

# DOJ pulls back anti-gun violence funding

By Christian M. Wade | Statehouse Reporter Apr 26, 2025

BOSTON — Hundreds of millions of dollars in federal grants to help Massachusetts and other states prevent gun violence, curb opioid addiction and support victims of violent crimes have been pulled back by the Trump administration, drawing outrage and threats of litigation from groups that depend on the funding.

The U.S. Department of Justice announced Tuesday that it has canceled 365 federal grants nationwide that funded a range of programs, saying the money was rescinded because it “no longer effectuates department priorities.”

“This Department of Justice is focused on prosecuting criminals, getting illegal drugs off of the streets, and protecting American institutions from toxic DEI and sanctuary city policies,” the agency said in a statement. “Discretionary funds that are no longer aligned with the administration’s priorities are subject to review and reallocation.”

Exactly how much money is being pulled back wasn’t made clear. The Office of Justice Programs, which awards the grants, distributed \$4.4 billion in fiscal year 2023, according to the Justice Department’s website. In the current fiscal year, the agency has so far distributed \$477 million in grants, the agency said.

The pullback of grant money from the DOJ includes \$2 million in Community Violence Intervention grants previously awarded to UTEC, a Lowell-based nonprofit that focused on community violence prevention and intervention in the Merrimack Valley region.

UTEC CEO Gregg Croteau called the DOJ’s funding cuts “deeply disappointing,” and said it effectively terminates two grant contracts awarded in 2021 and 2023 for gun violence prevention and community violence intervention services, as well as grants it distributes to local police departments.

“This negatively impacts our communities in a time where we are working so intentionally to combat the harms that affect our young people,” he said in a statement. “These cuts directly affect communities like ours across the country that are working to prevent violence and who are working to support young people most at risk.”

Croteau said programs UTEC funded with the DOJ grants are “highly effective” and that pulling the funding back will impact community based organizations, law enforcement and correctional facilities.

“Cutting off funding to programs like these, midway through grant cycles, with no warning, undermines trust, stability, and progress,” he said.

“We must continue to support the community-rooted solutions that have been proven effective.”

The Boston-based Community Resources for Justice lost nearly \$37 million, some of which supported crime data analysis and other services to local governments, according to government grant data, the group reported.

The National Center for Victims of Crimes, which directs victims to support services, lost \$2 million in funding for a website it operates, according to the group.

Attorney General Pam Bondi defended the cuts Wednesday as the elimination of millions of dollars in “wasteful” spending.

The Washington Post cited a memo from Bondi, where she described herself as a “lifelong advocate for victims of crimes against women,” and said she “will continue to ensure that services for victims are not impacted” by the cost-cutting and realignment of the agency’s priorities.

Congressional Democrats, including Massachusetts Reps. Seth Moulton, Jim McGovern and Ayanna Pressley, are calling on Bondi to reconsider a previous round of DOJ cuts to the Office of Violence Against Women, announced in February, that targeted funding for programs providing support to victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse.

In a letter to the AG on Thursday, the lawmakers “respectfully” urged the agency “to clarify the status of these grants as soon as possible and take swift action to ensure funding remains available to support survivors and the organizations that serve them.”

“The sudden withdrawal of these funding opportunities threatens to disrupt essential services, jeopardize the stability of victim assistance programs, and undermine the bipartisan commitment to combating these forms of violence,” they wrote.