Executive Summary

- In 2016, there were 14 family violence homicide incidents resulting in 19 deaths; 14 victims and 5 offender suicides. All 5 offenders in the murder-suicide incidents were male; 4 of the 5 offenders were in an intimate relationship with the victim. Three suspected offenders in murder-suicide incidents hanged themselves.

- The 2016 family violence victim count was the lowest annual total on record.

- There were on average 1.2 family violence homicide incidents per month during 2016.

- There were more female (11) than male (3) victims of family violence homicide.

- Victims ranged in age from 18 years old (girlfriend) to 76 years old (brother-in-law). The highest number of victims was in the 20 to 29 year old age group (4). The average age of all victims was 42 years old.

- In 2016, males were more often the offender in the family violence homicides, 13 of 14 (93%).

- The youngest offender to commit a domestic homicide was 21 years of age (boyfriend); the oldest was 70 years of age (husband). The highest number of offenders was in the 30 to 39 year old age group (6). The average age of all offenders was 42 years old.

- The majority of the family violence homicide victims were in an intimate relationship with the offender (86%).

- Hands, fists, feet were the most commonly used weapon to commit the murder, utilized in 36% of incidents.

- The month of February saw the most family violence homicide incidents (4). Other months with multiple family violence homicides were May and July (2).

- Half of the family violence homicides occurred in the residence shared by the victim and offender (7).

- In 2016, a family violence homicide occurred in 12 Connecticut municipalities. Two municipalities had multiple family violence homicides, Waterbury and West Haven (2).

- Children under 18 years of age were present in three family violence homicide incidents (21%).
### 2016 State of Connecticut Family Violence Homicide Victims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Weapon</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hartford</td>
<td>1/5/16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Girlfriend</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Firearm</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Hartford</td>
<td>2/11/16</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Roommate</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Scissors</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSP - Southbury</td>
<td>2/16/16</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Relative NOT residing in home: Father</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Hands/Fists/Feet</td>
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<td>* Vernon</td>
<td>2/17/16</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Girlfriend</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Hammer</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Haven</td>
<td>2/20/16</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Persons who have a child in common</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Knife</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Bethel</td>
<td>3/25/16</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Relative residing in home: Brother-in-law</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>Firearm</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Wife</td>
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<td>Persons who have a child in common</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>Firearm</td>
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<tr>
<td>* New Haven</td>
<td>5/19/16</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Girlfriend</td>
<td>38</td>
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<td>Hands/Fists/Feet</td>
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<td>Norwich</td>
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<td>Wife</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Live-in girlfriend</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Hands/Fists/Feet</td>
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<tr>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Firearm</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Hands/Fists/Feet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Murder-Suicide

CSP=Connecticut State Police

Note: The above list includes incidents submitted to the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection prior to June 21, 2017.
Family Violence Homicides 2016

Summaries of family violence homicides occurring in Connecticut during 2016 are presented in this report. Incidents are included in this report if a family or household member as defined in Connecticut General Statute 46b-38a (2) was arrested for the crime as of June 21, 2017. "Family or household member" means any of the following persons, regardless of the age of such person: (A) Spouses or former spouses; (B) parents or their children; (C) persons related by blood or marriage; (D) persons other than those persons described in subparagraph (C) of this subdivision presently residing together or who have resided together; (E) persons who have a child in common regardless of whether they are or have been married or have lived together at any time; and (F) persons in, or who have recently been in, a dating relationship. These homicides have been matched against offenses reported via Uniform Crime Reports. Any homicide circumstance information provided is derived from newspaper accounts or other publicly available sources.

OVERVIEW

In 2016 there were 14 family violence homicide incidents involving 14 victims. The total number of deaths from these incidents was 19 including 5 offender suicides. The 2016 victim count was the lowest annual total on record. The first full calendar year of collected family violence data was 1987. The number of family violence homicide victims ranged from a low of 14 in 2016 to a high of 32 in 1989. Between 1987 and 2016, there have been 720 recorded family violence homicide victims, an average of 24 per calendar year. The numbers listed below may be different from previously published reports. In some cases the offenders were arrested after publication of the data.

Homicide Victims 1987 - 2016

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender

In 2016, females were more often the victim of a family murder than males. Males were more often the offender in family violence homicides. Of the 14 victims, 11 (79%) were females and 3 (21%) were males. Each homicide incident involved a single offender. Thirteen offenders (93%) were male, 1 offender was female (7%).
**Offender Arrests-Suicides-Other**

A total of 8 offenders were arrested (57%), 5 offenders committed suicide (36%), and 1 offender suddenly became ill, lost consciousness, and died at the hospital (7%). Four of the 5 murder-suicides involved participants in an intimate relationship, all 4 victims were female. All 5 of the offenders of murder-suicide incidents were male. Two murder-suicides were perpetrated with a firearm. One victim was strangled, one victim died of stab wounds, and one died of blunt force trauma to the head. In three of these incidents the suspected offenders hanged themselves. In 2016 all murder/suicide incidents involved a single victim.

