



**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER**

401 E Street, SW – 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20024



Firearm-Related Homicides: January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2022

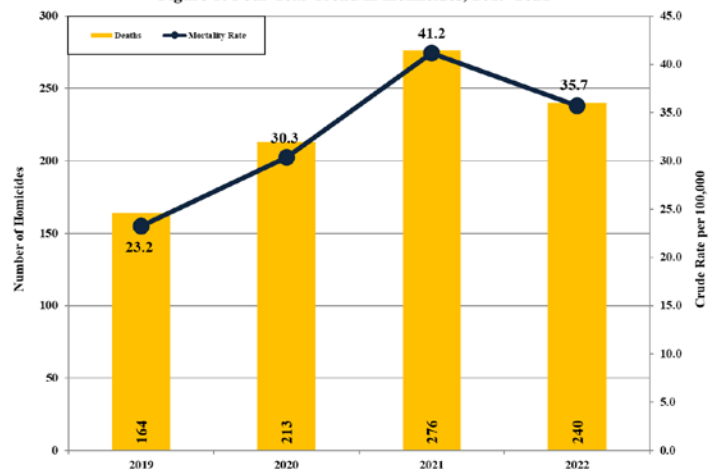
Report Date: March 22, 2023

The DC Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) investigated **893** deaths due to homicide from January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2022: **164** deaths in 2019; **213** in 2020; **276** deaths in 2021; and **240** deaths in 2022. Below is a breakdown of the homicides by cause of death and demographics, focusing on firearm-related fatalities as **731** homicides (82%) between 2019 and 2022 were due to firearm injuries. The data presented within this report represents deaths occurring exclusively within the District of Columbia. The data does not represent ALL deaths of DC residents. Likewise, the decedent’s residence or location of injury may be outside of District.

Trends in Homicides

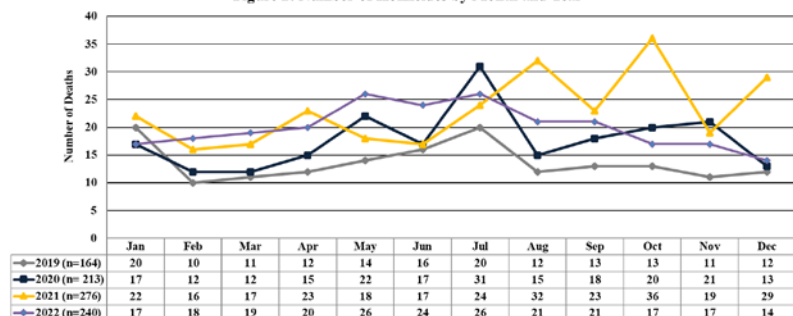
A steady increase in homicides has occurred from 2019 through 2021, though homicides declined in 2022. In 2021, the number of homicides increased by 26% compared to 2020 (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Four Year Trend in Homicides, 2019-2022



When examining homicides over the past couple of years, the number of homicides per month has increased since 2019 (Figure 2). In 2019, there was an average of 14 homicides per month. However, the number of homicides per month increased to an average of 23 per month in 2021. The average number of homicides in 2022 has decreased to 20 per month.

