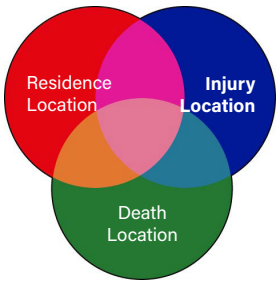
Tennessee Violent Death Reporting System

Quick Facts: What is TNVDRS?

The Tennessee Violent Death Reporting System (TNVDRS) helps state and local officials understand why violent deaths occur by linking data from medical examiner, law enforcement, and vital statistics records. It is the only data system for homicide and suicide that pools data on violent deaths and their circumstances from multiple sources into one anonymous database. TNVDRS collects over 600 unique data elements to provide context on violent deaths occurring in our state including: homicide, suicide, unintentional firearm deaths, legal intervention, and deaths of undetermined intent. For more information or to request additional data, please contact us at TN.VDRS@tn.gov

Why are TNVDRS counts unique?

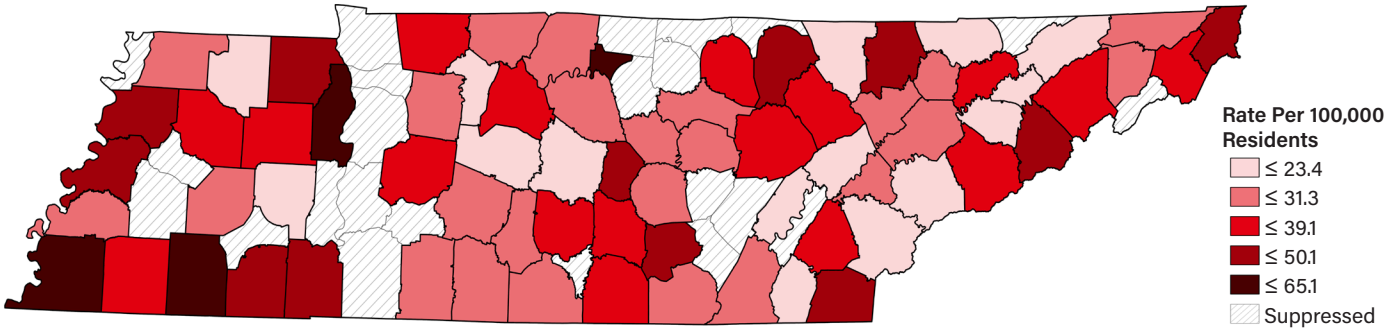
There are three geographic elements collected in mortality data: residence location, injury location, and death location. A death is included in the TNVDRS dataset if the location of ***injury*** is in the state of Tennessee.



Many deaths share residence, injury, and/or death location, but depending on which one a dataset uses in its definition, it may include deaths that a different dataset leaves out.

This means that TNVDRS collects information beneficial to understanding how resources should be allocated because our data allows an understanding of how geographical jurisdictions are impacted by violent death in addition to how individuals are affected.

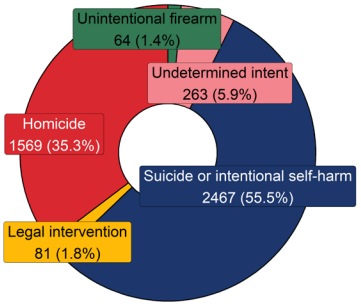
Violent Death Rates by County of Injury | TNVDRS, 2020–2021



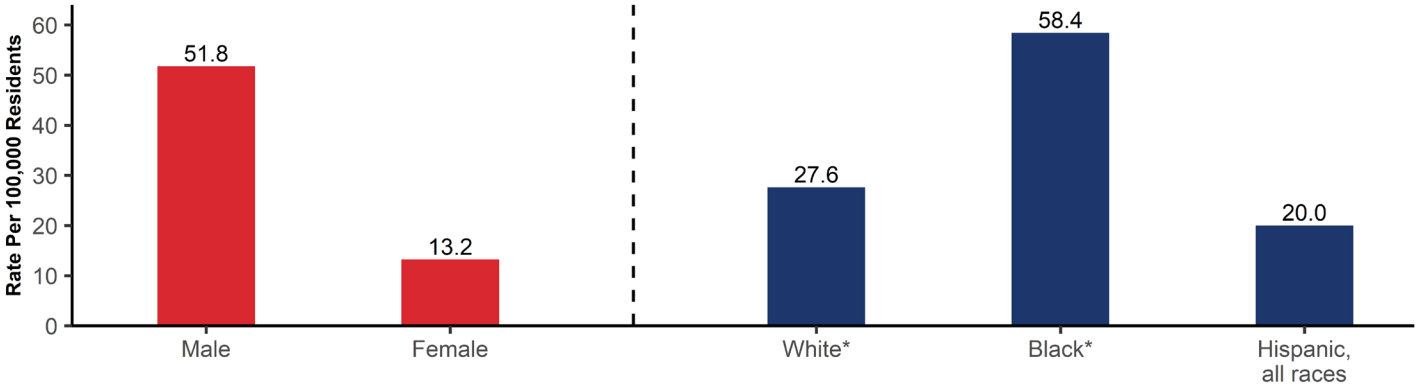
In 2020, there were 2,209 violent deaths, and in 2021, there were 2,235 violent deaths. Counties not shaded had fewer than 10 violent deaths included in TNVDRS from 2020 to 2021. No county had a statistically significant change in violent rate from 2020 to 2021, which is why we can aggregate the data.

