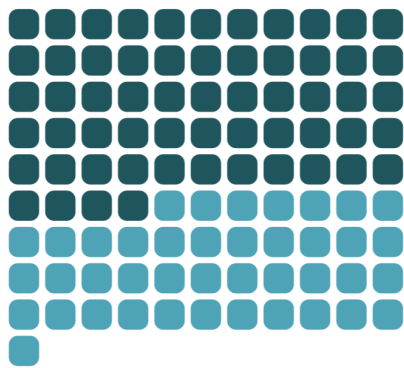


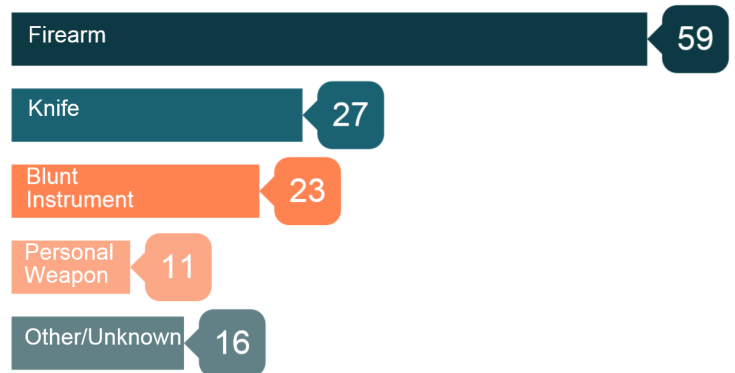
# North Dakota Domestic Violence Fatality Report 2014

## Domestic violence deaths 1992-2014

Between 1992 and 2014, **136 people** were murdered during incidents of domestic violence. Eighty victims were female, 56 male.



## Weapons used



Established in 2011, the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission reviews domestic violence deaths that have occurred in the state and recommends policies and protocols to help prevent future incidents of domestic violence and resulting fatalities.

**CONCERNS** As previously reported, several factors were common to **all the fatality cases reviewed to date**. Two factors were of particular concern to the Commission:



One or both parties had a history of **prior domestic violence incidents** [in the current and/or previous relationships]; the majority of those incidents resulted in involvement with **law enforcement and the criminal justice system**.



One or both parties had a **history of alcohol or substance abuse** sometimes in conjunction with a history of treatment for mental illness or a chronic health condition.

# Findings and Recommendations



Within the district court system, there is inconsistent application of federal & state laws and existing judicial policies requiring surrender of firearms in mental health or domestic violence cases.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Provide additional training to the district judges and states attorneys.

There is no comprehensive system to ensure the offender's timely compliance with court orders to complete batterer's, anger management, alcohol and substance abuse assessments and little to no consequence when the offender fails to complete either the required assessments or the recommended treatment.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Designate an individual within the district court system to track and report an offender's compliance with orders for assessment and completion of any recommended treatment.



All of the victims had a history of emergency or urgent care treatment for injuries consistent with domestic violence. In the majority of cases reviewed, the previously treated injuries were not reported to law enforcement.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Provide additional training to medical providers and emergency room personnel on screening for, and documenting, injuries consistent with suspected domestic violence.



When responding to a 911 call involving domestic violence, first responders may lose valuable time deciding whether there is probable cause to enter a residence or whether a search warrant is necessary. Obtaining consent to enter will buy back precious minutes that may mean the difference between life and death.

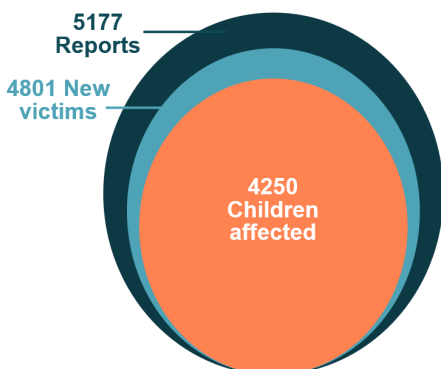
**RECOMMENDATION:** Train 911 operators and law enforcement dispatchers to obtain consent from the 911 caller for responders to enter the home. The consent obtained from the caller will provide at least "apparent" authority for the law enforcement entry and will skip the hesitation.



Domestic violence in the home affects minor children even if they are not the target of abuse. An adult victim may feel that options for leaving the abusive relationship may be limited when the abuser is a biological parent.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Law enforcement should complete a 960 if a child is present during a domestic violence incident, even if no arrest is made. The Child Protective Services manual should be revised accordingly and joint training for child protective services workers and domestic violence advocates should be convened on an annual basis.

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AT HOME



48%

of abusers had a history of abusing previous partners or other adults.

29

percentage of victims abused by a former spouse or partner

## ALCOHOL ABUSE



38% of new domestic violence cases involved alcohol abuse by the offender only. Another 11% of cases involved alcohol abuse by both parties

### Sources:

Annual Crime and Homicide Reports, Office of Attorney General;  
CAWS North Dakota