

**STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL**

Criminal Justice Statistics Special Report

Homicide in North Dakota, 2015



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The term "homicide," for purposes of this report, includes the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) offenses of murder and non-negligent manslaughter. Homicide refers to the "willful killing of one human being by another." It does not include attempts to kill, assaults to kill, suicides, accidental deaths, justifiable homicides or deaths caused by gross negligence.

HOMICIDE IN 2015

- In 2015, twenty-one homicide deaths were known to the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. Based on a state population estimate of 756,927, the resulting homicide rate for the state of North Dakota was 2.7 per 100,000 population. See Table 2 on page 3 for information regarding rates for previous years.
- **Victim Gender:** Seventeen of the homicide victims were male.
- **Victim Age:** Eighteen of the victims were adults. "Adult" is defined as a person aged 18 or older. See Table 1 on page 2 for a summary of homicide incidents in 2014.
- **Weapons:** Firearms were involved in the deaths of seven homicide victims.
- **Domestic Violence:** There were six homicides in 2014 resulting from domestic violence incidents. See definition on page 10.
- **Assailant Gender:** Eighteen of the twenty-two identified assailants were male.
- **Assailant Age:** All of the identified assailants were adults.
- While tribal law enforcement agencies and any other federal law enforcement entities in the state do not participate in the state UCR program, every effort is made to include all homicide incidents occurring within the state's borders.

**Table 1
Summary of Homicide Incidents
North Dakota, 2015**

Date & Location of Incident	Victim(s)		Assailant(s)		Weapons Used	Relationship of Victim to Assailant	Circumstances
	Age	Sex	Age	Sex			
03/09/2015 Standing Rock Reservation	BB	F	26	M	Asphyxiation	Child	Other Circumstance Domestic Violence
3/17/2015 Minot	BB	F	45	F	Personal Weapon	Child	Other Circumstances Domestic Violence
3/24/2015 Bottineau County	50 37	M M	18	M	Handgun	Acquaintance Acquaintance	Argument
5/17/2015 Fargo	35	M	33 33 34 35	M M M M	Personal Weapon	Stranger Stranger Stranger Stranger	Argument
5/26/2015 Grand Forks	70	M	21	M	Handgun	Stranger	Unknown Circumstances Murder/Suicide
05/30/2015 West Fargo	44	F	44	M	Firearm	Spouse	Lovers' Quarrel Domestic Violence Murder/Suicide
6/1/2015 West Fargo	BB	M			Personal Weapon		Unknown Circumstances
6/22/2015 Fargo	45	M	35	M	Knife	Acquaintance	Unknown Circumstances
6/23/2015 Fargo	24	M	35	M	Blunt Object	Stranger	Unknown Circumstances
6/30/2015 Wells County	21	F	34	M	Firearm	Former Girlfriend	Other Circumstances Domestic Violence Murder/Suicide
9/6/2015 Eddy County	41	M	51	M	Handgun	Stranger	Lovers' Quarrel Unknown Circumstance
9/7/2015 Mountrail County	46	M	40	M	Firearm	Sibling	Argument Domestic Violence
10/23/2015 Grand Forks	31	M	36	M	Knife	Acquaintance	Argument
10/27/2015 Standing Rock Reservation	59	M	45	F	Personal Weapon	Girlfriend	Argument Domestic Violence
10/29/2015 Lisbon	BB	M	35	M	Personal Weapon	Child	Other Circumstances Domestic Violence
11/12/2015 Minot	30	F	29	M	Knife	Ex-spouse	Unknown Circumstance Domestic Violence
11/16/2015 Bismarck	30	M	35	M	Firearm	Acquaintance	Lovers' Quarrel Murder/Suicide
11/29/2015 Minot	30	M			Handgun		Gangland
12/19/2015 Spirit Lake Reservation	18	M	27	M	Motor Vehicle	Acquaintance	Argument
12/29/2015 Turtle Mountain Reservation	31	M			Cutting Instrument		Unknown Circumstance

