

PROSECUTION

ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

PUBLIC SAFETY
PARTNERSHIP
Building Safer Communities

A special thanks to the subject matter experts who contributed to the development of prosecution assessment reports for the National Public Safety Partnership sites: Tammy Brown, Bridgette Clements, Mark Dumaine, Michael Eberhardt, Beth McGarry, Damon Mosler, Prosecutors' Center for Excellence, John Skinner, Rachel Smith, and Andrew Warshawer.

This project was supported by Grant No. 15PBJA-22-GK-03705-JAGP awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART). Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. All rights reserved. Copyright 2025.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction **4**
Findings **7**
Personnel **10**
Investigation and Prosecution **14**
Technology **18**
Conclusion **20**
Appendix A: Approach and Methodology 21
Appendix B: Theme Definitions 22
Appendix C: Themes Coded by Evaluation Team 25

INTRODUCTION

The National Public Safety Partnership (PSP) program provides an innovative framework for the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to enhance its support of state, local, and tribal law enforcement and prosecution authorities as they aggressively investigate and prosecute violent criminals, especially those involved in gun crime, drug trafficking, and gang violence. Through the PSP program, DOJ provides effective assistance to American cities of different sizes and diverse needs to support and build their capacity to fight crime. PSP facilitates the development of data-driven, evidence-based strategies tailored to the unique needs of participating cities to address serious violent crime challenges.

Departments and agencies participating in the PSP program go through a series of assessments to develop a baseline understanding of their challenges and areas for growth. The prosecution assessment helps PSP sites enhance their prosecution of violent crime and provides evidence-based recommendations to improve these efforts. In these prosecution assessments, subject matter experts (SMEs) focus on the following objectives:

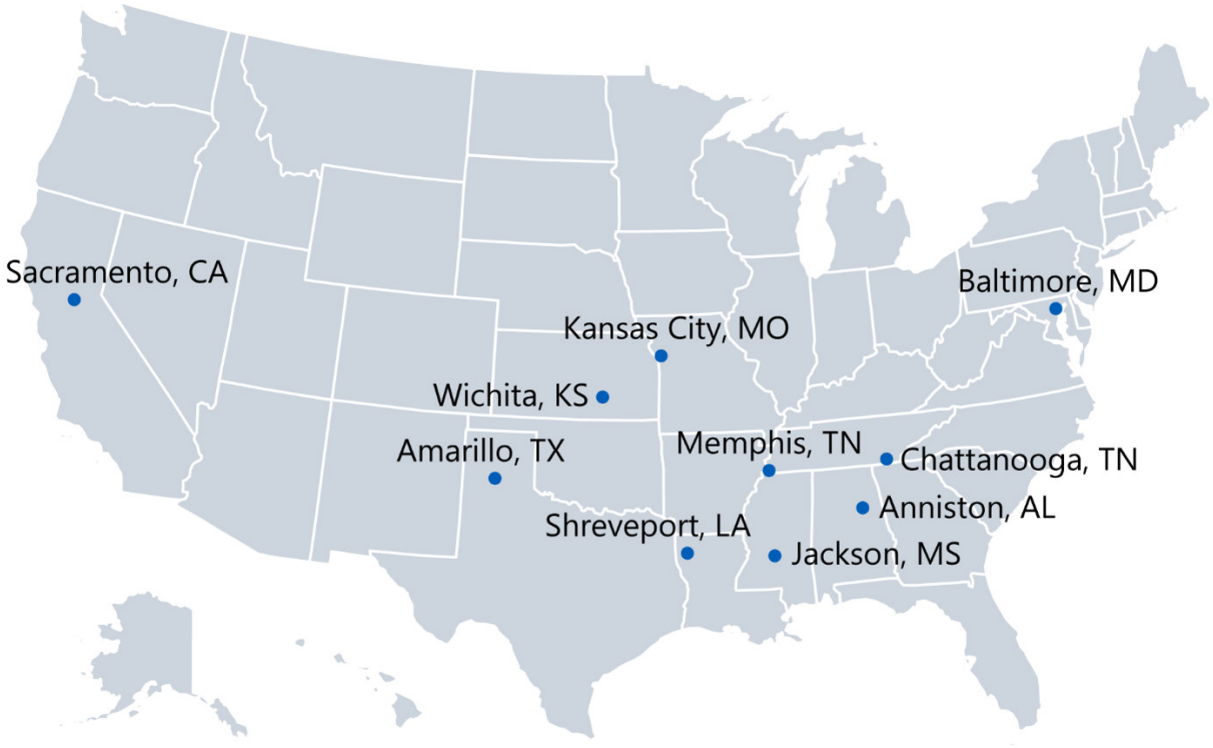
- Assess the capacity to prosecute violent crime using federal and state law.
- Identify strengths, gaps, and enhancements needed in violent crime prosecutions.
- Identify local and national resources to improve successful prosecution results.

To review a site's prosecutorial abilities and needs, PSP SMEs begin with reviewing background information provided by the prosecutor's office on cases received, cases prosecuted, and their outcomes. The SMEs then conduct an on-site visit to assess the site's prosecutorial capabilities by reviewing crime and prosecution data, policies, procedures, and other documents related to violent crime prosecutions. The SMEs interview local, state, and federal partners; attend relevant department and agency meetings; and tour the office's facilities.

