

PROCLAMATION

NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS DAY – JUNE 5, 2026

WHEREAS, the first Friday in June is declared as National Gun Violence Awareness Day in the Village of Oak Park to honor and remember all victims and survivors of gun violence and to declare that we as a country must do more to end this public health crisis; and

WHEREAS, every day in the United States, nearly 130 people are shot and killed, with an average of more than 19,000 gun homicides every year; more than 200 are shot and wounded, and countless other lives are changed by gun violence; and

WHEREAS, people in the United States are 26 times more likely to die by gun homicide than people in other high-income countries; and

WHEREAS, Illinois has 1,758 gun deaths every year, with a rate of 14.1 deaths per 100,000 people, a crisis that costs \$1,458 per resident each year; and

WHEREAS, cities across the nation, including in Oak Park, and states like Illinois are working to end the senseless violence with evidence-based solutions, including individual-level interventions like secure firearm storage, and community and societal-level interventions like Firearms Restraining Orders; and

WHEREAS, protecting public safety in the communities they serve is one of the government's highest responsibility; and

WHEREAS, elected officials, in partnership with community members, local violence intervention advocates, municipal staff and local law enforcement officers, know their communities best, are the most familiar with local criminal activity and how to address it, and are best positioned to understand how to keep their citizens safe; and

WHEREAS, gun violence prevention is more important than ever as we see gun violence continue to impact communities across the country; and

WHEREAS, in January 2013, Hadiya Pendleton was tragically shot and killed at age 15; and on June 6, 2025 to recognize the 28th birthday of Hadiya Pendleton (born: June 2, 1997), people across the United States will recognize National Gun Violence Awareness Day and wear orange in tribute to Hadiya Pendleton, other victims of gun violence, and the loved ones of victims of gun violence; and

WHEREAS, the idea was inspired by a group of Hadiya's friends, who asked their classmates to commemorate her life by wearing orange; they chose this color because hunters wear orange to announce themselves to other hunters when out in the woods, and orange is a color that symbolizes the value of human life; and

WHEREAS, anyone can join this campaign by pledging to wear orange on June 5th, the first Friday in June 2026, to help raise awareness about gun violence, honor the lives of gun violence victims and survivors; and

WHEREAS, we renew our commitment to reduce gun violence and pledge to do all we can to keep firearms out of the hands of people who should not have access to them and encourage responsible gun ownership to help keep our families and communities safe; and

WHEREAS, the Wear Orange Oak Park Austin Area group will meet on Saturday, June 6 at 12 p.m. at the Mercy Garden of Peace and Healing at 4910 West Quincey Street to honor the survivors of gun violence by planting a butterfly garden to honor victims of gun violence and welcomes adults and children to participate.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Vicki Scaman, Village President of the Village of Oak Park, do hereby proclaim the first Friday in June, June 5, 2026, to be National Gun Violence Awareness Day. I encourage all citizens to support their local communities' efforts to prevent the tragic effects of gun violence and to honor and value human lives.

DATED this 6th day of June, 2026.

Vicki Scaman, Village President

ATTEST:

Christina M. Waters, Village Clerk