

Intimate Partner Homicide and Firearms

What is Intimate Partner Violence?

The CDC defines **intimate partner violence (IPV)** as “abuse or aggression that occurs in a romantic relationship against current and former spouses and dating partners”.¹

IPV can take many forms, including physical, sexual, stalking, or psychological aggression. IPV varies in frequency and severity. It can lead to serious injury and death by firearms or other means.

What is an Intimate Partner Homicide?

A death is categorized as an **intimate partner homicide** when the suspected perpetrator’s relationship was a current or former spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend of the victim.

Did You Know?

MVDRS identified the following:

- In 2023, there were 24 intimate partner homicides, more than 3 in 5 of which involved firearms.
- From 2019-2023, there were about 100 intimate partner homicides involving firearms, or 20 per year.
- About 65% of intimate partner homicides involved firearms (*2019-2023 average*). This was similar to the national average of 66% (*2018-2022*).²

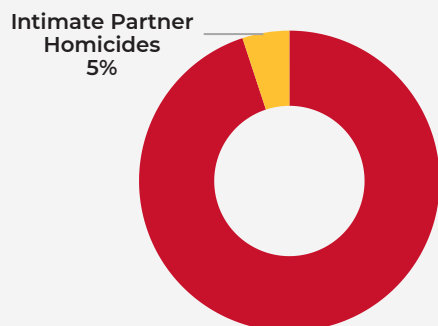
What is the Maryland Violent Death Reporting System?

This fact sheet features data from the **Maryland Violent Death Reporting System (MVDRS)**, which systematically collects information about the circumstances of homicide, suicide, and other violent deaths using information provided in death certificates, medical examiner reports, and law enforcement reports.

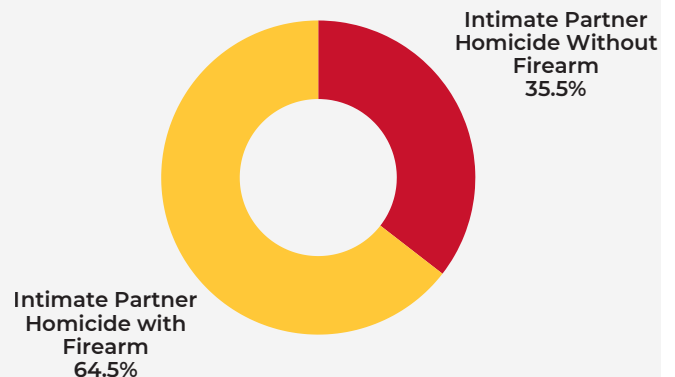
For homicides, information about the victim/suspect relationship is also recorded, when available. The MVDRS data presented in this report are based on homicide deaths where a suspect was identified as a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the decedent.

How Common is Intimate Partner Homicide?

Proportion of Homicides with an Intimate Partner as the Suspected Perpetrator (2019-2023)



Proportion of Intimate Partner Homicides Using a Firearm (2019-2023)



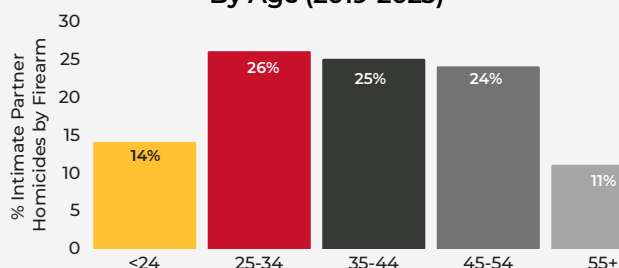
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Who is Most Affected by Intimate Partner Homicide with a Firearm?

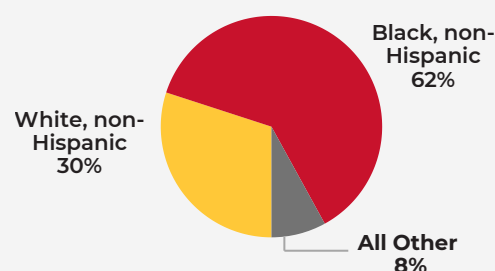


Females were disproportionately impacted by intimate partner homicide with a firearm. From 2019-2023, almost **9 in 10** (87%) of the decedents were female.

Intimate Partner Homicides with Firearm, By Age (2019-2023)



Intimate Partner Homicides with Firearm, By Race/Ethnicity (2019-2023)



Prevention Works



Evidence-informed risk and lethality assessments can help identify, intervene, refer, and serve IPV survivors at the highest risk of being killed.³



Targeted health care interventions for patients at risk for intimate partner homicide (such as those with strangulation injuries³ and pregnant or post-partum women) can help to identify, treat, and refer IPV survivors for services.



Firearm restrictions for Domestic Violence Protective Orders (DVPOs) at temporary and interim levels can reduce intimate partner homicides, especially firearm homicides.⁴



Extreme Risk Protective Orders which temporarily restrict firearm access when certain risks are present, can be used alone or with DVPOs to address threats of harm, including patterns of violent acts or threats and violations of DVPOs.⁵

Available Resources

- **Maryland Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention** health.maryland.gov/violence-prevention
- **Maryland Violent Death Reporting System** health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/Injury/Pages/mvdrs.aspx
- **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence** www.mnadv.org
- **Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence** www.mdpgv.org
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline** www.thehotline.org

References:

- ¹ CDC. About Intimate Partner Violence. Intimate Partner Violence Prevention. Published May 16, 2024. <https://www.cdc.gov/intimate-partner-violence/about/index.html>
- ² WISQARS National Violent Death Reporting System. wisqars.cdc.gov. Accessed September 30, 2025. <https://wisqars.cdc.gov/nvdrs/>
- ³ Messing JT, AbiNader M, Bent-Goodley T, Campbell J. Preventing Intimate Partner Homicide: The Long Road Ahead. *Homicide Studies*. 2021;26(1):108876792110484. doi: 10.1177/10887679211048492
- ⁴ Zeoli AM, McCourt A, Buggs S, Frattaroli S, Lilley D, Webster DW. Analysis of the Strength of Legal Firearm Restrictions for Perpetrators of Domestic Violence and Their Associations With Intimate Partner Homicide. *American Journal of Epidemiology*. 2018;187(11):2365-2371. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/aje/kwy174>
- ⁵ Side-By-Side Comparison of Extreme Risk and Domestic Violence Protection Orders | The National ERPO Resource Center. The National ERPO Resource Center. Published July 29, 2025. Accessed October 9, 2025. <https://erpo.org/resource/side-by-side-comparison-of-extreme-risk-and-domestic-violence-protection-orders/>