Figure 2: Number of Homicides by Month and Year



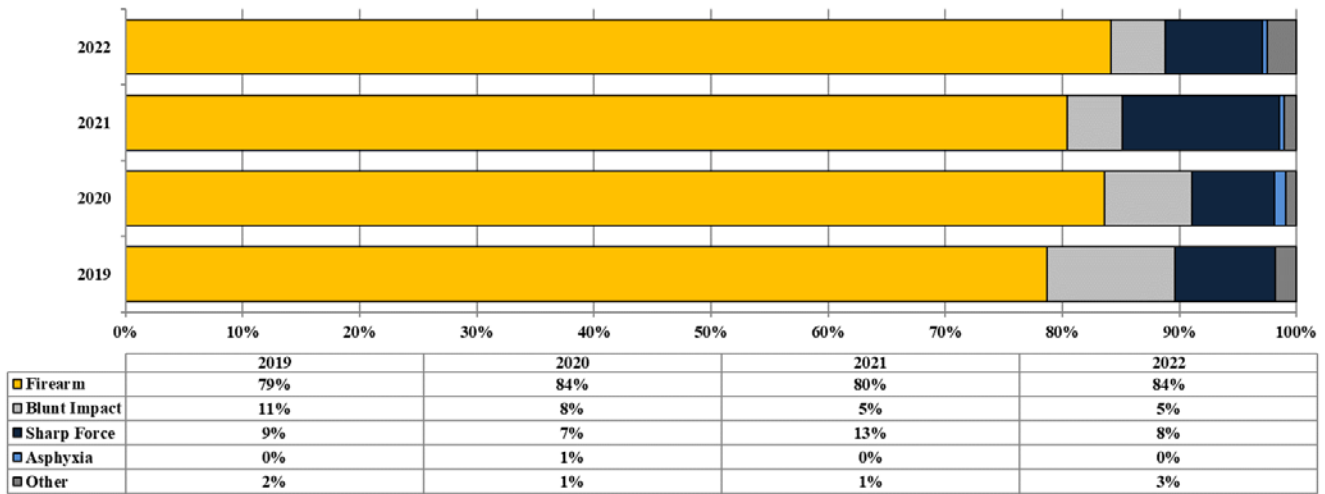
*Numbers with year in "Year-To-Date" or YTD and is subject to change upon investigation findings or incoming of new or reviewed cases



Cause of Death in Homicides by Year

Over a four-year period, the percentage of firearm-related homicides has increased from 79% in 2019 to 84% in 2022 (Figure 3).

Figure 3: 4 Year Trend of Homicides by Cause of Death and Year



Jurisdiction of Residence

Between 2019 and 2022, 673 decedents (75% of the homicides) were DC residents (Table 1). Wards 5, 7, and 8 have consistently had the most homicides across all years (Figure 4). Ward 8 had the highest percentage of homicides by firearm (39%) between 2019 and 2022.

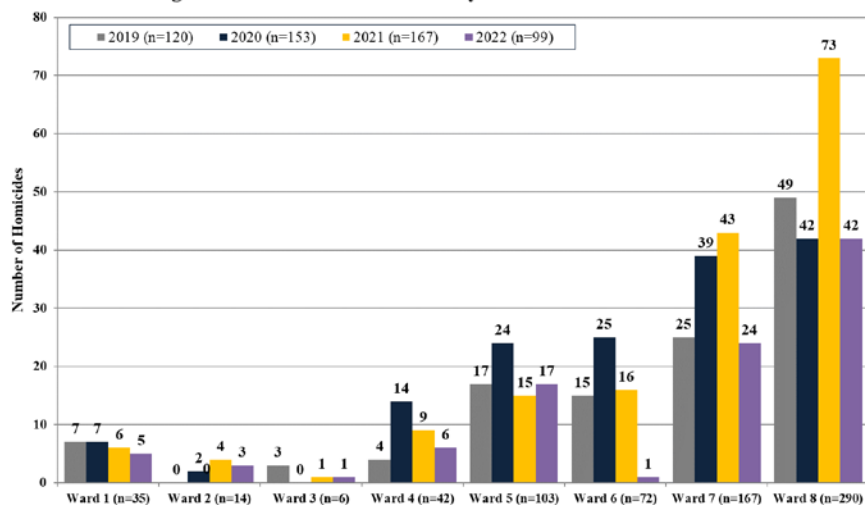
Table 1: Breakdown of Homicides by Jurisdiction of Residence and Year

Jurisdiction of Res.	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
DC	130	154	204	185	673
MD	25	40	53	43	161
VA	3	8	8	8	27
Other	1	1	2	1	5
Unknown	5	10	9	3	27
Undomiciled	0	0	0	0	0
Total	164	213	276	240	893

Table 2: Breakdown of DC Homicides by Firearms by Ward of Residence and Year

	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Ward 1	5	7	5	3	20
Ward 2	0	2	2	3	7
Ward 3	2	0	0	0	2
Ward 4	3	11	9	4	27
Ward 5	15	20	13	14	62
Ward 6	14	23	14	0	51
Ward 7	19	31	35	21	106
Ward 8	39	36	61	38	174
Total	97	130	139	83	449

Figure 4: Number of Homicides by Ward of Residence and Year



Demographics

Age

Approximately **60%** of all homicides happened among adults between the ages of 20 to 39 years old (Figure 5a). Homicides were most prevalent among people ages 20 to 29 (n=35%). The prevalence of firearm-related homicides among decedents age 20 to 29 varies by year (Figure 5b). In 2019, 56% of all firearm-related homicides were among decedents age 20 to 29. However, the percentage of firearm-related homicides among that age range decreased to 40% in 2021 and 31% in 2022.

