

Gov. Evers: Announces more than \$50 million investment in safer communities across Wisconsin

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New investments to address reckless driving, expand pre-trial GPS supervision, while supporting evidence-based crime prevention strategies, local and tribal law enforcement agencies, and alleviating court backlogs

MILWAUKEE — Gov. Tony Evers today announced a more than \$50 million investment in community safety, including nearly \$19 million for local and tribal law enforcement agencies as well as funding to help alleviate the pandemic-related backlog of criminal cases through additional public defender and assistant district attorney support. The package contains investments throughout the criminal justice system, providing both the opportunity to return to pre-pandemic levels and fund evidence-based initiatives aimed at keeping Wisconsinites safe. Today's announcement brings the governor's overall investment into violence prevention and public safety to more than \$100 million, including a [\\$45 million investment](#) announced last year to support violence prevention efforts and crime victims.

"Last October, I was proud to announce a \$45 million investment into addressing the cycle of violence and crime that for too long has gone uninterrupted. But I said then and I'll say it again today that violence is not a foregone conclusion. It is not inevitable. There is more we can do, and this is another public health crisis that deserves our attention and our action," said Gov. Evers. "So, today, we're building on the investments we announced last fall and investing more than \$50 million in grants to support local and tribal public safety agencies, to bolster crime prevention strategies, and to help alleviate the pandemic-related backlog of criminal cases across Wisconsin.

“Today, I’m announcing we’re investing nearly \$19 million for local and tribal law enforcement agencies in every corner of the state. Whether it’s training, recruitment bonuses, community policing needs, or technology, these funds will help our local and tribal law enforcement agencies address their community’s specific public safety needs. At the end of the day, folks, from investing in mental health support and diversion to getting folks a fair and speedy trial, to bolstering re-entry programming, we’re going to follow the science and use evidence-based, data-driven strategies to build a safer, fairer Wisconsin for everyone.”

The nearly \$19 million law enforcement program will provide an allocation to every local and tribal law enforcement agency in Wisconsin, enabling agencies to address the unique needs facing their communities, including training, recruitment bonuses, community policing needs, and technology investments. The determination of an agency’s amount is a formula based on the population served and includes a violent crime add-on for locations where violent crime exceeds the statewide average. Local and tribal law enforcement agencies will receive no less than \$7,000, regardless of the population served. A breakdown of the allocations can be found [here](#). Additionally, \$1 million will be provided to the Wisconsin Technical College System in an effort to support part-time police academy programs in Wisconsin.

Almost \$20 million will be provided to Milwaukee County and the city of Milwaukee for criminal justice system initiatives and community safety projects. The largest investment is more than \$14 million for Milwaukee County to expand their courthouse operations to dramatically reduce the backlog of cases in their criminal division. The funding will increase the number of criminal cases that are able to be heard by supporting staffing for the Milwaukee County District Attorney’s Office, the State Public Defender, the Milwaukee Clerk of Courts, and the Milwaukee County Sheriff’s Office. Cases alleging violent behavior will be prioritized.

Other Milwaukee-specific investments include funding to:

- Integrate licensed mental health clinicians into the city of Milwaukee’s 911 dispatch center;
- Prevent reckless driving through environmental design and upgrades to local roads;
- Expand pretrial GPS supervision staffing to ensure 24/7/365 monitoring on existing GPS units;
- Establish a pilot program that would expand the operations of two court rooms into the evening hours one to two days a week;

- Formalize Milwaukee County's Mental Health Treatment Court; and
- Provide employment and vocational preparedness programs at the Milwaukee County House of Correction.

Finally, more than \$16 million will go toward reducing the pandemic-related backlog of criminal cases statewide. This investment includes \$5.5 million for the State Public Defender to establish 'roving teams' that can provide assistance where it is needed most and \$5.7 million to ensure sufficient resources to fill Assistant District Attorney positions quickly and for [additional Assistant District Attorney positions](#), which will be allocated based on caseload and estimated dispositional backlog. Finally, \$5 million will be provided to the State Crime Lab to outsource testing associated with controlled substance and DNA cases and training for firearm examiners so analysts can continue to participate in jury trials across the state.

These allocations are funded through the state's American Rescue Plan Act funds. For updates on other recovery-related grant opportunities, sign up for the [Badger Bounceback update list](#).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).