**Offender Arrests-Suicides-Other**

Between 1987 and 2016, 173 suspected offenders have committed suicide an average of 6 per calendar year. The number of offender suicides ranged from a high of 10 in 1999 to a low of 3 in 2001, 2002, and 2014.
**Intimate/Non-intimate Relationship**

The majority of the homicide victims, a total of 12 (86%), were in an intimate relationship with the offender. The 12 intimate victims included 5 girlfriends (two were live-in girlfriends), 4 wives, 2 that had a child in common with the offender, and 1 roommate. Totaled, 11 intimate victims were female, 1 was male. Nine of the intimate victims resided with the offender.

![Victims Intimate Relationship]

Two victims (14%) of the homicides involved people in a non-intimate relationship. Both non-intimate victims were male; relationships included 1 father and 1 brother-in-law. One non-intimate victim lived with the offender.

![Victims Non-Intimate Relationship]

**Weapons**

A weapon is defined as any object, instrument, device or part of the anatomy used in an attack. In the 14 family violence homicide incidents, hands, fists, feet were the most commonly used weapon, 5 incidents (36%). Other weapons included firearms, 4 incidents (29%); knife, 3 incidents (21%); other dangerous weapons which included scissors and a hammer, 2 incidents (14%). The chart below reflects the most serious weapon per incident.

![Type of Weapon Used in Homicides]
Age & Gender of Victims

In 2016 the youngest victim of a domestic homicide was an 18 year old female (girlfriend). The oldest victim was 76 year old male (brother-in-law). The highest number of victims was in the 20 to 29 year old age group, 4 (29%). All victims in the age group 20-29 were female. The average age of female victims was 35 years old; the average age of male victims was 64 years old. The average age of all victims was 42 years old.

![Age & Gender of Victims](image)

![Age of Victims](image)
Age & Gender of Offenders

The youngest offender to commit a domestic homicide during 2016 was a 21 year old male (boyfriend). The oldest offender was a 70 year old male (husband). The highest number of offenders was in the 30 to 39 age group, 6 (43 percent). The average age of male offenders was 43 years old; the only female offender was 27 years old. The average age of all offenders was 42 years old.
Nine of the 14 family violence homicide victims were younger than the offender, (64%). Five victims (36%) were older than the offender. Overall, the age difference ranged from 16 years younger to 31 years older.

**Month**

The month of February had the highest number of family violence homicides, a total of 4. Other months with multiple family violence homicides included May and July (2 each). The months of August, October and December had no family violence homicides.
**Location of Homicide**

Seven of the 14 family violence homicides committed occurred in the residence shared by the victim and the offender (50%). Other locations included: the victim’s residence, 5 (36%); a motor vehicle, 1 (7%); and a motel, 1 (7%).

![Location of Homicide](image)

**Geographic Distribution**

The 14 family violence homicides committed during 2016 occurred in 12 Connecticut municipalities. Two Connecticut municipalities had multiple homicides, Waterbury and West Haven with 2.

![Family Violence Homicide Victims by Town 2016](image)

Prior to calendar year 2000, the details of family violence homicides that resulted in no arrest due to the suicide of the offender were not captured. The following table illustrates the total number of family violence victims by town where incident details were captured. With 62 homicide victims, Bridgeport recorded the highest total followed by Hartford (60), New Haven (44), and Waterbury (42). Combined, these four municipalities accounted for one-third (33%) of Connecticut’s family violence homicide victims where incident details were captured (633). A total of 115 municipalities have witnessed a family violence homicide, 68% of all Connecticut municipalities.
**Family Violence Homicide Victims by Town 1987 - 2016**

*Does not include victims where the offender committed suicide prior to 2000.*
Family Violence Homicide Victims by Town 1987 - 2016*

* Does not include victims where the offender committed suicide prior to 2000.
**Court Orders of Protection**

In 13 of the family homicide incidents occurring during 2016 there were no court orders of protection, either active or expired. In one incident it was unknown if there was either an active or expired court order of protection.