Race/Ethnicity

Overall, **825** or **92%** of all homicides were among Blacks (Figure 6). This trend remains consistent across years. The trend also remains true for firearm-related homicides, with 94% to 96% of the firearm-related homicides occurring among Blacks.

Gender

Homicides were more common among **males**. In addition, firearm-related homicides were also more common among males. Females were more likely to die from non-firearm related homicides (Figure 7). Given the small number of homicides among women (6 in 2019 and 18 in 2020), the percentages observed in firearm and non-firearm-related homicides among females are sensitive to small differences in the number of deaths per year.

Figure 5a: Number of Homicides by Age and Year

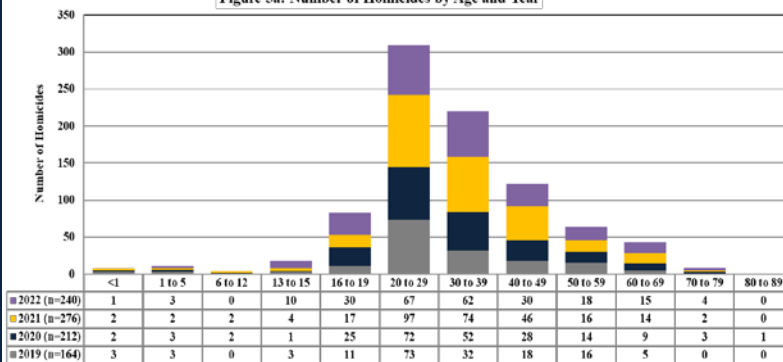
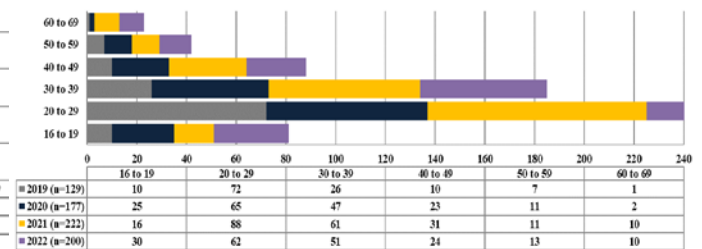


Figure 5b: Firearm-Related Homicides Among the Most Prevalent Age Categories by Year



*Legend reflecting the sum of total homicides by year (e.g. n=129) includes other ages not displayed in this graph.

Figure 6: Number of Homicides by Race/Ethnicity and Year

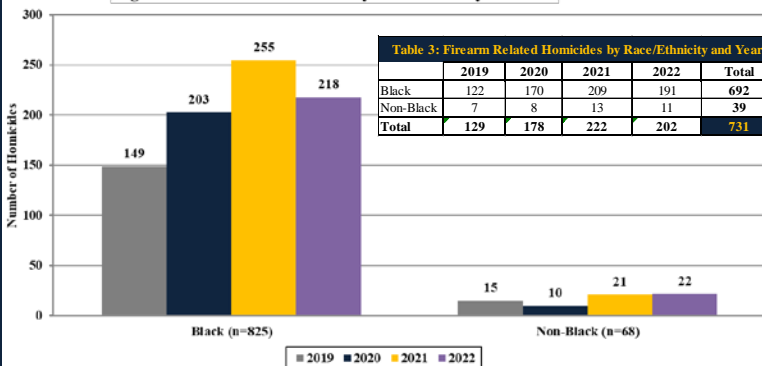
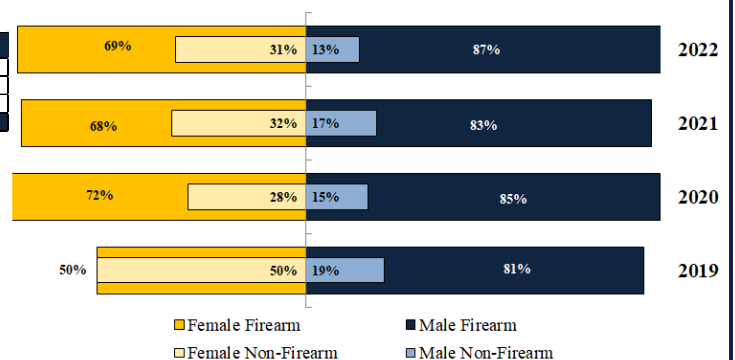