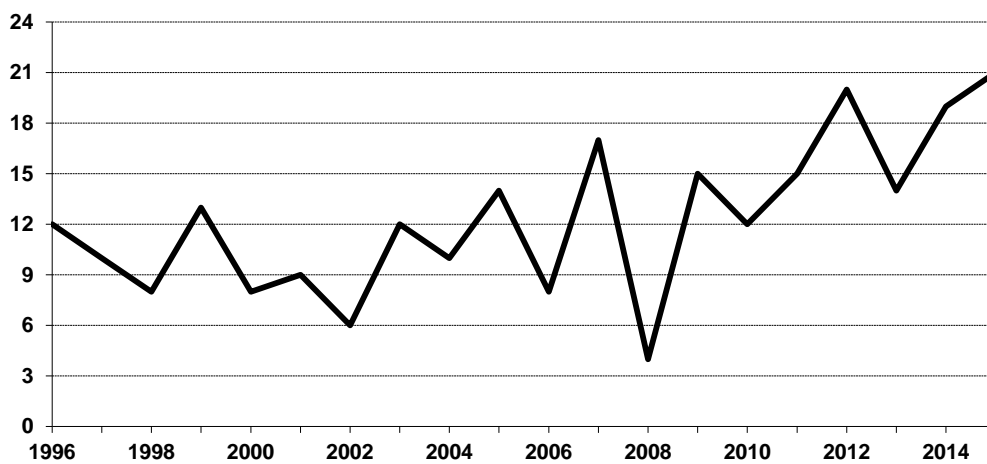
HOMICIDE TOTALS AND RATES

- Table 2 provides yearly homicide totals and homicide rate information for North Dakota during the period 1996-2015.
- The average number of homicide deaths per year during this period is 12.

Table 2
Homicide Rate
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Year	Homicide Total	Population Estimate	Rate/100,000 Population
1996	12	644,000	1.9
1997	10	641,000	1.6
1998	8	638,000	1.3
1999	13	634,000	2.1
2000	8	642,200	1.2
2001	9	634,450	1.4
2002	6	634,110	0.9
2003	12	634,000	1.9
2004	10	634,500	1.6
2005	14	637,000	2.2
2006	8	636,000	1.3
2007	17	640,000	2.7
2008	4	641,500	0.6
2009	15	647,000	2.3
2010	12	672,591	1.6
2011	15	683,932	2.2
2012	20	699,628	2.9
2013	14	723,393	1.9
2014	19	739,482	2.6
2015	21	756,927	2.7

Figure 1
Homicide in North Dakota
1996-2015



VICTIM CHARACTERISTICS - GENDER

- Sixty-four percent of the 247 total homicide victims during the period 1996-2015 were male.

Table 3
Gender of Homicide Victims
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Year	Male	Female	Total
1996	6	6	12
1997	7	3	10
1998	6	2	8
1999	9	4	13
2000	4	4	8
2001	7	2	9
2002	2	4	6
2003	6	6	12
2004	7	3	10
2005	8	6	14
2006	4	4	8
2007	7	10	17
2008	3	1	4
2009	7	8	15
2010	8	4	12
2011	10	5	15
2012	14	6	20
2013	9	5	14
2014	17	2	19
2015	16	5	21
Total 1996-2015	157 (64%)	90 (36%)	247

VICTIM CHARACTERISTICS - AGE

- Of the 247 homicides during the period 1996-2015, 83 percent were adults. See Table 4 below.
- Forty percent of homicide victims were between the ages of 21 and 40. See Table 5 on the following page for information regarding age and gender of victims.

**Table 4
Homicide Victims
Juvenile and Adult
North Dakota, 1996-2015**

Year	Juvenile	Adult	Total
1996		12	12
1997		10	10
1998	2	6	8
1999	2	11	13
2000		8	8
2001		9	9
2002	2	4	6
2003	2	10	12
2004	3	7	10
2005	2	12	14
2006	2	6	8
2007	4	13	17
2008	2	2	4
2009	4	11	15
2010	1	11	12
2011	4	11	15
2012	6	14	20
2013	2	12	14
2014	1	18	19
2015	4	17	21
Total 1996-2015	43	204	247

**Table 5
Homicide Victims
By Age and Gender
North Dakota, 1996-2015**

Age	Male	Female	Total
Less than 1 year	12	11	23
01-05	2	2	4
06-10	4	2	6
11-15	3		3
16-20	17	9	26
21-25	20	4	24
26-30	23	7	30
31-35	11	6	17
36-40	16	11	27
41-45	6	13	19
46-50	15	7	22
51-55	8	4	12
56-60	9	2	11
61-65	2	4	6
Over 65	9	8	17
Total 1996-2015	157	90	247

WEAPONS AND VICTIM CHARACTERISTICS

- Thirty-nine percent of deaths due to homicide during the period 1996-2015 resulted from firearm use. See Table 6 below.
- In homicides involving firearms, the weapon was more likely to be a long gun than a handgun.
- Forty-seven of the 247 total homicide deaths involved the use of "personal weapons." Personal weapons include the use of hands, fists and feet as weapons.

