

## 11. Violence

### Ranked AL's Eleventh Health Indicator

Alabamians identified violence as the eleventh most significant current health indicator in AL. Violence affects an individual long after the initial incident occurs. A community approach to help prevent violence and understand the risk and protective factors of violence is essential for the health, safety, and well-being of that population.<sup>1</sup>

#### Vulnerable Populations

Women and minority groups are more vulnerable to acts of violence against them. According to CDC, 1 in 5 women and nearly 1 in 7 men in the U.S. have experienced some form of intimate partner violence during their lifetime.<sup>1</sup> The Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) system reports that the motivation for single-bias hate crime incidents across the U.S. targeted victims for their race (57.6 percent), religion (20.1 percent), and sexual orientation (16.7 percent) in 2019.<sup>2</sup>

#### Geographic Variation

Crime statistics are considered a valuable indicator for neighborhood safety, particularly firearm violence. Rural areas typically have higher death rates due to longer emergency transport times after any accident.

#### Topics Addressed for This Indicator are:

- Violent crimes.
- Violent deaths.
- Firearm-related deaths.

#### Highlights

The AL Violent Death Reporting System (AVDRS) is a statewide surveillance program within ADPH and funded by CDC. AVDRS collects detailed information on deaths resulting from violence across the state. Death statistics include suicides, homicides, unintentional firearm deaths, and legal intervention deaths. Data are also retrieved from ADPH Center for Health Statistic Mortality Files:

- In 2019, firearms contributed to most of the suicides/intentional self-harm-related deaths (51.2 percent) and homicides (45.4 percent) in AL.<sup>5</sup>
- In AL, males are four times more likely to die from violent deaths than females (49.8 deaths compared 12.0 deaths per 100,000 persons).

#### Risk Factors:

- Low income housing.
- Presence of neighborhood crime.

## Violent Crimes

Violent crimes include assaults, robberies, rapes, and homicides. AL had 22,927 reports for violent crime and 117,379 reports for property crime in 2019:<sup>3</sup>

- Larceny, which is theft of personal property, was the most prominent violent crime in the state during 2019, followed by burglary and assault.<sup>3</sup>
- Domestic violence was indicated in 4,207 offenses for 2018. Of these offenses, 80 percent of the victims were female, 48 percent were AA/black, and 49 percent were white individuals.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2019, Russell County had the highest homicide rate of 34.5 per 100,000 persons. Tallapoosa County had the highest assault rate of 720.9 per 100,000 persons. Jefferson County had the highest rate of robberies with 171.0 per 100,000 persons. Russell County had the highest rate of rapes with 77.6 per 100,000 persons.<sup>3</sup>

**Figure 11.1** – The breakdown of firearm-related violent deaths by cause of death for 2019. Source: AL Law Enforcement Agency UCR.

Larceny	83,178
Burglary	22,689
Assault	17,329
Robbery	3,282
Rape	1,886
Homicide	430

## Violent Deaths

Violent death is defined as a death that results from the intentional use of physical force or power (threatened or actual) against oneself, another person, group, or community.<sup>4</sup>

In 2019, over 73,000 people died from violent deaths in the U.S., and over 1,400 died in AL:

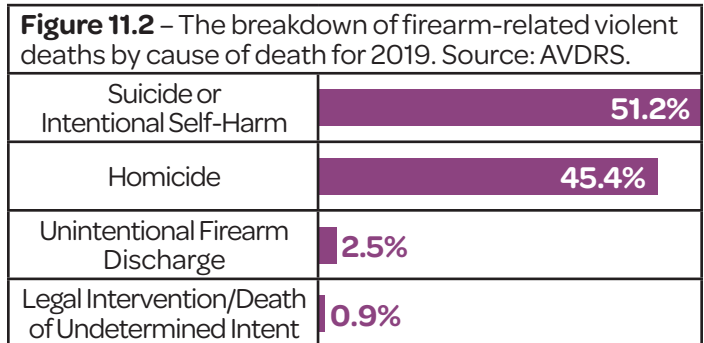
- In AL, males are four times more likely to die from violent deaths than females (49.8 deaths compared to 12.0 deaths per 100,000 persons).
- In 2019, young adults under 45 were more likely to die than older adults.
- More white individuals died from violence in 2019; however, AA/black individuals had a higher violent death rate.

