



UIC Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement

November 1, 2024

To: Quiwana Bell, Assistant Secretary, Illinois Department of Human Services, Office of Firearm Violence Prevention.
Fr: J. Hoereth, Director, UIC Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement, and Chair, Firearm Violence Research Group
Re: **Reimagine Public Safety Act/OFVP – Eligible Community Areas and Municipalities, 2024**

Dear Assistant Secretary,

As you know, the Reimagine Public Safety Act (RPSA) takes a public health approach to ending the epidemic of gun violence affecting communities across Illinois. RPSA enables the Office of Firearm Violence Prevention (OFVP) to support violence prevention programs in the state, and to seek advice from experts to determine the method and data sources for determining where to focus help to communities to maximize impact. The RPSA enables OFVP to update its determination of those communities no sooner than every 3 years. To that end, the Firearm Violence Research Group (FVRG) was convened beginning in August 2021, pursuant to the requirement in the Act, to help determine Illinois' most concentrated areas of firearm violence for investment. This memo conveys the FVRG recommendations for eligible Chicago community areas and Illinois municipalities in 2024.

Selected Eligible Areas – FVRG Recommendations per RPSA

In 2021, after consideration of the requirements of RPSA and available data sources, the FVRG developed a process for recommending eligible community areas in Chicago and municipalities in Greater Illinois as per the requirements of the Act. As an update, the FVRG applied this process again in 2024 to determine the Chicago Community Areas that rate highest in firearm victimizations, excluding self-inflicted injuries. **The eligible Chicago Community Areas for 2024 should include (*Rate per 10,000 residents/Volume*):**

- Auburn Gresham (162.2/746)
- Austin (154.2/1,448)
- Burnside (215.3/43)
- Chatham (164.3/511)
- East Garfield Park (351.5/666)
- Englewood (316.1/723)
- Fuller Park (438.6/105)
- Greater Grand Crossing (247.4/748)
- Humboldt Park (152.5/839)
- North Lawndale (299.8/961)

- Riverdale (226.3/166)
- Roseland (166.4/653)
- South Lawndale (69.3/499)
- South Shore (136.2/685)
- Washington Park (223.4/245)
- West Englewood (268.5/713)
- West Garfield Park (531.9/873)

The FVRG used a similar process for determining the eligible municipalities with populations less than 1,000,000 people. The Research Group applied this process to determine the eligible municipalities from across Illinois that rate highest in firearms victimization. **The eligible municipalities with less than 1,000,000 residents should include (*Rate per 10,000 residents/Volume*):**

- Belleville Cluster, including Belleville (23.3/99), Cahokia Heights (89.3/108), East St. Louis (126.7/234),
- Berwyn (16.4/94)-Cicero (13.3/113) Cluster
- Calumet City Cluster, including Calumet City (39.7/143), Dolton (73.7/158), Harvey (94.0/191), Lansing (23.0/67) Markham (62.6/73), Riverdale (105.0/112), South Holland (48.5/104)
- Champaign (17.2/152)-Urbana (15.7/60) Cluster
- Chicago Heights Cluster, including Chicago Heights (40.8/112), Park Forest (23.5/51), Sauk Village (53.4/53)
- Danville (49.3/144)
- Decatur (36.2/255)
- Joliet (12.4/187)
- Kankakee (52.4/126)
- Maywood (62.1/146)-Bellwood (43.6/82) Cluster
- Rockford (25.4/377)
- Rock Island (34.5/64)
- Springfield (18.6/213)
- Waukegan (13.5/121) – North Chicago (21.8/67) Cluster

Selection Methodology and Discretionary Selections

Process for Chicago Community Areas (Municipality with more than 1,000,000 population)

In 2021, the FVRG determined a blended approach using rate and volume would be most effective in identifying those communities with the most concentrated gun violence to be eligible for funding. This same methodology was applied in 2024 to update the list. The first ten community areas were selected, per the statute, by those that rank highest by a per capita combined fatal and non-fatal victimization rate. 430 ILCS 69/35-20(d). The next seven community areas were selected, per the statute, through a

ranking of the remaining community areas by total number of victims. 430 ILCS 69/35-20(d). With this blended approach, some of the smaller community areas with high per capita victimization rates make the list, as do larger community areas with the greatest number of victims.

