

# Firearm Injury and Death in North Carolina, 2022

Note: some data are provisional and subject to change

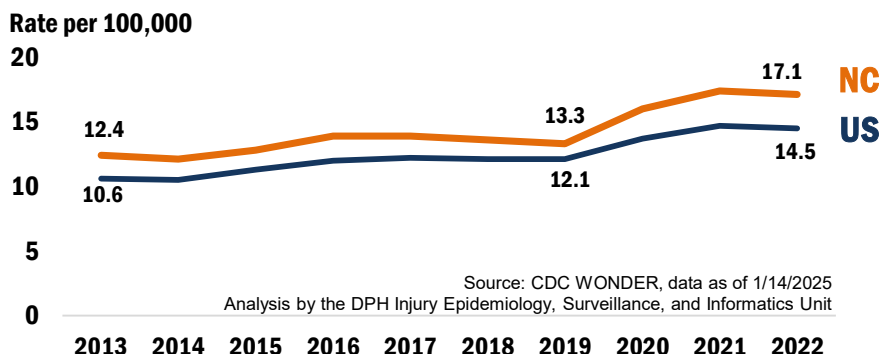
**5** people a day die from firearm injury in NC.

There were **1,782** firearm-related deaths among North Carolina (NC) residents in 2022.

The number of firearm deaths in NC has increased by 48% over the past 10 years, with a **29% increase from the start of the pandemic** from 1,379 deaths in 2019 to 1,782 deaths in 2022.

Source: NC-VDRS, 2022

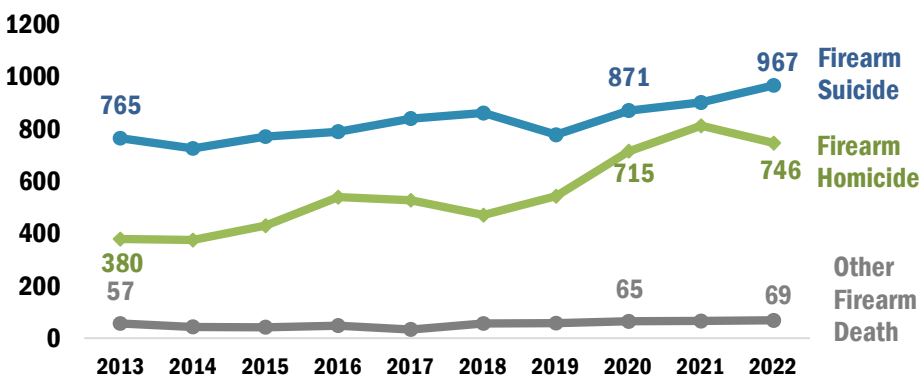
**The rate of firearm injury death is higher in NC than across the US.** NC has experienced a greater increase in firearm deaths since 2019.



Source: CDC WONDER, data as of 1/14/2025  
Analysis by the DPH Injury Epidemiology, Surveillance, and Informatics Unit

**Over half (54%) of NC firearm deaths in 2022 were suicides, and 42% were homicides.**

Number of Firearm Deaths by Manner, NC-VDRS, 2013-2022



Limited to NC residents  
Source: NC Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS), 2013-2022  
Analysis by the DPH Injury Epidemiology, Surveillance, and Informatics Unit

If you or someone you know needs support call or text **988** or chat **988lifeline.org**

**Firearm suicides** have increased by 26% over the past 10 years to over 950 deaths in 2022.

**Firearm homicides** increased by 96% over the past 10 years, and by 37% since the start of the pandemic (2019 to 2022).

**Other firearm death** includes unintentional firearm deaths, legal intervention, and other firearm deaths of undetermined intent.

The rate of firearm death was over 5 times higher for males than females (28.5 and 5.3 per 100,000, respectively).

