

# Firearm-Related Injury Fact Sheet 2016-2020

Gunshot wounds are a major cause of injury and death in the County and California as a whole. Firearms are commonly used in homicides and suicides. For every firearm-related death, there are several non-fatal but serious firearm-related injuries that require medical attention. This fact sheet describes how firearm deaths affected Sacramento County residents from 2016 to 2020.

## Summary

### Disproportionately involved in homicide and suicide

Gunshot wounds caused 726 deaths in the County during 2016 to 2020. These were approximately 15% of all 5,003 injury-related deaths in the County. However, firearms were involved in almost 40% of all suicides and two-thirds of all homicides in the County during the same time period [Figure 1].

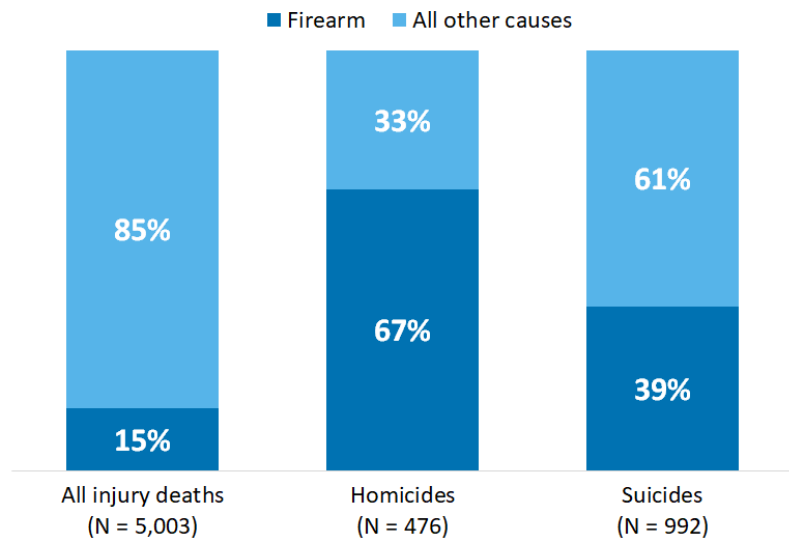
### Leading cause of death among young males

From 2016 to 2020, there were 1,062 County deaths among males ages 40 and younger [Figure 2]. The third and fifth most common causes of death were homicide (212 deaths) and suicide (122 deaths) by firearm, respectively. When combined, firearm-related deaths overtook unintentional poisoning and overdose as the most common cause of death among young males (334 deaths).

### Trends over time

For every firearm-related death, there are several non-fatal firearm-related injuries that require medical attention. Between 2016 and 2020, the County experienced more firearm-related violence than the State overall, leading to more emergency department visits and deaths [Figure 3]. In 2020, both the County and California experienced a large increase in firearm violence compared to previous years.

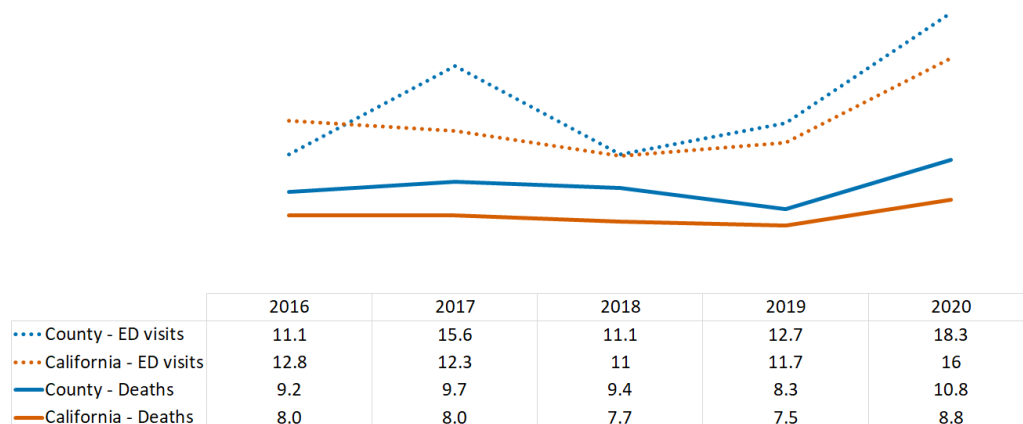
**Figure 1. Firearm-related vs. non-firearm-related injury deaths, Sacramento County, 2016-2020 (N = 5,003)**



