

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

Criminal Justice Statistics Special Report

Homicide in North Dakota, 2019



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2020

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. (Any new data for prior years will be included in this report.)

HOMICIDE IN 2019

- In 2019, twenty-six homicide deaths were known to the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. Based on a state population estimate of 762,062, the resulting homicide rate for the state of North Dakota was 3.4 per 100,000 population. See Table 2 on page 4 for information regarding rates for previous years.
- **Victim Gender:** Nineteen of the homicide victims were male.
- **Victim Age:** Twenty-four 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 2019.
- **Weapons:** Firearms were involved in the deaths of ten homicide victims.
- **Domestic Violence:** There were ten homicides in 2019 resulting from domestic violence incidents. See definition on page 11.
- **Assailant Gender:** Twenty-two of the twenty-four identified assailants were male.
- **Assailant Age:** Twenty-two of the twenty-four 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, 2019**

Date & Location of Incident	Victim(s)		Assailant(s)		Weapons Used	Relationship of Victim to Assailant	Circumstances
	Age	Sex	Age	Sex			
1/12/19 Mountrail County	49	M	15	M	Shotgun	Parent	Unknown Circumstance Domestic Incident
1/25/19 Fargo	80	F	78	M	Handgun	Spouse	Unknown Circumstance Murder/Suicide Domestic Incident
2/27/19 Ransom County	34	M	41	M	Rifle	Friend	Argument
3/25/19 Wahpeton	35	M	37	M	Knife/Cutting Instrument	Acquaintance	Unknown Circumstance
3/29/19 Fargo	84	M	70	M	Personal Weapon	Acquaintance	Other Circumstance
4/1/19 Mandan	50 52 42 45	M M M F	44	M	Knife/Cutting Instrument Firearm	Stranger Stranger Stranger Stranger	Unknown Circumstance
4/4/19 Ft. Berthold Reservation	29	F	34	M	Fire/Incendiary Devices	Acquaintance	Argument Other Circumstances
4/26/19 Williston	BB	M	18	F	Asphyxiation	Child	Other Circumstance Child Abuse Domestic Incident
5/1/19 Walsh County	36	F	65	M	Rifle-Fully Automatic	Child	Argument Domestic Incident
5/4/19 Williston	57	M	26	M	Blunt Object	Unknown	Argument
5/10/19 Minot	55	M	28	M	Firearm	Parent	Other Circumstance Domestic Incident
5/16/19 Ward County	49	M	32	M	Handgun	Acquaintance	Argument Murder/Suicide
6/3/19 Spirit Lake Reservation	31	F	38	M	Personal Weapon	Girlfriend	Argument Domestic Incident
6/7/19 Fargo	38	M	19 30	M M	Handgun	Unknown Unknown	Unknown Circumstances
6/21/19 Ft. Berthold Reservation	24	F	26	F	Knife/Cutting Instrument	Acquaintance	Argument
7/29/19 Williston	24	M	42	M	Motor Vehicle	Stranger	Argument
7/31/19 Fargo	52	F	44	M	Personal Weapon Fire/Incendiary Devices	Girlfriend	Argument Domestic Incident

**Table 1- Continued
Summary of Homicide Incidents
North Dakota, 2019**

Date & Location of Incident	Victim(s)		Assailant(s)		Weapons Used	Relationship of Victim to Assailant	Circumstances
	Age	Sex	Age	Sex			
8/22/19 Bismarck	BB	M	20	M	Personal Weapon	Parent	Child Abuse Domestic Incident
8/30/19 Williston	49	M	25	M	Handgun	Stranger	Argument
10/1/19 Williston	24	M	25	M	Knife/Cutting Instrument	Friend	Argument
11/10/19 Williston	19	M	17	M	Handgun	Acquaintance	Argument
11/13/19 Fargo	64	M	43	M	Blunt Object	Acquaintance	Unknown Circumstance
11/29/19 Wahpeton	41	M	61	M	Asphyxiation	Other Family Member	Argument Domestic Incident

