SUICIDE IN NORTH CAROLINA, 2020

The North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS) is a CDC-funded statewide surveillance system that collects detailed information on violent deaths that occur in North Carolina including: homicide, suicide, unintentional firearm deaths, legal intervention, and deaths of undetermined intent. NC-VDRS triangulates information from death certificates, medical examiner reports, and law enforcement reports to understand and aid in the prevention of violent deaths. For more information, please visit https://www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov/About/ncVDRS.htm.

**Sex-Specific Suicide Rates by Age: NC-VDRS, 2020**

- 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 41.5 per 100,000.
- Among females, the suicide rate peaked for ages 45-54 at 8.9 per 100,000 and steadily declined thereafter.

- Eighty-three percent (82.9%) of all suicide victims were identified as non-Hispanic (NH) white residents.
- NH white males had higher suicide rates than other racial/ethnic groups in North Carolina (28.3 per 100,000).

**Method of Death*: NC-VDRS, 2020**

- After firearms (60.7%), hanging (21.7%) and poisoning (12.1%) were the second and third leading causes of suicide, respectively.
- Almost six percent (5.5%) of suicides were completed using a method other than firearms, hanging or poisoning.

- Of the 2,423 violent deaths in North Carolina in 2020, 1,436 were suicides (59.3%).

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

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*Rate per 100,000 NC population

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Suicide Circumstances*: NC-VDRS, 2020

- Of suicide victims with circumstance information, 30.6% of males and 23.0% of females were characterized as being currently depressed when they completed suicide.

- Sixty-nine percent (68.7%) of females and 45.0% of males were characterized as having a current mental health problem.

- Fifty-eight percent (57.7%) of females and 32.2% of males were currently being treated for a mental health problem at the time of suicide.

- Approximately 25.5% of all suicide victims had disclosed their suicidal intention to someone else.

- Females (26.3%) were more likely to have a history of prior suicide attempts than males (13.0%).

More information on suicide prevention efforts can be found at:

**State Resource Partners**

- NC Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services [https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/mhddssas](https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/mhddssas)
- North Carolina Office of the Chief Medical Examiner [https://www.ocme.dhhs.nc.gov/](https://www.ocme.dhhs.nc.gov/)
- NC Injury and Violence Prevention’s Suicide Prevention Website [https://injuryfreenc.dph.ncdhhs.gov/preventionResources/Suicide.htm](https://injuryfreenc.dph.ncdhhs.gov/preventionResources/Suicide.htm)
- NC Division of Child and Family Wellbeing

**National Resources**

- The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention [https://afsp.org/](https://afsp.org/)
- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org

*Among those with reported circumstance information. 96.3% of cases had circumstance information. Forty-four males and nine females were missing circumstance information.*