The SMEs then develop a prosecution assessment report that identifies prosecutorial gaps, needs, and best practices. The report also provides recommendations to advance the site's capacity to prosecute violent crime. Finally, the PSP site team assists the site in implementing and tracking recommendations from the report, including facilitating specific types of training and technical assistance (TTA), such as peer exchanges, further SME assistance, guidance on relevant practices, or examples of policies or procedures from other prosecutor offices.

As of September 2025, 10 of the 65 PSP sites completed a formal prosecution assessment (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. PSP sites with prosecution assessments



The analysis in this report identifies common themes, technical gaps, and recommendations from completed prosecution assessments across all PSP sites. Our analysis of the common themes involved coding the recommendations to predetermined categories that aligned with PSP core outputs. We present our findings in both quantitative and qualitative formats. We review our analytical methods and subsequent findings in detail in the following sections, in which we reproduce some of the recommendations from earlier reports. **This report provides PSP stakeholders with an understanding of common gaps or needs in prosecutorial capabilities and practices among PSP sites, the types of recommendations made to PSP sites, and areas for potential program-wide TTA to strengthen PSP site prosecutorial capacity.**

Some common findings and recommendations include the following:

- Prosecutors' offices may be significantly understaffed and face large backlogs of cases.
  - With limited resources and staffing, prosecutors' offices should establish a foundation for the strategic growth of information technology (IT) and digital evidence.
- Prosecutors bear the legal and ethical responsibility of disclosing evidence related to criminal charges. Their ability to comply with those requirements can depend on the quality of information they receive from their law enforcement partners. Poorly investigated cases, unseized evidence, and investigative tunnel vision on violent crimes can jeopardize outcomes in court and limit the ability of prosecutors to hold offenders accountable.
  - Provide interagency training for detectives and investigators, supplementing existing knowledge with the current court mandates.

- Victim and witness participation in violent crime prosecution is not consistent, making successful prosecution more difficult.
  - Increase victim and witness participation, cooperation, and support related to violent crime cases by increasing the initial outreach to witnesses, developing coordinated and ongoing communication with witnesses and victims, and working with law enforcement to educate witnesses and victims on their role in the criminal justice system.
- Data sharing between police departments and prosecutors is not always systematic, which can create inefficiencies in case review and charging.
  - Prosecutors and police must establish a pathway to electronically share data between agencies.

FINDINGS

Using the 10 prosecution assessment reports, the PSP evaluation team coded 334 references to 10 theme categories and 84 themes within those categories (see Appendix A for details on the review methodology). The most common themes across the reports were in the personnel, investigation and prosecution, and technology categories.

Table 1. Theme categories found in prosecution assessments

Theme Category	Number of Occurrences
Personnel	99
Investigation and prosecution	93
Technology	38
Interagency partnerships	33
Community stakeholders	23
Data and analysis	17
Funding	17
Planning	12
Governance and policy	2
Crime prevention	0
Total	**334**

As shown in Table 2, training was the most common individual theme in the personnel category, with 37 references. Procedures and policies was the overall most common individual theme, and the PSP evaluation team coded it 50 times. Technology suggestion was the most common individual theme in the technology category, with 19 references. We discuss the most common themes later in this report, where we analyze specific recommendations pertaining to each theme.

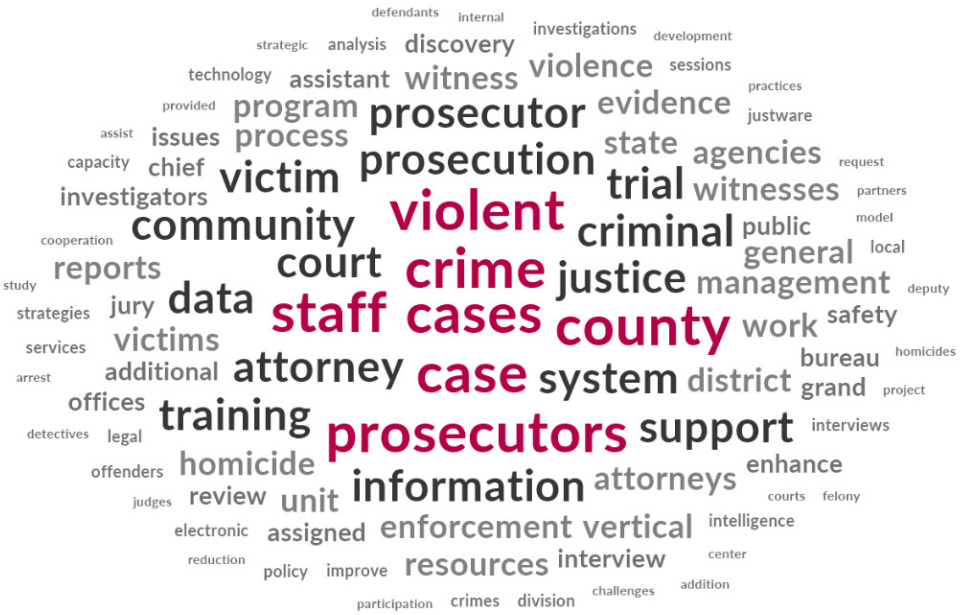
Table 2. Most common references at a glance

Theme	Number of References Coded (Cumulative)
PERSONNEL	99
Training	37
Staffing	25
Departmental organization	16
Performance review	8
Civilianization	6
Internal Communication	5
Cross-unit collaboration	1
Schedules and shifts	1
Culture	1
Organizational awareness	1

