

Self-Inflicted Injury and Death in North Carolina, 2023

Note: some data are provisional and subject to change

4 people a day die from suicide in NC.

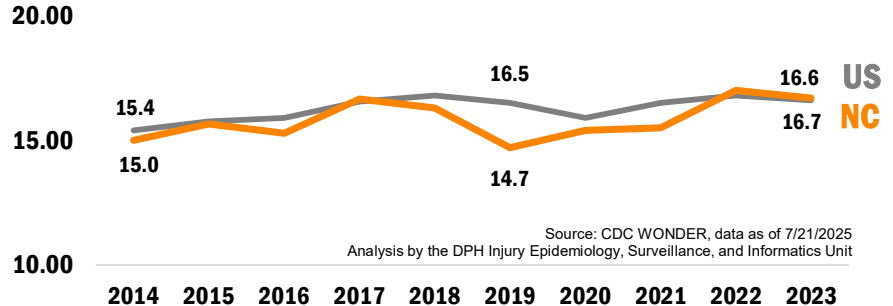
There were **1,593 suicide-related deaths** among North Carolina (NC) residents in 2023.

The number of suicide deaths in NC has increased by 22% over the past 10 years, with a **17% increase from the start of the pandemic** from 1,358 deaths in 2019 to 1,593 deaths in 2023.

Source: NC Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS), 2014-2023
Analysis by the DPH Injury Epidemiology, Surveillance, and Informatics Unit

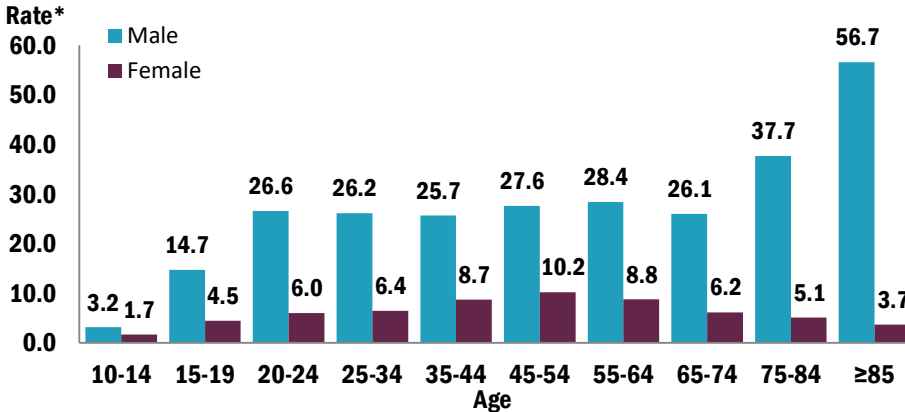
The rate of suicide death is slightly lower in NC than across the US. NC has experienced an increase in suicide death rates since 2019.

Rate per 100,000



Over half (60%) of NC violent deaths in 2023 were suicides, and a third (33%) were homicides.

Sex-Specific Suicide Rates by Age, NC-VDRS 2014-2023



Limited to NC residents; suicides limited to residents ages 10 and older.
Source: NC Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS), 2014-2023
Analysis by the DPH Injury Epidemiology, Surveillance, and Informatics Unit

Non-Hispanic (NH) White residents had the highest proportion of **suicides** out of all violent deaths (80.9%), followed by NH Asian and Hispanic residents (74.5% and 50.1%, respectively).

In contrast, NH Black residents had the highest proportion of **homicide deaths** (72.3%), followed by NH American Indian residents (58.1%).

By race/ethnicity, rates of all **suicide deaths** were highest among NH White residents (20.3 deaths per 100,000) followed by NH American Indian and NH Asian residents (14.8 and 8.5 deaths per 100,000, respectively).

Males consistently had a higher suicide rate than females regardless of age. The suicide rate peaked for men ages 85 years and older at a rate of 56.7 per 100,000.

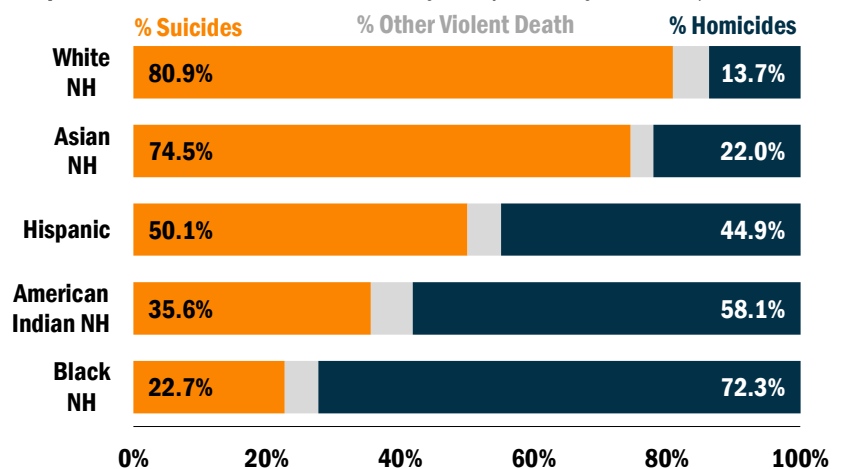
Among females, the suicide rate peaked for ages 45-54 at a rate of 10.2 per 100,000 and steadily declined thereafter.

The rate of suicide death was 3.6 times higher for males than females (25.0 and 7.0 per 100,000, respectively).

The manner of violent death differs by race/ethnicity.

Most violent deaths among NH White, NH Asian, and Hispanic residents were **suicides**, whereas most violent deaths among NH Black and NH American Indian residents were **homicides**.

