



**J. HANLEY**

WINNEBAGO COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**State's Attorney J. Hanley**

Winnebago County State's Attorney J. Hanley is proud to announce the award of a federal Project Safe Neighborhood grant to the Office to support the implementation of an "intelligence-led prosecution" strategy. The strategy will focus the resources of the State's Attorney's Office (SAO) on one goal - reducing violent crime.

The Project Safe Neighborhood Program (PSN) is a US. Department of Justice program aimed at reducing violent crime. To accomplish that goal, PSN fosters trust and legitimacy in communities, supports community-based organizations that help prevent violence, sets focused and strategic enforcement priorities, and measures the results of those efforts.

The intelligence-led prosecution strategy is consistent with PSN goals, particularly as it prioritizes the prosecution of our community's most violent offenders.

"From day one, we have been seeking out and devoting resources to the prosecution of violent criminals. It is our number one priority. The award of the PSN grant is a direct result of our office's strong relationship with our federal partners. I am grateful for the trust they have in our office and look forward to working together to reduce violent crime in our community," said J. Hanley, Winnebago County State's Attorney.

Intelligence-led prosecutions, and the creation and designation of two dedicated major case prosecutors, will focus our limited resources on the relatively small criminal population responsible for most violent crimes committed in our community. This strategy is aimed at reducing crime, particularly violent crime involving firearms, through timely information sharing and close coordination with law enforcement and community partners. This strategic approach will allow our prosecutors to analyze crime trends and focus on prolific offenders – particularly in high crimes areas.

The designation of major case prosecutors will allow for swifter action against gun offenders, gang members, and other persistent offenders with certainty and proportionality. Examples of enhanced enforcements against individuals or organizations who repeatedly commit major violent crimes include the following:

- Subjecting offenders to stricter pretrial sanctions and stricter sentencing
- Prioritizing prosecutions of the violent offenders, including, when appropriate, in the federal system, which most isolates the violent from the community



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- Prioritizing collection of law enforcement intelligence against the group, to gain evidence of additional crimes for prosecution
- Prioritizing service of any outstanding warrants

The major case prosecutors will work more effectively to prosecute cases in either state or federal court. Currently, one of the major case prosecutors has been designated as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney. While the state system has many powerful tools to prosecute firearms cases, in some instances, the federal system may be the better avenue and the Special Assistant U.S. Attorney will work with the United States Attorney's Office to bring federal charges. While subject to their discretion, cases that could potentially be referred to our federal partners include:

- Cases presenting a federal interest
- Cases where federal prosecution would result in a greater sentence of imprisonment
- Cases involving modifications to firearms, including those that convert a semi-automatic firearm to a fully automatic firearm ("switches" or "auto-sears")
- Possession of a firearm cases in which the defendant has a prior conviction, within the last 15 years, of one or more of the following: first or second-degree murder; attempted first or second-degree murder; aggravated robbery with a firearm; home invasion armed with a firearm; and aggravated domestic battery by strangulation.

The major case prosecutor will track their progress, including type of crime, conviction rate, sentences obtained, and cases referred to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

"There is no higher priority in our office than to reduce violent crime and keep people safe," said John R. Lausch, Jr., United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois. "This Project Safe Neighborhoods grant will allow us to work closer than ever with our state and local law enforcement partners in Winnebago County to prosecute the most violent offenders."

Winnebago County State's Attorney's Office  
815-319-4700