

President Obama Shares the Steps He's Taking to Reduce Gun Violence

Written by The White House

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“We know that we can’t stop every act of violence. But what if we tried to stop even one?” - President Obama

WASHINGTON, DC - Columbine. Blacksburg. Newtown. Aurora. Tucson. Oak Creek. Charleston. San Bernardino.

Too many communities across the country are still suffering from the heartbreaking consequences of a gun in the wrong hands. In the past decade, more than 100,000 people have died as a result of gun violence. Many of these crimes were committed by people who never should have been able to purchase a gun in the first place.

Sympathy is not enough to stop gun violence. Congress has repeatedly failed to take action, blocking commonsense reforms supported by the vast majority of the American people – including gun owners themselves.

The President has a responsibility to do everything in his power to reduce gun violence. This week, he will.

Here’s more about what he’s doing:



Gun Violence in America: By the Numbers

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MORE THAN 4 MILLION

Number of American victims of assaults, robberies, and other crimes involving a gun in the last decade

MORE THAN 30,000

Number of gun deaths in America each year

MORE THAN 20,000

Number of children under 18 killed by firearms over the last decade

MORE THAN 20,000

Number of Americans who commit suicide with a firearm each year

466

Number of law enforcement officers shot and killed by felons over the last decade

3

Number of days after which a gun dealer can sell a gun to an individual if a background check is not yet complete

[Get the full breakdown of the numbers on gun violence in the U.S here.](#)

The President's Actions to Reduce Gun Violence

So President Obama is taking executive action to reduce gun violence. Here's what his actions are designed to do:

Keep guns out of the wrong hands through background checks

- The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is making clear that it

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doesn't matter where you conduct your business—from a store, at gun shows, or over the Internet: If you're in the business of selling firearms, you must get a license and conduct background checks.

- ATF is finalizing a rule to require background checks for people trying to buy some of the most dangerous weapons and other items through a trust, corporation, or other legal entity.
- Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch has sent a letter to States highlighting the importance of receiving complete criminal history records and criminal dispositions, information on persons disqualified because of a mental illness, and qualifying crimes of domestic violence.
- The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is overhauling the background check system to make it more effective and efficient. The envisioned improvements include processing background checks 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and improving notification of local authorities when certain prohibited persons unlawfully attempt to buy a gun. The FBI will hire more than 230 additional examiners and other staff to help process these background checks.

Make our communities safer from gun violence

- The Attorney General convened a call with U.S. Attorneys around the country to direct federal prosecutors to continue to focus on smart and effective enforcement of our gun laws.
- The President's FY2017 budget will include funding for 200 new ATF agents and investigators to help enforce our gun laws.
- ATF has established an Internet Investigation Center to track illegal online firearms trafficking and is dedicating \$4 million and additional personnel to enhance the National Integrated Ballistics Information Network.
- ATF is finalizing a rule to ensure that dealers who ship firearms notify law enforcement if their guns are lost or stolen in transit.
- The Attorney General issued a memo encouraging every U.S. Attorney's Office to renew domestic violence outreach efforts.

Increase mental health treatment and reporting to the background check system

- The Administration is proposing a new \$500 million investment to increase access to mental health care.
- The Social Security Administration has indicated that it will begin the rulemaking process to include information in the background check system about beneficiaries who are prohibited from possessing a firearm for mental health reasons.
- The Department of Health and Human Services is finalizing a rule to remove unnecessary legal barriers preventing States from reporting relevant information about people prohibited from possessing a gun for specific mental health reasons.

Shape the future of gun safety technology

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- The President has directed the Departments of Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security to conduct or sponsor research into gun safety technology
- The President has also directed the departments to review the availability of smart gun technology on a regular basis, and to explore potential ways to further its use and development to more broadly improve gun safety.

[Take an in-depth look at the President's latest actions here.](#)