



## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **IDPH Launches New Data Dashboard on Violent Deaths and Firearm Injuries**

*Platform will feature extensive data on violent deaths and firearm injuries, which can help shape prevention and intervention strategies*

**SPRINGFIELD** – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has launched a new dashboard detailing information about all violent deaths and firearm-related injuries in the state. The new dashboard is presented in two parts: [Illinois Firearm Injury Rates](#) and [Illinois Violent Deaths](#). It is intended to provide detailed information at the county level about these incidents, including the types of incidents (e.g., homicide, suicide, etc.), weapon type and where victims reside, broken down by county. The goal of the dashboard is to inform data-driven prevention and intervention efforts to reduce violent deaths and firearm injuries in Illinois.

“Firearm violence is a public health crisis that requires public health solutions,” said IDPH Director Dr. Sameer Vohra. “Modernizing how we gather and use data is critical to finding holistic solutions that address firearm violence in a comprehensive way. IDPH is proud to partner with the Joyce Foundation and Understory to build this leading-edge dashboard that gathers comprehensive data about both violent deaths and firearm-related injuries. We look forward to partnering with our statewide and local leaders to use this dashboard to create data-driven policies and plans that make our communities safer and healthier.”

The dashboard development was funded through the generous support of The Joyce Foundation, a Chicago-based private, nonpartisan philanthropic organization that invests in public policies and strategies to advance racial equity and economic mobility in Illinois and other states in the Great Lakes Region. The dashboard was designed by Understory Consulting, a research and policy consulting firm that works on issues related to human rights, social justice and equity.

Data for the dashboard are sourced from two public health surveillance systems funded by the CDC. The violent death and circumstances data are contributed by the Illinois Violent Death Reporting System (IVDRS) which is operated by Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine. [IDPH syndromic surveillance](#) provides the emergency department (ED) visit data with data quality support funded, in part, by CDC’s AVERT (Advancing Violence Epidemiology in Real-Time) grant.

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IVDRS contributes data on violent deaths in Illinois going back to 2015 and includes data on victim and suspect demographics, circumstances leading up to and including the fatal injury, and toxicology and autopsy results. Syndromic surveillance contributes data from hospital ED visits, covering 185 acute-care hospitals around the state and includes non-fatal firearm injury rates per 100,000 ED visits, and break down aggregated data by age-range, sex, race/ethnicity, and county. Data from counties with fewer than 10 firearms injuries per 100,000 ED visits is suppressed to protect the anonymity of patients.

“We're excited to support this groundbreaking data dashboard and the innovative approach being taken by the Illinois Department of Health to keep our communities informed with such important and timely information,” said Tim Daly, director of The Joyce Foundation's Gun Violence Prevention and Justice Reform program. “This tool will provide us with more accurate data to better understand what is happening in communities and allow us to make more informed policy and practice decisions to prevent gun violence.”

“The launch of this dashboard represents a significant step forward in Illinois’ mission to reduce and eliminate firearm violence,” said Quiwana Bell, Illinois Department of Human Services Assistant Secretary Designate, Office of Firearm Violence Prevention. “Access to reliable data is a powerful tool for directing resources to where they can have the greatest impact, empowering communities, policymakers, and organizations to take decisive, life-saving action. The Office of Firearm Violence Prevention is committed to partnering with IDPH and others to ensure this information drives meaningful change and strengthens our communities.”

“We need data to identify public health problems so we can develop, scale and evaluate interventions to reduce violence. This dashboard puts critical data in the hands of people who can make a difference,” said Maryann Mason, associate professor of emergency medicine at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.

Although similar dashboards about violent deaths have been implemented in Minnesota and Michigan, the Illinois dashboard is the first of its kind developed by Understory to gather comprehensive data about both violent deaths and non-fatal firearm injuries.

The data gathered for the dashboard reveals notable trends about violent death and firearm injury in Illinois:

- Men are far more likely to be victims of violent deaths and non-fatal firearms injuries in Illinois. Men account for 89% of firearm-involved deaths since 2015. The non-fatal firearm injury rate for men was 261.2 per 100,000 ED visits, compared to 37.2 for women.
- Suicide, unintentional firearm, and law enforcement intervention death rates have been relatively flat in IL from 2015-2022, while homicide rates spiked in 2020 and 2021 (a trend that was also observed nationwide).
- Firearms were used in 84% of homicide deaths, 36% of suicide deaths, and 57% of all violent deaths among those under 18 years of age between 2015-2022. Firearms accounted for approximately 50,000 emergency department visits for non-fatal injury between January 2018-December 2024.
- The City of Chicago had the highest rate of non-fatal firearms injury, with more than 350 reported out of every 100,000 ED visits.



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- The most common age range to sustain a non-fatal firearm injury was 20-to-29-year-olds, followed by 10-to-19-year-olds. Firearm-related violent deaths were highest among 20-to-29-year-olds.
- Firearms violence disproportionately impacts communities of color. Black Illinoisans are more than ten times as likely to sustain a non-fatal firearm injury compared to white residents. Black Illinoisans account for more than 55% of firearm fatalities in the state.

While the non-fatal injury component of the dashboard is currently focused on firearms injuries, IDPH hopes in the future to expand the technology to track other significant incidents that impact public wellbeing, such as sexual assault.

The new dashboard is part of [IDPH's commitment to addressing and reducing firearm violence](#). That effort also includes the ongoing "Pause to Heal" public awareness campaign about how firearm restraining orders (FROs) can be used to temporarily remove firearms from the possession of someone in mental distress, reducing the possibility that they might use a weapon to harm themselves or others; that campaign is in partnership with the Ad Council and the Brady Campaign. IDPH has also actively promoted safe gun storage, including the distribution of more than 150,000 free gun locks around the state since the spring of 2023.

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