



# Homeland Security and Emergency Services

## FY2020 Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention Grant Program Close-Out Report (10/1/2020 - 12/31/2022)

### Section I: Project Overview

The NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) in partnership with the Monroe County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) was awarded FY2020 Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention (TVTP) funds to support the continued development of the Rochester Threat Advisory Committee (ROCTAC) model, both within the Rochester area and across upstate New York. DHSES applied under the replication track of the FY2020 TVTP funding and was awarded \$164,850 in federal funds to support these efforts.

ROCTAC is a Threat Assessment and Management (TAM) advisory team created to close threat management gaps created by system siloes and fragmented responses. It provides a central point of information coordination, led by the Monroe County Sheriff's Office. ROCTAC acts as a central clearinghouse for information flow specific to situations known as Threat Cases (TC). Threat Cases are defined as situations, above normal occurrences, where the risk of violence is assessed to be imminent and/or a cluster of risk factors and warning behaviors are present, commonly associated with elevated risks for targeted violence. The ROCTAC was launched in early 2019 and has since addressed over 50 TCs since its inception. FY2020 TVTP funds were used to advance the ROTAC program and to educate and train other areas of upstate New York to adapt this model and create regional TAM teams in their areas.

DHSES retained a portion of the award amount to design, develop and deliver TAM training which aided in standing up TAM teams in two major urban areas located in upstate New York, replicating the success that ROCTAC has had. The training provided the foundation for the domestic terrorism prevention frameworks that New York State Governor Kathy Hochul addressed with Executive Order 18, which was issued following one of the most tragic events of domestic terrorism and targeted violence experienced with the Buffalo mass shooting on May 14, 2022. [Executive Order 18](#).

### Section II: Key Accomplishments and Outcomes

**Monroe County Sheriff's Office (MCSO):** The Sheriff's Office hired a consultant to provide ROCTAC program management and be the central point of information coordination. The consultant assisted with the coordination of ROCTAC meetings by helping presenters prepare for meetings, implemented a communications plan to ensure maximum participation by committee members and ensured the availability of ad hoc training for Participating Member Agencies. The Program Manager collaborated with the Emergency Communications Center to

develop and implement a 911 referral method for ROCTAC. The Program Manager also coordinated ROCTAC case and data collection and increased awareness of ROCTAC to encourage government agencies, private entities, businesses, and merchants to coordinate and cooperate to identify and stop persons on the pathway toward violence in the Rochester-Monroe region. ROCTAC with the consultant interacted with **21 New York State counties** to various degrees ranging from email resource material to traveling across the state to make presentations, along with attending DHSES TAM meetings and training. The consultant provided full day TAM training for new ROCTAC members as well as half day HIPAA/FERPA training.

ROCTAC along with the assistance of the program manager and Sheriff's ROCTAC Sergeant assisted with the below tasks.

ROCTAC Case Indicators	1Q2 1	2Q2 1	3Q2 1	4Q2 1	1Q2 2	2Q2 2	3Q2 2	4Q2 2	Total
Number of Cases Opened	2	2	3	3	5	7	6	9	37
Number of Referrals	3	2	2	4	7	7	5	15	45
Case Status data referred to law enforcement			1	3	3	5	4	9	25
Anonymized case studies illustrating the impact of threat management		1	1		1			3	3
Presentations to Community Agencies	1		1	3	4	3	5	4	21
Presentations to Other TAM Teams							6	3	9

**NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services:** Through the use of a small percentage of the FY2020 TVTP award, DHSES was provided the opportunity to leverage the success that ROCTAC has had and replicate this model across the greater upstate region. Funding was utilized to develop and delivery vital training to jurisdictions interested in implementing a Threat Assessment Management team in their area. Initial Program Analyses (IPAs) were conducted in the major urban areas in New York State to gauge interest in supporting these efforts and implementing a TAM team. Based on those efforts, two additional areas expressed a need and a desire to participate in the training to formalize a TAM team. This included the Buffalo Threat Advisory Committee (BUFTAC) managed by the City of Buffalo Police Department and the Niagara County Threat Advisory Group (NITAG) managed by the Niagara County Sheriff's Office. Funding was utilized to procure a consultant who then delivered hands-on Threat Assessment training and aided in each of the jurisdictions standing up TAM Teams. This two-day training event included both an overview of the process and provided the teams the opportunity to review, discuss, and evaluate practice cases. This training was delivered three times over the course of the period of performance and included representatives from all disciplines to include mental health professionals, law enforcement, probation, children and family services, education, health care professionals, etc. **53 professionals** were trained during these three sessions. BUFTAC had its first meeting of its TAM team in October of 2021 and NITAG had its first meeting in November of 2021. Since that

timeframe, collectively, the TAM teams have reviewed over **21 cases** between the two of them during the period of performance of the grant.

#### Impactful Stories:

#1 A large corporation had an employee who was being stalked/harassed by an individual. This person's behavior was very alarming and causing concern to other employees at the work-place because she had visited the place of employment. The corporation presented the case to the TAM team. Intervention strategies were implemented which seemed to mitigate the threat and provide relief and reassurance to the victims and the business. All involved were extremely thankful that their concerns were being addressed and they had a resource to help them with their issue

#2 - Male party called County Mental Health over 200 times in a few days. Resources were deployed but they were unable to evaluate the party due to refusal to answer the door. Elderly mother also lives in the home and refused a welfare check to police. The concern was that she was possibly malnourished and in danger. Through the efforts of the TAM team the county Department of Social Services and the Office for the Aging joined the case and were able to secure an order to check on the mother's welfare. Both the person of concern and mother's welfare were checked, they were able to secure assistance and the calls ended.

Additionally, in August of 2022, DHSES was able to conduct the first-ever TAM Summit that include representatives from every county in New York State. This Summit included the delivery of the TAM training along with relevant domestic terrorism prevention planning initiatives, new grant funding initiatives and updates, and an overview of staffing and resource support that New York State will provide as a result of Governor Hochul's Executive Order 18. This training was delivered to **93 local, state and county officials** from law enforcement, mental health, education, and emergency management. Based on the post-conference survey, over 85% of the attendees found the session helpful. This training along with the funding initiatives that have been implemented in New York State has led to the development of **51 TAM teams**. Further efforts are underway to continue to support those established teams and a new unit within DHSES Office of Counter Terrorism has been stood up to aid in providing that assistance to the new teams.

### Section III: Deliverables

**Monroe County Sheriff's Office:** The Sheriff's Office also contracted with a marketing consultant and website consultant to increase community awareness for ROCTAC as well as develop and design an interactive community website and promotional materials. The ROCTAC website is operational along with resource tabs and a comprehensive video presentation about TAM and targeted violence response produced at the Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce presentation. **Six (6) ROCTAC** referrals have come in via the website since its inception. Promotional material included handouts, promotional social media, posters, banners, and professional presentation production materials specific to law enforcement, schools and public. Facebook and Instagram social media accounts were set up with the help of the marketing consultant.

The Monroe County Sheriff's Office Sergeant and Deputy assigned to ROCTAC used overtime when needed to conduct meetings and presentations to **21 other counties** and regions and to conduct public presentations, threat assessment case briefings, and case vetting after normal work hours.

**ROCTAC link below with a full promotional video**

[ROCTAC](#)

**NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services:** Training curriculum was developed to help support all New York State counties in their efforts to stand-up their own TAM teams. In response to the tragic events in Buffalo, Governor Hochul through an Executive Order has provided the staffing, resources, and funding to build a comprehensive targeted violence and terrorism prevention framework which includes all New York State counties developing comprehensive domestic terrorism prevention plans, providing the education on how to implement a Threat Assessment Management team prevention strategy and supporting their efforts through state funded initiatives. As a result of the efforts that occurred and the relationships that we have fostered with CP3, ROCTAC and other local partners, we have been afforded the opportunity to develop training curriculum as well as reference documents and materials that can serve as a baseline for all counties, cities, townships, villages, schools, etc. in implementing these strategies. All available materials have been posted the DHSES website: [Domestic Terrorism Prevention Program](#)