**Figure 2. Top 5 causes of death among males age 40 and younger, Sacramento County, 2016-2020 (N = 1,062)**

1. Unintentional poisoning and overdose (N = 310)
2. Unintentional motor vehicle collisions (N = 291)
3. **Firearm-related homicide (N = 212)**
4. Suffocation/strangulation suicide (N = 127)
5. **Firearm-related suicide (N = 122)**

**Figure 3. Firearm-related emergency department (ED) visits and deaths per 100,000 people, Sacramento County, 2016-2020**



## Demographics

### Race/ethnicity

There were large disparities in firearm-related deaths across different racial and ethnic groups [Figure 4]. The rate of firearm-related death among Blacks in 2016 was 20.7 deaths per 100,000 people. That rate dropped in 2018 but increased drastically in 2020 to 29.5. The rate of firearm-related death for Asians, Hispanics, and Whites remained relatively constant for this time period, ranging between 4.0 to 10.0 deaths per 100,000 people. The rate of firearm-related death among Blacks was more than twice the rate among Whites in 2016 (the racial/ethnic group with the second-highest firearm-related death rate). By the end of 2020, the firearm-related death rate among Blacks was more than triple the firearm-related death rate among Whites.

### Age

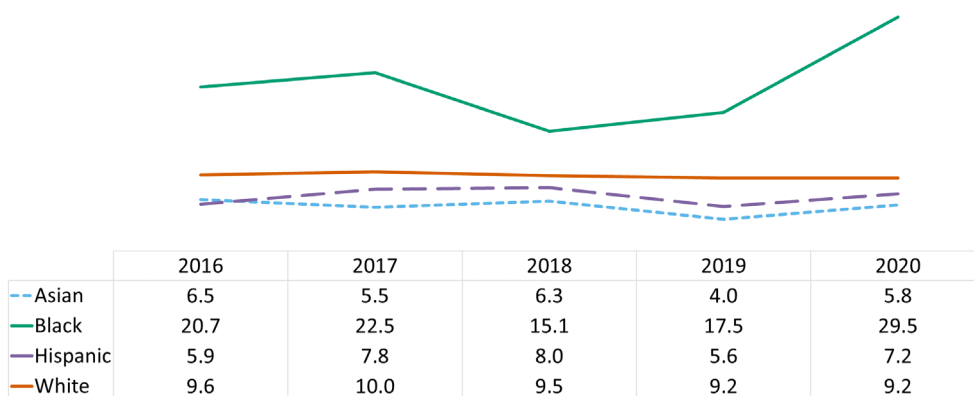
Firearm-related deaths varied across different age groups [Figure 5]. Firearm deaths increased among age group 65 and older from 9.0 deaths per 100,000 people in 2016 to 14.6 in 2020. Firearm-related deaths among age group 18-49 and 50-64 decreased by the end of 2019 but increased in the following year.

### Sex

Nearly 90% of firearm-related deaths from 2016 to 2020 in the County were male [Figure 6].

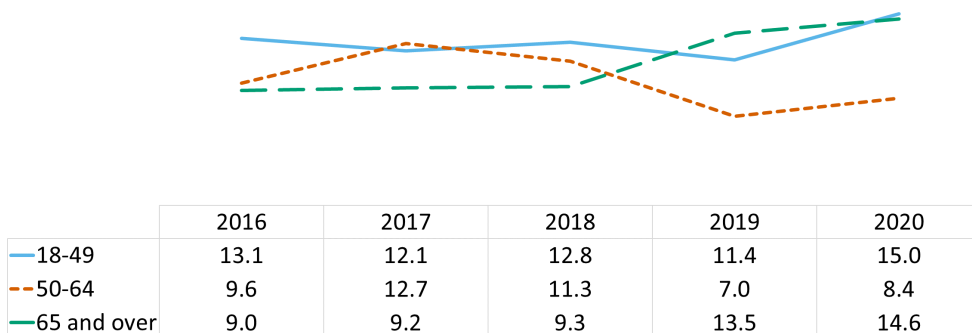
*Data Sources: Vital Records Business Intelligence System (VRBIS) death files, 2016-2020; California Department of Health Care Access and Information Emergency Department Data, 2016-2020.*

**Figure 4. Firearm-related deaths per 100,000 people by select race/ethnicity, Sacramento County, 2016-2020 (N = 710)**



\* American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) and; Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (NHPI) not displayed due to small number of events

**Figure 5. Firearm-related deaths per 100,000 people by select age group, Sacramento County, 2016-2020 (N = 726)**



\*Age group 0-17 not displayed due to small number of events

**Figure 6. Firearm-related deaths by sex, Sacramento County, 2016-2020**

