

FAMILY AND
INTIMATE
PARTNER
VIOLENCE
HOMICIDE

VIRGINIA: 2000

Virginia Department of Health
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INTRODUCTION

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner initiated surveillance of Family and Intimate Partner Homicide in 1999. The surveillance system is designed to provide accurate, timely and complete information about intimate partner homicide, child homicide, elder homicide and other homicides between family members. Unlike nonfatal injuries, deaths due to intimate partner and family violence can be measured and tracked over time with greater precision. The data in this report are meant to be used for prevention, public health planning and policy change.

The data that follow include Virginia residents and non-residents, and excludes death by legal execution. As a result, homicide data presented in this report will differ slightly from mortality data published by the Center for Health Statistics.

The first three sections of the report describe all homicide, intimate partner homicide and homicide-suicide in Virginia in 2000. The final section consists of summary tables providing 1999 and 2000 data for all homicide, intimate partner homicide, child homicide, family homicide and homicide-suicide in Virginia.

DEFINITIONS

Family and intimate partner homicide is characterized by a familial or intimate partner relationship between the victim and alleged offender. For purposes of this report, homicide victims have been categorized in one of six categories. The following six categories were developed for analysis purposes and are treated as mutually exclusive in the report's tables and graphs.

- **Intimate Partner** includes the following relationships between victim and alleged offender, regardless of whether the individual lived with the alleged offender: spouse (married or separated); former spouse; current or former girlfriend, boyfriend or same-sex partner; and perceived relationship (one of the parties has pursued a relationship or perceived that they had a relationship with the other where at least one of the following was historically noted: rejection, threats, harassment, stalking, possessiveness or protective order).
- **Intimate Partner Associated** includes victims who died as a result of a violent relationship between intimate partners. Victims can include alleged abusers killed by law enforcement or others who intervened; or friends, co-workers, neighbors and relatives caught in the crossfire of an intimate partner relationship.
- **Child** includes victims under the age of 18 killed by a caretaker.
- **Elder** includes victims over the age of 55 killed by a caretaker.
- **Other Family** includes all other homicide victims related by blood or marriage to the alleged offender (such as [step] siblings, [step] parents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, grandparents, grandchildren, in-laws and adult children).
- **Other Homicide** includes all other homicide victims who do not fall into one of the above categories.

Fatal Agency is the mechanism of injury which led to the death of the victim: firearm (handgun, rifle or shotgun), instrument (blunt or sharp), personal weapon (hand, foot, head, leg, arm, or other parts of the body) and other mechanisms (motor vehicle, poison, fire, strangulation, drowning or smothering).

HOMICIDE

Table 1. Homicide Victims in Virginia: 2000

	No.	%	Rate¹
TOTAL	454	100	6.4
SEX			
Female	125	27.5	3.5
Male	329	72.5	9.5
RACE/ETHNICITY			
White	166	36.6	3.3
Black	255	56.2	18.5
Hispanic	21	4.6	6.4
Other	12	2.6	2.9
AGE			
4 and under	18	4.0	3.9
5-14	13	2.9	1.3
15-24	115	25.3	11.9
25-34	113	24.9	10.9
35-44	92	20.3	7.7
45-54	51	11.2	5.1
55-64	22	4.8	3.5
>64	30	6.6	3.8
DISTRICT²			
Central	170	37.4	9.2
Northern	49	10.8	2.3
Tidewater	136	30.0	8.9
Western	99	21.8	6.3
TYPE OF HOMICIDE			
Intimate Partner	85	18.7	1.6
Intimate Partner Associated	14	3.1	0.3
Child	24	5.3	1.4
Elder	3	0.7	0.2
Other Family	22	4.8	0.3
Other Homicide	306	67.4	4.3
FATAL AGENCY			
Firearm	309	68.1	--
Sharp Instrument	60	13.2	--
Blunt Instrument	24	5.3	--
Personal Weapon	26	5.7	--
Strangulation	15	3.3	--
Other	20	4.4	--

