



Millions in federal funds slashed for violence prevention in Massachusetts

By Drew Karedes, Boston 25 News

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CHELSEA, Mass. — The U.S. Department of Justice is slashing millions of dollars in grants to Massachusetts organizations that work to decrease violence and support victims.

Termination letters sent out to non-profits this week offered a 30-day window to appeal.

Hundreds of grants are being cancelled nationwide because they reportedly do not align with the Trump administration's priorities.

Organizations that received those notifications from the federal government are now grappling with the impact of major funding losses.

“It’s a big blow. We believe our mission is perfectly aligned with the goals of the administration,” said Dwight Robson, Executive Vice President of Operations at Chelsea-based Roca.

The DOJ rescinded \$6 million in federal grants to Roca.

Robson said the three termination letters he received this week directly impact his non-profit’s work in Boston, Hartford, and Baltimore.

Law enforcement in those cities has credited Roca with helping to decrease homicide rates.

“We’re working hard to consider how we might close this gap. It’s enormous,” he said. “Community violence intervention works. The proof is in the individual stories of transformation we see every day.”

Other non-profits in Massachusetts that also work to curb crime rates, prevent convicted felons from ending up back in prison, and combat gang violence are processing the immediate cuts as well.

“The message we got is this does not align with the agency’s goals, yet I would firmly believe that the Department of Justice is about public safety,” said Gregg Croteau, CEO of Lowell-based UTEC.

Greg Croteau’s organization helps young adults who have been involved in criminal activity get on the right track.

The termination letters UTEC received strip \$2 million in federal grants.

“This is funding specifically under their program called community violence intervention that works in partnership with community-based organizations, law enforcement, and corrections,” explained Croteau. “It provides everything from mental health services to childcare support.”

Ruth Zakarian, CEO of the Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence, sent the following statement to Boston 25 News:

“Community Violence Intervention programs are a critical to keeping our communities safe from gun violence. Any disruption in funding is a devastating blow to these programs and the communities they serve. If our government is truly committed to the work of stopping gun violence and keeping our communities safe, they will ensure that CVI programs here in Massachusetts and across the country receive the resources they need.”

Boston 25 News reached out to the Department of Justice for comment and has not yet heard back.