperatives operated by formerly incarcerated people; and
 - Workforce development and training programs that specifically serve formerly incarcerated people and people with criminal-legal histories.
- **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & CAPACITY-BUILDING.–**
 - Trainings and presentations for the local community, providing them with the information, background knowledge, and social context necessary to understand, contribute to, and otherwise engage with the CSA and its work; and
 - Capacity-building funding to local nonprofits, advocates, and CLOs, including:
 - Fellowships to individual community leaders so that they can develop an advocacy infrastructure to meet the specific community’s needs;
 - Investments in fiscal agency, fiscal sponsorship, program evaluation, and shared administrative infrastructure amongst CLOs;
 - Technical assistance; and
 - Professional services (including lawyers who have expertise on contracts, risk management specialists, financial managers, and accountants) and marketing and/or promotion for CLOs.

- **VOLUNTARY PRETRIAL SUPPORTS.**—Providing voluntary pretrial services to help accused individuals successfully navigate the pretrial process and appear at court dates, including:
 - Text-message reminders about court dates;
 - Transportation assistance to help accused persons get to and from the courthouse; and
 - Childcare assistance during court appointments.
- **LIMITATION ON GRANT FUNDS.**—Funds made available under this section may be used only to implement programs, services, or activities that use non-carceral, non-punitive approaches to community safety.

APPENDIX B, ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMUNITY SAFETY AGENCY SAMPLE POLICY LANGUAGE

COMMUNITY SAFETY AGENCY

- **ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY SAFETY AGENCY.**—There is established a Community Safety Agency (“Agency”), which is led by a Director who shall be designated by, and report directly to, the [insert Mayor or County Executive], subject to the advice and consent of [insert City Council or County Commission].
- **RESPONSIBILITIES.**— The Agency shall have responsibility for overseeing activities that promote non-carceral, non-punitive approaches to community safety, including:
 - Identifying, prioritizing, vetting, funding, and evaluating non-carceral, non-punitive approaches to community safety; and
 - Providing capacity-building to CLOs that provide non-carceral, non-punitive approaches to community safety.

APPENDIX C, COMMUNITY SAFETY AGENCY FUNDING SAMPLE POLICY LANGUAGE

COMMUNITY SAFETY AGENCY FUNDING

- **REINVESTMENT FUNDING.**—No later than [insert date], the [insert Mayor or County Executive] shall set forth a mechanism for:

- Calculating the spending reductions that will occur as a result of local criminalization and incarceration reductions, such as decreased costs for jail maintenance, probation or pretrial supervision, policing, or any other costs associated with criminal-legal contact; and
- Creating a mechanism to ensure that an equivalent amount is reinvested into the Community Safety Agency.
- **GENERAL FUNDING.**—Not fewer than [10-20% of locally controlled revenues] overall, not counting any revenues from the local jurisdiction, are allocated to the Community Safety Agency.

APPENDIX D, AGENCY GRANT PREFERENCES SAMPLE POLICY LANGUAGE

AGENCY GRANT PREFERENCES

- **PREFERENCE FOR USING COMMUNITY-LED SERVICE PROVIDERS.**—Grant preferences for programs that are directly funded by the Agency, or programs that are funded with Agency dollars, shall give preference to CLOs, except where:
 - The program is primarily administrative, rather than focused on advocacy, education, programs, and/or service delivery; and
 - The grant administrator is able to certify that no CLO is available to, or can be supported to, adequately perform this function.
- **PRIORITY CLOS.**—When selecting among CLOs, the Agency shall show preference for organizations that:
 - Have a leadership with close ties to the local community, as measured by:
 - Living in the specified community for at least two consecutive years;
 - Participation and membership in local organizations, associations, and commissions; and/or
 - Growing up in the specified community and/or having loved ones continuing to reside there;
 - Have a leadership that reflects the racial diversity of the community in which the organization operates; and/or
 - Are led by or employing directly impacted persons (with “directly impacted” defined based on the programming provided by the organization).

APPENDIX E, HIRING PREFERENCES FOR THE COMMUNITY SAFETY AGENCY SAMPLE POLICY LANGUAGE

HIRING PREFERENCES

- **AGENCY HIRING.**—Hiring for the Agency shall be open to all, regardless of race, sex, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, immigration status, or disability status, but shall show a preference for:
 - Individuals who are currently or formerly incarcerated;
 - Family members of individuals who are currently or formerly incarcerated;
 - Individuals who are directly impacted, as such term is defined in this Act; and
 - Grassroots organizers working to dismantle mass incarceration.