HOMICIDE TOTALS AND RATES

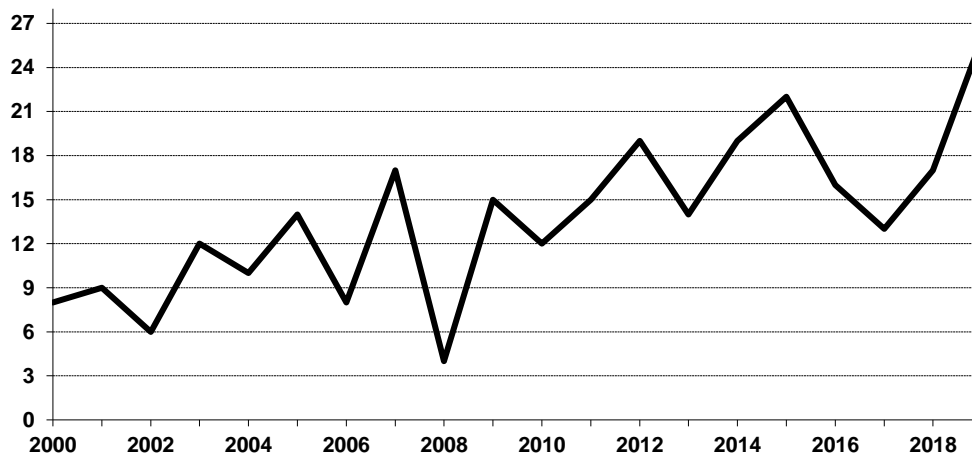
- Table 2 provides yearly homicide totals and homicide rate information for North Dakota during the period 2000-2019.
- The average number of homicide deaths per year during this period is 13.

**Table 2
Homicide Rate
North Dakota, 2000-2019**

Year	Homicide Total	Population Estimate	Rate/100,000 Population
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	19	699,628	2.7
2013	14	723,393	1.9
2014	19	739,482	2.6
2015	22	756,927	2.9
2016	16	757,952	2.1
2017 ¹	13	755,393	1.7
2018	17	760,077	2.2
2019	26	762,062	3.4

¹ Homicides have been revised throughout this report to reflect corrections.

**Figure 1
Homicide in North Dakota
2000-2019**



VICTIM CHARACTERISTICS - GENDER

- Sixty-four percent of the 276 total homicide victims during the period 2000-2019 were male.

Table 3
Gender of Homicide Victims
North Dakota, 2000-2019

Year	Male	Female	Total
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	13	6	19
2013	9	5	14
2014	17	2	19
2015	16	6	22
2016	12	4	16
2017	8	5	13
2018	11	6	17
2019	19	7	26
Total 2000-2019	178 (64%)	98 (36%)	276

VICTIM CHARACTERISTICS - AGE

- Of the 276 homicides during the period 2000-2019, 83 percent were adults. See Table 4 below.
- Nearly forty-two 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, 2000-2019**

Year	Juvenile	Adult	Total
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	13	19
2013	2	12	14
2014	1	18	19
2015	4	18	22
2016		16	16
2017		13	13
2018	7	10	17
2019	2	24	26
Total 2000-2019	48	228	276

**Table 5
Homicide Victims
By Age and Gender
North Dakota, 2000-2019**

Age	Male	Female	Total
Less than 1 year	14	12	26
01-05	1	2	3
06-10	5	3	8
11-15	4		4
16-20	17	9	26
21-25	24	7	31
26-30	26	9	35
31-35	17	4	21
36-40	15	13	28
41-45	9	13	22
46-50	16	6	22
51-55	7	4	11
56-60	13	2	15
61-65	4	3	7
Over 65	6	11	17
Total 2000-2019	178	98	276

WEAPONS AND VICTIM CHARACTERISTICS

- Forty-one percent of deaths due to homicide during the period 2000-2019 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.
- Fifty-six of the 276 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, 2000-2019**

Year	Handgun	Other Firearm	Knife	Blunt Instrument	Personal Weapon	Other or Unknown	Total
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	3	19
2013		4	6	2	2		14
2014	1	5	5	1	4	3	19
2015	5	4	4	1	5	3	22
2016	5	4	4	1	2		16
2017	2	4	2	2	1	2	13
2018	8	1	1	1	5	1	17
2019	5	4	7	2	4	4	26
Total 2000-2019	50	62	56	21	56	31	276

*One weapon per incident is recognized in this chart.

- Firearms were used in 21 percent of the homicides of juveniles. Forty-four percent of adult deaths due to homicide involved firearms. See Table 7 below.
- Forty-one percent of homicides of males and 39 percent of homicides of females involved the use of firearms. See Table 8.
- Twenty-two percent of homicides of males and 17 percent of homicides of females involved knives.

