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# Intimate Partner Violence Homicides in Nevada 2017

November 2018  
Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence

## DEDICATION

The Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence (NCEDSV) dedicates this report to the women, children, and men in Nevada who lost their lives due to intimate partner violence.

## INTRODUCTION

In 2017, NCEDSV identified 19 domestic violence incidences that resulted in 28 deaths. These incidences were documented in published news accounts and through publicly available police reports.

### National Snapshot & History

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) indicates that almost half of the women (48.1%) and almost one-third of men (30.9%) living in Nevada have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner.<sup>1</sup> As this report highlights, domestic violence homicide can be the tragic outcome of a violent relationship.

Additionally, the Bureau of Justice Statistics states that the reporting rate to police for intimate partner violence incidences is approximately 46.9%.<sup>2</sup> For incidences classified as serious intimate partner violence that includes rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault, the reporting rate is slightly higher at 51.9%.<sup>3</sup>

For 22 years, NCEDSV has documented the number of fatal incidences by reviewing news reports and publically available police homicide reports. Each incident received a varying degree of attention from reporters, ranging from multi-story investigative reporting to simple one-paragraph crime reports. As such, the descriptions in the report are not an attempt to capture the full complexity of these events.

### Definitions

Nevada has a very broad definition regarding who can be a victim of domestic violence. Nevada Revised Statutes defines domestic violence to include spouses, former spouses, family members, persons who have or had a dating relationship, persons with a child or children in common, the children of two persons, and persons cohabitating together.<sup>4</sup> To be included in this report, NCEDSV identified each homicide as an intimate partner violence-related incident; the deaths resulted from violence between adults who were either current or past intimate partners.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs/summary\\_reports.html](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs/summary_reports.html) accessed September 9, 2016

<sup>2</sup> Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Criminal Victimization 2016*, Dec. 2017, <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv16.pdf> accessed September 18, 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Nev. Rev. Stat. § 33.018 (This statute was revised in 2017 to remove persons cohabitating together which became effective Jan. 1, 2018.)

This report also measures the number of perpetrator deaths, children, family members, current partners, and law enforcement killed.

NCEDSV limits the definition of domestic violence to focus on our partner agencies' work to ending both intimate partner and sexual violence.

## Document Limitations

NCEDSV relies solely on publicly accessible information to create this report. NCEDSV reviews media clippings and the homicide reports of law enforcement agencies that provide information to the public. If the media does not report the killing as an intimate partner homicide or as a murder-suicide, NCEDSV does not include it in this report. As such, NCEDSV does not state this is the definitive number of domestic violence homicides, but it is the number identified through the sources described.

Additionally, the events listed have not been proven in court and as such the guilt or innocence of anyone listed as a perpetrator is considered alleged.

## HOMICIDE INCIDENTS OVERVIEW

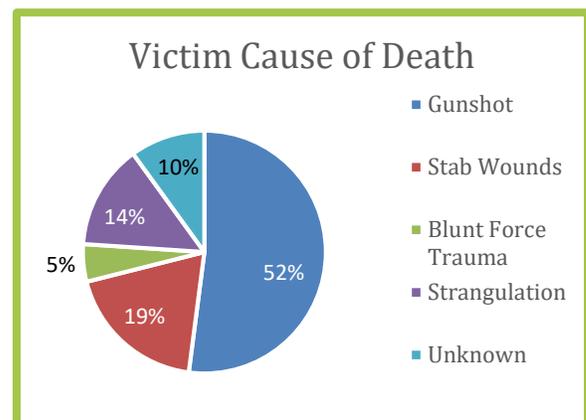
In 2017, NCEDSV identified 18 incidents in which someone lost his/her/their lives due to domestic violence<sup>5</sup>. In these incidents:

- Fifteen women and two men were killed due to intimate partner violence.
- Two children were killed during an intimate partner violence incident.
- The parents of a victim were killed in connection with an intimate partner violence homicide.
- Six alleged male perpetrators' suicide deaths followed domestic violence homicide or attempted homicide.