**Table 6
Weapons of Homicide
North Dakota, 1996-2015**

Year	Handgun	Other Firearm	Knife	Blunt Instrument	Personal Weapon	Other or Unknown	Total
1996	3	4	4			1	12
1997		1	1	2	4	2	10
1998		3	2			3	8
1999	1	4	3	1		4	13
2000	2	1	2	1	2		8
2001	2	3	1	1	2		9
2002	1	1			2	2	6
2003	4	7			1		12
2004		5		1	1	3	10
2005	2	1	1	2	5	3	14
2006	1		4		2	1	8
2007	4		2	1	6	4	17
2008			2		2		4
2009	3	3	2	2	3	2	15
2010	2	5	1	1	3		12
2011	2	4	6	1	2		15
2012	1	6	6	1	2	4	20
2013		4	6	2	2		14
2014	1	5	5	1	4	3	19
2015	5	4	4	1	4	3	21
Total 1996-2015	34	61	52	18	47	35	247

- Firearms were used in 19 percent of the homicides of juveniles. Forty-three percent of adult deaths due to homicide involved firearms. See Table 7 below.
- Thirty-six percent of homicides of males and 43 percent of homicides of females involved the use of firearms. See Table 8.
- Twenty-two percent of homicides of males and 19 percent of homicides of females involved knives.

**Table 7
Homicide Victims
By Weapon and Age Category
North Dakota, 1996-2015**

Weapon	Juvenile	Adult	Total
Handgun		34	34
Other Firearm	8	53	61
Knife	2	50	52
Blunt Instrument		18	18
Personal Weapon	20	28	48
Other or Unknown	13	21	34
Total 1996-2015	43	204	247

**Table 8
Homicide Victims
By Weapon and Gender
North Dakota, 1996-2015**

Weapon	Male	Female	Total
Handgun	23	11	34
Other Firearm	33	28	61
Knife	35	17	52
Blunt Instrument	14	4	18
Personal Weapon	29	19	48
Other or Unknown	23	11	34
Total 1996-2015	157	90	247

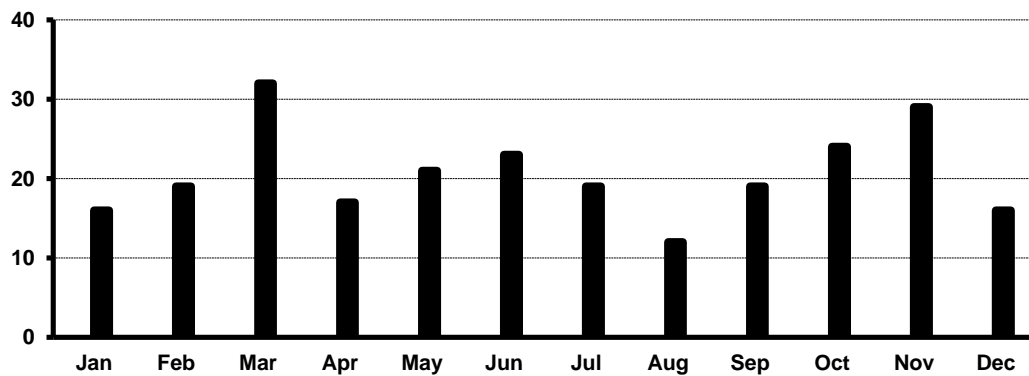
MONTH OF OCCURRENCE

- During the period 1996-2015, the month of March had the highest number of homicide deaths. See Table 9 below. Figure 2 illustrates this information graphically.

Table 9
Deaths Due to Homicide
By Month, 1996-2015

Month	Number	Percent of Total Homicides
January	16	6.5%
February	19	7.7
March	32	12.9
April	17	6.9
May	21	8.5
June	23	9.3
July	19	7.7
August	12	4.9
September	19	7.7
October	24	9.7
November	29	11.7
December	16	6.5
Total 1996-2015	247	100.0

Figure 2
Homicides by Month of Occurrence
North Dakota, 1996-2015



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DEATHS

For purposes of this report, domestic violence deaths include those involving a spouse, former spouse, parent, child, persons related by blood or marriage, persons in a present or former dating relationship, persons who are presently residing together or have resided together in the past, persons who have a child in common regardless of whether they are or have been married or have lived together at any time, other persons on premises when a domestic incident occurs, and romantic triangle situations.