Theme	Number of References Coded (Cumulative)
INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION	93
Procedures and policies	50
Case management	33
Witnesses	13
Evidence	0
Gangs	0
Feedback	0
Homicide	0
Cold cases	0
Social media	0
TECHNOLOGY	38
Technology suggestion	19
Records management	7
Software and hardware	5
Integration	4
Interoperability	3
Insufficient equipment	0
IT support needed	0
Privacy	0
Training needed	0
User interface	0

To further capture what was commonly discussed among the reports outside the themes, the frequency with which words appeared was counted. Figure 2 depicts our findings as a word cloud, in which the larger words are those that appeared most frequently in the assessments. Violent, crime, staff, case(s), and county were the most common topical word/phrases in the assessment reports.

Figure 2. Most common words in prosecution assessments



Regarding recommendations that could be coded to multiple theme categories, Table 3 identifies the intersecting themes from all 10 prosecution assessment reports. It shows only the recommendations that fell into more than one theme category. If recommendations fell into the same two theme categories three to nine times, we shaded the cell green to represent a strong correlation. Yellow shading displays a weak correlation (meaning there were one to two instances of an intersection), and red shows no overlap between the two categories.

As shown in Table 3, the intersection of personnel and interagency partnerships, investigation and prosecution and interagency partnerships, investigation and prosecution and personnel, and investigation and prosecution and technology were the most common intersections among the assessment reports. The frequency of cross-references indicates the importance of personnel, partnerships, and investigation and prosecution strategies for improving prosecutorial capabilities across PSP sites.

Table 3. Intersection of themes among all reports

	Community stakeholders	Crime prevention	Data and analysis	Funding	Governance and policy	Interagency partnerships	Investigation and prosecution	Personnel	Planning	Technology
Community stakeholders		🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟡	🟡	🔴	🔴
Crime prevention			🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
Data and analysis				🔴	🔴	🟡	🔴	🟡	🟡	🔴
Funding					🔴	🟡	🟡	🔴	🔴	🔴
Governance and policy						🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
Interagency partnerships							🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡
Investigation and Prosecution								🟢	🟡	🟢
Personnel									🟡	🟡
Planning										🔴
Technology										

The following sections contain examples of recommendations made across prosecution assessments to demonstrate the commonalities.

PERSONNEL

Training emerged as the most prominent subtheme under the personnel category, with 37 references in the assessment reports. Recommendations encouraged interagency training for prosecutors, police, and local law enforcement partners. Staffing was also identified as a core concern among prosecutors' offices; recommendations included strategies for hiring, retaining, and more effectively using existing staff. The SMEs also provided recommendations for the organization of units and prosecution models within PSP sites.

Six reports recommended interagency training for prosecutors and the police departments with which they work.

RECOMMENDATION: The Crime Strategies Unit (CSU) and the Data Driven Sciences Division (DDSD) should create a structured interagency training program to teach all analysts and district intelligence officers about the capabilities and expertise across agencies.

RECOMMENDATION: *Establish education and host Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.)-accredited training for law enforcement partners.*

This training should outline the importance of complete reports that include identification of all witnesses and their contact information. Officers also need to know what can be done to protect and secure witnesses and victims. The connection between cooperative victims and witnesses and strong prosecutions and combating defenses is also important. This training should include line officers as well as investigators or detectives.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide P.O.S.T.-accredited training for the [police department], [sheriff's office], and other regional law enforcement agencies' investigators on the need for collection, preservation, and admissibility of all forms of evidence, including electronic and forensic evidence.

RECOMMENDATION: *Establish ongoing training or legal education sessions between the Criminal Investigation Division (CID) and [the district attorney's office].*

[The police department] must consider collaborating with [the district attorney's office] managers to develop ongoing training on the foundations of successful prosecutions, charging considerations, and evidence needed to address defenses.

RECOMMENDATION: *Establish a regular training schedule with law enforcement partners.*

Suggested topics for training could be case preparation, search warrants, driving under the influence (DUI) investigations, domestic violence (DV), Fourth Amendment issues, and Miranda requirements.

RECOMMENDATION: *Develop a formal case review process with police agencies for homicide and sex offense investigations.*

Within this case review process, prosecutors and police detectives should have regularly scheduled meetings to discuss investigative steps in specific cases. A formalized review process helps

develop cases for successful prosecution and cultivates structured relationships between individual prosecutors and detectives. A structured case review process can also be very helpful in training detectives and preparing them for court. It is recommended that the district attorney's office work with the PSP Strategic Site Liaison to develop a case review process for specific violent crimes.

Six assessment reports encouraged prosecutors' offices to employ creative strategies for staffing, hiring, and retaining staff and for using existing staff on supporting roles for trial attorneys in understaffed prosecutors' offices.

RECOMMENDATION: *Examine Violent Crime Unit (VCU) investigator staffing in comparison with other prosecution offices.*

The [prosecutor's office] employs six investigators in an office of more than 170 employees. Only two of these investigators are currently assigned to the VCU. Consequently, these investigators are limited to providing witness location services for trials that are immediately pending. Additionally, investigators currently rely solely on commercially available databases.