#### **Section IV: Challenges and Lessons Learned**

In the prevention space, there is not a lot of training that is afforded to help aid in the implementation of strategies on targeted violence and terrorism prevention. This is still very much a "new science" in many ways. As we navigate through the growing pains of ensuring consistency as well as developing a set of standards, NYS DHSES has had the supreme advantage of having ROCTAC established as a functioning TAM team to model after. Monroe County Sheriff's Office, particularly its Program Manager, supporting staff and Sheriff, are devoted to this mission. They have dedicated countless hours of their time, effort, and expertise in educating the entire state on their experience in developing ROCTAC. They share their lessons learned as well as every best practice all while continuing to maintain the integrity of their group and its crucial membership and function, managing significant caseloads through not only the TAM team but outside referrals requiring follow-up through their website as well, and advancing their footprint and continuing to build-out their capacity. NYS DHSES is incredibly fortunate to have their partnership in this critical mission. These efforts would not exist without their unwavering commitment, willingness to help, tenacity, fortitude and grit. We are so incredibly proud of the foundation that ROCTAC has established.

#### **Section V: Sustainability**

NYS DHSES and Monroe County Sheriff's Office received an FY22 TVTP and DTP Grant to continue enhancing ROCTAC to include a mental health component, training, and project management as well as incorporating ROCTAC into County Emergency Management Planning

efforts. Continued funding is a critical component of ensuring prevention initiatives are effectively implemented and executed. Funding for this program in this targeted fashion is critical to sustaining all the efforts that have been built through the various cycles. Without the financial means to support these efforts, it is difficult for jurisdictions, as many are struggling to continue to support their operational response efforts.

## Long-Term Contributions

**Monroe County Sheriff's Office:** Through continued collaboration with local, state and federal law enforcement, we have identified a need for a closer inter-agency engagement, information sharing, and an organized approach to intervening in potential targeted attacks, especially for those cases that require greater intervention than ROCTAC can provide. Currently Law Enforcement agencies at both the state and federal level are tasked with receiving threat information, tracking these and then are expected to intervene, all without the involvement of local law enforcement, who likely has the most contact with those involved and the quickest opportunity to intervene.

This centralized state vs. federal approach is not only a duplication of effort but information is often held in siloes and evolves in several different agencies operating independently. To improve on this current practice Monroe County is developing a Regional Investigative Operations Center (Fusion Cell Concept) with the task of sharing information, tracking, and coordinating the intervention efforts of law enforcement within the region when threats are identified. The vision for the Regional Investigative Operations Center (RIOC) is to be modeled after the current Counter Terrorism Zone 16 structure, to include the Finger Lakes region, in order to tie in those surrounding counties and areas that may also be impacted by the same threats and hazards. Partnership already exists with the local FBI office and the Joint Terrorism Task Force, who support this RIOC concept and are assisting in developing its strategy.

With support from New York State, Monroe County Executive and Legislature, the Sheriff's Office has received partial funding to begin creating this RIOC structure but to also staff and equip it. Our strategy is to build off the outstanding efforts and proven results of the Monroe Crime Analysis Center (MCAC) that provides timely and qualified analysis of law enforcement information for use by the officers, deputies and investigators. MCAC would remain the dedicated point of communication with NYSIC to ensure that information and analysis flows in all directions.

The RIOC would be a centralized point of operational coordination with those sworn law enforcement personnel across the region who are conducting the fieldwork based upon analysis provided by NYSIC and MCAC. Each agency would be offered a seat at the table to coordinate investigations, share resources and track efforts. Investigative tools such as surveillance technology, digital forensics and tactical interventions will all be planned and supported through the RIOC. The long-term vision of this endeavor is a true Fusion Center with each of the Task Force efforts housed under one roof to ensure real time coordination, de-confliction and cooperation amongst all LE agencies within the region.

Although no plan is fool proof, we believe the above outlined summary presents the best option to identify and prevent acts of domestic terrorism, and all other forms of targeted violence occurring in this region.