- Lowndes and Wilcox counties had the highest rate with 92.5 deaths and 77.1 deaths per 100,000 persons, respectively.<sup>5</sup>

Table 11.1 – Violent Death Rates, 2019		
	Count	Rate per 100,000
<b>AL</b>	<b>1,483</b>	<b>30.2</b>
<b>U.S.</b>	<b>73,484</b>	<b>22.4</b>
<b>Public Health Districts</b>		
Northern	284	26.1
Northeastern	228	28.2
West Central	112	25.8
Jefferson	270	41.0
East Central	223	31.5
Southeastern	109	28.8
Southwestern	129	31.3
Mobile	128	31.0
<b>Geographic Variation</b>		
N/A	-	-
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	1,179	49.8
Female	304	12.0
<b>Race</b>		
White	927	29.0
AA/black	505	38.9
Hispanic	34	15.2
Other/not provided	11	14.7
<b>Household Income</b>		
N/A	-	-
<b>Age (in years)</b>		
Under 18	73	6.7
18-24	210	46.9
25-34	297	45.9
35-44	292	49.2
45-54	220	35.7
55-64	176	26.8
65+	215	25.3
<b>Education</b>		
Less than high school	406	-
High school or GED	649	-
Some college	263	-
College graduate or higher	152	-

- Firearms were the cause of death for 82.4 percent of all homicides and 67.1 percent of all suicides observed in AL during 2019.
- Over 690 firearm deaths occurred at homes, farms, or residential areas. Other common locations for firearm fatalities were motor vehicle-related locations such as in vehicles, parking lots, or streets and highways with over 170 deaths.<sup>7</sup>
- In Figure 11.2, the data shows that firearms contributed to more suicides/intentional self-harm deaths (51.2 percent) than homicides (45.4 percent) in 2019.
- Firearm injuries inflicted by law enforcement agents acting in the line of duty, unintentional firearm deaths, and firearm deaths with undetermined intent, constituted 3.4 percent of all firearm deaths in 2019.<sup>7</sup>
- According to CDC, 6 out of 10 firearm-related deaths in AL were suicides, and 3 out of 10 firearm deaths were homicides, and more people suffer non-fatal firearm-related injuries than fatal injuries.<sup>6</sup>

This data does not include non-fatal firearm-related injuries, long-term effects of injury, or socioeconomic impacts.



## Data Sources

**Figure 11.1 – AL Violent Crimes, 2019.** AL Law Enforcement Agency, UCR, 2019. Data requested March 2021.

**Table 11.1 – Violent Death Rates, 2019.** ADPH, Center for Health Statistics Mortality Files, 2019. Data requested March 2021.

**Figure 11.2 – Firearm-related Violent Deaths, 2019.** ADPH, AVDRS, 2019. Data requested March 2021.

## Firearm-Related Deaths

In 2019, AVDRS identified 1,050 deaths involving a firearm or 21.4 per 100,000 persons:

- Of these deaths, 45.4 percent were homicides, and 51.2 percent were suicides.

## Written Sources

- CDC, Preventing Intimate Partner Violence, 2020.
- FBI, UCR, 2019.

- 3 AL Law Enforcement Agency, UCR / Domestic Violence in AL, 2019.
4. CDC, Violence Prevention, 2019
5. ADPH, Center for Health Statistics, 2019.
6. CDC, Firearm Violence Prevention, 2020.
7. ADPH, AVDRS, 2019.

## Community Resources

### **2nd Chance, INC**

Location: Etowah County, AL  
Type: Domestic Violence Shelter

### **AL Appleseed Center for Law and Justice**

Location: Montgomery County, AL  
Type: Advocacy Program

### **AL Child Death Review System**

Location: Statewide  
Type: State Government Organization

### **AL Law Enforcement Agency**

Location: Statewide  
Type: State Government Organization

### **AVDRS**

Location: Statewide  
Type: State Government Organization

### **CDC Injury Center**

Location: Atlanta, GA  
Type: Federal Government Organization

### **Crisis Center of Russell County**

Location: Russell County, AL  
Type: Domestic Violence Shelter

### **Hope Place**

Location: Madison County, AL  
Type: Domestic Violence Shelter

### **Occupational Safety and Health Administration**

Location: Washington, DC Metro  
Type: Federal Government Organization

### **National Institute of Justice**

Location: Washington, DC Metro  
Type: Federal Government Organization

### **SafeHouse of Shelby County**

Location: Shelby County, AL  
Type: Domestic Violence Shelter

### **University of AL at Birmingham Injury Control Research Center**

Location: Jefferson County, AL  
Type: Research Institution