Table 3: Firearm Related Homicides by Race/Ethnicity and Year					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Black	122	170	209	191	692
Non-Black	7	8	13	11	39
Total	129	178	222	202	731

Figure 7: Comparison of Non-Firearm vs Firearm Related Homicides by Gender and Year



Location and Details of Gunshot Wounds

When examining firearm-related homicides, both multiple and single gunshot wounds increased significantly between 2019 and 2022, except for multiple gunshot wounds in 2022 (Figure 8). More gunshot wounds to the head occurred than to any other part of the body (Table 2). Approximately **34%** of all firearm-related homicides between 2019 and 2022 had a gunshot wound to the head. Overall, firearm-related homicides have increased in number and lethality.

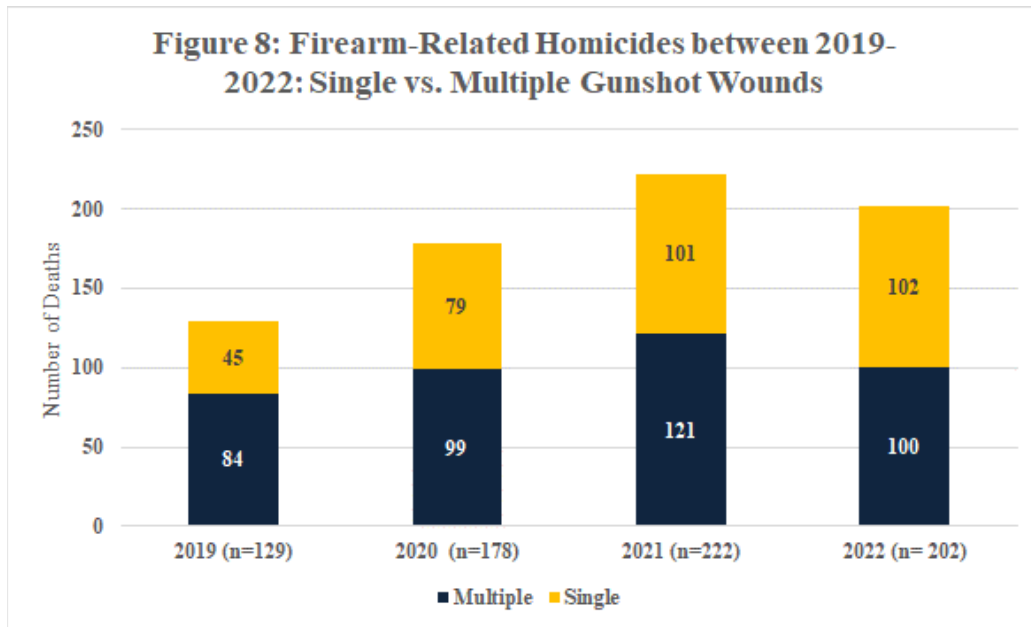


Table 4: Breakdown of Location of Single GSWs 2019-2022

	2019	%	2020	%	2021	%	2022	%
Abdomen	4	9%	2	3%	4	4%	3	3%
Back	9	21%	11	14%	18	18%	12	12%
Chest	7	16%	14	18%	11	11%	28	27%
Head	13	30%	27	34%	33	33%	36	35%
Neck	4	9%	2	3%	6	6%	4	4%
Shoulder	1	2%	1	1%	2	2%	1	1%
Torso	3	7%	19	24%	26	26%	14	14%
Extremities	2	5%	3	4%	1	1%	4	4%
	43	100%	79	100%	101	100%	102	100%