Table 2. Homicide Victims in Virginia by Fatal Agency and Sex: 2000

	Female		Male		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Firearm	68	54.4	241	73.2	309	68.1
Sharp Instrument	22	17.6	38	11.6	60	13.2
Blunt Instrument	7	5.6	17	5.2	24	5.3
Strangulation	8	6.4	7	2.1	15	3.3
Personal Weapon	9	7.2	17	5.2	26	5.7
Other	11	8.8	9	2.7	20	4.4
Total	125	100	329	100	454	100

Table 3. Homicide Victims in Virginia by Age and Race: 2000

	White		Black		Other		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
4 and under	5	3.1	12	4.7	1	3.0	18	4.0
5-14	8	4.8	5	2.0	0	0.0	13	2.9
15-24	27	16.3	80	31.4	8	24.2	115	25.3
25-34	27	16.3	74	29.0	12	36.5	113	24.9
35-44	48	28.9	37	14.5	7	21.2	92	20.3
45-54	19	11.4	28	11.0	4	12.1	51	11.2
55-64	13	7.8	8	3.1	1	3.0	22	4.8
>64	19	11.4	11	4.3	0	0.0	30	6.6
Total	166	100	255	100	33	100	454	100

Highlights of homicide in Virginia:

- 72.5% of homicide victims were men; 27.5% were women.
- Males were killed at a rate over two-and-a-half times that of females (9.5 per 100,000 compared to 3.5).
- 68.1% of homicide victims were killed with a firearm.
- The majority (56.2%) of homicide victims were Black.
- Blacks were killed at almost three times the rate of Hispanics and over five-and-a-half times the rate of Whites (18.5 per 100,000 compared to 6.4 for Hispanics and 3.3 for Whites).
- 15 – 24 year olds had the highest homicide rate.
- The Central District (which includes the City of Richmond) had the highest homicide rate (9.2) and the Northern District (which includes suburbs of Washington, DC) had the lowest rate (2.3).
- Nearly one-third of all homicides were family or intimate partner related (includes Intimate Partner, Intimate Partner Associated, Child, Elder and Other Family).

INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE

In 2000, 85 (19%) homicide victims were killed by intimate partners.

Table 4. Intimate Partner Homicide Victims in Virginia by Age and Sex: 2000

	Female		Male		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
15-24	9	15.0	2	8.0	11	12.9
25-34	18	29.9	5	20.0	23	27.1
35-44	16	26.7	8	32.0	24	28.3
45-54	10	16.7	6	24.0	16	18.8
>54	7	11.7	4	16.0	11	12.9
Total	60	100	25	100	85	100

Table 5. Intimate Partner Homicide Victims in Virginia by Fatal Agency and Sex: 2000

	Female		Male		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Firearm	38	63.3	13	52.0	51	60.0
Sharp Instrument	10	16.7	8	32.0	18	21.2
Other	12	20.0	4	16.0	16	18.8
Total	60	100	25	100	85	100

Figure 1. Intimate Partner Homicide Victims by District, n=85

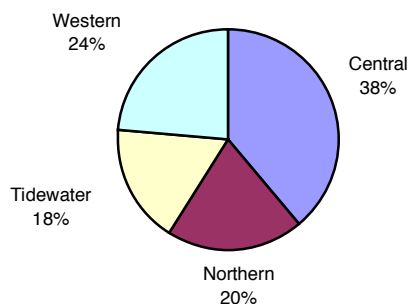
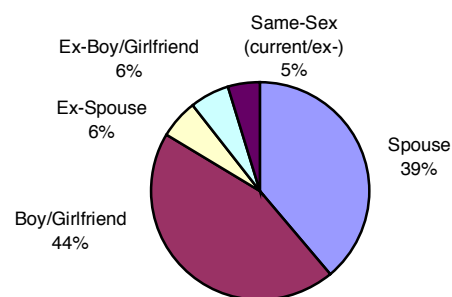


Figure 2. Intimate Partner Homicide Victims by Relationship, n=85



Highlights of intimate partner homicide in Virginia:

- Of the 85 intimate partner homicide victims, 60 (70.6%) were women and 25 (29.4%) were men.
- 23 (38.3%) female intimate partner homicide victims were killed in homicide-suicide events.
- Nearly one-third of female victims were between the ages of 25 and 34; approximately one-third of male victims were between the ages of 35 and 44.
- Over one-third of intimate partner homicides occurred in the Central District.
- 60% of all victims were killed with a firearm.
- 44% of intimate partner homicides were committed by boy/girlfriends; 39% were committed by spouses.
- 48 (56.5%) intimate partner homicide victims lived with the perpetrator at the time of the homicide.
- Of the 85 intimate partner homicide victims, 15 (17.6%) had perpetrated violence toward the alleged offender. Of the 15, 2 (13.3%) were women and 13 (86.7%) were men.
- 9 (15%) female victims had obtained protective orders.
- 7 (8.2%) victims were immigrants to the U.S.

RISK FACTORS

Medical Examiner records revealed the presence of risk factors typically associated with lethal intimate partner violence in 49 homicides (some homicides had more than one risk factor present).³

- Reports of previous violence: 37
- Relationship ending: 29 (17 break-ups; 4 divorces; 8 separations)
- Threats: 19
- Excessive jealousy: 14
- 911 calls: 12
- Non-biological children living in the home: 9
- Property destruction: 9
- Stalking: 3

CHILD WITNESSES

- 32 children witnessed family or intimate partner related homicide in Virginia in 2000.

HOMICIDE-SUICIDE

A Homicide-Suicide Event is homicide followed within one week by the perpetrator's suicide. In 2000, there were 30 homicide-suicide events in Virginia, resulting in 36 homicide victims.

Figure 3. Homicide Victims of Homicide-Suicide Events by Type, n=36

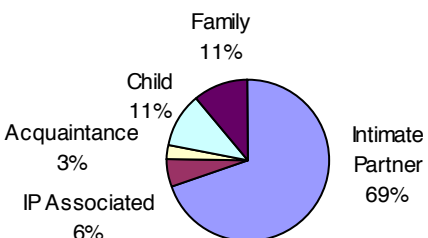


Figure 4. Homicide-Suicide Events by District, n=30

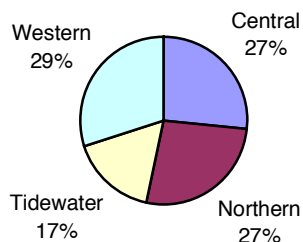


Table 6. Characteristics of Victims and Alleged Offenders of Homicide-Suicide Events in Virginia: 2000

	Victim		Alleged Offender	
	No.	%	No.	%
TOTAL	36	100	30	100
SEX				
Female	27	75.0	2	6.7
Male	9	25.0	28	93.3
RACE/ETHNICITY				
White	22	61.1	17	56.7
Black	12	33.3	13	43.3
Other	2	5.6	0	0.0
AGE				
5-24	6	16.7	0	0.0
25-34	9	25.0	8	26.7
35-44	8	22.2	11	36.7
45-54	5	13.9	4	13.3
55-64	4	11.1	0	0.0
>64	4	11.1	7	23.3

Highlights of homicide-suicide in Virginia:

- The majority (69%) of homicide-suicide victims were intimate partners.
- 75% of victims were female and 93.3% of alleged offenders were male.
- The majority of homicide-suicide victims (61.1%) and alleged offenders (56.7%) were White.
- Nearly half of homicide-suicide victims were between the ages of 25 and 44, and over one-third of alleged offenders were between the ages of 35 and 44.
- 92% of homicide-suicide events were committed with a firearm.

SUMMARY TABLES: 1999 - 2000

Rates in the tables were calculated using 2000 Census figures (see Technical Notes).

