



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER
401 E Street, SW – 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20024

Comparison of Homicides in 2017 and 2018: January 1, 2017 to December 17, 2018¹

Report Date: December 21, 2018

The DC Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) investigated a total of **275** deaths due to the use of homicide from January 1, 2017 through December 20, 2018: **123** deaths in CY 2017 and **152** year to date in CY 2018. Below is a breakdown of the homicides by cause of death and primary location of gunshot wound.

Trends in Homicides by Manner

The number of homicides has increased since 2017. The majority of homicides occur by firearms, followed by sharp force and blunt impact. This trend is consistent across years. However, the percentage of firearm-related homicides has increased from **71% (2017) to 79% (2018)**.

Homicides by Manner of Death and Year		
Cause of Death	# in 2017	# in 2018 (Jan. to Dec. 17)
Firearm	87	120
Sharp Force	18	20
Blunt Impact	14	9
Asphyxia	1	2
Other	3	1
Total	123	152

Primary Location of Gunshot Wound

The majority of homicides involve multiple gunshot wounds followed by gunshot wounds of the head. Past gunshot wounds that lead to death is the third most common reason of homicides. The table to the right highlights the primary location of gunshot wounds per year. A similar percentage of homicides due multiple gunshot wounds has occurred in 2017 (52%) and 2018 (53%). Of note, a slightly higher percentage of homicides due to past gunshot wounds has occurred in 2018 (9%) than 2017 (7%).

Homicides by Primary Location of Gunshot Wound and Year		
Primary Location of Gunshot	# in 2017	# in 2018 (Jan. to Dec. 17)
Multiple Areas	45	63
Head	15	21
Past Injury Leading to Current Death	6	11
Chest	5	10
Back	4	6
Head (Multiple)	3	0
Torso (Multiple)	3	0
Abdomen	2	2
Head/Neck	1	0
Head/Torso (Multiple)	1	0
Trunk/Extremities (Multiple)	1	1
Upper Extremity	1	1
Neck	0	5
Total	87	120

¹ Data for 2018 is inconclusive and subject to change.



Homicides and Firearm-related Homicides by Residence

The majority of homicides occurred among residents of the District of Columbia. Although a higher percentage of homicides occurred among DC residents in 2018 (75%) compared to the percentage of homicides among DC residents in 2017 (66%). Similar trends are observed when examining the jurisdiction of residence among firearm-related homicides. The table to the right provides a breakdown of homicides and firearm-related homicides by year.

Number of Homicides by Jurisdiction of Residence and Year				
	2017	(%)	2018	(%)
DC	81	66%	114	75%
MD	29	24%	28	18%
VA	5	4%	3	2%
Other	3	2%	2	1%
Undomiciled	3	2%	0	0%
Unknown	2	2%	5	3%
Total	123	100%	152	100%

Number of Firearm-related Homicides by Jurisdiction of Residence and Year				
	2017	(%)	2018	(%)
DC	58	67%	92	77%
MD	20	23%	22	18%
VA	2	2%	2	2%
Other	3	3%	1	1%
Undomiciled	2	2%	0	0%
Unknown	2	2%	3	3%
Total	87	100%	120	100%

