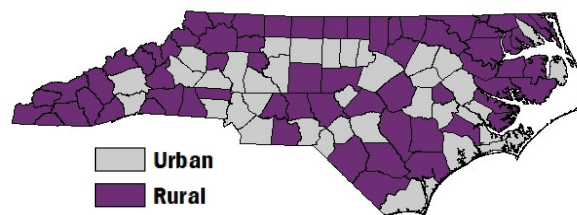


NC Violent Death Reporting System

SUICIDE IN RURAL AND URBAN NORTH CAROLINA, 2024

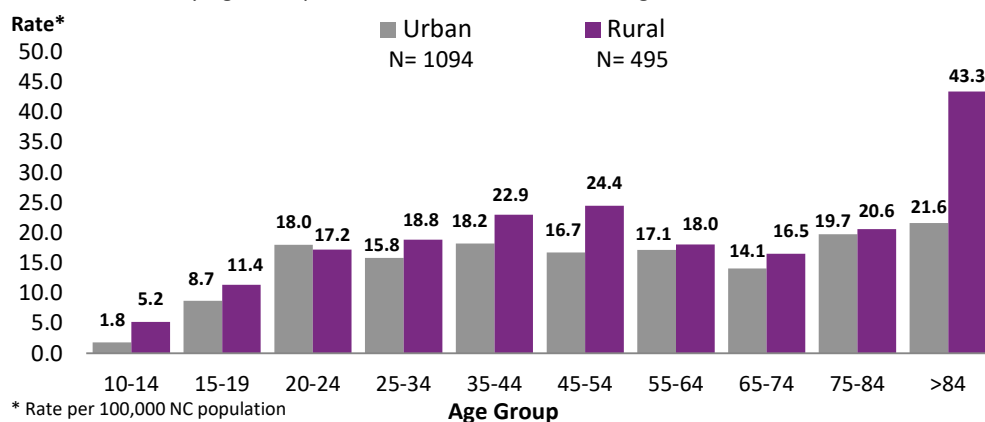
• Of North Carolina's 100 counties, 61 (61%) are classified as rural. Although most counties are considered rural, they are home to only 26.7% of the total state population.

• 792 (30.3%) of 2,616 violent deaths occurred among rural NC residents. Most rural violent deaths were suicides (62.5%).



The suicide rate in 2024 was 23% higher among rural residents than urban residents.

Rates of Suicide by Age Group in Rural vs Urban counties: Ages 10 and older, 2023



• The 2024 suicide rate among rural residents was 1.2 times the rate for urban residents (18.9 and 15.3 per 100,000, respectively), and was also higher than the state suicide rate (16.2 per 100,000).

• Rural county suicide rates were consistently higher than urban county suicide rates across all age groups, with the exception of those ages 20 to 24.

• The suicide rate was highest for rural victims ages 85 and older with a rate of 43.3 per 100,000. This was 2.0 times the rate for urban county suicides among the same age group.

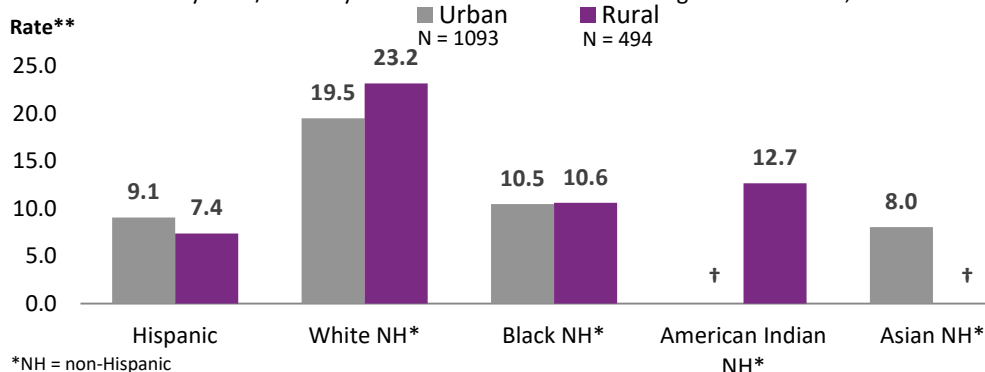
• 81.8% of rural suicide victims were male. The rate among male rural victims was 4.7 times that of female rural victims (31.5 and 6.7 per 100,000 respectively).

• Similarly, rates of suicide among urban male victims was 4.3 times that of female victims (25.3 and 5.9 per 100,000 respectively).

• Most suicides in NC involve firearms (64.6%). Firearms were more commonly used in rural suicides (69.5%) than urban suicides (62.4%).

After Non-Hispanic (NH) White victims, NH American Indian victims died by suicide at a higher rate than other race/ethnicities in rural NC counties.

Rates of Suicide by Race/Ethnicity in Rural vs Urban counties: Ages 10 and older, 2023