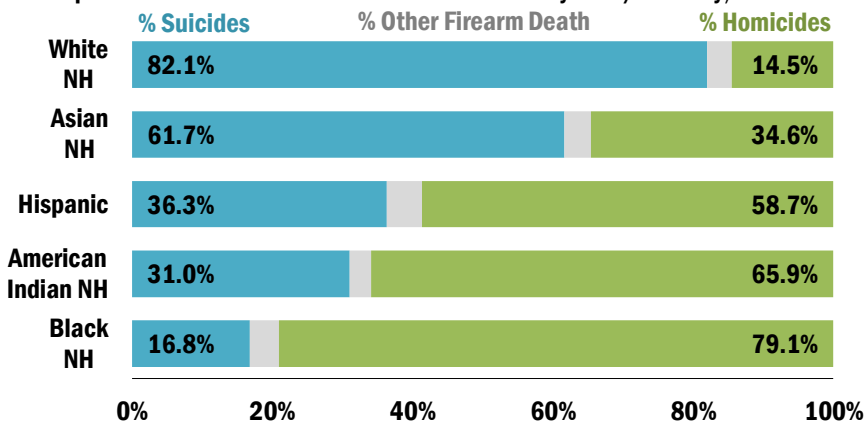
Rates of firearm death were highest among males ages 18-24 (49.9 per 100,000) and males ages 25-34 (45.2 per 100,000).

By race/ethnicity, rates of firearm-related death were highest among non-Hispanic (NH) American Indian males and NH Black males, followed by NH white males (61.3, 54.2, and 23.9 per 100,000, respectively).

**The manner of firearm-related death differs by race/ethnicity.**

Most firearm deaths among NH Black, NH American Indian, and Hispanic residents were **homicides**, where most firearm-related deaths among NH Asian and NH white residents were **suicides**.

Proportion of Firearm Suicide and Homicide Deaths by Race/Ethnicity, 2013-2022



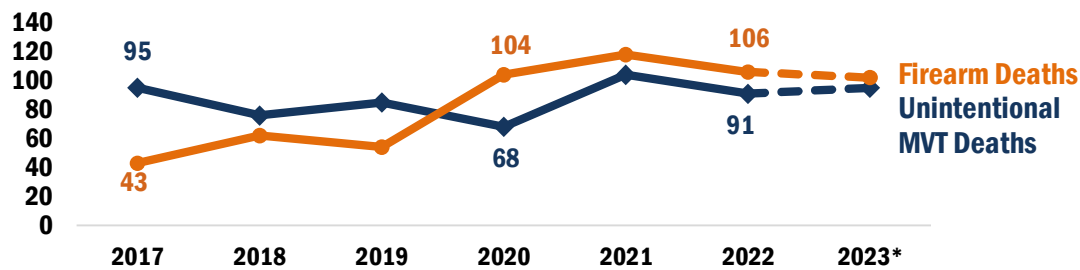
Limited to NC residents; suicides limited to residents ages 10 and older; Source: NC-VDRS, 2013-2022  
Analysis by the DPH Injury Epidemiology, Surveillance, and Informatics Unit

**Firearm deaths are a health equity issue.**

Generations of social, economic, and environmental inequities contribute to disparities in injuries, including from firearms. When interpreting data, it is crucial to recognize and acknowledge these systemic, avoidable, and/or unjust factors.

# Child firearm deaths surpassed the number of child deaths from motor vehicle traffic (MVT) crashes for the first time in NC in 2020 and remain a leading cause of child injury death.

Number of Child Deaths



**More than 100 children ages 0-17 died from a firearm injury in NC in 2022.** Child firearm injury deaths increased 147% from 2017 to 2022.

\*2023 Death Certificate (DC) data are provisional and subject to change, data as of 1/6/2025; Limited to NC residents ages 0-17  
Source: NC-VDRS, 2017-2022; NC State Center for Health Statistics, DC Data, 2017-2023\*  
Analysis by the DPH Injury Epidemiology, Surveillance, and Informatics Unit

## Firearm deaths are preventable.

Storing firearms safely, locked and unloaded, can greatly reduce the risk of firearm-related injury and death.