APPENDIX F, COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD SAMPLE POLICY LANGUAGE

COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY BOARD

- **IN GENERAL.**—The Agency shall establish an advisory board that will oversee all activities of the Agency, which shall be known as the Community Advisory Board (“Board”).
- **COMPOSITION.**—
 - **IN GENERAL.**—The Board shall be composed of [X] individuals selected by the [the Mayor / the County Commissioner] with the advice and consent of the [City Council / County Commission]. Such members shall reflect the racial, religious, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, immigration status, and other diversities of the United States, including representation for Black people, Asian American people, Latinx people, Indigenous people, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people, women, youth, disabled people, undocumented and formerly undocumented immigrants, and other groups that have been disproportionately disadvantaged by the criminal-legal system.
 - **REPRESENTATION.**—The [Mayor / County Commissioner] shall ensure that not fewer than half of the individuals who are selected to serve as Board members are—
 - People who have personal experience with the criminal-legal system, including—

- Individuals who have been detained or incarcerated;
- Individuals who are currently on community supervision (such as probation or parole) or who have been on community supervision;
- Individuals who have been arrested or cited by law enforcement;
- Individuals who have been directly impacted by police violence or other forms of violence, including domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, and other forms of sexual or intimate partner violence; and
- Immediate family members of individuals who have been directly impacted by police violence; and
- Advocates or grassroots practitioners working to advance educational equity, health equity, housing equity, environmental justice, racial justice, gender justice, disability justice, or Indigenous justice.
- **PAY.**—Members of the Board shall serve at a pay rate that is determined by the Director.
- **RESPONSIBILITIES.**—The duties of the Board are as follows:
 - Designing the process for decision-making during grantmaking and Safety Plan development, as such Plan is described below;
 - Providing final approval to the Safety Plan;
 - Monitoring Safety Plan implementation; and
 - Producing an annual report, as described in [insert internal citation to next bullet].
- **ANNUAL REPORT.**—
 - **IN GENERAL.**—By [insert date] each year, the Board shall submit to the [insert Mayor or County Executive] and the [insert City Council or County Commission] a report that addresses:
 - Whether activities conducted by the Agency adequately reflect the specific needs and interests of all individuals, including Black individuals, Asian American individuals, Latinx individuals, Indigenous individuals, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals, disabled individuals, and other individuals who are members of communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the immigration and criminal-legal systems;
 - Whether funding made available to the Agency is sufficiently flowing to organizations that are led by individuals referred to in clause; and
 - Changes that the Agency could make to address any issues uncovered during such evaluations, including ways to ensure that grants awarded under this title

are serving to enhance racial equity and benefit CLOs that have diverse leadership and composition.

- **RESPONSE TO REPORT.**–Not later than 60 days after the date on which the Agency receives the recommendations under paragraph [insert internal citation], the Agency shall submit a report [insert Mayor or County Executive] and the [insert City Council or County Commission], which details–
 - Steps the Agency has taken or will take to implement the Board’s recommendations; or
 - For any recommendations not implemented or planned to be implemented, an explanation as to why such recommendation was infeasible or conflicted with the Agency’s statutory obligations.

APPENDIX G, ESTABLISH TARGETED OFFICES TO SUPPORT SPECIFIC POPULATIONS AND SAFETY NEEDS SAMPLE POLICY LANGUAGE

OFFICE OF SURVIVOR AUTONOMY AND HARM PREVENTION

- **IN GENERAL.**–The Director shall establish within the Agency an Office of Survivor Autonomy and Harm Prevention.
- **DUTIES.**–The duties of the Office of Survivor Autonomy and Harm Prevention shall include working with violence survivors, including survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and rape, to:
 - Research, identify, provide guidance on, and directly administer grant programs for non-carceral, non-punitive, prevention-oriented programs that–
 - Support the safety, healing, and wellbeing of survivors;
 - Address and prevent domestic violence and sexual violence, including rape;
 - Build local infrastructure that serves to provide, fund, and coordinate supports for survivors;
 - Otherwise support individuals who have experienced violence of any nature; and
 - Disseminate information and guidance internally to ensure that all Agency grant programs, technical assistance, and other activities are sensitive to the needs of survivors; and
 - Provide interagency coordination among local agencies to support survivor safety,

as well as facilitate access to services and programs administered by such agencies.

- **PROGRAMMING.**—Programs funded by the Office may include, but are not limited to:
 - Voluntary, non-coercive, trauma-informed health-related services and healing supports for communities so that they can recover from witnessing violence, abuse, and/or harmful interactions with police;
 - Vouchers for individuals who do not have safe places to go, including individuals experiencing domestic and/or sexual abuse, individuals who have been victims of human trafficking, and individuals who have experienced housing discrimination due to being or having been a sex worker;
 - Programming related to abuse interruption, intervention, and prevention;
 - Safe passage to school programs;
 - Mentorship programs;
 - Afterschool and enrichment programs for youth, including programs focused on music, dance, theater, and other creative and performing arts; and
 - Any wraparound supports and services not already provided by local schools and health clinics.
- **PROHIBITION.**—No portion of any grant funds awarded by this Office may be used to fund any projects that are directly run by any carceral entities.
- **LIMITATIONS.**—Any individuals consulted for their expertise during the design, implementation, or monitoring of any grant funds that are awarded by this Office must be financially compensated for their time.

