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Keeping Our Community Safe: Updates on the District Attorney's Efforts to Reduce Gun Violence

In November 2021, District Attorney José Garza announced a four-point plan to address gun violence in Travis County: 1) hold people who commit acts of gun violence accountable; 2) invest in gun violence prevention programs; 3) intervene early to prevent family violence homicides; and 4) expand services to support victims of gun violence.¹

Gun violence is declining in Travis County

- Violent crime rates in Austin have steadily dropped.²
- Since 2021, the number of firearm-related offenses prosecuted by the Travis County District Attorney's Office (TCDA) has increased.³
- Homicide cases in Travis County have continued to decrease from 2021 to 2025.⁴
- Working in collaboration with the Austin Police Department (APD) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), TCDA has assisted local law enforcement agencies to secure additional investigative resources to solve gun crimes.⁵

TCDA and community partners are working together to reduce gun violence

- In 2022, TCDA hosted a Gun Violence Prevention summit to coordinate gun violence prevention efforts.⁶ That Summit has continued every year since.⁷
- TCDA has supported funding requests for local community violence intervention programs.⁸
- Since 2024, frontline workers at ATXPeace have completed 151 mediations and de-escalations, with the goal of diffusing conflicts before gun violence occurs.⁹
- In 2025, TCDA established a gun violence prevention program which focuses on individuals who are most at-risk of committing future acts of gun violence.¹⁰

Travis County has among the lowest number of family violence homicides of major urban centers in the State¹¹

- In 2021, TCDA added a full-time staff member to the Family Violence High Risk Team, which includes representatives from TCDA, APD, and community partners. This team meets weekly to identify family violence cases with a high risk of gun violence and deploys early intervention strategies to prevent that violence from occurring.
- TCDA announced a firearm surrender protocol in 2021 to seize guns from those accused of a family violence offense who are legally prohibited from possessing a firearm.¹²

TCDA has helped secure needed resources for victims of gun violence

- In 2022, TCDA advocated for the creation of a hospital-based violence intervention program in Travis County.¹³ Ascension Seton launched this program in October 2024 and has served 134 patients who are victims of gun violence and other violent offenses since then.¹⁴
- TCDA supported the establishment of a Trauma Recovery Center in Travis County.¹⁵ The Harvest Trauma Recovery Center opened in November 2023 and provides free, comprehensive behavioral health services to survivors of violent crimes and their families. It is the first Trauma Recovery Center to open in Texas.¹⁶

¹¹Travis County District Attorney's Office. 2021. "Keeping Our Community Safe: How the District Attorney is Addressing the Rise in Gun Violence in Travis County." Released November 16, 2021. https://districtattorney.traviscountytx.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/pr-211116-new-TCDAO_Gun_Strategy_with_Foreword.pdf.

²Weber, Andrew. "Crime in Austin Dropped Below Pre-Pandemic Highs in 2025." KUT News, January 12, 2026. <https://www.kut.org/crime-justice/2026-01-12/crime-in-austin-dropped-below-pre-pandemic-highs-in-2025>. Additional violent crime statistics for Travis County law enforcement agencies can be found through the FBI's Data Discovery Tool at <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/query>.

³Travis County District Attorney's Office. "Firearm-Related Prosecutions: 2021 – 2026." Unpublished data. Retrieved June 8, 2026. Between 2021 and 2025, the number of firearm-related felonies that TCDA resolved by trial or guilty plea increased by over 60%.

⁴Travis County Medical Examiner. 2026. "Travis County Medical Examiner Annual Report 2025." https://www.traviscountytx.gov/images/medical_examiner/docs/2025_Annual_Report.pdf. The report cites the following number of deaths by homicide in Travis County : 110 in 2021, 93 in 2022, 87 in 2023, 83 in 2024, and 71 in 2025.

⁵Stark, Sam. "TravCo Officials Receive National Award for Linking a Man's Firearms with an Unsolved Murder." KXAN, July 8, 2023. <https://www.kxan.com/news/local/travis-county/travco-officials-receive-national-award-for-linking-a-mans-firearms-with-an-unsolved-murder>. See also José Garza, letter to Director Karhlton Moore, February 10, 2023, on file with the Travis County District Attorney's Office, Austin, TX.

⁶Reader, Grace. "Travis County to Host Gun Violence Summit in Wake of Texas Mass Shooting." KXAN, May 27, 2022. <https://www.kxan.com/news/crime/travis-county-to-host-gun-violence-summit-in-wake-of-texas-mass-shooting>.

⁷Pauda, Erica. "Local Leaders, Public Health Experts Gather for 4th Annual Gun Violence Prevention Summit." KXAN, June 24, 2025. <https://www.kxan.com/news/local/austin/local-leaders-public-health-experts-gather-for-4th-annual-gun-violence-prevention-summit>.

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- ⁸ Garza, José. Letter to Director Karlhlon F. Moore, June 9, 2024. On file with the Travis County District Attorney's Office, Austin, TX. See also José Garza, letter to Mayor Kirk Watson, August 10, 2023, on file with the Travis County District Attorney's Office, Austin, TX.
- ⁹ ATXPeace. "ATXPeace Mediation and De-Escalation Report." June 17, 2026. On file with the Travis County District Attorney's Office, Austin, TX.
- ¹⁰ "Safer Travis County Resolution." Travis County Commissioners Court, November 1, 2022. https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/images/commissioners_court/judge/2022-11-01-Safer_Travis_County_Resolution.pdf. This gun violence prevention program was first announced as part of TCDA's four-point plan in November 2021 and enacted as a component of the Safer Travis County Resolution which Travis County Commissioners Court approved in November 2022.
- ¹¹ Texas Council on Family Violence. 2026. "2024 Honoring Texas Victims." Texas Intimate Partner Fatality Report. https://tcfv.org/wp-content/uploads/2024-HTV-Report_WEB.pdf. In 2024, 5 intimate partner homicides occurred in Travis County, 11 occurred in Tarrant County, 17 occurred in Bexar and Dallas Counties, and 47 occurred in Harris County.
- ¹² Quijano, Jerry. "Travis County DA Launches Firearm Surrender Policy." KUT News, May 12, 2021. <https://www.kut.org/crime-justice/2021-05-12/travis-county-da-launches-firearm-surrender-policy>.
- ¹³ Garza, José and Jeffrey Travillion. "Opinion: We Must Do More in Travis County to Prevent Gun Violence." Austin American-Statesman, October 30, 2022. <https://www.statesman.com/story/opinion/columns/guest/2022/10/30/opinion-we-must-do-more-in-travis-county-to-prevent-gun-violence/69596297007>.
- ¹⁴ Laing, Jenny, LaPorshia Maloy, and Amanda Daniels. "Hospital-based Violence Intervention Program (HVIP)." Presentation by Ascension Texas Center for Violence Prevention & Policy to Travis County Commissioners Court, Austin, Texas, June 9, 2026. <https://traviscotx.portal.civicclerk.com/event/3678/files/attachment/75880>.
- ¹⁵ Goodwin, Amber. "On the Development of a Proposal for a Trauma Recovery Center in Travis County." Testimony, Travis County Commissioners Court, Austin, Texas, November 1, 2022. <https://traviscotx.portal.civicclerk.com/event/2716/files/agenda/9740>.
- ¹⁶ Alliance for Safety and Justice. "Texas Follows National Model, Opens Trauma Recovery Center for Victims of Violence." Press release. November 1, 2023. <https://allianceforsafetyandjustice.org/news/texas-follows-national-model-opens-trauma-recovery-center-victims-violence-0>.