

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

TO: Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
FROM: Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Maine DHHS
DATE: June 1, 2022
RE: Report pursuant to 22 MRS, Ch. 256-A §1425

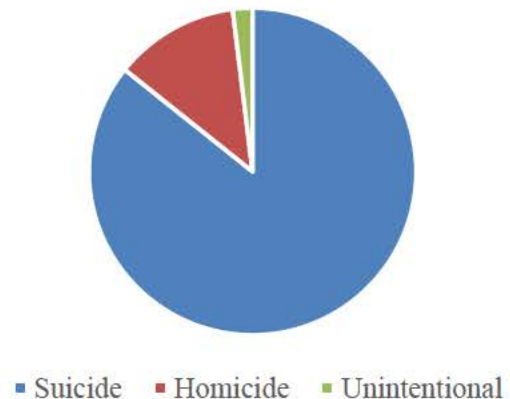
To comply with 22 MRS, Ch. 256-A §1425, the Maine CDC submits this initial report representing the available data for firearm-related deaths and hospitalizations occurring in Maine from January 2020 through December 2020 as provided to the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) by its partners, including Maine Health Data Organization (MHDO), the Office of the Medical Examiner and Maine Department of Public Safety (DPS). Additional sources of data specific to incidents involving the use of a firearm and information beyond the scope of this legislative report mandate have been identified and included, but are not limited to the following: Maine's Violent Death Reporting System, Maine's Domestic Violence and Homicide Review Panel and National Electronic Injury Surveillance System-All Injury Program (NEISS-AIP).

FIREARM DEATHS: OVERALL

In Maine in 2020, there were 154 deaths by firearms. Of these deaths, 19 were homicides, 3 were unintentional, and 132 were suicides.

FIREARM DEATHS IN MAINE, 2020

Category	Total	Percent
Suicide	132	86%
Homicide	19	12%
Unintentional	3	2%
2020 Total	154	100%



UNINTENTIONAL FIREARM DEATHS

Unintentional firearm deaths are when a person dies by a firearm discharging unintentionally.

Unintentional Deaths by Firearm	
Age Group	2020
<15	0
15-24	1
25-34	1
35-44	0
45-54	0
55-64	1
65+	0
2020 Total	3

Source: Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Maine Office of Data, Research and Vital Statistics, Death certificate data

HOMICIDE

In Maine in 2020, there were 19 firearm-related homicides. Of these, more than 1 in 3 were domestic violence (DV) homicides. According to Maine’s Domestic Violence Homicide Review Panel, about 40% of domestic violence homicide perpetrators use a firearm to kill their victim.

Homicide Deaths by Firearm		
Age Group	2020	DV (subset)
<15	0	0
15-24	4	1
25-34	5	1
35-44	3	1
45-54	1	0
55-64	5	3
65-74	1	1
75+	0	0
2020 Total	19	7

Source: Maine Vital Records, Maine CDC, Department of Health and Human Services, Maine State Police, Department of Public Safety, and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner, Maine Attorney General's Office.

Notes: Firearm homicide data were run from the death records filed and registered with Data, Research, and Vital Statistics, and compared with the Maine State Police Report on homicides, found on their website (<https://www.maine.gov/dps/msp/media-center/homicide-lists/2020-homicides>). The Office of Chief Medical Examiner provided input on records not found on the State Police website.

The following ICD 10 codes were used to identify firearm deaths: W32, W33, W34, X73, X74, X94, X95, Y23, Y24, and Y35

As of January 2022, DPS will implement a revised data collection form to require law enforcement agencies to submit additional data elements for firearm-related incidents occurring January 1, 2021 and after.

SUICIDE

Suicide is the ninth leading cause of death in Maine¹. In 2020, 234 Mainers died by suicide. Of these deaths, 56% used a firearm. Men are more likely to die by suicide using a firearm than women.

	Age Group				Total
	10-24	25-44	45-64	65+	
Female	1	4	8	1	14
Male	12	29	36	41	118
2020 Total	13	33	44	42	132

Data Source: Maine death certificates, Maine CDC Data, Research and Vital Statistics.

Notes: Suicide related deaths are defined as deaths of Maine residents for which the underlying cause of death was coded as ICD-10 U03 X60-X84 or Y87.0.

HOSPITALIZATIONS

In 2020, there were 39 hospitalizations due to a firearm in Maine. Of these, 34 (87%) were men and 18 (46%) were between the ages of 20 and 34 years. Most of the firearm-related hospitalizations were due to either accidental discharge of a firearm or assault.

Non-fatal firearm-related hospital discharges by cause, 2020	
Cause of Injury	Number of Discharges
Accidental discharge or malfunction of firearm	15
Intentional self-harm by firearm	8
Assault by firearm	14
Terrorism involving firearms	0
Firearm discharge of undetermined intent	1
Legal intervention involving firearm discharge	1

Data Source: Maine Health Data Organization Hospital Inpatient Database 2020

Notes: Data include Maine Non-Federal/Non Psychiatric Acute Care Hospital Discharges with Principal Diagnosis of injury and firearm-related secondary diagnosis or injury cause code

The U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention publishes data on causes of nonfatal injury via Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) Nonfatal, providing data from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System-All Injury Program (NEISS-AIP)². This surveillance data informs State and federal public health policies. The NEISS-AIP data provides information about types of nonfatal injuries in U.S. hospital emergency departments, how common they are, who they affect, and what causes them.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/states/maine/maine.htm>

² <https://wisqars.cdc.gov/data/non-fatal/home>