OFFICE OF YOUTH SAFETY

- **IN GENERAL.**—The Director shall establish within the Agency an Office of Youth Safety.
- **DUTIES.**—The duties of the Office of Youth Safety shall include working with children, youth, providers of youth services, and other individuals to:
 - Identify the key barriers that are currently preventing many youth from achieving educational, social, emotional, and economic success, including specific barriers faced by Black, Latinx, Indigenous, disabled, and LGBT populations;
 - Identify the non-carceral, non-punitive programs and services that will most effectively serve to promote youth safety and opportunity, including opportunity for Black, Latinx, Indigenous, disabled, and LGBT populations; and

- Coordinate between City, County, and other agencies that are currently providing youth services, seeing which necessary programs and services are not currently available in the forms and quantities needed; and
- Make grants and/or directly implement programming to address the identified gaps.
- **PROGRAMMING.**—Programs funded by the Agency may include, but are not limited to:
 - Safe passage to school programs;
 - Mentorship programs;
 - Youth centers;
 - Afterschool and enrichment programs for youth, including programs focused on music, dance, theater, and other creative and performing arts; and
 - Any wraparound supports and services not already provided by local schools and health clinics.
- **PROHIBITION.**—No portion of any grant funds awarded by this Office may be used to fund any projects that are directly run by any carceral entities.
- **LIMITATIONS.**—Any individuals consulted for their expertise during the design, implementation, or monitoring of any grant funds that are awarded by this Office must be financially compensated for their time.

OFFICE OF REENTRY

- **IN GENERAL.**—The Director shall establish within the Agency an Office of Reentry.
- **DUTIES.**—The duties of the Office shall include working with individuals who have been directly impacted by the criminal-legal system, including individuals who are formerly incarcerated or currently on community supervision, to:
 - Identify the key barriers that are stymying successful reentry for individuals who are formerly incarcerated or currently on community supervision, including specific attention to barriers that are faced by Black, Latinx, Indigenous, disabled, and LGBT populations;
 - Identify the non-carceral, non-punitive programs and services that will most effectively serve to promote successful reentry, including successful reentry for Black, Latinx, Indigenous, disabled, and LGBT populations;
 - Coordinate between City, County, and other agencies that are currently providing reentry services, seeing which necessary programs and services are not currently available in the forms and quantities needed; and

- Make grants and/or directly implement programming to address the identified gaps.
- **PROGRAMMING.**—Programs funded by the Office may include, but are not limited to:
 - Educational and workforce development programs and/or pathways that work with formerly incarcerated individuals, including youth, helping them to secure secondary and/or post-secondary credentials;
 - For formerly incarcerated youth and youth exiting the foster system, reentry and/or transition supports, including transition coordinators who will ensure that youth participants:
 - Can return to school following incarceration; and
 - Have their credits transfer so that they can progress toward secondary credential attainment; and
 - Employment opportunities that benefit formerly incarcerated individuals, including:
 - Grants for entrepreneurship;
 - Technical assistance and financial incentives to businesses that hire formerly incarcerated individuals;
 - Subsidized and transitional employment opportunities, including “earn and learn” opportunities;
 - Worker cooperatives; and
 - Workforce development and training programs that specifically serve formerly incarcerated people and people with criminal-legal histories.

OFFICE OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND CRISIS RESPONSE

- **IN GENERAL.**—The Director shall establish within the Agency an Office of Violence Prevention and Crisis Response.
- **DUTIES.**—The duties of the Office of Violence Prevention and Crisis Response shall include working with mental health, substance, and other experts, including individuals who are currently experiencing challenges related to mental health or substance use, to:
 - Identify issues that are driving contact between law enforcement and individuals who are experiencing issues surrounding mental health or substance use, including specific attention to Black, Latinx, Indigenous, disabled, and LGBT populations; and
 - Fund and operate non-carceral, non-punitive local programs that support individuals who are experiencing crisis and match these individuals with the targeted services that they need.
- **PROGRAMMING.**—Programs funded by the Office may include, but are not limited to:

- **CALL PROCESSING.**–
 - An accessible method of processing 911 calls that reduce contact between law enforcement and community members; and/or
 - The designation of an accessible emergency response number that can be used to dispatch non-punitive crisis and trauma intervention teams.
- **DEPLOYMENT OF EXPERTS.**–
 - A framework for deploying non-punitive, unarmed first-responders; and/or
 - Non-law enforcement personnel and partnerships to solve problems that do not require criminal enforcement.
- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.**–
 - Programs identifying and providing skills, resources, and community engagement infrastructure to reduce communities’ reliance on first-responders, including through conflict resolution, de-escalation, first aid, and other community-building skills.
- **PUBLIC HEALTH.**–
 - Preventative, non-punitive, non-coercive, patient-driven mental health care;
 - Communicable disease services;
 - Non-mandatory, non-coercive, harm-reduction based Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment programs, including medications for SUD treatment and peer support programs; and/or
 - Voluntary harm reduction programs.
- **PROHIBITION.**–No portion of any grant funds awarded by this Office may be used to fund any projects that are directly run by any carceral entities.
- **LIMITATIONS.**–Any individuals consulted for their expertise during the design, implementation, or monitoring of any grant funds that are awarded by this Office must be financially compensated for their time.

APPENDIX H, NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN SAMPLE POLICY LANGUAGE

SAFETY ACTION PLAN

- **REQUIREMENT FOR PLAN CREATION.**—Not later than one year after this Act becomes law and, henceforward, not fewer than once every three years, the Community Safety Agency shall create a Safety Action Plan that includes the following elements:
 - **NEEDS ASSESSMENT.**—An assessment of the core, systemic needs of the community supervision and jail populations, such as through a survey, interviews, focus groups, participatory budgeting, or other mechanisms that examines root issues including:
 - Access to affordable housing;
 - Access to social services, including services related to physical and mental health;
 - The burden of legal financial obligations;
 - Access to education;
 - Access to high-quality childcare;
 - Access to public transportation;
 - Access to job training and/or placement in career-pathway jobs; and
 - Other factors driving criminal-legal contact, including a demographic breakdown by race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, and other factors, and any community needs suggested by these patterns.
 - **ACTION PLAN.**—An action plan that uses these identified needs to recommend non-carceral, non-punitive investments that will help the jurisdiction to improve community safety and reduce criminal-legal contact.
- **REQUIREMENT FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION.**—In producing the Safety Action Plan (“Plan”), the Agency shall incorporate input from people who have lived expertise and who would be eligible for services that are funded through this Plan, including but not limited to:
 - Individuals who are currently or formerly incarcerated;
 - Individuals who have been arrested in the past five years;
 - Individuals who have experienced police violence;
 - Family members of individuals who are currently or formerly incarcerated;
 - Family members of people who have experienced police violence;
 - Individuals who have been subject to child protective service investigations;
 - Individuals who use drugs;

- Individuals who have been homeless and/or faced housing insecurity;
- Families of such individuals; and
- Community-led organizations that serve such individuals.

APPENDIX I, SAMPLE DEFINITIONS

DEFINITIONS

- **NON-CARCERAL FIRST RESPONDER.**—The term “non-carceral first responder” includes a licensed therapist, psychiatrist, doctor, nurse, psychologist, peer support worker, peer, teacher, mentor, counselor, peer support specialist, violence intervention worker, and other community-members with relevant experience who respond to crises in a way that meets the definition of non-carceral approaches to public safety.
- **NON-CARCERAL APPROACH TO SAFETY.**—The term “non-carceral approach to safety,” with respect to a program or service, means that the program or service is established or provided in a manner that is disconnected from carceral institutions, including law enforcement, criminal courts, prosecution, probation, child welfare services, or immigration enforcement.
 - **DISCONNECTED.**—For purposes of this Section, the term “disconnected from carceral institutions” means having no relationship with respect to administration, staffing, or funding, or otherwise cooperating with, collaborating with, or reporting to, any carceral institution in any situation, except where the program or service involved is bound to engage in such cooperation or reporting by existing Federal, State, or local law.
- **SAFETY NEEDS ASSESSMENT.**—The term “safety needs assessment” means a systematic, participatory process for identifying the safety needs in the local community. Such process shall include—
 - Soliciting input from persons who represent the broad interests of the local community, including those who have been directly impacted by arrest, incarceration, criminal supervision, immigration detention, or other criminal-legal system involvement;
 - Identifying the structural, systemic factors that may lead community members to feel unsafe or may increase the risk that community members may become involved with the criminal-legal system;
 - Identifying existing resources that are potentially available to address those safety needs as well as any other gaps in necessary resources; and

- Providing opportunities that allow people meaningful opportunities to review, comment on, and provide suggested modifications to the draft assessment, such as through public hearings, online publication, and a comment period that allows sufficient time for community feedback.
- **NON-PUNITIVE.**—The term “non-punitive” means not relying on surveillance or inflicting or aiming to inflict punishment, including, but not limited to, punishment through the criminal-legal system (e.g. arrest, supervision, or incarceration), child welfare system (child removal), medical system (mandated treatment or incarceration in a medical facility), or mandated social services.