Investigator staffing models vary across the spectrum of district attorney offices. The District Attorney of New York employs investigators permanently assigned from the New York Police Department (NYPD) who retain access to all of its databases and intelligence during their assignment. Many prosecutor offices employ sheriff's deputies or peace officers commissioned as law enforcement officers with access to the databases managed by the law enforcement entities, including often very productive jail databases. Like many prosecutor offices, the [district attorney's office] hires retired law enforcement officers as investigators. Unlike the [district attorney's office], however, the retired law enforcement officer may be granted continuing access to the report management system of their former law enforcement agencies. In all these circumstances, the investigator's role, while also performing a witness location function, is more broadly defined than in the [district attorney's office] currently. Talented investigative support provides expertise that assists in closing the gap between probable cause and beyond a reasonable doubt while also reducing the burdens of trial prosecutors.

RECOMMENDATION: Hire part-time prosecutors who can cover many routine court appearances and be “floaters”—taking this burden from senior members of the [district attorney's office].

RECOMMENDATION: Hire retired prosecutors to help with the most serious trials and mentor younger attorneys. This will free up time for all staff so they can attend to their many cases.

RECOMMENDATION: *Create training for clerical staff related to trial preparation support.*

To work more effectively with the Deputy District Attorneys (DDAs) on witness communication and body-worn camera (BWC) video review, clerical staff need to be trained. Each unit should examine its workflow needs and identify tasks that require additional support. Once the needs are identified, training should be developed to show staff which tasks they are responsible for, why each task is important to the case, and how to accomplish each task. All clerical staff should receive global training concerning each unit's workflow and all stages of case prosecution, from intake to trial. Thereafter, legal secretaries and paralegals should receive training on witness coordination and trial support tasks, which will help ease some of the burden on the attorneys and more fully engage staff with the overall mission of the office.

RECOMMENDATION: *[Hire] more staff.*

Although this recommendation is limited by available resources for [the district attorney's office], it is worth noting again that the caseloads for prosecutors handling violent crimes, especially homicides, are untenably high. The Office needs additional prosecutors and non-legal staff to ensure that these cases are handled thoroughly.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue efforts to attract and retain prosecutors by using salary savings created by understaffing to create short-term "backlog bonuses" or "staffing shortage stipends" to add to the salary of attorneys whose caseloads or workloads are increased because of staffing shortages. Such a bonus or stipend would end when the staffing levels consume the leftover salary savings.

RECOMMENDATION: *Attend recruitment efforts at law schools and undergraduate college job fairs.*

Explore the possibility of using salary savings from staffing shortages for signing bonuses, recruitment events, or bar exam fees for students who sign a commitment to work for the [district attorney's office] for a defined period.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue ongoing efforts to increase the number of prosecutors and staff—allowing for better case preparation, improved outcomes, and enhanced staff morale—while using salary savings to create backlog bonuses; host internal training sessions on focused topics; and increase the use of trial support individuals to prepare files for trial.

Three assessment reports recommended considerations for the organizational placement of specific units within prosecutors' offices as well as modifications to prosecution models.

RECOMMENDATION: *Establish a clear pathway for the development of the Crime Strategies Unit (CSU).*

The CSU's role should be focused primarily on intelligence collection and analytical case support. The [prosecutor's office] should consider the organizational placement of the CSU so that it is closely aligned to provide intelligence support for trial attorneys within the Violent Crime Unit (VCU).

RECOMMENDATION: *[The district attorney's office] is commended for taking the difficult step of moving to a vertical prosecution system. Though many aspects of a vertical prosecution model are already in place, going to a fully vertical system will be a significant change for an office that has followed the existing model for decades.*

Vertical prosecution—in which a single prosecutor handles a case for most of its pendency—offers multiple advantages in achieving just outcomes, addressing the needs of victims and witnesses, and maintaining attorney morale. [The district attorney's office] has fully adopted this model and will be implementing it in the months to come. Improved tracking of cases and management training will be essential to the success of this new model.

RECOMMENDATION: *Reorganize and reprioritize Victim Assistance Coordinators (VACs) to focus on supporting the VCU.*

Organizations with limited VAC resources can be more effective when VACs are organized into teams that implement best-practice strategies together. [The prosecutor's office] VACs currently function as individual contributors and report to the Chief of Operations, who also supervises all paralegals and administrative staff. There are national models that can transform the VACs into a team that works together on improving victim, survivor, witness, and trial support.

INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION

Procedures and policies and case management were mentioned most frequently under the Investigation and Prosecution theme. This indicates that sound policies and case management strategies are critical for the successful prosecution of violent crimes. Specifically, several recommendations focused on improving interactions with witnesses, including policy adjustments to increase witness participation and cooperation.

Six assessment reports offered recommendations to develop or modify procedures intended to improve witness cooperation at trial.

RECOMMENDATION: *Develop written victim and witness anti-intimidation protocols.*

Consistent, coordinated contact with victims and witnesses throughout the criminal justice process is critical. At each encounter with a victim or witness, from the application for a Protection from Abuse (PFA) order through appeal, ensure that the following steps are taken:

- Contact information is updated.
- Preferred means of communication (text, email, social media message functions, or telephone) is verified.
- An assessment of medical/social service needs is conducted and referrals are made as applicable.
- Safe use of social media is reviewed.
- The individual's safety plan is confirmed.

