Deaths from Suicide: A Look at 18 States

**SOUTH CAROLINA, 2013-2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Divided into 46 counties covering 30,000 square miles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>23rd most populated state with 4.9 million residents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race/ethnicity of state population</td>
<td>64% White non-Hispanic, 28% Black, 6% Hispanic or Latino, 2% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% American Indian/Alaska Native; 2% two or more races</td>
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<tr>
<td>NVDRS participation</td>
<td>South Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (SCVDRS) joined NVDRS in 2002; first year of data collection in 2003</td>
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### A LOOK AT SUICIDE IN SOUTH CAROLINA

**Types of Violent Deaths in South Carolina**

- Nearly all (99%) violent deaths occurring in South Carolina in 2013-2014 were classified as suicide or homicide.
- Suicide was the most common manner of violent death in South Carolina (N=1474, 67%), occurring 2.1 times more often than homicide (N=694, 32%).
- The remaining deaths from violence were attributed to undetermined manner (N=8, <1%), legal intervention (N=14, 1%), and unintentional firearm death (N=6, <1%).

**Suicide in South Carolina**

- **State rates.** South Carolina’s suicide rate* in 2013-2014 was 15.3/100,000, a 28% increase from 12.0 in 2004-2005 and a 15% increase from 13.3 in 2009-2010.
- **State/U.S. comparison.** The suicide rate in South Carolina was 16% higher than the U.S. suicide rate (13.2) and was the eighth highest of all NVDRS states.
- **Race/ethnicity.** Suicide victims were 81% White, 9% Black, 3% Hispanic, 1% Asian/Pacific Islander, 2% other/two or more races, and 3% unknown.
- **Sex.** Males accounted for 78% of suicide victims (28.2/100,000 ages 10+) and females accounted for 22% (7.5/100,000 ages 10+). The suicide rate among males was highest for those ages 65+ (34.5/100,000). For females, the suicide rate was highest among those ages 45-64 (11.5/100,000).

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*Percent in this state profile may not equal 100% due to rounding.
*All rates in this profile are occurrent ratios based on the number of resident and non-residents deaths that occurred in the state per 100,000 resident population.
SUICIDE METHODS
- Firearms were used in 65% of suicides, followed by hanging/strangulation/suffocation (18%) and poisoning (12%).
- Use of a firearm was the most common method for both males (70%) and females (48%). Males ages 65+ had the highest firearm suicide rate (30.0/100,000). (See infographic)

ADDITIONAL SUICIDE DEMOGRAPHICS
- **Veterans.** Four percent (4%) of suicide victims were identified as veterans (served in the U.S. Armed Forces) on the death certificate; 88% of victims had an unknown or missing veteran status.
- **Sexual orientation.** Six (6) victims were identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.
- **Homeless status.** Fewer than five victims were identified as homeless at the time of death.
- **Marital status.** Thirty-nine percent (39%) of victims were married, 30% were never married, 20% were divorced, 7% were widowed, and 3% had another or unknown marital status.
- **Education level.** Among victims ages 25+, 17% were a high school or GED graduate, 50% had less than a high school education, 27% had some college or a college degree, and 6% had an unknown education level.

SUICIDE CIRCUMSTANCES
- In 78% of South Carolina’s deaths by suicide, circumstances were documented in the records (N=1143).
- The most frequently cited circumstances were current mental health problem (36%), relationship problems (30%), physical health problem (27%), intimate partner problem (24%), current depressed mood (23%), and disclosed suicide intent (20%). A suicide note was left in 28% of the incidents.
- The most frequent or notable circumstances by age group are shown in the chart below.