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## Franklin County Blueprint for Safety

### I. Background

The Blueprint for Safety domestic violence response model, safety audit and implementation guide were developed in Saint Paul, Minnesota by the City of Saint Paul, Praxis International and the Saint Paul Domestic Abuse Intervention Project. The Blueprint for Safety guide is recognized as the first comprehensive, inter-agency “how to” resource for criminal justice practitioners working together to effectively process domestic violence cases. Since its creation, Blueprint for Safety models have been adopted and implemented in jurisdictions across the country, including but not limited to:

- Duluth, Minnesota
- Kansas City, Missouri
- Madison County, Kentucky
- Marin County, California
- New Orleans, Louisiana
- Shelby County/Memphis Tennessee

Blueprint for Safety models apply a collective impact approach to domestic violence. They build off local successes by linking best practice communication protocols, risk assessments and evidence collection tactics occurring at each justice phase. Through the Blueprint process, justice and victim advocacy practitioners work collaboratively to review and update current response protocols/practices and develop standard methods for proactive data sharing. The result is a single, written DV response policy with clear protocols outlining each practitioner’s role, responsibilities, specific actions, and documentation duties. Successful implementation of protocols is supported through ongoing training, reference resources and active communication between and across practitioners.

Blueprint for Safety is grounded in the experiences of victims of violence and an understanding of how the intervention of the criminal justice system affects their lives. This victim-centered approach supports authorities’ ability to intervene quickly when there are new acts of violence, intimidation or coercion; and shifts the burden of holding the offender accountable for violence or abuse from the victim to the system.

Based on 30 years of work and research, outcomes of the Blueprint for Safety include:

- Keeping more women and children in their own home
- Increased victim safety and perpetrator accountability
- Reduced domestic abuse-related homicides
- Reduced level of domestic abuse incidents. For example, St. Paul experienced a reduction of domestic abuse emergency calls from 11,000 to 5,000 between 2009 and 2016

On behalf of the Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board, the Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs (OJPP) will partner with Praxis International and the Center for Family Safety and Healing to guide Franklin County Justice agencies through the Blueprint system safety audit and subsequent writing of unified DV response policy and procedure manual.

The bulk of the project workload will be done by OJPP, contract staff from the Columbus City Attorney’s Office hired by OJPP, and the Praxis consultant with active participation and input from justice partners. OJPP will facilitate Blueprint for Safety orientation; coordinate meeting schedules; lead system safety audit activities; synthesize learnings from audit activities and share them with the inter-agency team;



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provide suggestions on policy/protocol modifications to increase safety, promote positive justice outcomes and improve system efficiency; draft unified DV response based on input from project partners; guide partners through training and implementation phases; and lead ongoing evaluation efforts through annual audits done in collaboration with justice partners.

Justice partners will provide case statistics/data and existing DV response/case processing SOPs as well as participate in mapping exercises, observations, case reviews and interviews. As stated above, findings from these activities will be synthesized by OJPP and Praxis then vetted with the group and inform revisions to existing policies and practices that will be written into the Franklin County Blueprint for Safety. The resulting policy will be based in research and reflect the collective input, knowledge and expertise of justice and victim advocacy professionals.

## **II. Roles and responsibilities agreed to by participating agencies**

A. The following agencies are partners to this MOU:

1. COLUMBUS DIVISION OF POLICE - EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER (E.C.C.) is the local emergency communications center. It receives calls and dispatches for police, fire, and emergency medical services.
2. COLUMBUS DIVISION OF POLICE has 1,800 sworn officers and 300 civilian staff. The Maryland Lethality Assessment Program is integrated into standard response protocol for all domestic violence runs. The division also supports a Domestic Violence Unit within their Special Victim Bureau. Ten domestic violence detectives are dedicated to this unit.
3. COLUMBUS CITY ATTORNEY- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND STALKING UNIT facilitates prosecution and provides education, support, counseling, crisis intervention and overall assistance to victims of domestic violence and stalking. The unit is comprised of one Director, four specially trained Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys and fifteen Victim Advocates. Unit staff members work in tandem with liaisons from CHOICES for Victims of Domestic Violence, Southeast Mental Health Services, Legal Aid, Franklin County Job and Family Services and Franklin County Children's Services to provide comprehensive, wraparound support for victims of domestic violence. In 2019, 4,129 misdemeanor domestic violence cases were opened in the City Attorney's Office.
4. FRANKLIN COUNTY PROSECUTOR- SPECIAL VICTIMS AND WITNESS ASSISTANCE UNIT prosecutes felony domestic violence crimes through its Special Victims Unit. The Special Victims Unit is comprised of one Director and six Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys who handle specialized cases from indictment to conviction. They prosecute cases involving sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking and child abuse. The Witness Assistance Unit employs thirteen victim advocates who provide courtroom accompaniment, resource referrals and assistance in filing protection orders. In 2019, the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office indicted 347 domestic violence related cases.
5. FRANKLIN COUNTY SHERIFF OFFICE is responsible for jail operations, serving civil protection orders and suspending/revoking CCW licenses for prohibited individuals. The office





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also employ a domestic violence detective who works closely with Columbus Division of Police detectives and City Attorney domestic violence prosecutors to review misdemeanor DV cases for potential felony enhancement. The Sheriff's Administrative, Patrol, Corrections and the Criminal Investigation Bureaus will be involved in the Blueprint for Safety Initiative.