Selection of Additional Chicago Community Areas

OFVP had the authority to consider adding “up to 5 additional eligible neighborhoods or clusters of contiguous neighborhoods utilizing the same data sets so as to maximize the potential impact for firearm violence reduction” as well as “to identify up to 5 additional neighborhoods, municipalities, contiguous geographic areas, or other local government-identified boundary areas to receive funding . . . after considering additional risk factors that contribute to community firearm violence.” 430 ILCS 69/35-20(d). With that authority, OFVP selected these 9 additional Chicago community areas or community clusters:

- Ashburn
- Chicago Lawn
- New City
- Northside Cluster – Near North Side, West Town, Belmont Cragin, Hermosa, Logan Square, Avondale, Irving Park, Albany Park
- South Chicago
- South Deering
- Southwest Cluster – Near West Side, Lower West Side, Brighton Park, Gage Park, McKinley Park
- West Pullman
- Woodlawn

Process for Municipalities under 1,000,000 in Population

In 2021, the FVRG confirmed that the same blended approach used for Chicago would also be the best approach for those municipalities with less than 1,000,000 residents, with the added criteria of clustering municipalities that are contiguous to each other. This process meets the specific language of the RPSA which enables the OFVP to select up to 15 “municipalities or contiguous geographic areas.” This same process was applied in 2024. The selection process for municipalities under 1,000,000 residents can be described in three steps.

Step 1. The municipalities with populations between 35,000 and 1,000,000 are sorted by rank order on highest per capita rate of fatal and non-fatal firearm-shot victimization 2018-2022 (excluding self-inflicted) for the municipalities of this population size. As per the RPSA, the first 10 municipalities on that list are selected.

Step 2. Illinois municipalities of any population size that were not already selected are then sorted in rank order by absolute (raw) numbers of fatal and non-fatal firearm-shot victimization 2018-2022 (excluding self-inflicted). As per the RPSA, the top five municipalities on this list are selected.

Step 3. After each list is ranked by its respective measure (rate or raw number), any selected municipalities that are contiguous to another selected one are joined together in a cluster. If a cluster is formed in this way, the next highest municipality on the ranking lists is selected in the open slot created by clustering. If that next municipality is contiguous to one in the original selected 15 slots, then it is also selected and joined to that cluster. The process continues down the appropriate list until there are fifteen total slots filled with selected municipalities and/or clusters of municipalities.

Selection of Additional Municipalities under 1,000,000 in Population

Pursuant to statute, OFVP had the power to identify “up to 5 additional municipalities or contiguous geographic areas” as well as the additional power, detailed earlier “to identify up to 5 additional neighborhoods, municipalities, contiguous geographic areas, or other local government-identified boundary areas to receive funding . . . after considering additional risk factors that contribute to community firearm violence.” 430 ILCS 69/35-20(d). With that authority, OFVP selected the following additional municipalities or municipal clusters:

- Aurora

Data Sources

The FVRG agreed that there exists no single, publicly available, statewide data source that meets the requirement of the Act for measuring victim data, specifically “fatal and non-fatal firearm-shot incidents” as specified in 430 ILCS 69/35-20(d). To resolve this, the FVRG agreed to the following definition of “firearm-shot” incidents: “[A]ny assault in which a person is shot with a firearm, including both fatal and non-fatal incidents, excluding self-inflicted.”

With no single, statewide data source available, the group agreed to use Chicago Police Department Shooting Incident data for cities with population over 1,000,000 (Chicago). Since 2010, the Chicago Police Department has made “shooting incident” and more recently “shooting victim” data available to the public. To identify the Illinois municipalities under 1,000,000 in population, the group used data from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). IDPH provided the group with the number of firearm homicides and number of emergency room and hospital admissions for firearm assaults (non-fatal firearm-shot victimization). These measures are consistent with the FVRG definition and have also been used in other initiatives, including the Illinois Restore, Reinvest, and Renew Program (R3) and Chicago’s Our City, Our Safety Plan.

Figure 1 below shows the full list of OFVP Eligible Areas for 2024.

Figure 1. Full List of OFVP Eligible Areas (2024) – Chicago Community Areas, and Greater Illinois Municipalities

Chicago Community Areas	
Ashburn	Northside Cluster – Near North Side, West Town, Belmont Cragin, Hermosa, Logan Square, Avondale, Irving Park, Albany Park
Auburn Gresham	Riverdale
Austin	Roseland
Burnside	South Chicago
Chatham	South Deering
Chicago Lawn	South Lawndale
East Garfield Park	South Shore
Englewood	Southwest Cluster – Near West Side, Lower West Side, Brighton Park, Gage Park, McKinley Park
Fuller Park	Washington Park
Greater Grand Crossing	West Englewood
Humboldt Park	West Garfield Park
New City	West Pullman
North Lawndale	Woodlawn

Greater Illinois Areas	
Aurora	Joliet
Belleville Cluster, including Belleville, East St. Louis, and Cahokia Heights	Kankakee
Berwyn-Cicero Cluster	Maywood-Bellwood Cluster
Calumet City Cluster, including Calumet City, Harvey, Dolton, Riverdale, South Holland, Markham, and Lansing	Peoria
Champaign-Urbana Cluster	Rock Island
Chicago Heights Cluster, including Chicago Heights, Sauk Village, and Park Forest	Rockford
Danville	Springfield
Decatur	Waukegan-North Chicago Cluster