**Table 7
Homicide Victims
By Weapon and Age Category
North Dakota, 2000-2019**

Weapon	Juvenile	Adult	Total
Handgun	3	47	50
Other Firearm	7	55	62
Knife	2	54	56
Blunt Instrument		21	21
Personal Weapon	25	31	56
Other or Unknown	11	20	31
Total 2000-2019	48	228	276

**Table 8
Homicide Victims
By Weapon and Gender
North Dakota, 2000-2019**

Weapon	Male	Female	Total
Handgun	35	15	50
Other Firearm	38	24	62
Knife	39	17	56
Blunt Instrument	17	4	21
Personal Weapon	32	24	56
Other or Unknown	17	14	31
Total 2000-2019	178	98	276

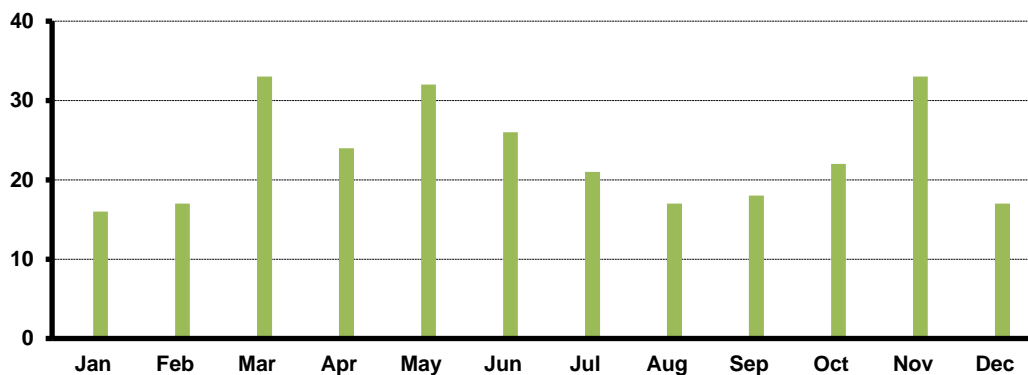
MONTH OF OCCURRENCE

- During the period 2000-2019, the months of March and November 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, 2000-2019

Month	Number	Percent of Total Homicides
January	16	5.8%
February	17	6.2
March	33	12.0
April	24	8.7
May	32	11.6
June	26	9.4
July	21	7.6
August	17	6.2
September	18	6.5
October	22	8.0
November	33	12.0
December	17	6.2
Total 2000-2019	276	100.0

Figure 2
Homicides by Month of Occurrence
North Dakota, 2000-2019



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 2000-2019, 45 percent of deaths due to homicide involved domestic violence.

**Table 10
Domestic Violence Deaths
North Dakota, 2000-2019**

Year	Domestic	Non-Domestic	No Assailant Identified	Homicide Total
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		19
2013	7	7		14
2014	6	12	1	19
2015	9	11	2	22
2016	2	14		16
2017	4	9		13
2018	12	5		17
2019	10	16		26
Total 2000-2019	124	143	9	276

- Persons killed in non-domestic violence incidents were more likely to be killed with a firearm than those killed in domestic incidents.
- Forty-five percent of female deaths in domestic violence incidents involved firearms, while 28 percent of female deaths in non-domestic violence incidents involved firearms.
- Seventy-six percent of female homicide victims were killed in domestic violence incidents, compared to 31 percent of males.

Table 11
Domestic Violence Deaths
By Type of Weapon and Age Category of Victim
North Dakota, 2000-2019

Weapon	Domestic		Non-Domestic	
	Juvenile	Adult	Juvenile	Adult
Handgun	3	17		30
Other Firearm	3	27	4	27
Knife	2	19		33
Blunt Instrument		9		12
Personal Weapon	20	10	4	20
Other or Unknown	6	8	4	9
Total 2000-2019	34	90	12	131

Table 12
Domestic Violence Deaths
By Type of Weapon and Gender of Victim
North Dakota, 2000-2019

Weapon	Domestic		Non-Domestic	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Handgun	6	14	29	1
Other Firearm	10	18	25	6
Knife	12	11	27	6
Blunt Instrument	5	4	12	
Personal Weapon	11	19	20	4
Other or Unknown	8	6	6	7
Total 2000-2019	52	72	119	24

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 National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) program, reflects law enforcement activity. If an arrest is made, the NIBRS program considers the case cleared. NIBRS data does not reflect the results of prosecution of assailants.
- The average clearance rate for homicides in North Dakota during the period from 2000 to 2019 is 95 percent.