6. FRANKLIN COUNTY MUNICIPAL COURT- OFFICE OF PRETRIAL AND PROBATION SERVICES conducts presentence investigations (PSI) or presentence reports (PSR) and supervises defendants on probation or parole post-conviction. Pretrial and Probation Services utilizes validated risk assessment tools to identify individuals at high risk for repeat violence not just for flight risks. Assessment information is used to develop individualized case plans. Probation conditions outlined in plans are enforced according to swift, certain and fair principals that promote safety and encourage personal development and rehabilitation. In 2017 the unit created Strategic Enforcement Response Team (SERT) Probation Program focusing attention on high-risk domestic violence offenders through enhanced community supervision.

7. **CENTER FOR FAMILY SAFETY AND HEALING (required victim service provider partner)** addresses all aspects of family violence, including child abuse and neglect, teen dating abuse, domestic violence and elder abuse. From its inception, the center took a multi-disciplinary approach to addressing the complicated issue of family violence. The center works in partnership with law enforcement, child protective services, prosecution and a variety of community resources to ensure victims have access a wide range of supports. The center also focuses on expanding public awareness for family violence through education, advocacy and ongoing research.

B. Agencies signing this MOU agree to work with other participating agencies to:

1. Engage in system mapping exercise and review of protocols and documented practices governing each practitioner who has a significant role in processing domestic violence cases.

2. Participate in an assessment of current agency practice compared to the Blueprint template. Assessment process includes: interviews and observation of agency staff, reading of case files, review of current DV best practice. Agencies agree to make staff available for interviews and observations, and to have case files and other documents examined by team members under a negotiated confidentiality agreement.

3. Recommend modifications/updates to DV policies, procedures, and implementation processes to increase information sharing and promote a coordinated system response to DV crimes. Revised policies and procedure will be consistent with the six Blueprint Principles:

1. Adherence to an interagency approach
2. Attention to context and severity of the violence
3. Recognition of domestic violence as a patterned crime requiring continuing engagement
4. Providing swift and sure consequences



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- 5. Sending messages of help and accountability
  - 6. Reducing unintended consequences and disparity of impact
4. Actively engage community-based advocacy program in interagency policy and protocol review, development and Blueprint for Safety implementation process.

**III. Signing agencies agree to**

A. Actively participate in planning and coordination meetings.

B. Assign a lead person(s) to:

- 1. Work with the Blueprint team coordinator and participate in the development, assessment, implementation and monitoring phases i.e. attend monthly planning meetings, engage in system interviews, engage in case file review and observation activities.
- 2. Assist with and/or provide feedback on writing/updating policies and procedures
- 3. Oversee internal agency implementation of the agreed-upon changes to local policy, protocol and practice.

C. Work in partnership with OJPP to evaluate and monitor the Blueprint implementation process and seek a high rate of compliance with the policies, protocols, and procedures specific to their section of the Blueprint.

- 1. Adopt a monitoring protocol that will ensure a high rate of practitioner compliance to the community's Blueprint policies and protocols.

D. Commit to an ongoing process of working with other Blueprint agencies in the community to continually monitor effectiveness of the Blueprint and make modifications as needed.

**I have read and agree with this MOU:**

**Franklin County Commissioners:**

*Chief Michael Woods*

Signature of Authorized Representative:

**Michael Woods, Interim Chief of Police**

Print Name of Authorized Representative:

**City of Columbus- Division of Police**

Name of Agency:

Kevin L. Boyce, President  
Fr. Co. Board of Commissioners

*Erica C. Crawley*

~~XXXXXXXX~~, Commissioner  
Fr. Co. Board of Commissioners

**Erica C. Crawley**

*John O'Grady*

John O'Grady, Commissioner  
Fr. Co. Board of Commissioners

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

**G. GARY TYACK  
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY  
FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO**

BY *[Signature]*  
**ASSISTANT PROSECUTING ATTORNEY**

*8.3.21*

KENNETH COONTZ, JR  
Support Services Administrator

THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**  
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC SAFETY

June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Franklin County Board of Commissioners  
Office of Justice Policy and Programs  
Kevin Greenwood, Deputy Director  
373 S. High Street, 15th Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6320

Dear Deputy Director Greenwood,

On May 29, 2021, the Columbus Emergency Communications Center moved from the Division of Police to its own, separate Bureau within Public Safety.