A best practice is to ensure that all victim and witness information is located in one place (e.g., a case management system) that is accessible to the victim service officers (VSOs), prosecutors, and investigators. In addition, the case management system can be flagged for high-risk victims and witnesses. The investigators are integral to the protection of victims and witnesses. A proactive approach is recommended when the district attorney's office suspects intimidation. The team should educate the victim or witness to keep threatening texts, voicemails, and emails, and provide them to the investigators. When indicated, the investigators should review jail calls, visitor logs, and social media posts. In severe cases, the investigators can obtain information from informants or through surveillance. The prosecutor's role in addressing victim and witness intimidation is critical. "Early charging of intimidation crimes where there is probable cause to do so enhances the ability of the State to secure an appropriate bail amount with appropriate conditions, and helps to keep the focus on the issue of intimidation throughout the trial proceedings."

In compliance with [the state's] discovery statutes, the prosecutor should consider where redaction of documents is appropriate. The prosecutor can also consider seeking a protective order so that the defense attorney can show their client the discovery, but the defendant cannot copy the documents. Trials are often the flashpoint for intimidation. The addition of the [waiting room in the courthouse] adds a safe waiting room for victims and witnesses, which is a critical environmental design enhancement. The written protocols can include potential motions to close the courtroom in whole or in part, to prevent mobile phones in the courtroom, and to admit the testimony of a witness who fears testifying.

RECOMMENDATION: *Provide greater victim, survivor, and witness safety planning and support.*

No state has developed a witness protection program that duplicates the features of the federal witness protection program, which provides for new identities, careers, and permanent relocations. Yet several states, including Massachusetts, Colorado, and Louisiana, have enacted legislation and programs to support witness safety and witness cooperation. These programs rely primarily on relocation as a strategy to address anticipated retaliation and are relatively affordable. For example, Colorado reports spending less than $50,000 per year on witness protection, and the city of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, spends less than $10,000 annually. Additionally, prosecutor offices can enter into partnership agreements with each other to provide reciprocal support.

RECOMMENDATION: *Establish a trial teams victim/witness coordinator to initiate contact with witnesses within 48 hours of the [district attorney's office] receiving referrals using phone, text, email, social media, or mail.*

Either repurpose existing staff or retain additional staff member(s) to act as a "call center" to initiate contact with witnesses or to request any missing contact information from the referring agency, then initiate contact within 48 hours of referral.

RECOMMENDATION: *Require the victim/witness coordinator to assist trial teams in maintaining regular, electronic contact with witnesses at the direction of the trial attorneys.*

The person in this role would function like a call center, using phone calls, form letters, form texts, and form emails to generate contact. Those that bounce back would be sent to investigators for immediate follow-up.

RECOMMENDATION: Establish expectations that associated personnel will initiate and maintain contact with victims and witnesses for consistency among the trial sections, including written standard policies and guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION: Require on-duty attorney and head of the homicide screening section to interview essential witnesses prior to billing decisions—facilitating earlier contact with the witnesses, timely requests for follow-up work from detectives, and quicker identification of witnesses or victims who are at risk.

RECOMMENDATION: *Develop automated e-notification of victims and witnesses within or in partnership with the [district attorney's office] case management system (CMS) to notify victims and witnesses of upcoming court dates, if possible, or establish a separate electronic communications platform.*

Within this system, the [district attorney's office] should establish a system of obtaining cell phone numbers, social media accounts, email addresses, and emergency contact information at the earliest possible interaction with victims and witnesses with the aid of law enforcement partners.

RECOMMENDATION: *Have investigative staff use an early-warning system to identify witnesses and/or victims who may become uncooperative.*

Experienced investigative staff who know the community and have the time to identify, locate, and continuously connect with witnesses can be key to increasing an individual's willingness to assist and prevent witness/victim intimidation. Early contact increases the likelihood of cooperation down the line.

RECOMMENDATION: Educate the public by developing outreach with community groups and community leaders on the importance of victim and witness participation—including resources available to assist with counseling, victim rights, and protection if needed.

RECOMMENDATION: Increase victim and witness participation, cooperation, and support related to violent crime cases by increasing the initial outreach to witnesses, developing coordinated and ongoing communication with witnesses and victims, and working with law enforcement to educate witnesses and victims on their role in the criminal justice system.

RECOMMENDATION: *Use victim advocates to assist with witness coordination.*

Given the direct interaction and close relationship with victims and some witnesses, it makes sense to have victim advocates help with trial coordination and communication with witnesses and victims.

RECOMMENDATION: *The violent crime that is plaguing [the county] cannot be effectively addressed without the cooperation of victims and witnesses. The issues are complex and difficult. Further study of how to enhance the [the district attorney's office] approach to this issue can lead to significant benefits for the residents of [the] county.*

[The district attorney's office] should study and assess a witness's journey through the criminal justice system, from first speaking with the police through trial and after. A wide array of issues should be addressed, including community outreach to encourage witness cooperation, identification of available social services, improvement of [the CMS's] tracking of victims and witnesses, security in the courthouse and courtroom, how and when to obtain protective orders associated with discovery, safety planning and safety training for witnesses and victims, and researching relocation options. [The district attorney's office] staff, legal and nonlegal, should receive training about available approaches to assist witnesses and victims.

