ALASKA, 2013-2014

Size
Largest state in the U.S. in land area, covering 570,000 square miles

Population
48th most populated state with 738,000 residents

Race/ethnicity of state population
62% White non-Hispanic, 4% Black, 7% Hispanic or Latino, 8% Asian/Pacific Islander, 15% American Indian/Alaska Native; 7% two or more races

NVDRS participation
Alaska Violent Death Reporting System (AKVDRS) joined NVDRS in 2002; first year of data collection in 2003

A LOOK AT SUICIDE IN ALASKA

Data from the National Violent Death Reporting System 2013-2014.

TYPES OF VIOLENT DEATHS IN ALASKA
- Nearly all (90%) violent deaths occurring in Alaska in 2013-2014 were classified as suicide or homicide.
- Suicide was the most common manner of violent death in Alaska (N=335, 72%), occurring four times as often as homicide (N=83, 18%).
- The remaining deaths from violence were attributed to undetermined manner (N=31, 7%), legal intervention (N=6, 1%), and unintentional firearm death (N=9, 2%).

SUICIDE IN ALASKA
- **State rates.** Alaska’s suicide rate* in 2013-2014 was 22.7 per 100,000 residents, a 3% increase from 22.1 in 2004-2005 and a 5% increase from 21.6 in 2009-2010.
- **State/U.S. comparison.** The suicide rate in Alaska was 72% higher than the U.S. suicide rate (13.2) and was the highest of all NVDRS states.
- **Race/ethnicity.** Suicide victims were 62% White, 26% American Indian/Alaska Native, 4% Black, 3% Hispanic, 2% two or more races, 1% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% unknown.
- **Sex.** Males accounted for 81% of suicide victims (40.9/100,000 ages 10+) and females accounted for 19% (10.6/100,000 ages 10+). The suicide rate among males was highest for those ages 25-44 (51.8/100,000). For females, the suicide rate was highest among those ages 45-64 (13.6/100,000).

Percents in this state profile may not equal 100% due to rounding.

*All rates in this profile are occurrence ratios based on the number of resident and non-residents deaths that occurred in the state per 100,000 resident population.
SUICIDE METHODS
- A firearm was used in 68% of suicides, followed by hanging/strangulation/suffocation (19%) and poisoning (9%).
- Use of a firearm was the most common method for both males (74%) and females (46%). Males ages 25-44 had the highest firearm suicide rate (36.5/100,000). (See infographic)

ADDITIONAL SUICIDE DEMOGRAPHICS
- **Veterans.** Twenty-one percent (21%) of victims were identified as veterans (served in the U.S. Armed Forces) on the death certificate, including 58% of those ages 65+.
- **Sexual orientation.** Five (5) victims were identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.
- **Homeless status.** Four (4) victims were identified as homeless at the time of death.
- **Marital status.** Twenty-eight percent (28%) of victims were married, 50% were never married, 18% were divorced, 2% were widowed, and 2% had another or unknown marital status.
- **Educational level.** Among victims ages 25+, 47% had an unknown or missing education level, 21% were a high school or GED graduate, 6% had less than a high school education, and 26% had some college credit or a college degree.

SUICIDE CIRCUMSTANCES
- In 96% of Alaska’s deaths by suicide, circumstances were documented in the records (N=323).
- The most frequently cited circumstances were relationship problems (50%), a recent/imminent crisis (46%), intimate partner problem (38%), current depressed mood (37%), current or past mental health treatment (37%), current mental health problem (36%), and history of suicidal thoughts or plans (35%). A suicide note was left in 32% of the incidents.
- The most frequent or notable circumstances by age group are shown in the chart below.