## Cause of Death

National studies show that when there is a handgun present in a household where domestic violence is occurring, the chances of someone being killed increases 500 percent.<sup>6</sup> These statistics continue to bear true in Nevada.

In 2017, 11 of the 21 victim, child, and bystander deaths (52.38 percent) were due to gunshot wounds; 4 or 19.05 percent were due to stab wounds; 3 or 14.29 percent were to



<sup>5</sup> NCEDSV identified two deaths as intimate partner homicides that were ruled self-defense. As such, NCEDSV is not listing them in this report.

<sup>6</sup> J.C. Campbell and others, "Risk factors for femicide in abusive relationships: results from a multisite case control study," American Journal of Public Health 93 (7) (2003): 1089-1097.

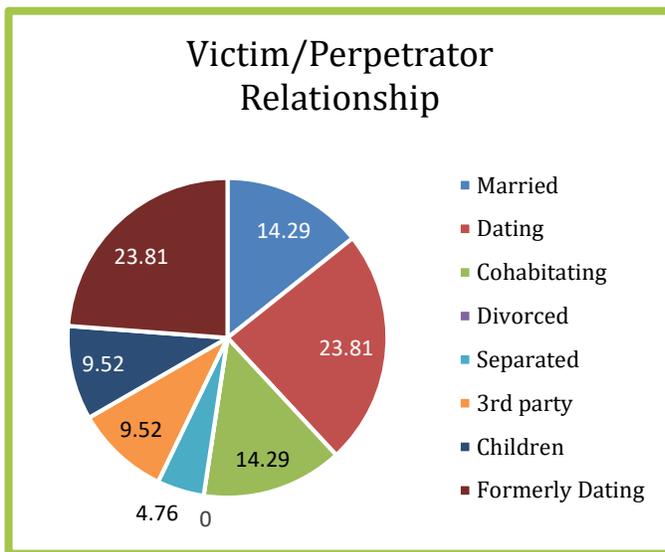
strangulation, 2 or 9.52 percent were due to unknown circumstances, and 1 or 4.76 percent was due to blunt force trauma.

Additionally, 66.67 percent of the alleged perpetrators who killed themselves, used firearms.

### Average Age

The average age of persons who died was 27.

### Victim/Perpetrator Relationship



The majority of fatal incidences that occurred were between dating (23.81 percent) or formerly dating (23.81 percent) individuals.

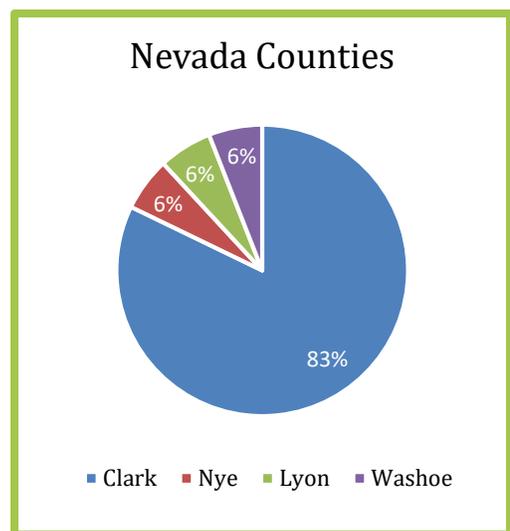
This year, two children were killed in intimate partner violence situations. Additionally, two parents of a victim were murdered in a secondary location.

### Counties Where Incidences Occurred

Due to Nevada’s population disbursement, it is not surprising that the majority of intimate partner homicides occurred in the primary urban area of Clark County.

In total, NCEDSV identified 18 intimate partner homicide incidents:

- Clark County had 15 intimate partner homicides or 83 percent;
- Lyon County had one domestic violence homicide incident where three people were murdered;
- Nye County had a murder-suicide; and
- Washoe County had one intimate partner homicide.



## In the death of . . .

### ***Laura Angel Guden, 21 (female victim)***

March 9, 2017, Las Vegas, Clark County

Police arrested Robert Roginisky, 38, for the strangulation death of Laura Angel Guden. Guden and Roginisky were dating and living together. Neighbors called the police after hearing screaming and a loud thump. According to police, Guden was found unresponsive and with defensive wounds on her hands.