**Children Under 18 Years Old**

Children under 18 years of age were present in 3 of the 14 family violence homicide incidents (21%). Children under 18 years of age were not involved in 11 incidents (79%).
Victim’s Family Violence History

Of the 14 victims in the 2016 family violence homicide incidents, 9 (64%) had no previous family violence history in the state of Connecticut as either an offender or a victim.

Of the other five victims, two were involved in previous family violence incidents as either the victim or the offender. One of these two victims was involved in 7 past incidents, 6 as the victim and 1 as the offender. The other victim was involved in 2 past incidents, 1 as the victim and 1 as the offender.

One victim of a 2016 homicide was previously involved in 2 past incidents, 1 as the victim and 1 incident where all participants were arrested. One victim was previously involved in 2 past incidents, 1 as the offender and 1 where all participants were arrested. One victim was previously involved in 1 past incident as the offender.

![Pie chart showing the distribution of victim's family violence history.](image-url)
**Offender’s Family Violence History**

Of the 14 offenders in the 2016 family violence homicides, 10 (71%) had no previous family violence history in the state of Connecticut as either an offender or a victim.

Of the other four offenders, one was previously arrested three times in Connecticut on a family violence related charge. One offender was previously arrested twice and was once the victim of family violence. One offender was previously involved in one family violence incident where all participants were arrested. None of the past family violence incidents involved the 2016 homicide victim.

One of the offenders had been involved in 1 previous family violence incident as the victim. In this past incident, the 2016 homicide victim was also a reported victim.
2016 Family Violence Homicide Circumstances

1. 01/05/16 Hartford P.D.  
   **Victim**: Female, 18  **Relationship**: Girlfriend

   **Circumstances**: Responding to a 911 call, officers found the victim lying on a bedroom floor, bleeding from a neck wound. Medics took the victim to the hospital where she was pronounced dead. The suspect told officers the victim had shot herself with his 12-gauge sawed-off shotgun after the two had gotten into an argument and physical altercation. The suspect’s story was not consistent with forensic evidence.

   **Suspect Arrested**: Male, 21

2. 02/11/16 East Hartford P.D.  
   **Victim**: Male, 43  **Relationship**: Roommate

   **Circumstances**: After responding to a telephone call to assist a citizen at a motor inn, officers found the victim not breathing and suffering from a fatal stab wound caused by scissors. The suspect claimed the victim stabbed himself after threatening to end his life because their relationship was on the rocks. Officers found empty heroin packages, syringes and other drug paraphernalia along with broken lamps and damage to the motel room consistent with a struggle. The suspect’s story was not consistent with forensic evidence.

   **Suspect Arrested**: Female, 27

3. 02/16/16 CSP -Southbury  
   **Victim**: Male, 74  **Relationship**: Relative NOT residing in home; Father

   **Circumstances**: While responding to a reported medical emergency, officers found the victim unresponsive on the floor and he was pronounced dead at the scene. The victim died from compression of his neck with blunt force trauma to his head and torso. The suspect, the victim’s son, was located in the house. While speaking with officers the suspect suddenly became ill and passed out. The suspect was transported to the hospital where he was pronounced deceased shortly after.

   **Suspect Deceased**: Male, 43

4. 02/17/16 Vernon P.D.  
   **Victim**: Female, 53  **Relationship**: Girlfriend

   **Circumstances**: A maintenance worker responding to a report of a water leak found the victim and suspect dead. Evidence at the scene suggested the suspect killed the victim and then himself. The victim died as the result of blunt force trauma to the head. The suspect died of a suicide by hanging. In the months leading up to the murder/suicide, the victim told police she was having problems with the suspect who was controlling and emotionally abusive.

   **Suspect Suicide**: Male, 59

5. 02/20/16 West Haven P.D.  
   **Victim**: Female, 26  **Relationship**: Persons who have a child in common

   **Circumstances**: While conducting a welfare check, first responders found the victim on the living room floor. She had been stabbed more than 30 times and her throat cut. The victim and offender’s 7-month old son was in the room at the time. The victim also had a 5-year old from a previous relationship who was not present. The victim and suspect dated for around two years and had broken up several weeks before the incident after the suspect punched the victim in the face in front of her children.

   **Suspect Arrested**: Male, 37
6. **03/25/16 Bethel P.D.**  
**Victim:** Male, 76  
**Relationship:** Relative residing in home; Brother-in-Law

*Circumstances:* While investigating a hang-up call to 911, officers heard a gunshot as they arrived at the scene of a triple shooting. In a landlord-tenant dispute that involved an eviction, the suspect fatally shot his brother-in-law with a makeshift gun, shot the victim’s wife (his sister), then turned the gun on himself. The victim was pronounced dead in his bedroom, the victim’s wife was found on the kitchen floor bleeding from the head and suffered a cervical spine injury and underwent surgery the day of the shooting, and the suspect was found in his bedroom and was taken to the hospital where doctors determined he was already brain dead and died the following day.

