

# Columbus Ohio- FTAP

Holding offenders accountable; keeping families safe



**ZACH KLEIN**  
COLUMBUS CITY ATTORNEY



# Columbus Ohio-FTAP Partners

L. McCaughan	Supervising Attorney	Capital University Law School, Civil Protection Unit & Family Advocacy Clinic
J. Gibson	Deputy Chief Prosecutor	Columbus City Attorney
B. DeCrane	Co- FTAP Site Coordinator and Blueprint for Safety Project Director	Columbus City Attorney & Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs
M.L. Caswell	Director	Columbus City Attorney- Domestic Violence Stalking Unit
M. Gray	Commander	Columbus Division of Police
R. Ketchum	Sergeant	Columbus Division of Police Special Victims Bureau - Domestic Violence Unit
C. Dawson	Judge Brown's Staff Attorney	Franklin County Domestic Relations Court
J. Brown	Judge	Franklin County Domestic Relations Court
A. Peeples	Judge	Franklin County Municipal Court
T. Thomas	Probation Officer Supervisor-Domestic Violence Unit	Franklin County Pretrial and Probation Services
D. Meyer	Director, Criminal Division - Special Victims Unit	Franklin County Prosecutor
J. McKenzie	Director, Criminal Division - Victim Witness Assistance Unit	Franklin County Prosecutor
M. Dolchin	Municipal Unit Chief	Franklin County Public Defender
R. Minerd	Chief Deputy	Franklin County Sheriff's Office
S. Huntzinger	Co- FTAP Site Coordinator, Court Services Coordinator	The Center for Family Safety and Healing
K. Norris	Deputy Criminal Chief	U.S. Attorney's Office for Southern District of Ohio

# Columbus Ohio-FTAP Goal Objectives

**FTAP Goal/Vision: Improve safety outcomes for victims and defendants/respondents in criminal and civil domestic violence cases**

Over the last 2 years, we focused on standard process, admin procedures, forms and building information networks to ensure we had the infrastructure in place to **increase seizure of firearms/ammunition/weapons** in DV cases i.e.

- ▶ Commitment from criminal, civil and community to discuss how we could/would address this issue together
- ▶ Confirmation that the city/county had capacity to store seized firearms/ammunition/weapons
- ▶ Standard procedures for how firearms/ammunition/weapons are seized, stored and returned (if appropriate) in civil and criminal proceedings
- ▶ Standard processes and forms to collect information about the presence of firearms in criminal and civil cases and inform defendants and respondents when they are required to surrender
- ▶ Commitment from judges to deploy actions that promote surrender compliance
- ▶ Tie FTAP work to other city and county-wide DV initiatives
- ▶ Collaboration and commitment from partners to endure DESPITE challenges

Going forward, we will continue to focus on surrender compliance/enforcement strategies for the courts and law enforcement **AND embed community DV advocates with law enforcement first responder teams and in our Domestic Relations Court's Family Protection Center**

# Columbus Ohio-FTAP Wins and Challenges



- ▶ Confirmation from the city and county on capacity to store firearms
- ▶ Local law enforcement agencies adopted standard procedures/directives for surrendering pursuant to civil and/or criminal orders
- ▶ Firearm inventory sheets and DV risk factors forms are included w/civil service packets for deputies (not part of packet for respondent to see)  
*NOTE: FCSO deputies made 78 arrests during service in 2021*
- ▶ Surrender instructions for civil respondents are given at time of service  
*NOTE: FCSO deputies seized 47 firearms during service in 2021*
- ▶ Surrender instructions were added to municipal court forms - DVPO, CRPO, NCO, etc.
- ▶ Standard CCW revocation process put in place at municipal court arraignment  
*NOTE: FCSO revoked 55 CCWs at time of arraignment in 2021\*\**
- ▶ 1 DR court judge is holding firearm compliance hearings
- ▶ Commitment from law enforcement and DR court to pilot embedding community advocates with patrol response and in the court's Family Protection Center (funded by FTAP)
- ▶ Aligning FTAP with other DV systems initiatives creates broader support, momentum, sustainability
- ▶ Increased communication across justice partners

# Columbus Ohio-FTAP Wins and Challenges



- ▶ **\*\*Ohio just passed a bill allowing conceal and carry w/no required training or license**
- ▶ Ohio is considering legislation allowing DV records to be sealed and expunged
- ▶ Change in County Prosecutor derailed firearm immunity proffer initiative
- ▶ Still waiting on feedback from NICS on our proposed sentence entry form notifying the courts and defendant of potential federal prohibition
- ▶ Challenges with dedicated compliance efforts on from the criminal bench and baby steps on the civil side (Judge Brown is a HUGE asset)
- ▶ No firearm registry; defendants/respondents must voluntarily state they have firearms/weapons to surrender
- ▶ Need to raise broader awareness for the complexity and lethality associated with DV + firearms on the bench and broader community
- ▶ Lack of required standard, ongoing DV training for justice practitioners
- ▶ COVID (like the rest of the sites, country, world)

# Columbus Ohio-FTAP engaging/listening to victims



- ▶ Actively involve system and community advocates in FTAP conversations and planning sessions
- ▶ Approach work through lessons learned from LSS Choices for Domestic Violence 2019 Intimate Partner Violence Community Analysis and the City of Columbus Prosecution Unit's 2019 focus group report on understanding the experiences of survivors of domestic violence engaged with the justice system
- ▶ Linking FTAP work to our community's Blueprint for Safety initiative

# Columbus Ohio-FTAP diversity and inclusion



- ▶ Talking one on one with culturally specific organizations in our community about the resources they have available for DV victims AND educating those agencies on how the justice system works (criminal and civil), so victims have information on all their options
- ▶ Linking FTAP work to our communities Blueprint for Safety initiative

# Columbus Ohio-FTAP Bragging and Aspirations



## Bragging...

- ▶ Dedicated support from Columbus City Attorney, Columbus Division of Police, DR court and The Center for Family Safety and Healing for the FTAP DV Advocate Pilot
- ▶ ???

## Aspirations...

- ▶ Continued and ongoing communication across justice and community partners
- ▶ Increase support from civil and criminal judges on firearm surrender compliance
- ▶ More engagement/collaboration btwn justice system and culturally specific partners