

# Harris County Adult Violent Death Review Team



# Goals

- ▶ To conduct formal, confidential and systematic evaluation and analyses of adjudicated cases of family violence focusing on the flow of each case through the various agencies in the system
- ▶ To identify areas for improvement or strengthening of agency contacts and interagency response
- ▶ To evaluate policies, protocols, and practices to identify gaps in service within agencies and the community



- ▶ Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse
- ▶ Bay Area Turning Point
- ▶ Baylor College of Medicine
- ▶ The Bridge Over Troubled Waters
- ▶ Harris County Community Supervision and Corrections
- ▶ Harris County Constable Pct. 5- Victim Assistance Unit
- ▶ Harris County District Attorney's Office, Domestic Violence Division and Victim Services Division
- ▶ Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council
- ▶ Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences
- ▶ Harris County Sheriff's Office, Homicide Division
- ▶ Houston Area Women's Center
- ▶ Houston Community College
- ▶ Houston Police Department- Homicide Division, Family Violence Unit and Special Victims Division
- ▶ Texas Attorney General's Office- Crime Victim Compensation
- ▶ Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
- ▶ TDCJ- Parole Division
- ▶ Shalom Bayit

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*Team reviews are closed to the public and not subject to the open meetings law. In no case should any team member or meeting attendee disclose any information regarding team decisions outside the team, other than pursuant to team confidentiality guidelines.*

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CHAPTER 672.007 TEXAS HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE



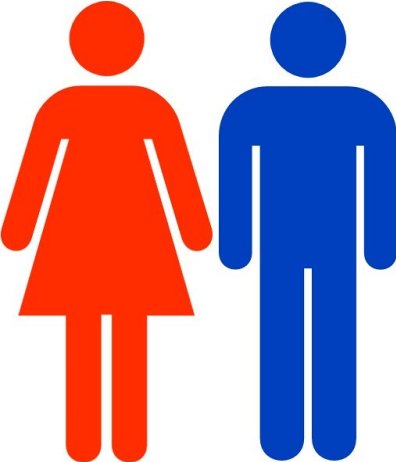
# Texas Department of Public Safety Crime Records For Family Violence Incidents 2017-2021

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
195,315	190,851	196,902	213,875	231,207



Texas Department  
of Public Safety

# DPS- Crime Records 2021

	Victims		Offenders
Female	177,095		65,134
Male	71,485		175,633

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# DPS Crime Records 2021 Harris County Total- 49,778

Agency	Number Reported to DPS
Houston Police Department	28,259
Harris County Sheriff's Office	17,433
Pasadena Police Department	1,349



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# Honoring Texas Victims 2021- TCFV

- ▶ 204 Texans were killed by an Intimate Partner
  - ▶ 169 Women
  - ▶ 35 Men
  - ▶ 12 LGBTQ+
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- ▶ 22 family members, friends, bystanders were also killed including 11 children
  - ▶ 21 additional people were injured



County	Total	Women	Men
Denton	6	6	
Travis	7	6	1
Tarrant	11	9	2
Bexar	15	12	3
Dallas	22	19	3
<b>Harris</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>7</b>

