



# TOWN OF BEDFORD, MA



## HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT and BOARD OF HEALTH

Town Center Building - 12 Mudge Way  
Bedford, MA 01730-2144  
Phone: 781-275-6507

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

2 Mudge Way  
Bedford, MA 01730-2144  
Phone: 781-275-1212

January 18, 2023

Bedford School Committee  
97 McMahon Road  
Bedford, MA 01730

Dear School Committee Members:

Research has shown that an increase in gun violence nationwide has led to the designation of gun violence not only as a justice issue, but also as a public health epidemic. Gun violence in homes is a major contributor to this epidemic with statistics supporting that a firearm in the home is a public health danger that substantially increases the risk of:

- fatal assaults especially for those living in the home;
- lethal domestic violence;
- unintentional shootings; and
- suicide by firearm, especially among youth.

To reduce the risks that a firearm in the home poses, public health experts recommend:

- removing unwanted firearms from the home through gun buyback programs;
- practicing safe and secure storage of guns in the home; and
- educating yourself and your family about firearm risks and preventative measures.

The Bedford Police Department reports that there are at least 700 firearm licenses in Bedford which means that potentially 13% of Bedford households contain firearms. Our Police Officers have responded to calls in homes with multiple firearms, some unsecured and some including assault weapons. Over the past 10 years, the Bedford Police Department has conducted a successful Gun Buyback Program, removing numerous unwanted firearms from homes in our community. The Bedford Board of Health (BOH), the Bedford Health Department (BHD) and the Bedford Police Department (BPD) are joining together to further promote gun violence prevention through a comprehensive campaign to protect our children, youth and families from gun violence injury and death in homes.

Our **Bedford Safe Campaign**, a joint prevention campaign sponsored by the BPD, BHD and BOH will be held in Spring 2023 and will include:

- an enhanced Gun Buyback program;
- distribution of free cable-style gun lock kits with safety instructions;
- a community-wide prevention awareness program including educational online articles and a mailing to all households; and
- a public educational presentation by the co-founders and Directors of the Massachusetts General Hospital's Center for Gun Violence Prevention: "Gun Violence in America: community-driven approaches to this local and national crisis".

We are asking that the School Committee join many other Bedford community organizations in endorsing our **Bedford Safe Campaign** as outlined above. As such, we request that your organization permit us to use its name in our educational and promotional materials. If you are willing to join this important effort, **please complete the form found here:** <https://forms.gle/Y7oTSfXmUkrEpJGm9> or scan the QR Code, by **January 27, 2023.**



We thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at [BOH@bedfordma.gov](mailto:BOH@bedfordma.gov) and/or 781-275-6507.

Respectfully,

John C. Fisher, Chief, Bedford Police Department  
Scott Jones, Lieutenant, Bedford Police Department

Heidi Porter, Director, Health & Human Services  
Susan Schwartz, Chair, Bedford Board of Health  
Maureen Richichi, Vice-Chair, Bedford Board of Health