

Homicides in Iowa, 2016 - 2020

Get the facts:

There were 451 homicides in Iowa from 2016 to 2020.

Homicides were the second most common type of violent death in Iowa, making up 14% of all violent deaths.

Suicides were the most common type of violent death in Iowa (78%). (Figure 1)

On average there were over 100 homicide deaths per year amounting to 3.5 homicides per 100,000 Iowa residents. This is lower than the U.S. rate of homicide of 5.0 per 100,000 residents in 2018. (Figure 2)

The most common causes of homicide were: firearm (73%), cut/pierce (12%), suffocation (6%), and fire, struck by/against (2%).

The causes of homicide death in Iowa are similar to the rest of the country. Firearms are used in 75% of homicides in the U.S.

This report highlights the current data (2016 - 2020) about homicides in Iowa. All data are collected as part of the Iowa Violent Death Reporting System (IAVDRS), a CDC-funded statewide surveillance system that collects information on deaths in Iowa resulting from homicide, suicide, unintentional firearm deaths, legal intervention, and deaths from undetermined intent.

Figure 1: Manner of death for records collected in the IAVDRS system, 2016 - 2020

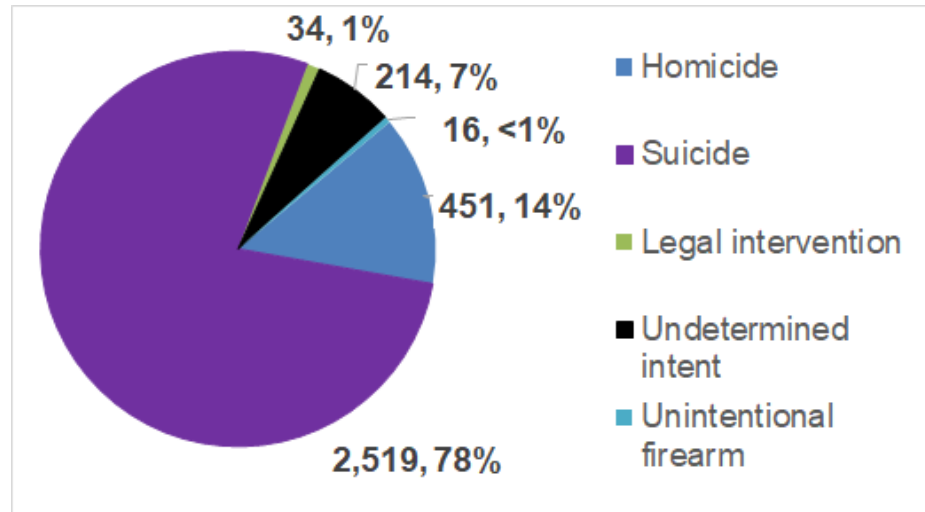
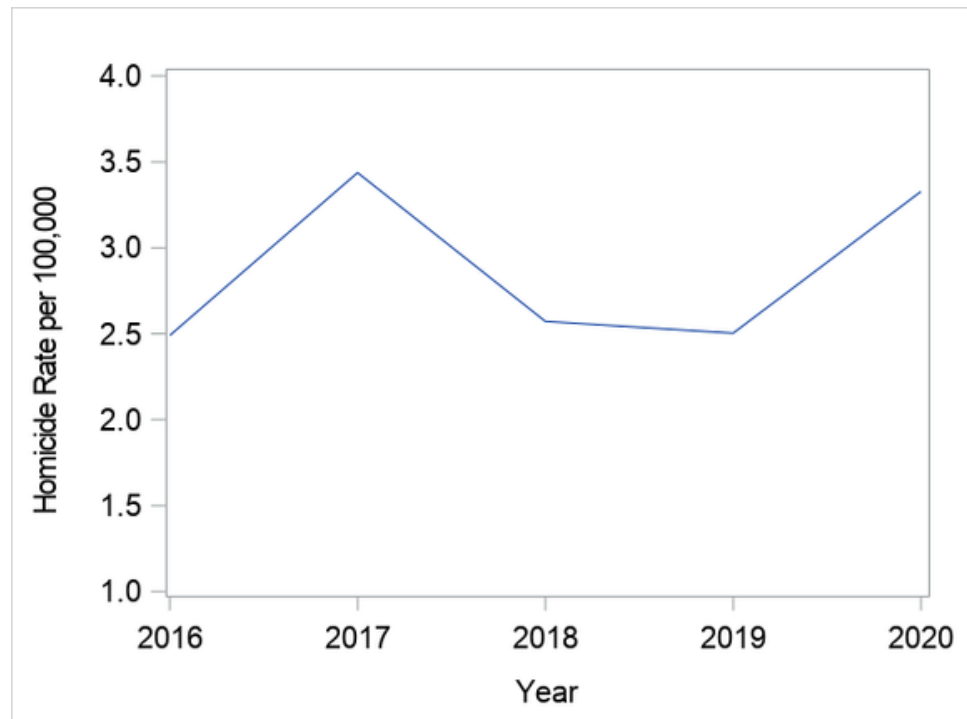