- For the period 1996-2015, 48 percent of deaths due to homicide involved domestic violence.

**Table 10
Domestic Violence Deaths
North Dakota, 1996-2015**

Year	Domestic	Non-Domestic	No Assailant Identified	Homicide Total
1996	7	5		12
1997	2	8		10
1998	6	2		8
1999	7	6		13
2000	6	1	1	8
2001	2	7		9
2002	4	1	1	6
2003	8	4		12
2004	6	4		10
2005	6	7	1	14
2006	4	3	1	8
2007	7	9	1	17
2008		4		4
2009	12	3		15
2010	6	6		12
2011	7	7	1	15
2012	6	13	1	20
2013	7	7		14
2014	6	12	1	19
2015	9	9	3	21
Total 1996-2015	118	118	11	247

- Persons killed in domestic violence incidents were more likely to be killed with a firearm than those killed in non-domestic incidents.
- Forty-nine percent of female deaths in domestic violence incidents involved firearms, while 28 percent of female deaths in non-domestic violence incidents involved firearms.
- Eighty percent of female homicide victims were killed in domestic violence incidents, compared to 32 percent of males.

Table 11
Domestic Violence Deaths
By Type of Weapon and Age Category of Victim
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Weapon	Domestic		Non-Domestic	
	Juvenile	Adult	Juvenile	Adult
Handgun		15		18
Other Firearm	4	30	4	22
Knife	2	21		27
Blunt Instrument		9		9
Personal Weapon	15	9	4	18
Other or Unknown	8	5	4	12
Total 1996-2015	29	89	12	106

Table 12
Domestic Violence Deaths
By Type of Weapon and Gender of Victim
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Weapon	Domestic		Non-Domestic	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Handgun	5	10	17	1
Other Firearm	10	24	22	4
Knife	12	11	21	6
Blunt Instrument	5	4	9	
Personal Weapon	8	16	20	2
Other or Unknown	8	5	11	5
Total 1996-2015	48	70	97	18

CLEARANCE RATES

- Cases may be "cleared by arrest" of an assailant, or "cleared exceptionally," if a physical arrest cannot be made for reasons beyond the control of law enforcement. An example of an exceptional clearance would be a case in which the assailant committed suicide after killing someone.
- "Clearances" should not be interpreted as "convictions." The information regarding clearances, collected through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program, reflects law enforcement activity. If an arrest is made, the UCR program considers the case cleared. UCR data does not reflect the results of prosecution of assailants.
- The average clearance rate for homicides in North Dakota during the period from 1996 to 2015 is 95 percent.

Table 13
Clearance Rates for Homicides
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Year	Total Cleared	Total Homicides	North Dakota Clearance Rate	National Clearance Rate*
1996	12	12	100	67
1997	10	10	100	66
1998	8	8	100	69
1999	13	13	100	69
2000	7	8	88	63
2001	9	9	100	63
2002	5	6	83	64
2003	12	12	100	62
2004	10	10	100	63
2005	12	14	86	62
2006	7	8	88	61
2007	15	17	88	61
2008	4	4	100	64
2009	15	15	100	67
2010	12	12	100	65
2011	14	15	93	65
2012	19	20	95	63
2013	14	14	100	64
2014	18	19	95	65
2015	18	21	86	Not Available

* Clearance rates reported in annual Crime in the United States reports published by the FBI.

IDENTIFIED ASSAILANT CHARACTERISTICS - GENDER

- During the period 1996-2015, 87 percent of the 253 identified homicide assailants were male.
- Eleven homicides during 1996-2015 have not had an assailant identified by law enforcement.

Table 14
Identified Homicide Assailants
By Gender
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Year	Male	Female	Total
1996	13	2	15
1997	8	1	9
1998	5	3	8
1999	9	2	11
2000	7	1	8 *
2001	11		11
2002	5		5 *
2003	9		9
2004	13	1	14
2005	13	1	14 *
2006	6	1	7 *
2007	14	3	17 *
2008	6	1	7
2009	15	2	17
2010	11	1	12
2011	11	2	13 *
2012	15	2	17 *
2013	13	4	17
2014	18	4	22 *
2015	18	2	20 *
Total 1996-2015	220 (87%)	33 (13%)	253

* Indicates that at least one incident for the year does not have an identified assailant.

