



NEWS

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Essex County Prosecutor's Office and Essex County Bar Sponsor Gun Buyback

Newark – Acting Essex County Prosecutor Theodore N. Stephens, II, and Essex County Bar Association President Raj Gadhok announced today that the Essex County Prosecutor's Office and the Essex County Bar Foundation are jointly sponsoring a one-day gun buyback.

The gun buyback program is one of the first initiatives in New Jersey involving law enforcement and a private organization.

“The proliferation of guns is an ongoing problem in Essex County and beyond. This is a unique collaboration between law enforcement and a private, nonprofit organization --- the Essex County Bar Foundation --- to reverse that trend,” said Acting Prosecutor Stephens. “The leadership of the Essex County Bar Association came to us and offered to fund the gun buyback. The funds needed for this were raised by the Bar Foundation through the generous support of law firms, individual attorneys and others who understand the importance of removing guns from our streets.”

Anyone can anonymously turn in up to three guns, no questions asked. The gun buyback will be held at **Bethany Baptist Church, Fellowship Hall, located at 275 West Market Street in Newark**. Police officers from the Newark Police Department and detectives from the Essex County Prosecutor's Office will be at the church to collect and secure the guns and to assist with the valuation of the weapons.

“Through their generosity and joint efforts with the Essex County Prosecutor's Office and Newark Police Department, the members of the Essex County Bar Association have stepped up to make residents safer,” said Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal. “I commend the Bar Association and their law enforcement partners for having the wisdom to recognize that a gun that has been removed from the community through a gun buyback cannot cause the accidental death of a child or fall into the wrong hands and be used in a crime.”

Up to \$250 will be paid for each gun. The program will begin at 8 a.m. and end at 5 p.m. rain or shine.

“Gun violence is an epidemic in our society today which we cannot and should not ignore. Nearly 40,000 people died from guns in the United States last year, the most in 50 years. The mass shootings are becoming a

regular event and that is simply unacceptable. The Essex County Bar Association is a community service organization of attorneys and we have undertaken this project to help to stop gun violence in our communities. We realize that this project is not going to fix the problem around the country, but if we are able to save even one life, then we have certainly made a difference,” said Essex County Bar Association President Gadhok.

The Newark Police Department is assisting by helping with the collection, valuation and disposal of the weapons.

According to Matthew Adams, a Criminal Defense lawyer and Trustee of the Essex County Bar Association, “Taking unwanted, illegal, and unsafe guns off the street through programs like this contributes to public health and safety. With full amnesty and no questions asked thanks to the leadership of the Essex County Prosecutor’s Office, members of the community are incentivized to come forward and do the right thing.”