Figure 2: Number of homicides per year, 2016 - 2020



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As many as 36% of homicide victims were Black or African American, despite only 4% of Iowa residents identifying as Black or African American.

American Indians also accounted for a higher proportion of homicide victims (1%) relative to the population of American Indians in Iowa (0.5% of the Iowa population) (Figure 3)

The majority of homicide victims were under the age of 45 and male.

For every age category, males represented a higher proportion of homicide victims relative to females.

The highest proportion of male homicide victims was males ages 25-44 (42%). (Figure 4)

Figure 3: Race of homicide victims, 2016 - 2020

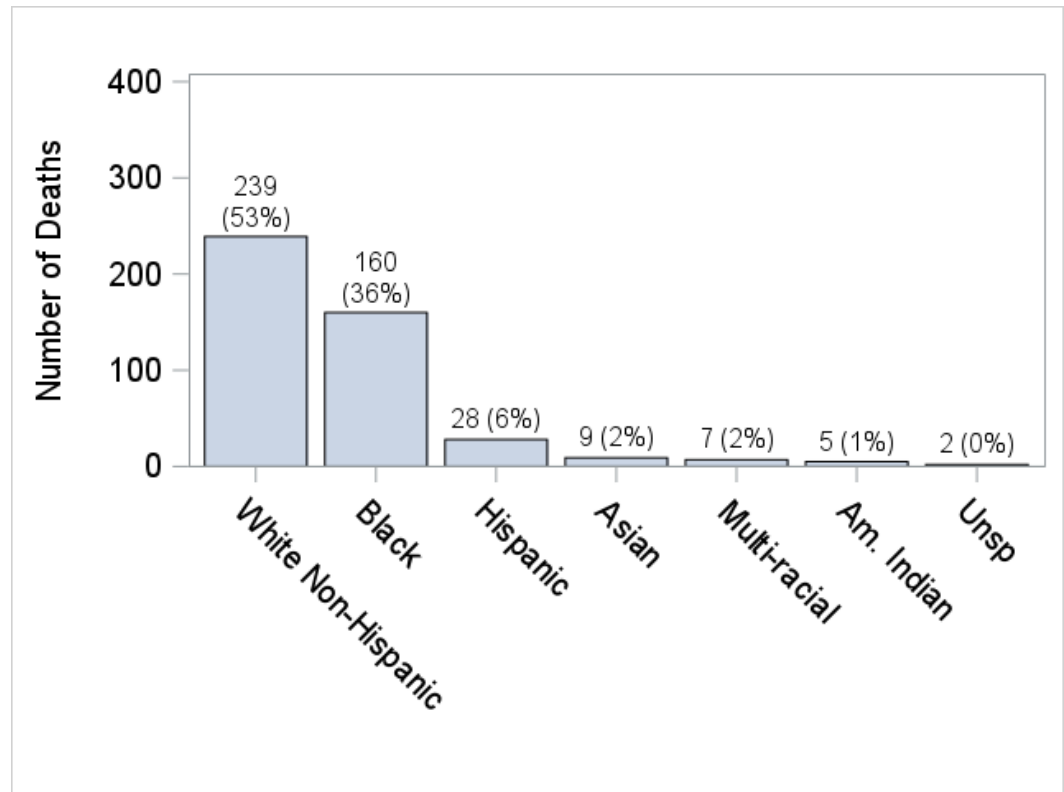
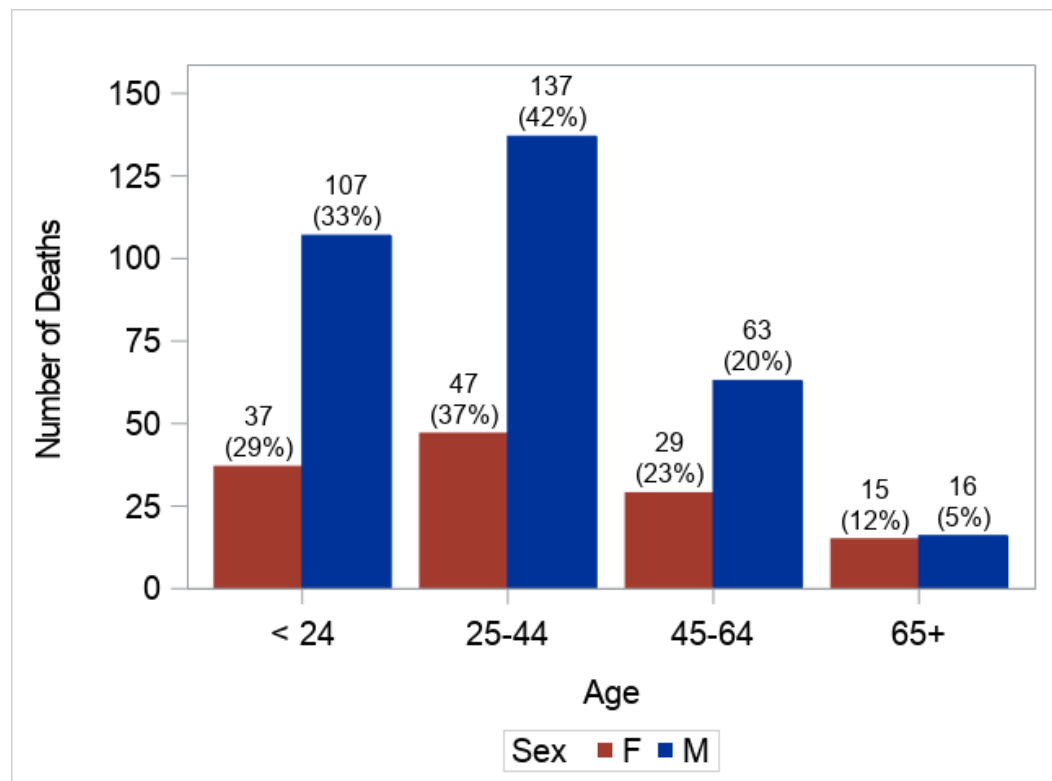


