

# GUN VIOLENCE IN WASHINGTON STATE BY THE NUMBERS



**Gun violence is a public health crisis impacting every corner of the state. Though every Washingtonian is impacted by the gun violence epidemic, we are not impacted equally. These numbers help illustrate the crisis in our communities.**

## FAST FACTS

Every year, **781 Washingtonians are killed by guns**, a rate of 10.2 per 100,000 people.

Someone is killed by a gun **every 12 hours** in Washington state.

More than **75 percent of gun deaths in Washington are suicides**.

Gun violence is the **leading cause of death for children and teens**.

Gun violence costs Washington state an average of **\$5.3 billion every year**.

More than **34 percent of Washingtonians report having a firearm** in their household.

Only **36 percent of people in gun-owning households practice safe storage**—keeping firearms locked and unloaded.

**179 people** have been fatally shot by Washington police since 2015.

More people are killed by guns than die in **car accidents** in Washington.

Washington has the **40th highest rate** of gun violence in the United States.

## GUN VIOLENCE BY INTENT

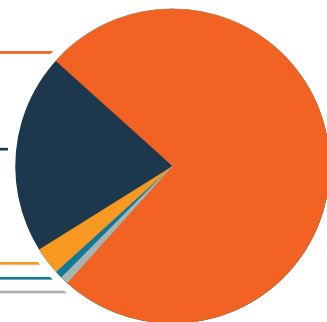
**Suicide 75%**

**Homicide(including domestic violence) 20%**

**Police Involved 3%**

**Other 1%**

**Mass Shootings 1%**



**SUICIDE:** The vast majority of gun deaths in Washington state—more than **75 percent**—are suicides. White and American Indian and Alaska Native people have the highest rate of gun suicide at 8.8 and 8.3 per 100,000 people respectively.



**HOMICIDE:** Sixty-eight percent of all homicides in Washington involve firearms. Homicides, including police shootings, account for **24 percent** of all gun deaths in the state and disproportionately impact Black communities. Black Washingtonians are six times more likely to die by gun homicide than white Washingtonians.

**POLICE VIOLENCE:** Since 2015, **179 people** have been fatally shot by law enforcement in Washington. While white people represent the largest number of victims of police violence, BIPOC Washingtonians are disproportionately likely to be fatally shot by police. For example, 44 percent of victims of fatal police shootings were white but white people account for 61 percent of the state population.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:** **56 percent** of intimate partner homicides in Washington are carried out with a firearm. Perpetrators of domestic violence homicide in Washington use firearms more often than all other weapons combined. Women account for **87 percent** of intimate partner homicide victims in Washington.

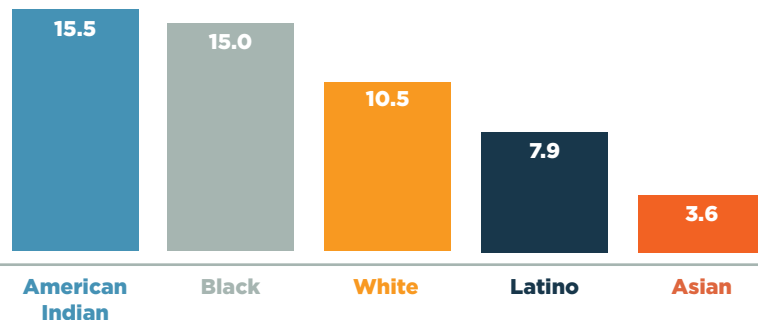
**CHILDREN AND TEENS:** Firearms are the **leading cause of death for children and teens in Washington state.** While school shootings dominate the narrative around children and gun violence, young people are more likely to be victims of unintentional shootings, domestic violence, or suicide. In fact, suicide accounts for **53 percent** of all youth firearm deaths in Washington. Black children and teens in Washington are twice as likely to be killed by a gun as their white peers.

**RACE AND ETHNICITY:** Black, Indigenous, and people of color in Washington are significantly more likely to be killed by a gun than white people. American Indian and Alaska Native people are killed by a gun at the highest rate in the state—15.5 per 100,000 people—followed closely by Black Washingtonians, who are fatally shot at a rate of 15 per 100,000 people.

### ALL FIREARM DEATHS per 100,000 people in Washington

CDC, UNDERLYING CAUSE OF  
DEATH, FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE:  
2015-2019

Deaths per 100,000 People



**TRENDS:** In Washington, the rate of gun suicide increased 19 percent and gun homicide increased **34 percent** from 2010 to 2019. Beginning in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic increased the risks of all types of gun violence. Washington, like the country as a whole, saw a record number of murders in 2020. Fortunately, the suicide rate declined in Washington and nationally, defying most predictions. While it is not possible to identify one reason, it's clear that the presence of suicide prevention policies like Extreme Risk Protection Orders, voluntary waivers, and safe storage incentives, work to reduce gun suicide.