Manners of Death | TNVDRS, 2020–2021

Fifty-five percent (55.5%) of TNVDRS cases from 2020 to 2021 were classified as suicide or intentional self-harm. An additional 35.3% of cases were homicides. The remainder of cases were either undetermined intent (5.9%), legal intervention (1.8%), or unintentional firearm deaths (1.4%). The distribution of percentages of manner of death did not change substantially between 2020 and 2021.



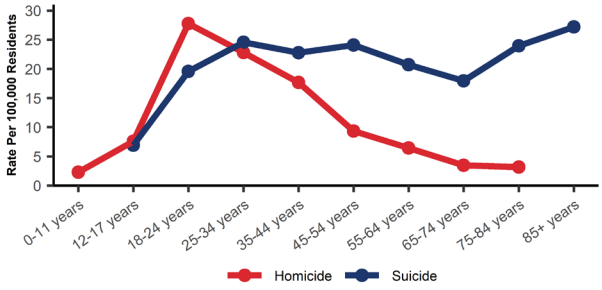
Rates by Age, Sex, and Race/Ethnicity | TNVDRS, 2020–2021



The violent death mortality rate was 3.9 times higher for males than females (51.8 per 100,000 compared to 13.2 per 100,000), as shown above. We can also see that black individuals had a higher rate than white individuals (58.4 per 100,000 compared to 27.6 per 100,000). These groupings include Hispanic white and Hispanic black decedents respectively due to the available population groups for rate calculation. The violent death mortality rate for Hispanic decedents of all races was 20.0 per 100,000.

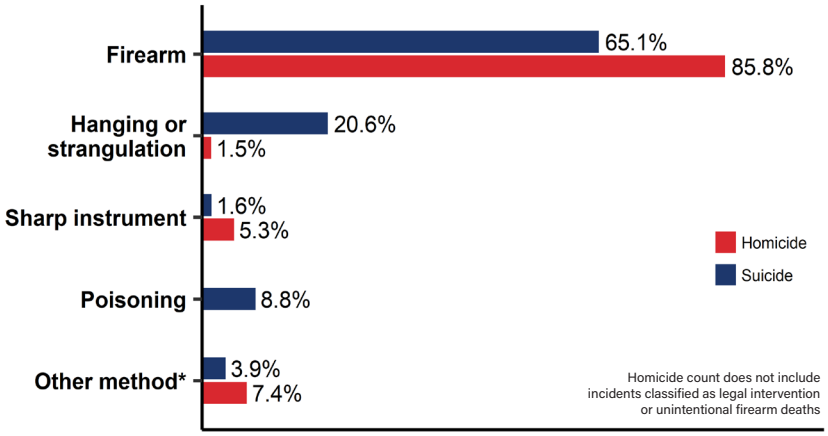
As shown in the figure to the right, the homicide rate was higher than the suicide rate among individuals younger than 25. For all other ages, the suicide rate was higher than the homicide rate. Homicide statistics exclude deaths due to legal intervention.

Individuals aged 18 to 24 had the highest homicide rate at 27.8 per 100,000, and individuals over the age of 85 had the highest suicide rate at 27.2 per 100,000, although we note that all age groups over 25 years had suicide rates that were relatively close to this value.



Method of Death by Manner | TNVDRS, 2020–2021

The majority of deaths due to suicide involved a firearm (65.1%), followed by hanging (20.6%), and poisoning (8.8%). The majority of deaths due to homicide involved a firearm (85.8%), followed by a sharp instrument (5.3%). Mechanisms with low counts were aggregated into the "Other method" category shown; refer to the annual reports on the TNVDRS website for more specific information about method of death for homicide or suicide deaths.



* Includes personal weapons, fall, drowning, blunt instrument, and other methods with low counts

TNVDRS had available toxicology information for 83.7% of individuals from 2020 to 2021. Almost twenty-four percent (23.8%) of individuals with available toxicology results had no substances present. The most common substances present were marijuana (33.2%), ethanol (18.1%), methamphetamine (14.8%), and fentanyl (7.8%). There is substantial variation in toxicology results based on the manner of death.