### ***Geranique Bentley, 20 (female victim)***

March 11, 2017, Las Vegas, Clark County

Geranique Bentley's burned body was found in the rear part of an apartment complex. The coroner later determined that she was strangled before being burned. Police arrested Raymond Quinsell Lewis IV on one count of open murder, arson in the third degree, domestic battery by strangulation, and destroying or concealing evidence.

According to police, Quinsell stated he strangled Bentley then burned her body because she called him lazy in an argument.



### ***Jose Ignacio Villanueva, 40 (male victim)***

April 1, 2017, Las Vegas, Clark County

Jose Villanueva was allegedly shot and killed by his girlfriend, Lisa Hollopeter, 35. According to the police, Villanueva died due to gunshot wounds to his legs, back, and left shoulder. When questioned by the police, Hollopeter stated she shot her boyfriend and changed her story several times that prompted the arrest.



***Glenda Taylor Freese, 45 (female victim)***

April 23, 2017, Las Vegas, Clark County

Allegedly, after Glenda Taylor Freese called off her wedding to Steven Miller, he stabbed her multiple times with a butcher knife. Taylor Freese was able to tell police that Miller had stabbed her before dying. According to police, Miller admitted that he stabbed Taylor Freese several times. Subsequently, the coroner reported that Taylor Freese was strangled as well.

According to police, Miller attempted to take his own life. He survived and was charged with murder. Miller was a Clark County juvenile probation officer.



***Jodeane Robertson, 54 (female victim) and Jason Charles Robertson 54, (male suicide)***

May 13, 2017, Las Vegas, Clark County

A neighbor called police after she heard a gunshot and then heard another. Police arrived to find Jodeane Robertson dead with multiple gunshot wounds, and Jason Robertson dead from a single gunshot wound.



***Stella Martinez, 39 (female victim)***

June 3, 2017, Las Vegas, Clark County

According to Las Vegas Metropolitan Police, officers observed Christopher Wood attacking and strangling Stella Martinez. As police ordered Wood to cease, he ripped hair out of her head. A week later, Martinez died from her injuries. Prior to her death, Martinez predicted that Wood would murder her.



***Lorena Gardner, 29 (female victim)***

July 8, 2017, Reno, Washoe County

In Dinuba, California, police responded to a domestic disturbance, and shots fired call. Witnesses indicated to the police that Jose Rodriguez had a dead body hidden in his SUV. Upon the arrest of Rodriguez for a stabbing incident, the police obtained a search warrant and found the body of Lorena Gardner in the cardboard box. Reno Police was contacted, and they confirmed evidence of a possible homicide in the apartment that Gardner and Rodriguez shared. According to police, Rodriguez drove from Reno to Dinuba with their four children and the body of his girlfriend in his vehicle.



***Karen Jackson, 34 (female victim) John Lunetta, Jr., 1 (male victim),  
John Lunetta, Sr. 40 (male suicide)***

July 10, 2017, Las Vegas, Clark County

Neighbors discovered the bodies of Karen Jackson, John Lunetta, Jr., John Lunetta, Sr., and their family dog. Shots were heard about 24 hours before the discovery. Police determined that Lunetta, Sr., murdered Jackson and their son, shot the dog, then killed himself. Police stated they were called to the residence during a domestic disturbance that did not escalate to domestic violence before this incident.



***Nova Knaub, 4 (male victim) Tyler Knaub (male suicide)***

July 15, 2017, Las Vegas, Clark County

According to the police, Tyler Knaub allegedly forced his way into the home of his ex-girlfriend, Cierra Cabrera, and bound Cabrera and his son Nova Knaub with zip ties. Tyler Knaub began to stab both Cabrera and his son. Tyler Knaub then stabbed himself. Cabrera screamed, and a neighbor came in and found them.

Nova Knaub was rushed to the hospital and was pronounced dead. Cabrera survived.