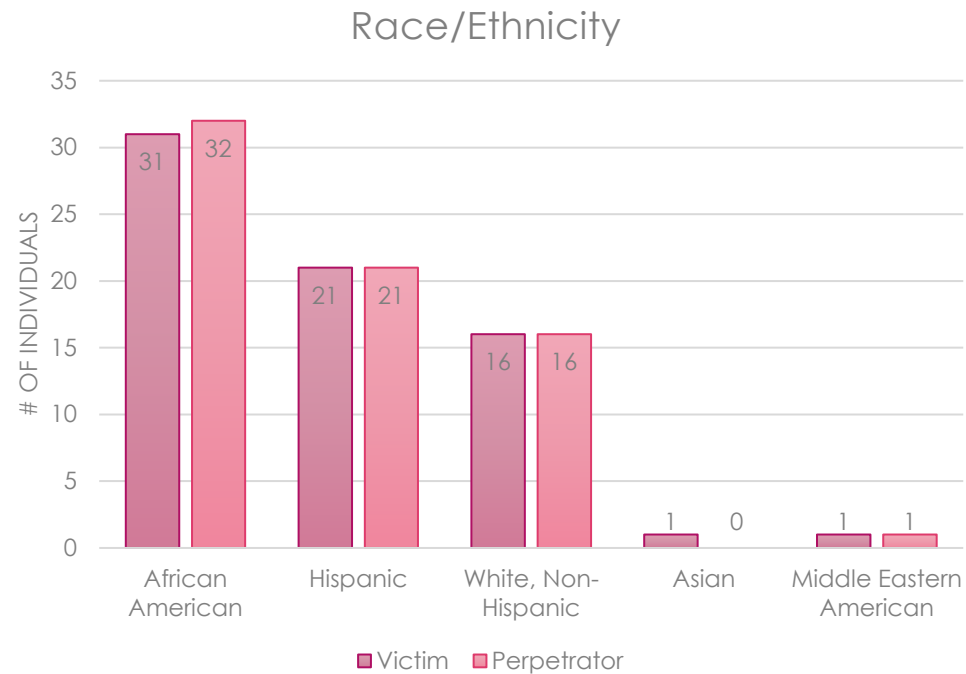


# AVDRT- 5- year report

- ▶ From 2018- 2022 Reviewed 70 cases
- ▶ Cases reviewed occurred between 2002 to 2022, with the majority (91% or 64/70) of the cases reviewed occurring between 2015-2019.
- ▶ The data is based on the number of cases reviewed by the team from 2018 to 2022. It does not reflect the total number of intimate partner homicides for the time-period.

Year	Number of Cases Reviewed
2018	14
2019	17
2020	10
2021	14
2022	15

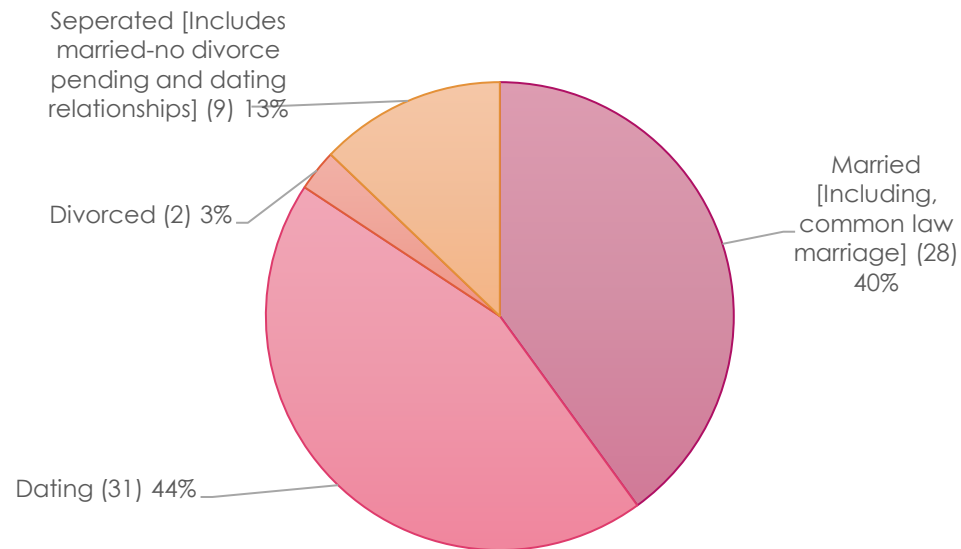
# Race and Ethnicity



- ▶ In 59 cases – women were the victims and men were the perpetrator. decedent was female. 1 was in a same-sex relationship
- ▶ Of the 11 male decedents –
  - ▶ one was in a same-sex relationship.
  - ▶ One was believed to be an accident (male decedent – female perpetrator.)
  - ▶ Of the remaining 9, 6 male decedents were suspected of being the main aggressor with evidence indicating that these homicides were likely committed in self-defense – 3 female defendants were acquitted and 3 female defendants received 10-year plea deals.
- ▶ 44% of the victims and 46% of the perpetrators were African American
- ▶ 30% of the victims and perpetrators were Hispanic
- ▶ 23% of the victims and perpetrators were White, non-Hispanic

# Relationship at the Time of Death

Relationship at Time of Death



84 % Homicides occurred in a married or dating relationship:

44% Dating

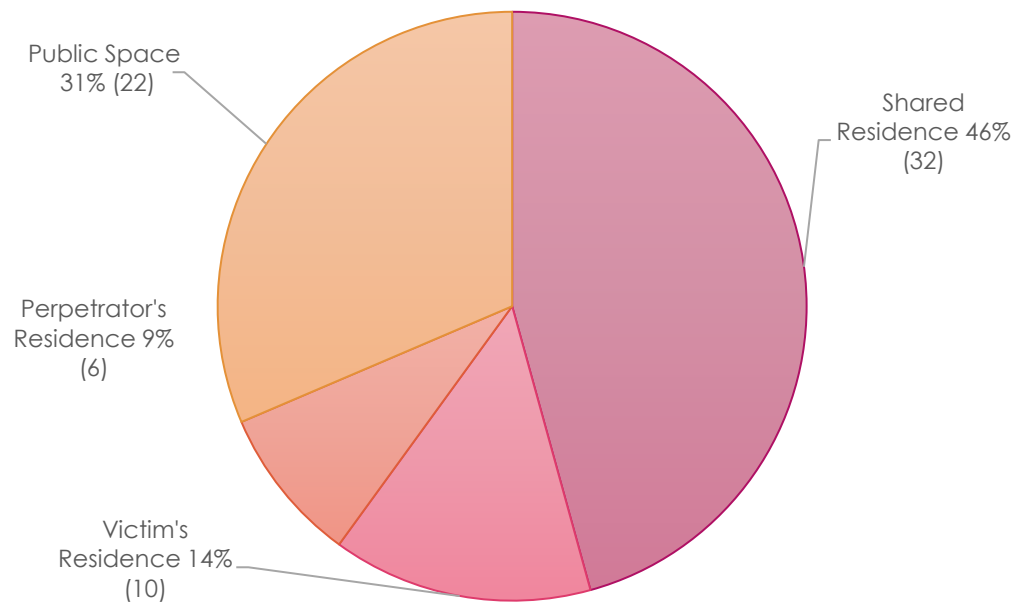
40% Married including common law marriage

The minority of cases happened after separation:

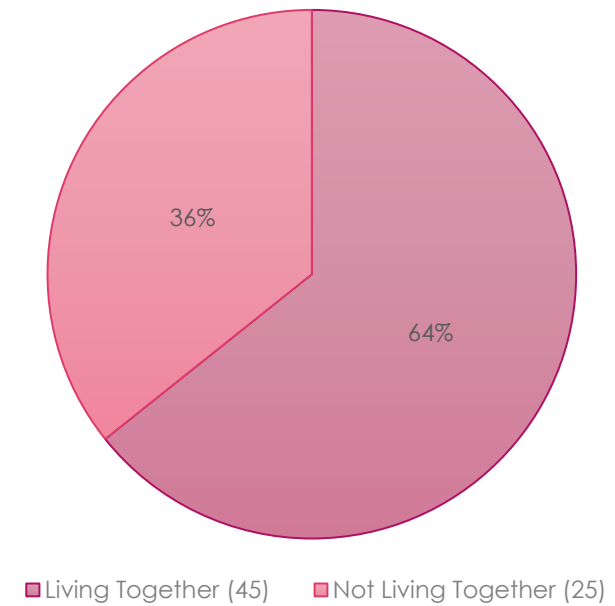
16% divorced and/or separated

# PLACE OF INCIDENT/LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

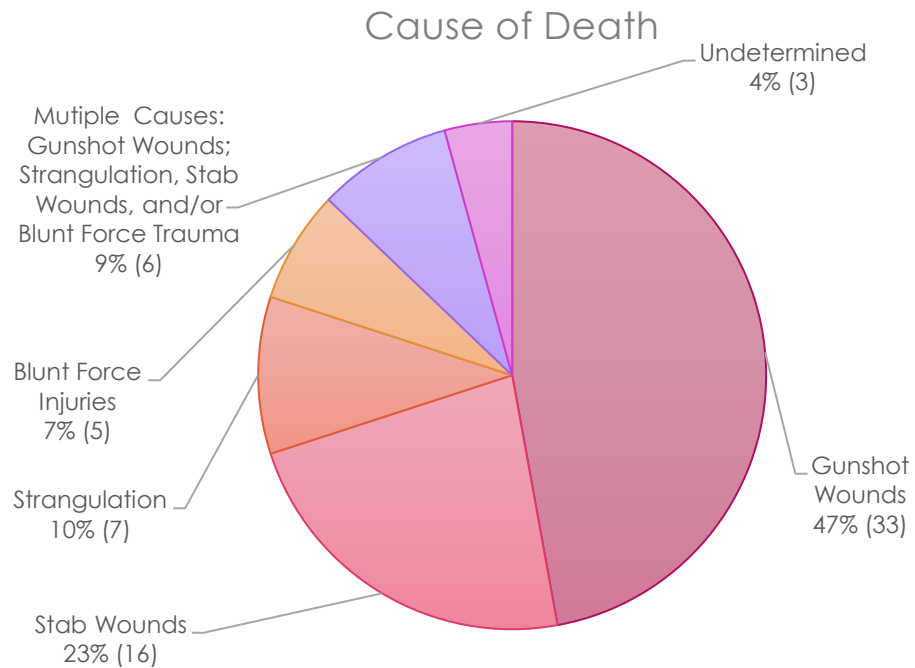
## Place of Incident



## Prior Living Arrangements



# CAUSE OF DEATH

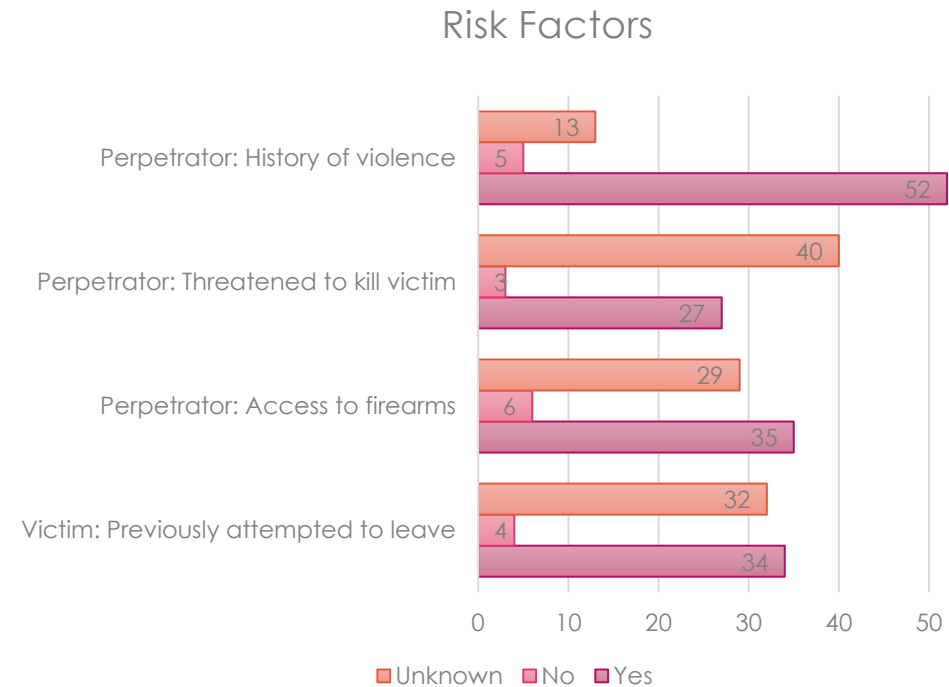


► **Murder/Suicide:** In 5 of the 70 cases, the perpetrator **committed suicide** after killing the victim. In every case, the perpetrator was **male** and cause of death was a **gunshot wound**. In 3 of the 70 cases, the perpetrator **attempted to commit suicide** after killing the victim but survived. In every survived attempt, the perpetrator was a **male** and guns were **not** used.

► **Secondary Victims:** In 9 of the 70 cases, the perpetrator **killed or injured 12 others** in addition to the decedent. This includes the **death of 9 people** (6 adults, 1 child, and 2 unborn), **death of 1 pet** (dog) and **injury to 2 children** (gunshot wound to hand; sexual assault).

# RISK FACTORS

- ▶ **History of violence: 52 cases**
- ▶ **Access to firearms: 35 cases**
- ▶ **Victim had previously attempted to leave: 34 cases**
- ▶ **Threatened to kill the victim: 27 cases**



# AVDRT Recommendations- 2022

- ▶ **Conversations with victims**
- ▶ **Training for all Judges**
- ▶ **Training for Prosecutors**
- ▶ **Training for Professionals in the Criminal Justice System**
- ▶ **Enhancing training for Advocates**
- ▶ **Training for the General Public**
- ▶ **Intervention in the Investigation**
- ▶ **Investment in the future**