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

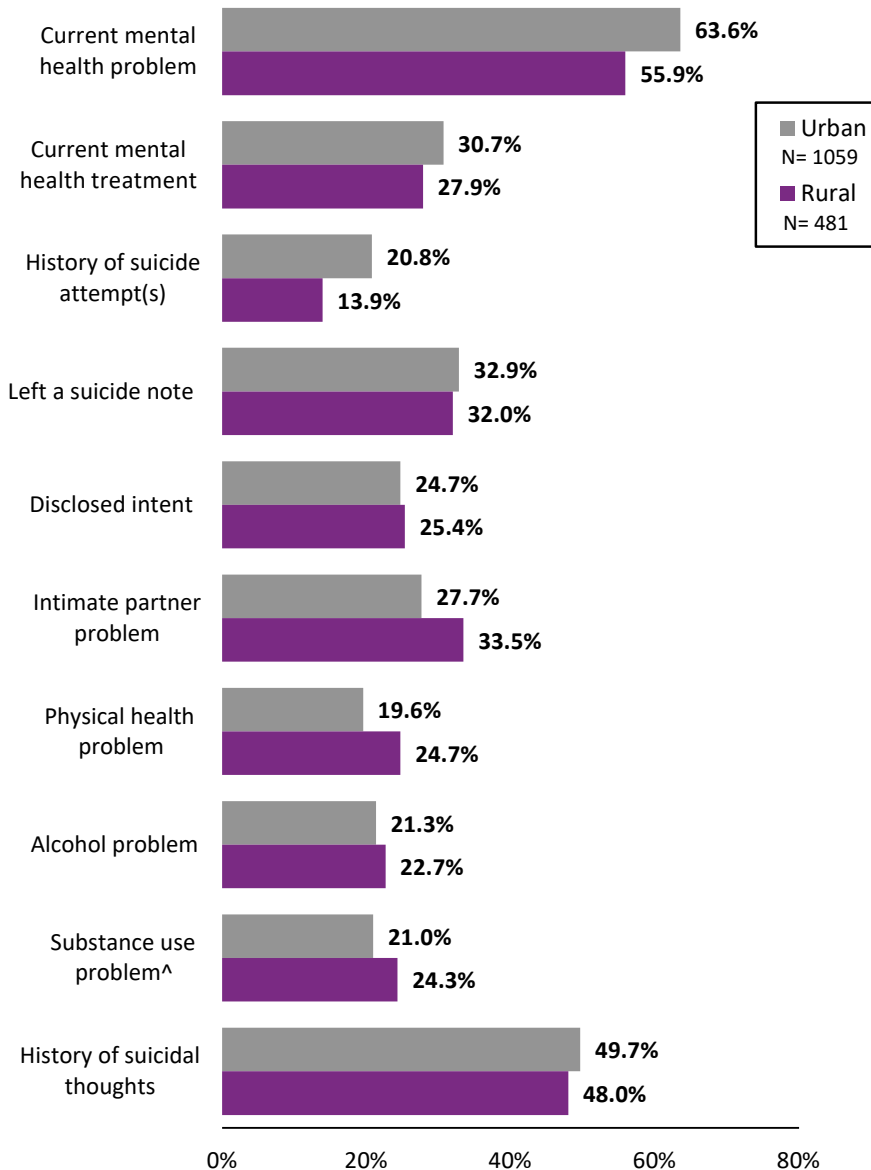
• Non-Hispanic (NH) White residents experienced the highest rates of suicide in both urban (19.5 per 100,000) and rural (23.2 per 100,000) counties.

• The second highest suicide rate for residents of rural counties was among NH American Indian (12.7 per 100,000) victims. The second highest rate of suicide in urban counties was among NH Black (10.5 per 100,000) residents.

The North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS) is a CDC-funded statewide surveillance system that collects detailed information on violent deaths that occur in North Carolina including: homicide, suicide, unintentional firearm deaths, legal intervention, and deaths of undetermined intent. NC-VDRS uses information from death certificates, medical examiner reports, and law enforcement reports to understand and aid in the prevention of violent deaths. For more information, please visit the [NC-VDRS page](#) within the Injury and Violence Prevention website.

Circumstances* surrounding urban and rural county suicides.

Precipitating Circumstances of Suicide in Rural vs Urban counties, 2023



* Chart excludes 49 deaths that did not have reported circumstance information. 97.2% of rural cases had circumstance information. Similarly, 96.8% of urban cases had circumstance information.

^ Non-alcohol substance use problem

- Fewer suicide victims of rural NC counties currently had a mental health problem (55.9%) than urban suicide victims (63.6%).

- Although 55.9% of rural suicide victims currently had a mental health problem, 27.9% were known to be currently receiving mental health treatment.

- A smaller proportion of rural suicide victims had a history of suicide attempt(s) (13.9%), but a larger proportion of rural suicide victims had a history of suicidal thoughts (48.0%) compared to urban suicide victims (20.8% and 49.7% respectively).

- Rural suicide victims were slightly more likely to have an alcohol problem (22.7%) than urban victims (21.3%), and rural suicide victims were more likely to have another substance use problem (24.3%) than urban suicide victims (21.0%).

- Rural suicide victims were more likely to have had an intimate partner problem (33.5%) than urban suicide victims (27.7%).

- Rural suicide victims were less likely to have left a suicide note (32.0%), but more likely to have disclosed their suicide intent (25.4%) than urban victims (32.9% and 24.7%, respectively).

- Rural suicide victims were more likely to have a physical health problem (24.7%) than urban suicide victims (19.6%).

More information on suicide prevention efforts can be found at:	
State Resource Partners	National Resources
<u>Division of Mental Health,</u>	<u>The Suicide Prevention Resource Center</u>
<u>Developmental Disabilities and Substance Use Services</u>	
<u>Office of the Chief Medical Examiner</u>	<u>The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention</u>
<u>Injury and Violence Prevention's Suicide Prevention Website</u>	<u>The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline</u>
<u>Division of Child and Family Well-being</u>	call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org

The North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System is supported by Cooperative Agreement 5NU17/CE002613-05-00 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Public Health
Injury and Violence Prevention Branch



NC DHHS Division of Public Health / Injury Epidemiology & Surveillance Unit / 919-707-5425
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2024 FINAL DATA 7/21/2026
Please see the [NC-VDRS 2024 Annual Report](#) for additional data and technical information.