Table 7. Homicide Victims in Virginia: 1999 - 2000

	1999			2000		
	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate
TOTAL	434	100	6.1	454	100	6.4
SEX						
Female	117	27.0	3.2	125	27.5	3.5
Male	317	73.0	9.1	329	72.5	9.5
RACE/ETHNICITY						
White	160	36.9	3.2	166	36.6	3.2
Black	251	57.8	18.2	255	56.2	18.5
Hispanic	14	3.2	4.2	21	4.6	6.4
Other	9	2.1	3.4	12	2.6	5.2
AGE						
4 and under	25	5.8	5.4	18	4.0	3.9
5-14	6	1.4	0.6	13	2.9	1.3
15-24	117	27.0	12.1	115	25.3	11.9
25-34	105	24.2	10.1	113	24.9	10.9
35-44	90	20.7	7.5	92	20.3	7.7
45-54	45	10.4	4.5	51	11.2	5.1
55-64	17	3.9	2.7	22	4.8	3.5
>64	29	6.7	3.7	30	6.6	3.8
FATAL AGENCY						
Firearm	289	66.6	--	309	68.1	--
Sharp Instrument	58	13.4	--	60	13.2	--
Blunt Instrument	23	5.3	--	24	5.3	--
Personal Weapon	29	6.7	--	26	5.7	--
Strangulation	11	2.5	--	15	3.3	--
Other	24	5.5	--	20	4.4	--
DISTRICT						
Central	169	38.9	9.1	170	37.4	9.2
Northern	58	13.4	2.7	49	10.8	2.3
Tidewater	139	32.0	9.1	136	30.0	8.9
Western	68	15.7	4.3	99	21.8	6.3
TYPE OF HOMICIDE						
Intimate Partner	72	16.6	1.3	85	18.7	1.6
Intimate Partner Associated	15	3.5	0.2	14	3.1	0.2
Child	30	6.9	1.7	24	5.3	1.4
Elder	1	0.2	0.1	3	0.7	0.2
Other Family	27	6.2	0.4	22	4.8	0.3
Other Homicide	289	66.6	4.1	306	67.4	4.3

Table 8. Intimate Partner Homicide Victims in Virginia: 1999 - 2000

	1999			2000		
	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate
TOTAL	72	100	1.3	85	100	1.6
SEX						
Female	53	73.6	1.9	60	70.6	2.2
Male	19	26.4	0.7	25	29.4	1.0
RACE/ETHNICITY						
White	36	50.0	0.9	51	60.0	1.3
Black	32	44.4	3.3	29	34.1	3.0
Other	4	5.6	0.8	5	5.9	1.0
AGE						
15-24	7	9.7	0.7	11	12.9	1.1
25-34	20	27.8	1.9	23	27.1	2.2
35-44	26	36.1	2.2	24	28.3	2.0
45-54	9	12.5	0.9	16	18.8	1.6
>54	10	13.9	0.7	11	12.9	0.8
FATAL AGENCY						
Firearm	42	58.3	--	51	60.0	--
Sharp Instrument	19	26.4	--	18	21.2	--
Blunt Instrument	3	4.2	--	2	2.4	--
Other	8	11.1	--	14	16.4	--
DISTRICT						
Central	25	34.7	1.8	33	38.8	2.4
Northern	12	16.7	0.7	17	20.0	1.1
Tidewater	14	19.4	1.3	15	17.7	1.3
Western	21	29.2	1.7	20	23.5	1.6
RELATIONSHIP OF VICTIM TO ALLEGED OFFENDER						
Spouse	30	41.6	--	33	38.8	--
Ex-Spouse	2	2.8	--	5	5.9	--
Boy/Girlfriend	26	36.1	--	38	44.7	--
Ex-Boy/Girlfriend	8	11.1	--	5	5.9	--
Same-Sex Relationship/Ex-Relationship	3	4.2	--	4	4.7	--
Perceived	3	4.2	--	0	0.0	--

Table 9. Child Homicide Victims in Virginia: 1999 – 2000*

	1999			2000		
	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate
TOTAL	30	100	1.7	24	100	5.8
SEX						
Female	16	53.3	1.9	12	50.0	1.4
Male	14	46.7	1.6	12	50.0	1.3
RACE/ETHNICITY						
White	14	46.7	1.3	9	37.5	0.8
Black	13	43.3	3.2	14	58.3	3.5
Other	3	10.0	1.3	1	4.2	0.4
AGE						
Less than 1	12	40.0	12.9	10	41.7	10.8
1-4	13	43.3	3.5	8	33.3	2.2
5-17	5	16.7	0.4	6	25.0	0.5
FATAL AGENCY						
Firearm	4	13.4	--	6	25.0	--
Personal Weapon	16	53.3	--	16	66.7	--
Other	10	33.3	--	2	8.3	--
DISTRICT						
Central	13	43.4	2.8	9	37.5	2.0
Northern	4	13.3	0.7	4	16.7	0.7
Tidewater	9	30.0	2.2	9	37.5	2.2
Western	4	13.3	1.2	2	8.3	0.6
RELATIONSHIP OF VICTIM TO ALLEGED OFFENDER						
Child	17	56.7	--	15	62.5	--
Stepchild	3	10.0	--	3	12.5	--
Child of Boy/Girlfriend	6	20.0	--	5	20.8	--
Babysittee	3	10.0	--	0	0.0	--
Other Family	1	3.3	--	1	4.2	--