Four reports recommended improvements to prosecutors' CMS to streamline workloads and improve case outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION: *Expand the [district attorney's office's] ability to manage workloads by acquiring a CMS that includes automation of motions, document generation, communication with witnesses and victims, and integrated case files.*

The CMS should enable the office to convert from a paper-based file system to an electronic file system. It should also have the capacity to consolidate information and intelligence on individuals and track information on victims.

RECOMMENDATION: As a part of the call center, the [district attorney's office] should also develop an "early warning" system within the CMS for letters or emails that are returned, unanswered, or met with rejection as the first sign of lack of cooperation that is sent to investigators for analysis and action.

RECOMMENDATION: *Coordinate the court's and [district attorney's office's] CMSs.*

Though computer upgrades can be trying, they also create opportunities. A detailed analysis should be undertaken on how the two systems can exchange data, how data should be collected, and how the accuracy of the data should be verified.

RECOMMENDATION: *Designate a project manager for the new CMS project.*

The project manager can be from [the district attorney's office] or on loan from the state. Also, [the district attorney's office] could enter into a short-term contract for project management services to ensure that the full functionality of the new CMS is implemented with fidelity and the entire staff is trained. The success of new technology implementation is enhanced when a project manager assumes responsibility for implementation, training for all users, and continuous improvement.

RECOMMENDATION: Ensure that staff enter active case information into the new CMS quickly and accurately.

RECOMMENDATION: Prioritize the implementation of the document component of the new CMS to ensure that documents and digital evidence are obtained, stored, and transmitted securely.

RECOMMENDATION: Use the data analytics and report functions of the new CMS to assist with management decisions.

RECOMMENDATION: *Collaborate with local law enforcement agencies to ensure the full integration of Evidence.com with the new CMS.*

During the implementation process, ensure that case files, including digital evidence, are organized and transmitted securely using a uniform format.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology emerged as another common theme in the prosecution assessment reports. Many recommendations involved suggestions for technology, including establishing electronic information sharing between police and prosecutors. They also recommended that prosecutors engage in a process by which they identify gaps in technology systems through working groups. These recommendations aim to increase efficiency and improve case dispositions.

Five reports offered recommendations to establish or enhance electronic information sharing between police departments and prosecutors' offices.

RECOMMENDATION: *The [district attorney's office] and [police department] should work together to implement software that allows electronic files from the records management system (RMS) to be transferred directly into JustWare [prosecutor's CMS].*

The goal is a seamless process that permits detectives to send prosecutors the state report and all its underlying documents with a few keystrokes. Although [the district attorney's office] will eventually want to have the original documents for trial (if necessary), cases can move through many stages of the pretrial process by electronic means. Special software may be needed to upgrade the JustWare system to accommodate these needs.

RECOMMENDATION: State reports should be prepared electronically by [the police department]. To the extent that [the police department] moves to a web-based version of RMS, the process will be easier, allowing officers and detectives simultaneous access to case files and facilitating the creation of calendaring and other case-tracking software. Uniformed officers of [the police department] already do their paperwork electronically on their smartphones. [The police department] has experience with electronic files, so it should be able to do the same for state reports.

RECOMMENDATION: [The district attorney's office] must move to electronic case processing and recordkeeping. [The district attorney's office] should be able to track the progress of a case from arrest to resolution and must have the ability to assess how long each phase of a case—most particularly grand jury—takes. The outmoded Grand Jury Book unfortunately stands as a symbol of an era in which "educated guesses" counted as case tracking and assessment.

RECOMMENDATION: *Establish a pathway to begin electronic data sharing with [the district attorney's office's] law enforcement partners.*

The [district attorney's office] largest partner, [the police department], represents 60 percent of the office workload and virtually 100 percent of its violent crime workload. Yet all referrals from [the police department] are still made in paper form with photos and video provided on Blu-ray discs. The process involves a huge amount of unnecessary manual labor that consumes [the district attorney's office] legal assistants' time with duplicate data entry, scanning reports, and copying media.

[The police department] has recently adopted an RMS that supports data sharing. The Springfield (Missouri) Police Department and the Alaska Department of Public Safety are currently using the same

system with success. Both the [district attorney's office] CMS and the [police department] RMS appear to have the technical capacity to integrate.

RECOMMENDATION: *Establish a pathway to begin electronically sharing data with law enforcement partners.*

Create an interagency work group to explore the ability to systematically share data and information across agencies.

RECOMMENDATION: *The [Office of the State's Attorney] and [police department] need to create an interagency working group to explore the ability to share data across agencies.*

It is imperative that Crime Strategies Unit (CSU) analysts redirect their expertise away from the re-creation and re-analysis of [police department] crime data. As a result, CSU analysts need ready access to crime information and data that are currently available through the Data Driven Strategies Division's (DDSD) dashboard application.

RECOMMENDATION: *Expand the [district attorney's office's] ability to manage workloads by acquiring a CMS that includes automation of motions, document generation, communication with witnesses and victims, and integrated case files.*

The CMS should enable the office to convert from a paper-based file system to an electronic file system. It should also have the capacity to consolidate information and intelligence on individuals and track information on victims.

Two assessment reports recommended that prosecutors appoint an internal IT leader to identify technological gaps and facilitate the integration of data systems with partner agencies.

RECOMMENDATION: *Identify and develop an internal IT leader.*

This IT leader needs to be responsible for evaluating the current case management system, identifying IT gaps, and developing strategies to close these gaps.

