



# JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

United States Marshals Service • Monroe County Sheriff's Office



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Operation Guardian

*An inter-agency approach to stop the bleed*

**Rochester, NY (June 24, 2021)** – The Monroe County Sheriff's Office (MCSO), in collaboration with the United States Marshals Service (USMS) Fugitive Task Force and New York State Police (NYSP), is announcing the conclusion of the first phase of Operation Guardian, initiated on May 17, that resulted in 60 arrests, five for homicide over the course of 29 days. To understand the scope, the number of homicide arrests by the Task Force in the first half of 2021 already equals the total number of homicide arrests by this team in 2020.

This task force was comprised of local, state and federal agencies, including the USMS, MCSO, NYSP, Rochester Police Department, Greece Police and the NY State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision.

The professionalism, skill, tenacity, and dedication of this team has resulted in the USMS Fugitive Task Force making 120 arrests in our community in 2021 thus far.

*“The Task Force is only successful because of our ongoing partnership and collaboration.”* **said Charles Salina, U.S. Marshal Western District of New York.**

The mission is now transitioning with the conclusion of Phase I.

With this idea of partnership and collaboration in mind, MCSO has transitioned to the next phase of the operation where an unprecedented inter-agency approach will begin to counter the violence. We must restore peace and safety to the streets of the City of Rochester.

This undertaking will require all of us to come together with a common purpose. We have heard from countless members of the community who suffer from a continued surge in gang related assassinations and violence.

This changes today.

Everyone deserves to live, work and play on streets free from the terror of violent criminals. Teachers should not have to worry about their children getting gunned down at their own graduation ceremonies. Mothers should not have to worry about their sons and daughters getting shot while at the playground.

A very small number of people commit almost all of the shootings. These repeat violent offenders, not entire communities, must remain the focus of both police and prosecution. The policing side of this operation is dedicated to those wretched few.

Prevention is just as important as response; therefore, the rest of the community will be of focus in the preventive programs, programs where law enforcement will take a back seat and let community leaders, non-profits, and government agencies address the systemic issues leading to violence with the full support of the law enforcement community. These programs will have a focus on sustainability.

This joint task force will continue its effort under Operation Guardian with the following lines of operation forming the basis of Phase II.

#### *Plan of Action*

1. MCSO and the DA will surge the RPD Patrol Sections Investigations, supporting immediate investigations of violent crime. These resources will focus on gun interdiction, shooting incidents and serve violent felony warrants. MCSO and the DA's office will provide supervisors, undercover, uniformed and K9 deputies, and investigators from the DA's office.
2. Working with the County, MCSO will begin a program where social workers will be brought into homes after a person is arrested for gun related offences. Our goal is to stabilize the home and provide support, thus reducing the potential for more violence.
3. The United States Marshal Office will concentrate their efforts to each RPD Section's wanted boards, finding these violent offenders. The United States Marshal Office will bring in additional marshals from other regions.
4. We will support neighborhoods by providing uniformed high visibility patrols. Patrols will be increased in hot spot areas identified by RPD. The intent is to provide a sense of peace

community, be a deterrent effect and respond to calls for service related to shootings for immediate apprehension and safety. Multiple agencies will be paired up with RPD, to show the public the support of law enforcement based on community requests.

5. We will seek rewards for illegal gun information, working with Crime Stoppers will provide funds for information that leads to the arrest of persons related to violent crimes.
6. We will build a transparent and timely update system that provides mapping, trends and other pertinent information related to shootings and those responsible for committing them.
7. Working with state and local partners we will build a system inside the jail similar to Operation Ceasefire to steer people away from violence.
8. Monroe County Probation will increase community conversations and engagement. Probation will continue to work with local law enforcement agencies to combat violence by holding probationers accountable, and providing behavioral intervention programming and other resources to break the cycle of violent thought patterns and behaviors.
9. We will hold bi-weekly collaboration meetings with our community and law enforcement partners to build next steps and update the community of future initiatives.

These plans do not come only from law enforcement, but are formed with collaboration from community groups, non-profits, government and law enforcement agencies to create the most effective and wholistic approach. This Phase II plan of action focuses on new, inclusive and innovative strategies focused on stopping the bleeding and prioritize all available resources to save lives. Law enforcement cannot solve the violence alone.

To succeed:

We need our law enforcement agencies at all levels to work diligently to get guns off our streets, in partnership with the prosecutors to effectively hold these criminals accountable.

We need the collaboration of our community leaders, non-profits, and school leaders to help people who are stuck in a cyclical world of violence.

We need people like Clay Harris to continue his work of standing up for peace and to continue to speak out.

We need the jails to focus on rehabilitating those trapped in a cycle of violence while they are under our care.

We need the media to not let these shootings fall off the front pages and become the norm.

We need everyone to stand up for what is right and just against the few who terrorize the community.

We will work closely with our community leaders and civic partners to steer individuals from a pathway to violence.

The operation will continue to evolve, and this operation is here to stay until the streets of Rochester are once again made safe.

One thing remains certain, it's time to send a clear message to the individuals responsible for this destructive behavior that it will not be tolerated in our community. To those living under these dangerous conditions, we are here to support you.

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