- Ninety-eight percent of the total 253 assailants identified by law enforcement were adults. See Table 15 below.
- Of the 253 assailants identified by law enforcement, 66 percent were between the ages of 16 and 35. See Table 16 on the following page for information on age and gender of identified assailants.

Table 15
Identified Homicide Assailants
Juvenile and Adult
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Year	Juvenile	Adult	Total
1996	1	14	15
1997		9	9
1998	1	7	8
1999		11	11
2000		8	8 *
2001		11	11
2002		5	5 *
2003		9	9
2004		14	14
2005		14	14 *
2006		7	7 *
2007	3	14	17 *
2008		7	7
2009		17	17
2010		12	12
2011		13	13 *
2012	1	16	17 *
2013		17	17
2014		22	22 *
2015		20	20 *
Total 1996-2015	6 (2%)	247 (98%)	253

* Indicates that at least one incident for the year does not have an identified assailant.

Table 16
Identified Homicide Assailants
By Age and Gender
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Age	Male	Female	Total
01-05			0
06-10			0
11-15	1	1	2
16-20	35	4	39
21-25	49	9	58
26-30	36	6	42
31-35	25	4	29
36-40	17	2	19
41-45	17	4	21
46-50	18	1	19
51-55	7	1	8
56-60	7	1	8
61-65	3		3
Over 65	5		5
Total 1996-2015	220	33	253

WEAPONS AND IDENTIFIED ASSAILANT CHARACTERISTICS

- In homicide incidents involving firearms, adult assailants were much more likely to use firearms other than handguns.
- Male assailants were more likely to use firearms in homicide incidents, while females were more likely to use knives.

Table 17
Identified Assailants
By Type of Weapon and Age Category
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Weapon	Juvenile	Adult	Total
Handgun		32	32
Other Firearm		54	54
Knife	2	62	64
Blunt Instrument		21	21
Personal Weapon	3	51	54
Other or Unknown	1	27	28
Total 1996-2015	6	247	253

Table 18
Identified Assailants
By Type of Weapon and Gender
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Weapon	Male	Female	Total
Handgun	31	1	32
Other Firearm	52	2	54
Knife	52	12	64
Blunt Instrument	21		21
Personal Weapon	44	10	54
Other or Unknown	20	8	28
Total 1996-2015	220	33	253

- Forty-seven percent of assailants identified by law enforcement were involved in domestic violence incidents. See Table 19 below.
- Assailants were more likely to use firearms in domestic incidents than in non-domestic incidents. See Table 20.
- Knives were more likely to be used by assailants in non-domestic incidents.

Table 19
Identified Homicide Assailants
Domestic/Non-Domestic Incidents
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Year	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total
1996	7	8	15
1997	2	7	9
1998	6	2	8
1999	6	5	11
2000	6	2	8 *
2001	2	9	11
2002	4	1	5 *
2003	6	3	9
2004	6	8	14
2005	7	7	14 *
2006	4	3	7 *
2007	9	8	17 *
2008		7	7
2009	14	3	17
2010	6	6	12
2011	7	6	13 *
2012	6	11	17 *
2013	6	11	17
2014	6	16	22 *
2015	8	12	20 *
Total 1996-2015	118 (47%)	135 (53%)	253

* Indicates that at least one incident for the year does not have an identified assailant.

Table 20
Weapon Use by Identified Assailants
Domestic/Non-Domestic Incidents
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Weapon	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total
Handgun	17	15	32
Other Firearm	30	24	54
Knife	21	43	64
Blunt Instrument	10	11	21
Personal Weapon	26	28	54
Other or Unknown	14	14	28
Total 1996-2015	118	135	253

Table 21
Domestic/Non-Domestic Incidents
By Type of Weapon and Age Category of Assailant
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Weapon	Domestic		Non-Domestic	
	Juvenile	Adult	Juvenile	Adult
Handgun		17		15
Other Firearm		31		23
Knife		21	2	41
Blunt Instrument		10		11
Personal Weapon	2	24	1	27
Other or Unknown	1	13		14
Total 1996-2015	3	116	3	131

Table 22
Domestic/Non-Domestic Incidents
By Type of Weapon and Gender of Assailant
North Dakota, 1996-2015

Weapon	Domestic		Non-Domestic	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Handgun	16	1	15	
Other Firearm	28	2	24	
Knife	15	6	37	6
Blunt Instrument	10		11	
Personal Weapon	17	9	27	1
Other or Unknown	6	8	14	
Total 1996-2015	92	26	128	7