RECOMMENDATION: *Identify and develop an internal technology leader responsible for identifying technology gaps, developing strategies to close the gaps, and integrating data systems with partnering agencies.*

Technology leaders must constantly inform their mission by asking: What are the next steps the office must take to improve its technology?

CONCLUSION

The PSP evaluation team conducted an analysis of all available prosecution assessment reports as of September 2025. This analysis uncovered the three most prevalent themes across all prosecution assessments. Key findings include the need for interagency training to increase collaboration and positive outcomes for violent crime cases. Recommendations emphasized prosecutor-led training for police detectives to improve the quality of cases submitted for prosecution. Additionally, SMEs encouraged agencies to find creative ways to fill staffing vacancies and retain existing staff. The SMEs identified a critical need for prosecutors to develop policies and procedures intended to increase witness cooperation and participation in trials. Finally, the SMEs offered recommendations around technology capabilities, including data sharing and case management practices in district attorney's offices. The findings aim to guide PSP sites in achieving successful prosecutions, ultimately enhancing their capacity to reduce serious violent crime.

These findings will help us execute prosecution assessments and provide TTA to PSP sites. The findings in this report suggest potential training and workshop topics, as well as ideas for facilitated discussions on common challenges in PSP sites. The findings also identify potential priorities for program-wide PSP strategy development.

APPENDIX A: APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The PSP evaluation team reviewed all PSP assessment reports covering a range of topics to identify common themes, such as records management, data sharing, and peer agencies (see Appendix B for a full list with definitions). We also included themes that we did not find in the reviewed assessment reports but that we deemed relevant to PSP (and considered likely to be present in other PSP assessment reports) based on our background knowledge of PSP processes and TTA. Through this process, we identified 84 individual themes that correspond to assessment recommendations. We organized these themes into 10 categories (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Assessment theme categories



The PSP evaluation team used the qualitative analysis software NVivo to code the recommendations from the detective function assessment reports against the 94 themes (both the 84 individual themes and the overarching theme categories) at the sentence level or higher, and we coded the recommendations to multiple themes when appropriate (Figure 4). The PSP evaluation team used the same themes for each topical assessment type; therefore, not all themes were present in every assessment.

Figure 4. Recommendation coding process



Each appearance of a coded sentence or group of sentences in the assessment reports created a "reference." We could then rank the most common of the 84 themes by identifying those that had the greatest number of references.

APPENDIX B: THEME DEFINITIONS

Table 4. Theme definitions

Theme	Definition
Community stakeholders	Interacting with community members and groups
External communication	Establishing formal communication with stakeholders and the community
Local media	Interacting with local media
New meeting	Creating a meeting with community partners
New partnerships	Creating partnerships that did not previously exist with community members or organizations
Outreach	Engaging with the community to share information and promote relationships
Policy and procedure	Policy and procedure related to community engagement and external information sharing
Procedural justice	Maintaining internal and external procedural justice
Social media	The use of social media
Strengthen partnerships	Improving and strengthening relationships between the police agency and its community
Trust	Increasing citizen and community trust in the police agency
Crime prevention	Proactively reducing the incidence of crimes
Drug crime prevention	Proactively reducing the incidence of crimes related to drugs and the drug market
Gang crime prevention	Proactively reducing the incidence of gang-related crimes
Gun violence prevention	Proactively reducing the incidence of gun-related crimes
Policing strategies	Structured approaches or methods used by law enforcement to prevent crime, maintain public order, and build community trust
Treatment and social services	Working with local social service providers to deliver assistance to community members
Youth	Working to address youth-related community issues
Data and analysis	Collecting and using metrics and information
CompStat	Recommendations related to the CompStat process and/or data and accountability
Crime mapping	Documenting and analyzing the geographical representation of crimes
Data dissemination	Methods to ensure data are sent to or consistently available to officers or agency partners
Evaluation and research	Assessing a departmental program
Data sharing	Agreements or methods to view or transfer data between organizations
Interoperability	The ability to access data between organizations or pieces of equipment
More analysis	The addition of specific forms of analysis to existing practices
New metrics	Additional information or data to collect that is not currently being collected or documented
Offender-based strategy	Analysis strategies that focus on the individual or individuals committing a disproportionate number of offenses
Processes and procedures	Analysis practices in a department
Report automation	Creating reports automatically using software rather than analytical personnel
Social network analysis	Analysis strategies that map or explore connections between offenders
Funding	Gathering and using financial resources
Budget	Adding additional line items to the budget; finding money in the budget
Cost benefit analysis	Measuring the costs and benefits of a proposed technology to an agency
Diverse funding sources	Soliciting funding from a variety of sources
Federal funding and grants	Seeking funding and grants from federal organizations
Grant writing process and staff	An agency's grant writing procedures and the staff involved in writing and managing grants
Local funding	Soliciting funding from local sources
More funding	Pursuing and using additional funding beyond an agency's current level
Private and foundation funding	Soliciting funding from private sources, including foundations
Research partnerships	Partnerships with universities or colleges to conduct research
State funding	Soliciting funding from state sources

