

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

House Bill 1030  
Judiciary

(Delegate Young, *et al.*)

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Task Force to Study Murder Prevention and Reduction in Maryland

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This bill establishes the Task Force to Study Murder Prevention and Reduction in Maryland and outlines its duties. The Office of the Governor must provide staff for the task force. The task force must submit an interim report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services (GOCPYVS), the General Assembly, and specified legislative committees by December 1, 2023. A final report is due by December 1, 2024. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2023, and terminates June 30, 2025.**

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Any expense reimbursements for task force members and staffing costs for the Office of the Governor are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The task force must:

- study the causes of murder in the State by conducting a comprehensive examination of factors contributing to homicides, as specified;
- examine the impact of community-based violence prevention programs that engage youth, families, and communities;

- examine the effectiveness of current laws relating to firearms, background checks, and domestic violence;
- review accessibility to mental health and substance abuse treatment;
- review law enforcement, community collaboration, and restorative justice programs;
- examine the influence of systemic racism and discrimination on violence in marginalized communities;
- study any other factors that the task force considers relevant; and
- make recommendations regarding (1) ways to increase the number of community programs to address the root causes of violence; (2) ways to strengthen laws related to firearms and risk assessment tools; (3) ways to expand access to mental health services and telehealth services; (4) ways to enhance law enforcement and community collaboration; (5) ways to promote equality and justice for marginalized communities and end discriminatory policing practices; and (6) any other matters the task force considers relevant.

A task force member may not receive compensation but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses.

**Current Law:** GOCPYVS plans, promotes, and funds efforts with government entities, private organizations, and the community to advance public policy, enhance public safety, reduce crime and juvenile delinquency, and serve victims.

*Maryland Violence Intervention and Prevention Program:* The Maryland Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund, a special, nonlapsing fund, is administered by the Executive Director of GOCPYVS, in consultation with the Maryland Violence Intervention and Prevention Advisory Council, to (1) support effective violence reduction strategies by providing competitive grants to local governments and nonprofit organizations to fund evidence-based health programs or evidence-informed health programs and (2) evaluate the efficacy of the programs funded as a result. The fund consists of (1) money appropriated in the State budget to the fund; (2) investment earnings; and (3) any other money from any other source accepted for the benefit of the fund. The fiscal 2024 budget as introduced includes \$3.0 million for the fund.

*Violence Prevention Initiative:* The Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI) within the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services' Division of Parole and Probation (DPP) was implemented in 2007 in response to a finding that approximately 30% of all homicides in Baltimore City involved individuals under adult parole or probation supervision. VPI has since expanded to a statewide initiative.

The initiative focuses DPP's resources on (1) the accurate identification of those offenders with the greatest potential for violent re-offense and (2) the intensive, containment-model approach to the management of these potentially dangerous individuals. DPP uses validated risk and needs screening instruments to classify individuals under supervision upon intake and to determine the appropriate level of supervision to provide for each case. DPP's screening instrument considers criminal history, age, and previous arrests for weapons. First among the factors considered is whether the present age of the offender is younger than age 30. Offenders with the highest risk of re-offending are placed into the VPI caseload. The containment-model approach to supervising VPI offenders involves increased contacts between the offender and agent in conjunction with immediate and consistent responses to violations of the conditions of supervision.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Governor's Office; Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Maryland Department of Health; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 3, 2023  
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Analysis by: Shirleen M. E. Pilgrim

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510