As Administrator of the newly established Columbus Emergency Communications Bureau, I fully support my team's participation in Blueprint for Safety activities as outlined in the project MOU previously signed by Columbus Division of Police Chief Michael Woods.

We look forward to partnering with you on this important work.

Respectfully,



Kenneth A. Coontz Jr.  
Administrator  
Department of Public Safety  
Support Services







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**Approved as to form:**

G. Gary Tyack  
Prosecuting Attorney  
Franklin County, Ohio

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Franklin County**

**blueprint**  
*for safety*

**Project Partners**

**Lead- Franklin County Office of Justice Programs and Policy**

Authorized Rep: Kevin Greenwood, Deputy Director, Survivor Services,  
[Kevin.Greenwood@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:Kevin.Greenwood@franklincountyohio.gov)

***Staff assigned to project:***

Bridget DeCrane, Blueprint for Safety Project Director, [bldecrane@columbus.gov](mailto:bldecrane@columbus.gov)

**Columbus Division of Police**

Authorized Rep: Michael Woods, Interim Chief of Police, [MWoods@columbuspolice.org](mailto:MWoods@columbuspolice.org)

***Staff assigned to project:***

Timothy Becker, Deputy Chief Criminal Investigation Subdivision, [TBecker@columbuspolice.org](mailto:TBecker@columbuspolice.org)

Kelly Weiner, Commander Special Victims Bureau, [Kweiner@columbuspolice.org](mailto:Kweiner@columbuspolice.org)

Brain Traux, Lieutenant Family Crimes Section, [Btruax@columbuspolice.org](mailto:Btruax@columbuspolice.org)

Richard Ketcham, Sergeant Domestic Violence Unit, [RKetcham@columbuspolice.org](mailto:RKetcham@columbuspolice.org)

Michael Gray, Commander Patrol, [MGray@columbuspolice.org](mailto:MGray@columbuspolice.org)

Bob Meader, Commander Communications Bureau, [RMeader@columbuspolice.org](mailto:RMeader@columbuspolice.org)

Bob Little, 911 Emergency Communications Specialist, [ROLittle@columbuspolice.org](mailto:ROLittle@columbuspolice.org)

**Columbus City Attorney**



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Authorized Rep: Zach Klein, Columbus City Attorney, [ZMKlein@columbus.gov](mailto:ZMKlein@columbus.gov)

***Staff assigned to project:***

Mary Lynn Caswell, Director of the Domestic Violence and Stalking Unit, [MLCaswell@columbus.gov](mailto:MLCaswell@columbus.gov)

**Franklin County Pretrial and Probation Services**

Authorized Rep: Molly Gaunter, Chief Probation Office, [GaunterM@fcmcclerk.com](mailto:GaunterM@fcmcclerk.com)

***Staff assigned to project:***

Cassandra Munoz, Probation Officer Supervisor- Domestic Violence Unit, [MunozC@fcmcclerk.com](mailto:MunozC@fcmcclerk.com)

**Franklin County Prosecutor's Office**

Authorized Rep: G. Gary Tyack, Franklin County Prosecutor, [gtyack@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:gtyack@franklincountyohio.gov)

***Staff assigned to project:***

Kara Keating, Special Victims Prosecutor, [kkeating@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:kkeating@franklincountyohio.gov)

Jane McKenzie, Special Victims Advocate, [jmckenzie@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:jmckenzie@franklincountyohio.gov)

**Franklin County Sheriff's Office**

Authorized Rep: Dallas Baldwin, Franklin County Sheriff, [dlbaldwin@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:dlbaldwin@franklincountyohio.gov)

***Staff assigned to project:***

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James Gilbert, Chief of Patrol [jhgilber@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:jhgilber@franklincountyohio.gov)

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Penny Perry-Balonier Chief Deputy of Corrections, [plperry-balonier@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:plperry-balonier@franklincountyohio.gov)

David Conley, Chief Deputy of Administrative Services, [daconley@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:daconley@franklincountyohio.gov)

Christopher Wimbish, Sargent Civil Services Bureau, [cwimbis@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:cwimbis@franklincountyohio.gov)

Maggie Buechner, Records Manager, [mxbuechn@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:mxbuechn@franklincountyohio.gov)

**The Center for Family Safety and Healing**

Authorized Rep: Nancy Cunningham, Interim Director, [Nancy.Cunningham@familysafetyandhealing.org](mailto:Nancy.Cunningham@familysafetyandhealing.org)



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*Staff assigned to project:*

TBA