Theme	Definition
Governance and policy	Agency management, standards, processes, and procedures
Discipline	Disciplinary actions in the department
Leadership	The training, structure, and role of leadership
Morale	Officer morale and departmental cohesion
SOPs	Standard operating procedures or established departmental procedures
Transparency	Being open, honest, and clear about actions, decisions, and processes
Use of force	Use of force policies, procedures, or practices
Wellness	Officer safety and physical and mental health
Interagency partnerships	Creating, strengthening, and sustaining relationships with other agencies
Criminal justice system	Developing partnerships among organizations across the justice system
Federal partnerships	Developing or strengthening partnerships with regional federal partners
Local partnerships	Developing or strengthening partnerships with local partners
New partnerships	Creating partnerships that did not previously exist
Peer agencies	Learning from other law enforcement (peer) agencies
State partnerships	Developing or strengthening partnerships with state partner organizations
Strengthen partnerships	Further developing existing partnerships
Investigations	Conducting and managing investigations, including crime-specific approaches to investigations
Case management	Managing the investigations process and associated materials
Cold cases	Old and challenging cases
Evidence	Evidence practices in investigations
Feedback	Information or responses about performance, actions, or work to guide improvement or reinforce positive behavior
Gangs	Gang-related crimes and activities
Homicide	Investigations of homicides
Procedures and policies	Investigation practices and standards
Social media	Using social media in investigations
Witnesses	Managing witnesses in investigations
Personnel	Staffing management and officer professional development
Civilianization	Assigning non-sworn (civilian) personnel to perform tasks that do not require the authority or training of a sworn police officer
Cross-unit collaboration	Collaboration among groups in a department
Culture	Collective values, norms, attitudes, and behaviors that exist within an agency, shaping how employees interact and make decisions
Departmental organization	Department units, hierarchy, and organizational relationships
Internal communication	Communication within the department
Organizational awareness	Ability of individuals within an agency to understand what is happening across the organization—such as ongoing initiatives, priorities, decisions, challenges, and internal dynamics. It means being informed about who is doing what, why it's being done, and how different teams and functions connect and impact each other.
Performance review	Formal assessment in which an individual's work performance is evaluated
Schedules and shifts	Departmental scheduling and shift practices
Staffing	The need to create and fill a specific position or unit; promotions
Training	Training for department personnel
Planning	Developing and institutionalizing agency changes
Strategic planning	Creating a plan of direction and action for the department
Sustainability	Institutionalizing technology and procedural changes
Working group	Small, focused team of individuals brought together to accomplish a specific goal or address a particular issue

Theme	Definition
Technology	Agency use of technology, including new equipment and procedural changes
Insufficient equipment	The need for additional equipment or replacement or repair of existing equipment
Integration	Combining different systems, software, or technologies so they work together seamlessly
Interoperability	The ability to access or use technology systems between organizations or pieces of equipment
IT support needed	Services or technology changes needed by the agency from the responsible IT organization
Privacy	Maintaining individual privacy as new technology and systems are introduced
Records management	RMS (records management systems) and the agency's ability to collect and store information
Software and hardware	Software or hardware technology needed by the agency
Technology suggestion	Specific new technology or technology change recommended to be implemented
Training needed	Technology training needed or recommended
User interface	The specific dashboard or form of presentation through which end-users (usually officers) engage with a software

APPENDIX C: THEMES CODED BY EVALUATION TEAM

Table 5. Themes coded by category and number

Theme	Total number of times theme was coded across all PSP assessments
Community stakeholders	177
External communication	24
Local media	18
New meeting	3
New partnerships	7
Outreach	36
Policy and procedure	13
Procedural justice	2
Social media	43
Strengthen partnerships	29
Trust	10
Crime prevention	35
Drug crime prevention	2
Gang crime prevention	2
Gun violence prevention	6
Policing strategies	16
Treatment and social services	2
Youth	11
Data and analysis	122
CompStat	9
Crime mapping	10
Data dissemination	5
Evaluation and research	14
Data sharing	16
Interoperability	9
More analysis	42
New metrics	27
Offender-based strategy	3
Processes and procedures	9
Report automation	6
Social network analysis	5
Funding	210
Budget	18
Cost benefit analysis	1
Diverse funding sources	17
Federal funding and grants	10
Grant writing process and staff	54
Local funding	6
More funding	22
Private and foundation funding	34
Research partnerships	25
State funding	13
Governance and policy	35
Discipline	0
Leadership	3

Theme	Total number of times theme was coded across all PSP assessments
Morale	1
SOPs	13
Transparency	1
Use of force	0
Wellness	8
Interagency partnerships	137
Criminal justice system	56
Federal partnerships	10
Local partnerships	61
New partnerships	14
Peer agencies	13
State partnerships	7
Strengthen partnerships	12
Investigations	425
Case management	81
Cold cases	0
Evidence	18
Feedback	2
Gangs	3
Homicide	23
Procedures and policies	283
Social media	0
Witnesses	38
Personnel	435
Civilianization	13
Cross-unit collaboration	32
Culture	3
Departmental organization	83
Internal communication	45
Organizational awareness	5
Performance review	19
Schedules and shifts	18
Staffing	52
Training	169
Planning	91
Strategic planning	56
Sustainability	1
Working group	27
Technology	106
Insufficient equipment	2
Integration	5
Interoperability	17
IT support needed	7
Privacy	0
Records management	25
Software and hardware	30
Technology suggestion	40
Training needed	6
User interface	3



PUBLIC SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

Building Safer Communities

CNA

ANALYSIS & SOLUTIONS

cna.org

This project was supported by Grant No. 15PBJA-22-GK-03705-JAGP awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART). Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. *All rights reserved. Copyright 2025.*