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MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON
ROAD TO RECOVERY PLAN
CITY OF CHICAGO

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MAYOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SAFETY AND THE CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNOUNCE \$6.4 MILLION EXPANSION OF THE EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL VICTIMS FUND

Program expansion to serve victims injured in gun violence incidents within 15 community areas, and provide citywide support for families of youth victims of homicide

CHICAGO — Mayor Brandon Johnson, in collaboration with the Mayor's Office of Community Safety and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), announced the expansion of the Emergency Supplemental Victims Fund (ESVF) program to ten (10) additional communities most impacted by violence with the goal of easing the financial burden and trauma inflicted on individuals and families directly impacted by gun violence. This expansion aligns with Mayor Johnson's *People's Plan for Community Safety*, a community-led initiative supporting individuals most acutely impacted by violence and addressing the root causes of violence through long-term, layered investments in key areas: education, economic opportunity, housing, health, community environment, community violence intervention and policing.

"I am proud to expand this impactful program and holistically support our residents who suffer from the trauma of gun violence," said **Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson**. "While we invest heavily in strategies that prevent violence from happening in the first place, we also want to make sure that those already impacted by violence get the support that they need. The ESVF program provides much-needed resources to promote healing in our communities and among the families that have been affected by violence, offering a lifeline that will lead us to a safer city. My administration continues to invest in our people and communities through the People's Plan for Community Safety to build a united and stronger Chicago."

As part of the expansion, Chicago residents who are victimized by gun violence or all-cause homicide in one of the city's 15 priority community areas may be eligible

for the ESVF program. Additionally, Chicago families of youth aged 24 or younger who fall victim to homicide anywhere in the City may be eligible for this program as well.

"The ESVF program embodies this administration's compassionate, comprehensive, and strategic approach to addressing community violence," said **Deputy Mayor of Community Safety Garien Gatewood**. "By offering critical support to the people and communities most adversely impacted by violence, we intend to heal our communities and address the effects of trauma. I look forward to continued collaboration with all community stakeholders to expand this program and others like it that promote safety in our city."

The ESVF program was originally piloted by the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) Community Safety Coordination Center (CSCC) in December of 2022 in five community areas and thus far it has approved the disbursement of financial assistance to nearly 400 victims and survivors of gun violence. Since 2021, the CSCC has worked with many City departments and sister agencies to develop a public health framework and implement a full-force-of-government approach to violence prevention.

"Gun violence is a public health issue, as its ripple effects reach the victim's family, loved ones, and throughout their communities," said **CDPH Commissioner Olusimbo 'Simbo' Ige, MD, MPH**. "ESVF was developed to alleviate the immediate impacts of gun violence, and we are excited to expand this program to better address the needs of communities at highest risk and increase equitable access to critical financial support."

Eligible applicants can receive up to **\$1,000** in financial assistance to support their **basic needs** as well as up to **\$1,000** for temporary relocation-related costs. Eligible Chicago families who lose a loved one to homicide can receive an additional **\$1,500** in financial assistance to support **funeral or burial costs**.

"This program showed me that there were people out there that were able to help me, and it really helped me get through a rough period," said **Kevin Edwards**, a participant receiving victim support from the Institute for Nonviolence after surviving a non-fatal gunshot wound from an incident in West Garfield Park last summer.

"Providing victims of gun violence with compensation immediately following a tragic incident is an important step in strengthening the support systems for victims and survivors in the City of Chicago. The ESVF program shows immense promise in reducing the amount of trauma inflicted and connecting survivors to comprehensive

services. The ESVF expansion will allow for more residents and communities to access these necessary services and strengthen the City’s community safety ecosystem”, said **Christa Hamilton, president and CEO of UCAN.**

ESVF will dedicate roughly \$6.4 million over the next two (2) years, funded partially through the American Rescue Plan Act as a part of the Mayor’s *Road to Recovery Plan*. Funds will be distributed by Victim Services and Street Outreach organizations currently funded by CDPH in the communities most impacted by violence. For 2024, partnering organizations include Breakthrough Urban Ministries, Institute for Nonviolence Chicago, Universal Family Connection, BUILD, Chicago Survivors, UCAN, New Life Centers, Claretian Associates, Metropolitan Family Services, Together Chicago, Target Area (TADC), and Southwest Organizing Project (SWOP).

“The Emergency Supplemental Victims Fund does just what it was set out to do. It plays a crucial role in supporting victims and family members of victims of gun violence by providing funds to help cover expenses that families face immediately after a tragic incident,” said **Ebony Lane, Victim Services Supervisor, Institute for Nonviolence Chicago.** “Many of our participants can’t afford to cover unexpected expenses due to the loss of a family member. Without these supplemental funds, many families would struggle to provide everyday basic needs. The fund helps to ease some of the burdens families face when they need it most.”

Further expansion may be considered dependent on program outcomes, the changing needs of the communities, and availability of funding. For more information, please visit chicago.gov/ESVF.

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