Suicide among Veterans and Armed Forces
ALASKA, 2010 - 2014

Data from the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS)


Alaska is the largest state in the U.S. in land area, covering 570,000 square miles. It is the 48th most populated state.

Types of violent deaths among veterans and armed forces in Alaska (N=221)

- **77%** Suicide (170 deaths)
- 9% Homicide (20 deaths)
- 4% Unintentional firearm (9 deaths)
- 1% Legal intervention (2 deaths)
- 9% Undetermined (20 deaths)

SUICIDE was the most common type of violent death among veterans and armed forces in Alaska, occurring more than eight times as often as homicide during 2010-2014.

Percent of all suicide victims in Alaska in 2010-2014 identified as veterans or armed forces

- 25% Males
- 7% Females
- 22% Total

Method of suicide deaths among veterans and armed forces in Alaska

- 80% Firearm
- 10% Hanging
- 6% Poisoning
- 3% Other

Percents may not equal 100% due to rounding. *All rates are occurrent ratios based on the number of resident and non-resident deaths that occurred in the state per 100,000 resident population. **Statistical testing was not conducted. Differences between veterans/armed forces and non-veteran civilians may not be statistically significant. Sources: 1. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014; 2. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2014 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress; 3. U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs

Suicide rates in Alaska**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suicides</th>
<th>Veterans/ Armed Forces</th>
<th>Non-Veteran Civilians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>20.1***</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***Rate based on <20 deaths

Annual number of suicide deaths among veterans and armed forces in Alaska

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Suicide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographics of veterans and armed forces suicide victims in Alaska (N=170)

- **78%** White, Non-Hispanic
- 8% American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic
- 6% Black, non-Hispanic
- 5% Hispanic
- 2% Two or more races, other, or unknown race
- 0% Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic

Marital Status

- **44%** Married
- 29% Never married
- 20% Divorced
- 6% Widowed
- 1% Other/unknown status

**Includes civil unions and domestic partnerships

Education Status

- **42%** High school/GED graduate
- 32% Some college credit or college degree
- 4% Less than a high school education
- 22% Unknown or missing education level

Homeless Veterans

- **89**

Veteran Health Administration facilities in Alaska

- **9**
Firearm suicide rates among male veterans/armed forces and non-veteran civilians in Alaska**

**Firearm suicide rates** in Alaska, 2010-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Males, All Ages</th>
<th>VETERAN/ ARMED FORCES</th>
<th>Firearm use 34.6</th>
<th>Non-firearm use 7.1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NON-VETERAN CIVILIAN</td>
<td>Firearm use 28.0</td>
<td>Non-firearm use 14.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

● or ○ = 2 deaths per 100,000 residents

Suicide circumstances by life stage among male veterans and armed forces in Alaska

In 96% of Alaska’s suicide deaths among male veterans and armed forces, circumstances were documented in the records (N=152). More than one circumstance may have been noted in the record. The five most frequent circumstances by age group, as well as information about suicide intent, and a suicide note, are shown below. Circumstances by age group were not calculated for females due to small numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE 18-34</th>
<th>AGE 35-54</th>
<th>AGE 55-64</th>
<th>AGE 65+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=59)</td>
<td>(N=41)</td>
<td>(N=19)</td>
<td>(N=33)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 59% Intimate partner problems
- 37% Job/financial problems
- 39% Current mental health problem
- 37% Job/financial problems
- 34% Intimate partner problems
- 34% Ever treated for mental health or substance abuse problem
- 32% Recent/imminent crisis
- 56% Suicide intent disclosed within last month
- 37% Left a suicide note
- 39% Suicide intent disclosed within last month
- 34% Left a suicide note
- 37% Suicide intent disclosed within last month
- 47% Left a suicide note
- 26% Ever treated for mental health or substance abuse problem
- 27% Current mental health problem
- Not calculated, n<5
- 48% Recent/imminent crisis
- 21% Other death of friend or family member
- 30% Suicide intent disclosed within last month
- 52% Left a suicide note

Diagnoses among suicide victims with a current mental health problem in Alaska*

- Depression/dysthymia was similar among veteran/armed forces and non-veteran civilian suicide victims
- Post-traumatic stress disorder was higher among veteran/armed forces suicide victims compared to non-veteran civilians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Depression/dysthymia</th>
<th>Post-traumatic stress disorder</th>
<th>Schizophrenia</th>
<th>Anxiety disorder</th>
<th>Bipolar disorder</th>
<th>Other/Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>66%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

= Veteran/Armed Forces (N=59)
= Non-Veteran Civilians (N=184)

Percentages will not add up to 100% as individuals may have had more than one diagnosis.