**Suspect Suicide:** Male, 56

7. **04/09/16 West Haven P.D.**  
**Victim:** Female, 38  
**Relationship:** Wife

*Circumstances:* The suspect called the police initially telling them his wife had fallen, but later told police he strangled his wife and she was unconscious and not breathing. The suspect was arguing with the victim through a locked bedroom door, became extremely angry, went to the kitchen and retrieved a butcher style knife with the intent of stabbing the victim when she opened the door. When the door opened he lunged at her and missed, he then threatened to cut himself. The suspect eventually gave the knife to the victim, when the victim put the knife down the suspect grabbed her by the neck and strangled her until she lost consciousness. The victim was dead for several hours before the suspect called the police. The couple had two children who were not home at the time.

**Suspect Arrested:** Male, 44

8. **05/07/16 Waterbury P.D.**  
**Victim:** Female, 22  
**Relationship:** Persons who have a child in common

*Circumstances:* Police were called to the victim’s and suspect’s shared home for a reported disturbance. Officers found the victim suffering from several gunshot wounds. The victim was rushed to the hospital where she was pronounced dead about an hour later. The suspect told police the victim had attacked him with a knife. The couple’s two-month-old daughter was present at the time of the shooting.

**Suspect Arrested:** Male, 32

9. **05/19/16 New Haven P.D.**  
**Victim:** Female, 22  
**Relationship:** Girlfriend

*Circumstances:* The suspect was found hanged from a tree in a cemetery and the victim was found by relatives hours later in her apartment. The victim had been strangled. According to police, the two had been involved in a “turbulent relationship” and had previously lived together for several years. The suspect was wanted on a 2014 arrest warrant for a second-degree domestic assault involving the victim. The two had lived together for years.

**Suspect Suicide:** Male, 38

10. **06/02/16 Norwich P.D.**  
**Victim:** Female, 42  
**Relationship:** Wife

*Circumstances:* The suspect turned himself into the police and told officers he had stabbed his 8 months pregnant wife multiple times in the head and feet then intentionally set window curtains on fire and left the house. The suspect also told police his wife was a voodoo priestess who had cast several spells on him over the last couple years and told him he would be dead as a “sacrifice” prior to the child’s birth. The victim was found with severe burns and large lacerations on her head and stab wounds on her face as well as defensive wounds on both hands.

**Suspect Arrested:** Male, 39
11. 07/03/16 Waterbury P.D.  
**Victim:** Female, 40  
**Relationship:** Live-in girlfriend

*Circumstances:* Following a domestic dispute, the suspect choked the victim to death then stuffed her body into a bedroom closet. The suspect drove a nail into the closet door to keep it closed and went about his daily routine, even sleeping in the bedroom where the victim’s body had been hidden. After returning home from a few days away, the victim and suspect’s roommates questioned the suspect about the smell emitting from the room. The suspect initially told them the victim threw up, and then said he punched the victim in the face and she left the house. After several days the stench from the victim’s decomposing body grew overwhelming and the police were called.

**Suspect Arrested:** Male, 38

12. 07/28/16 New Milford P.D.  
**Victim:** Female, 66  
**Relationship:** Wife

*Circumstances:* In a murder-suicide, the suspects shot his wife then himself.

**Suspect Suicide:** Male, 70

13. 09/09/16 Plainville P.D.  
**Victim:** Female, 37  
**Relationship:** Live-in girlfriend

*Circumstances:* When the victim failed to return from a work break, a co-worker called police and told them the victim was seen leaving in her boyfriend’s car. Police found the suspect dead of an apparent suicide, he hanged himself. A day later the victim’s body was found in a secluded wooded area. The victim died of stab wounds. She was the mother of three children.

**Suspect Suicide:** Male, 45

14. 11/14/16 Stamford P.D.  
**Victim:** Female, 24  
**Relationship:** Wife

*Circumstances:* The suspect smothered his estranged wife with a wet towel, then woke their sleeping six year old daughter and brought her to the Port Authority Bus Terminal in Midtown New York City where he abandoned her. Commuters alerted Port Authority Police after seeing the girl alone for an extended period of time. The girl provided enough direction to lead police to the scene of her mother’s murder. The suspect remained on the loose for four days until he was apprehended outside a homeless shelter near the Brooklyn Navy yard.

**Suspect Arrested:** Male, 32