



2024 Colorado Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board Key Findings

What is a Domestic Violence Fatality or DVF?

The death of any person that results from an act of domestic violence (DV) or occurs in the context of an intimate partner relationship.

2023 DVF Data

Each year roughly 10% of all murders in Colorado are DVFs.

In 2023, 56 people died in 47 DVF cases. This is lower than last year's 94 deaths, but the decrease is proportional to the decrease in homicides statewide. Fifty-four percent of the DVFs were the DV victim, 37% were perpetrators, and 9% were collateral victims.



Nearly 20% of DV cases involved a Protection Orders (PO) at some point, but only one case had an active PO at the time of death, suggesting POs have a protective function.



Geographic disparities were evident in the data, with rural counties in Colorado experiencing a disproportionately higher rate of DVFs compared to urban areas.

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Seven community members were killed in DVF cases and tragically over half were children.



DV generally, and DVFs specifically, remain a very gendered crime. Eighty-nine percent of DVF victims this year were women, and 89% of perpetrators were male.



Consistent with all past reports, firearms are the most common weapons involved in DVFs. They caused 95% of perpetrator deaths and 63% of victim deaths.



There were 365 background check denials because someone tried to purchase a gun when they were subject to some sort of restraining order. Victims are almost never notified in these circumstances.

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DV Risk Factors



Pregnancy has been identified as one of the riskiest times for DVFs. Over 4% of cases this year included pregnant women.



Children and teens remain at great risk in DVFs. Three of the DVF cases involved teenagers with perpetrators as young as 15 and DV victims as young as 14. In the past five years, 14 children have been DVF victims.



Three of the 58 DVF cases involved active family court cases and three had resolved family court cases. This finding mirrors existing research that involvement in custody and other family law disputes are risk factors for DVFs.

It is important to pay attention to the risk factors common among DVF victims.

- DV perpetrator's access to a gun
- DV perpetrator drug/alcohol abuse
- DV perpetrator demonstrating controlling and possessive behavior
- DV perpetrator's social dependence on the victim
- Pending domestic relations cases
- History of past acts of domestic violence
- Threats of suicide

Domestic Relations Practitioners

- 1. Many DVF victims have never had any civil or legal system involvement.** People stay in abusive relationships for many reasons. Do not take the fact that someone stays with an alleged abuser to mean they are being untruthful about DV.
- 2. Involvement in a domestic relations case is a risk factor for DVF.** This means the lives of individuals appearing before you may be in danger. Paying attention to risk factors detailed above is therefore critical.
- 3. Most DV victims do not report the first - or every - act of abuse for many reasons.** When they do report to law enforcement, they frequently do so when they cannot manage the situation on their own and need acute intervention. Even in these circumstances, they may minimize the full scope of the abuse to mitigate future consequences by abusers for calling the police.