Figure 4: Differences across age and sex of homicide victims, 2016 - 2020



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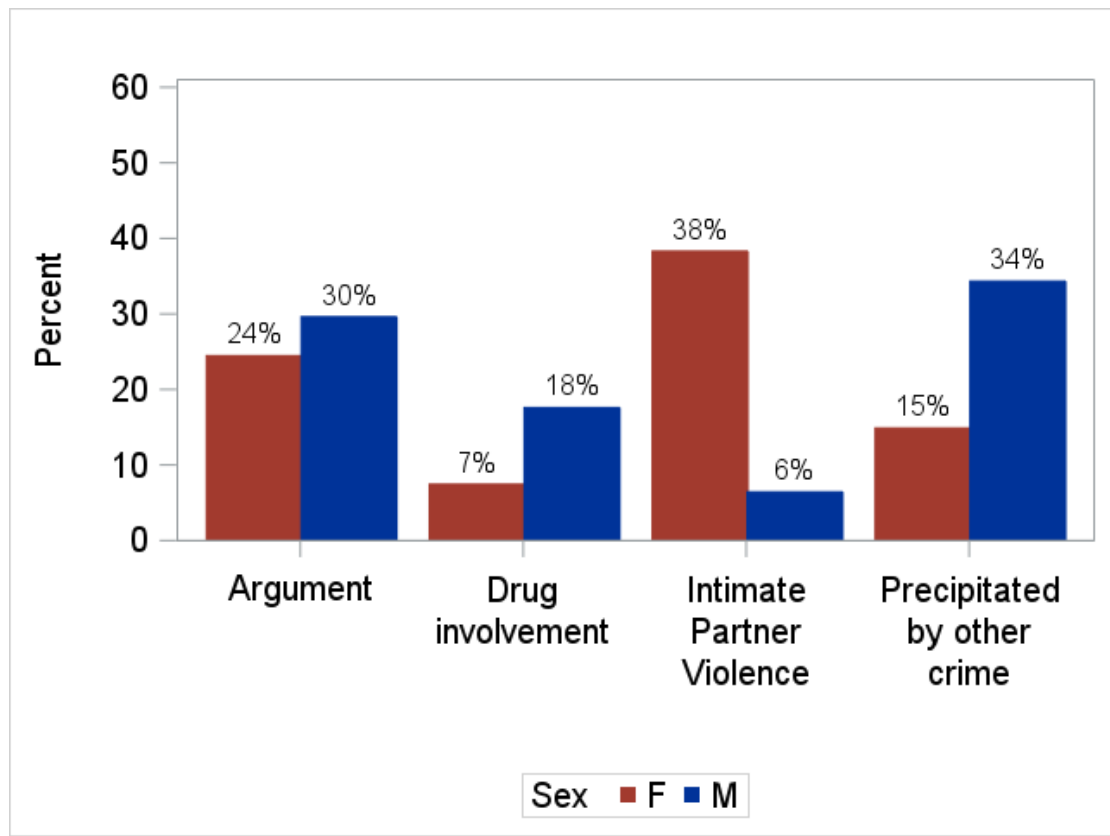
The most common circumstance reported around the homicide of a male victim was that the homicide was precipitated by another crime (34%).

The most common circumstance reported around the homicide of a female victim was intimate partner violence (38%). (Figure 5)

Data on other circumstances are collected but were less common than those presented in Figure 5.

Other circumstances collected in IADVRS as being associated with a homicide include stalking, self-defense, school-related violence, and random violence.

Figure 5: Circumstances around homicides, 2016 - 2019



Note: Circumstances are collected via abstraction of medical examiner and law enforcement reports. The most recent data from abstraction are for 2019.

About the IAVDRS:



IAVDRS is a multi-source data system from death certificates, medical examiner and law enforcement reports. The data aids researchers, policymakers, and community interest groups in the development of public health prevention strategies to reduce violent deaths. Iowa began collecting data in 2015, with statewide coverage achieved in 2016.

This report uses data on all homicides occurring in Iowa (resident and non-resident) during the years 2016 to 2020.



Iowa Victim Service Call Center: 24/7 support for victims of crime in Iowa. Call the Iowa Crime Victims Helpline at 1-800-770-1650 or text "IOWAHELP" to 20121 Website: <https://survivorshelpline.org/>

Iowa Dept. of Justice, Crime Victim Compensation Program: <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/for-crime-victims/crime-victim-compensation-program>

Homicide and Other Violent Crime Services Programs: https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/media/cms/4_Survivors_of_Homicide_and_OVC_FY2_571E4333E6CD2.pdf