Table 13
Clearance Rates for Homicides
North Dakota, 2000-2019

Year	Total Cleared	Total Homicides	North Dakota Clearance Rate	National Clearance Rate*
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	19	100	63
2013	14	14	100	64
2014	18	19	95	65
2015	20	22	91	62
2016	16	16	100	59
2017	12	13	92	62
2018	17	17	100	62
2019	26	26	100	Not Available

* Clearance rates reported in annual [Crime in the United States](#) reports published by the FBI.

IDENTIFIED ASSAILANT CHARACTERISTICS - GENDER

- During the period 2000-2019, 88 percent of the 283 identified homicide assailants were male.
- Eleven homicides during 2000-2019 have not had an assailant identified by law enforcement.

Table 14
Identified Homicide Assailants
By Gender
North Dakota, 2000-2019

Year	Male	Female	Total
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	20	2	22 *
2016	17	2	19
2017	11	2	13 *
2018	12	3	15
2019	22	2	24
Total 2000-2019	249 (88%)	34 (12%)	283

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

- Ninety-eight percent of the total 283 assailants identified by law enforcement were adults. See Table 15 below.
- Of the 283 assailants identified by law enforcement, 67 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, 2000-2019

Year	Juvenile	Adult	Total
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		22	22 *
2016		19	19
2017		13	13 *
2018		15	15
2019	2	22	24
Total 2000-2019	6 (2%)	277 (98%)	283

* 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, 2000-2019

Age	Male	Female	Total
Less than 10			0
11-15	2		2
16-20	33	5	37
21-25	54	7	61
26-30	46	8	54
31-35	32	5	37
36-40	15	1	16
41-45	23	4	27
46-50	19	1	20
51-55	8	1	9
56-60	6	1	7
61-65	5		5
Over 65	6	1	7
Total 2000-2019	249	34	283

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 or personal weapons.

Table 17
Identified Assailants
By Type of Weapon and Age Category
North Dakota, 2000-2019

Weapon	Juvenile	Adult	Total
Handgun	1	48	49
Other Firearm	1	56	57
Knife	1	61	62
Blunt Instrument		27	27
Personal Weapon	3	59	62
Other or Unknown		26	26
Total 2000-2019	6	277	283

Table 18
Identified Assailants
By Type of Weapon and Gender
North Dakota, 2000-2019

Weapon	Male	Female	Total
Handgun	48	1	49
Other Firearm	54	3	57
Knife	52	10	62
Blunt Instrument	26	1	27
Personal Weapon	51	11	62
Other or Unknown	18	8	26
Total 2000-2019	249	34	283

- Forty-three 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 non-domestic incidents than in 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, 2000-2019

Year	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total
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	9	13	22 *
2016	2	17	19
2017	4	9	13 *
2018	10	5	15
2019	10	14	24
Total 2000-2019	124 (43%)	159 (57%)	283

* 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, 2000-2019

Weapon	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total
Handgun	20	29	49
Other Firearm	28	29	57
Knife	19	43	62
Blunt Instrument	10	17	27
Personal Weapon	32	30	62
Other or Unknown	15	11	26
Total 2000-2019	124	159	283

Table 21
Domestic/Non-Domestic Incidents
By Type of Weapon and Age Category of Assailant
North Dakota, 2000-2019

Weapon	Domestic		Non-Domestic	
	Juvenile	Adult	Juvenile	Adult
Handgun		20	1	28
Other Firearm	1	27		29
Knife		19	1	42
Blunt Instrument		10		17
Personal Weapon	2	30	1	29
Other or Unknown		15		11
Total 2000-2019	3	121	3	156

Table 22
Domestic/Non-Domestic Incidents
By Type of Weapon and Gender of Assailant
North Dakota, 2000-2019

Weapon	Domestic		Non-Domestic	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Handgun	19	1	29	
Other Firearm	27	1	27	2
Knife	14	5	38	5
Blunt Instrument	10		16	1
Personal Weapon	22	10	29	1
Other or Unknown	7	8	11	
Total 2000-2019	99	25	150	9