*Child victims are children under the age of 18 who were killed by a caretaker. The data do not include children under 18 killed by someone other than a caretaker and adult children killed by a parent.

Table 10. Other Family Homicide Victims in Virginia: 1999 - 2000

	1999			2000		
	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate
TOTAL	27	100	0.2	22	100	0.3
SEX						
Female	12	44.4	0.3	5	22.7	0.1
Male	15	55.6	0.1	17	77.3	0.5
RACE/ETHNICITY						
White	16	59.3	0.3	10	45.5	0.2
Black	9	33.3	0.7	11	50.0	0.8
Other	2	7.4	0.3	1	4.5	0.1
AGE						
5-24	4	14.8	0.2	5	22.7	0.3
25-34	4	14.8	0.4	3	13.6	0.3
35-44	4	14.8	0.3	5	22.7	0.4
45-54	2	7.5	0.2	6	27.3	0.6
55-64	5	18.5	0.8	1	4.6	0.2
>64	8	29.6	1.0	2	9.1	0.3
FATAL AGENCY						
Firearm	16	59.3	--	17	77.3	--
Sharp Instrument	6	22.2	--	3	13.6	--
Other	5	18.5	--	2	9.1	--
DISTRICT						
Central	7	25.9	0.4	4	18.2	0.2
Northern	8	29.7	0.4	1	4.5	0.0
Tidewater	7	25.9	0.5	2	9.1	0.1
Western	5	18.5	0.3	15	68.2	1.0
RELATIONSHIP OF VICTIM TO ALLEGED OFFENDER						
Child	3	11.1	--	1	4.5	--
Child of Boy/Girlfriend	1	3.7	--	0	0.0	--
Sibling	2	7.4	--	9	40.9	--
Parent	8	29.7	--	5	22.7	--
Stepparent	0	0.0	--	1	4.5	--
Grandparent	4	14.8	--	0	0.0	--
In-Law	4	14.8	--	0	0.0	--
Other Family	5	18.5	--	6	27.4	--

Table 11. Homicide Victims as a Result of Homicide-Suicide Events in Virginia: 1999 - 2000

	1999			2000		
	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate
TOTAL	38	100	0.5	36	100	0.5
SEX						
Female	33	86.8	0.9	27	75.0	0.7
Male	5	13.2	0.1	9	25.0	0.3
RACE/ETHNICITY						
White	24	63.1	0.5	22	61.1	0.4
Black	12	31.6	0.9	12	33.3	0.9
Other	2	5.3	0.3	2	5.6	0.3
AGE						
5-14	2	5.3	0.2	5	13.9	0.5
15-24	6	15.8	0.6	1	2.8	0.1
25-34	10	26.3	1.0	9	25.0	0.9
35-44	12	31.5	1.0	8	22.2	0.7
45-54	2	5.3	0.2	5	13.9	0.5
>54	6	15.8	0.4	8	22.2	0.6
FATAL AGENCY						
Firearm	38	100.0	--	33	91.7	--
Other	0	0.0	--	3	8.3	--
DISTRICT						
Central	17	44.8	0.9	11	30.6	0.6
Northern	7	18.4	0.3	9	25.0	0.4
Tidewater	7	18.4	0.5	5	13.8	0.3
Western	7	18.4	0.4	11	30.6	0.7
RELATIONSHIP OF VICTIM TO ALLEGED OFFENDER						
Spouse	17	44.6	--	11	30.6	--
Ex-Spouse	0	0.0	--	2	5.6	--
Boy/Girlfriend	3	7.9	--	9	25.0	--
Ex-Boy/Girlfriend	6	15.8	--	3	8.3	--
Family	2	5.3	--	4	11.1	--
Child	5	13.2	--	4	11.1	--
Other	5	13.2	--	3	8.3	--