**1/3** of youth suicides and unintentional deaths are prevented by securing firearms.  
*Monuteaux, Azrael, Miller, JAMA Pediatr. 2019*

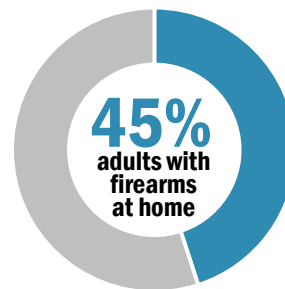


Storing ammunition in a locked location separate from firearms can reduce the risk of firearm injury, especially in households with children.

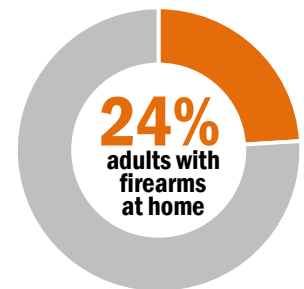
## More than 1.5 Million (42%) of NC adults have a firearm in or around the home.

Nearly half of adults store their firearm(s) **loaded** and 1 in 4 adults store their firearm(s) **both loaded and unlocked**.

Firearms Stored **Loaded**



Firearms Stored **Loaded & Unlocked**



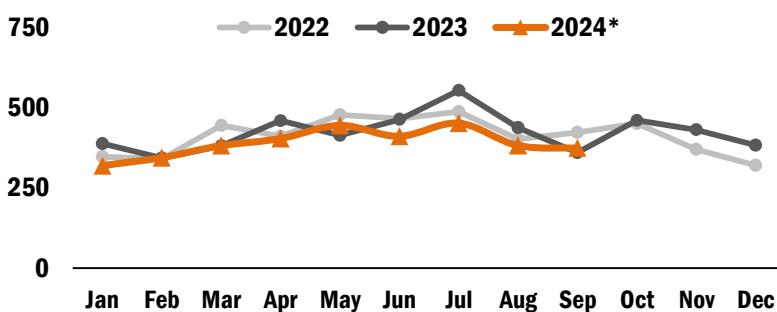
## Firearm deaths are just the tip of the iceberg

For every 1 firearm death, there were 2 emergency department (ED) visits coded for firearm injury in NC.

**NC-FASTER** (Firearm Injury Surveillance Through Emergency Rooms) provides surveillance data in near-real time on ED visits for nonfatal firearm injuries based on diagnosis codes and free-text chief complaint information.

**2024\*** Firearm injury ED visits trends are similar to previous years.

Number of NC-FASTER Firearm ED Visits by Month, 2022-2024\*



\*2024 NC FASTER ED visit data are provisional and subject to change, data as of 1/14/2025;  
Source: NC DETECT ED visit data, 2022-2024\*, Firearm Injury - All Intentions CDC V2  
Analysis by the DPH Injury Epidemiology, Surveillance, and Informatics Unit

In 2022, males, young adults (18-24), and NH Black residents experienced a higher than expected burden of firearm-related injury ED visits.

- 80%** Males made up 80% of ED visits vs. 49% of the state population.
- 29%** 18-24 year olds made up 29% of ED visits but only 9% of the population.
- 70%** NH Black residents made up 70% of ED visits vs. 22% of the population in NC.

NC-FASTER quarterly fact sheets with provisional data on nonfatal firearm injury ED visits are available [here](#) on the NC DETECT website.

### Injury and Violence Prevention Branch Resources

- <https://injuryfreenc.dph.ncdhhs.gov/safestorage/index.htm>
- <https://injuryfreenc.dph.ncdhhs.gov/preventionResources/Suicide.htm>

### National Resources

- The Suicide Prevention Resource Center: <http://www.sprc.org/>
- The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <https://afsp.org/>

### State Resources & Partners

- NC Office of Violence Prevention <https://www.ncsafe.org>
- NC Office of the Chief Medical Examiner <https://www.ocme.dhhs.nc.gov/>
- Division of Child and Family Wellbeing <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/division-child-and-family-well-being>



NC DEPARTMENT OF **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**  
Division of Public Health