***Makayla Rhiner, 21 (female victim)***

August 3, 2017, Las Vegas, Clark County

Makayla Rhiner was allegedly stabbed multiple times by her ex-boyfriend, Brandon Hanson, 33. According to family members, Rhiner broke-up with Hanson. He took it poorly, threatening to kill himself and vandalizing cars belonging to Rhiner’s mother and her new boyfriend. Hanson admitted that he went to her home to discuss their relationship but “grew angry and stabbed her in the neck when she dismissed the ideology of their relationship.”



***Noel Acosta, 46, (female victim) Thomas Acosta, 44 (male suicide)***

August 13, 2017, Las Vegas, Clark County

Noel Acosta’s teenaged-daughter, Selena Janeway, called the police after hearing gunshots. Upon arrival, police assisted Janeway out of the home through a window. When entering, the police found the bodies of Noel Acosta and Thomas Acosta. The police indicated there were previous incidences of domestic violence in the family. It was determined Thomas Acosta murdered Noel then shot himself. The couple was in the midst of a divorce. According to police, the daughter did not witness the shooting, but was in her room and heard it.



***Cynthia Alden, 37 (female victim)***

September 6, 2017, North Las Vegas

Police allege that an argument between Cynthia Alden and her boyfriend Toby Lara is what lead to Lara shooting and killing Adlen. When police arrived, Alden was unresponsive and was later declared deceased on the scene. Later that day, Lara was taken into custody by the FBI C.A.T. Task Force.



***Susan Arvanitis, 70 (female victim) Fred Frank Wolf, 71 (male suicide)***

September 28, 2017, Pahrump, Nye County

Deputies from the Nye County Sheriff's Office were dispatched to the couple's home for a welfare check. Upon arrival, deputies were unable to make contact with the couple and entered the home. Once inside, deputies discovered both persons deceased as a result of gunshot wounds. According to the Sheriff's Office, the investigation and autopsy results lead them to believe that Fred Wolf fatally shot his wife, Susan Arvanitis several hours prior and then took his own life.



***Daniela Rozada, 37 (female victim)***

October 1, 2017, Las Vegas, Clark County

Daniela Rozada was allegedly shot in the head by Eduardo Rozada-Tomayo, 36, during an argument regarding custody of their daughter. Rozada-Tomayo then disappeared with their daughter and later dropped her off at a family member's home. Rozada died of her wounds. Rozada-Tomayo was arrested.



***Rebecca Driver, 36 (female victim), Frank Evans, 67 (male victim),  
Coral Evans, 68 (female victim)***

October 10, 2017, Silver Springs, Lyon County

According to the Lyon County Sheriff's Office, Scott Baskette, 48 was arrested for the murders of his ex-girlfriend Rebecca Driver, and her parents Frank and Coral Evans. The incident began when deputies responded to Drivers' home for a medical call. She was discovered by her children who called 911. When deputies arrived, she was already deceased. During the investigation, the deputies discovered information that led them to believe the Evans were in danger. The deputies went to the Evans' home to notify the family of the Drivers' death and warn them of the possible danger. The deputies found Evans shot and killed.



***Philomena Wong, 82 (female victim), John Pinkkuen Wong (male suicide)***

November 1, 2017, North Las Vegas

According to police, Philomena and John Wong were found dead in a rehabilitation center where one of the couple was admitted. Police determined that Philomena was shot in the head and the manner was ruled a homicide. Additionally, police determined that John's death was suicide due to a intraoral gunshot wound.



***Nicole Nguyen, 41 (female victim)***

November 11, 2017, Las Vegas, Clark County

LVMPD arrested John Fitzgerald Gonzelez, 51 for the shooting death of Nicole Nguyen. Nguyen had filed for divorce seven weeks before the shooting asking for sole legal and physical custody of their child. According to police, there was one previous domestic disturbance call to the home.



***Emmanuel Amar, 43 (male victim)***

According to police, Emmanuel Amar was allegedly stabbed in the chest and back by his girlfriend, Melissa Barnes. According to witnesses, Amar was attempting to prevent Barnes from stabbing herself when she began stabbing him. Witnesses stated seeing incidences of domestic violence towards Amar before his death; however, the police were not called.