END NOTES

1. Rates were calculated using 2000 Census figures. Source: United States Bureau of the Census, *2000 Census of Population and Housing*. Prepared by the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service. Rates for this report are calculated per 100,000 persons in the population.
2. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner has four district offices (Central, Northern, Tidewater, Western). A list of cities and counties within each district is provided on page 13.
3. Information regarding risk factors in a relationship is gathered during the course of a death investigation. It is likely that the information available at the time of death is incomplete. Therefore, readers should interpret this information cautiously as it is probably underreported.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Throughout this report, information about homicide is presented using three statistics: (1) the *number of cases* that fit a category; (2) the *percentage of cases* that fit a category; and (3) the *homicide rate* for selected categories. Rates provide a standard unit of measurement for homicide and permit precise comparisons between groups. Rates for this report are calculated per 100,000 persons in the population. Listed below are the tables with rates, and the populations used to determine the rates.

Table 1. Homicide Victims in Virginia: 2000;

Table 7. Homicide Victims in Virginia: 1999 - 2000;

Table 10. Other Family Homicide Victims in Virginia: 1999 - 2000; and

Table 11. Homicide Victims as a Result of Homicide-Suicide Events in Virginia: 1999 - 2000

- *All victims* - total population of VA
- *Female and Male victims* - female and male populations of VA
- *White and Black victims* - White and Black populations of VA, excluding persons of Hispanic origin
- *Hispanic victims* - Hispanic population of VA, of any race
- *Other victims (race/ethnicity)* - population of VA not identified as White, Black or Hispanic (as described above)
- *Age* - population of each subgroup in VA
- *Central, Northern, Tidewater, Western* - population of each medical examiner district in VA
- *Intimate Partner* - adult (18 and older) population of VA
- *Intimate Partner Associated* - total population of VA
- *Child* - child (under 18) population of VA
- *Elder* - elder (55 and older) population of VA
- *Other Family* - total population of VA
- *Other Homicide* - total population of VA
- *Fatal Agency; Relationship of Victim to Alleged Offender* - population base cannot be determined with available information

Table 8. Intimate Partner Homicide Victims in Virginia: 1999 - 2000

- *All victims* - adult (18 and older) population of VA
- *Female and Male victims* - female and male adult (18 and older) populations in VA
- *White and Black victims* - White and Black adult (18 and older) populations of VA, excluding persons of Hispanic origin
- *Other victims (race/ethnicity)* - adult (18 and older) population of VA not identified as White or Black (as described above)
- *Age* - population of each subgroup in VA
- *Central, Northern, Tidewater, Western* - adult (18 and older) population of each medical examiner district in VA
- *Fatal Agency; Relationship of Victim to Alleged Offender* - population base cannot be determined with available information

Table 9. Child Homicide Victims in Virginia: 1999 - 2000

- *All victims* - child (under 18) population of VA
- *Female and Male victims* - female and male child (under 18) populations in VA
- *White and Black victims* - White and Black child (under 18) populations in VA
- *Other victims (race/ethnicity)* - child (18 and under) population of VA not identified as White or Black (as described above)
- *Age* - child (under 18) population of each subgroup in VA
- *Central, Northern, Tidewater, Western* - child (under 18) population of each medical examiner district in VA
- *Fatal Agency; Relationship of Victim to Alleged Offender* - population base cannot be determined with available information

Example: In Table 1 the homicide rate for females was calculated using Virginia's female population. In 2000, 125 homicide victims were female; Virginia's female population was estimated at 3,606,620. The female homicide rate per 100,000 is calculated by dividing 125 by 3,606,620, and then multiplying that figure by 100,000. The resulting rate is 3.46, or 3.5. Said another way, 3.5 of every 100,000 females in Virginia were homicide victims in 2000.

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