
PAGV

PROSECUTORS AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE

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CONTACT:

Prosecutors Against Gun Violence Convene Virtual Summit: *Prosecutors Respond to COVID-19*

Prosecutors Against Gun Violence (PAGV) brought hundreds of prosecutors, law enforcement leaders, subject matter experts and gun violence prevention advocates together for a virtual summit entitled: **Prosecutors Respond to COVID-19**. The summit was convened on May 7th to discuss the unprecedented challenges facing the criminal justice system during COVID-19, including domestic violence, child abuse, safe storage of firearms, Gun Violence Restraining Orders (GVROs) and Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs), jail release considerations, and firearm suicide prevention efforts.

“For some our present COVID-19 quarantine has resulted in a “great pause” – a chance to reflect,” said Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce Dudley. “For victims of “in-home” violence it has resulted in catastrophic injuries as “great P-A-W-S” (human hands) committed despicable acts of Domestic Violence, Spousal rape, Child, Elder and Animal Abuse and those same “great paws” are keeping victims from calling 911 and others from coming in to rescue them.”

"The coronavirus outbreak has forced prosecutors' offices around the country to become nimble and rapidly adapt to new challenges," said Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr. "It has ushered in a new era of teleworking, meaning that most daily functions have moved from the courtroom to the living room, and yet work continues apace. The pandemic is also changing crime patterns before our eyes. Around the country, there's been a surge in gun purchases, and mounting concern about the rise in at-home crimes, like domestic violence. This combination of factors prompted PAGV to come together in this forum."

“This was PAGV’s eleventh summit and it was like no other because these times are like no other,” said Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer. “One public health emergency, the prevalence of gun violence, has collided with another—COVID-19. Our summit took on the implications of that collision through the lens of public safety officials that especially focus on our most vulnerable communities.”

Highlights from the summit’s discussions:

- Reaching out to domestic violence victims during the pandemic and how to disarm abusers in general and during COVID-19
- Heightened concerns surrounding child abuse during this crisis and how adverse childhood events and trauma are made more dangerous by the presence of guns in the home, and how to address those issues
- Safe storage of guns, focused on legislation, outreach to pediatricians and schools to help ensure that guns in the home are locked away and kids do not have access to them
- Best practices on GVROs and ERPOs, including setting up units to make them more accessible and how best to enforce them
- Jail release considerations and the need for compassionate justice, taking into account both the public's safety and the safety of those detained
- Firearm suicide prevention, and finding the potential for common ground with gun owners

The summit can be viewed here <https://prosecutorsagv.org/summits/>. More information about PAGV can be found at ProsecutorsAGV.org.

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