Proportion of Male and Female Suicides by Race/Ethnicity: NC-VDRS, 2014-2023



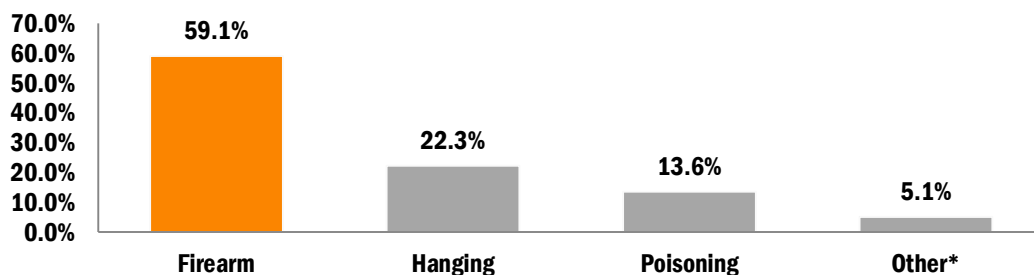
Limited to NC residents; suicides limited to residents ages 10 and older.
Source: NC Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS), 2014-2023
Analysis by the DPH Injury Epidemiology, Surveillance, and Informatics Unit

Get Help Now: Suicide Prevention

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

After **firearms** (59.1%), hanging (22.3%) and poisoning (13.6%) were the second and third leading causes of suicide, respectively.

Method of Suicide Death: NC-VDRS 2014-2023



Limited to NC residents; suicides limited to residents ages 10 and older.
Source: NC Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS), 2014-2023
Analysis by the DPH Injury Epidemiology, Surveillance, and Informatics Unit

Approximately five percent (5.1%) of suicides were completed using a method other than firearms, hanging, or poisoning, which includes falls (1.3%), motor vehicle (0.7%), sharp instrument (1.6%), drowning (0.7%), fire/burns (0.4%), unknown and other causes of suicide.

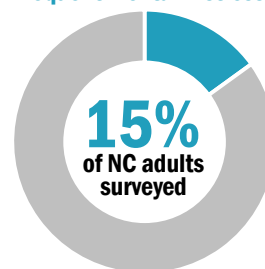
Suicide Death Circumstances

- 32%** About 32% of NC residents who died by suicide were characterized as **currently depressed**.
- 55%** Roughly 55% of NC residents who died by suicide had a **current mental health problem**.
- 26%** Nearly 26% of NC residents who died by suicide **disclosed their suicidal intention** to someone else.
- 42%** Almost 42% of NC residents who died by suicide **experienced a recent crisis**.

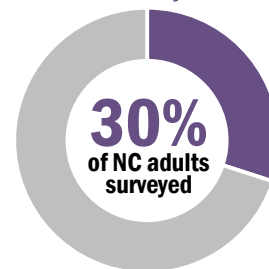
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Source: NC Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS), 2014-2023
Analysis by the DPH Injury Epidemiology, Surveillance, and Informatics Unit

More than 1/7 of NC adults experienced **frequent mental distress** and more than 1/4 of NC adults reported feeling **lonely**.

Experienced Frequent Mental Distress



Felt Lonely



* Frequent Mental Distress = 14 or more days of poor mental health in the past month
Limited to NC Residents

Source: NC BRFSS Core Module, 2023 <https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/brfss/2023/nc/all/topics.htm>

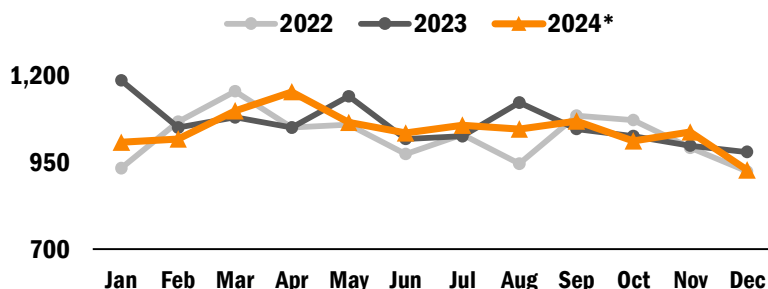
Suicide deaths are just the tip of the iceberg

For every 1 suicide death, there were about 8 emergency department (ED) visits coded for self-inflicted injury in NC.

NC DETECT (North Carolina Disease Event Tracking and Epidemiological Collection Tool) provides surveillance data in near-real time on ED visits for nonfatal self-inflicted injuries based on diagnosis codes.

2024* Self-inflicted injury ED visits increased in April, though trends are similar to previous years.

Number of Self-Inflicted Injury ED Visits by Month, 2021-2023*



*2024 NC DETECT ED visit data are provisional and subject to change, data as of 5/13/2025;
Source: NC DETECT ED visit data, 2022-2024*
Analysis by the DPH Injury Epidemiology, Surveillance, and Informatics Unit

In 2024, females, youth (10-18), and NH White residents experienced a higher than expected burden of self-inflicted injury-related ED visits.

- 60%** Females made up 60% of ED visits vs. 51% of the state population.
- 29%** 10-18 year olds made up 29% of ED visits but only 13% of the population.
- 60%** Most visits were among non-Hispanic (NH) White residents (60%) followed by NH Black

Self-Inflicted Injury quarterly fact sheets with provisional data on nonfatal ED visits are available [here](#) on the IVPB 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: <https://sprc.org/>

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <https://afsp.org/>

State Resources & Partners

Office of Violence Prevention

<https://www.ncdps.gov/about-dps/current-initiatives/north-carolina-office-violence-prevention>

Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

<https://www.ocme.dhhs.nc.gov/>

Division of Child and Family Wellbeing

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/child-and-family-well-being>



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