

domestic  
domestic  
violence

IN NEW JERSEY



2020

# **THIRTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSE REPORT 2020**

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*Prepared by:*  
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The Honorable Philip D. Murphy  
Governor of the State of New Jersey

Honorable Members of the Senate and  
Assembly of the State of New Jersey

Dear Governor and Members of the Legislature:

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2C:25-24, I herewith submit for your information and review the thirty-eighth annual report on domestic violence in New Jersey. The annual report is based on the domestic violence offense reports submitted to the New Jersey Uniform Crime Reporting System by every New Jersey law enforcement agency for the year 2020.

It would have been impossible to complete this report without the cooperation of New Jersey's criminal justice family. It is with appreciation to these dedicated public servants, and in the interest of the thousands of persons in this state who are victims of domestic disputes, that this thirty-eighth Domestic Violence Report is submitted.

Respectfully,

Gurbir S. Grewal  
Attorney General of New Jersey





## State of New Jersey

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The Honorable Gurbir S. Grewal  
Attorney General  
State of New Jersey  
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Dear Attorney General Grewal:

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2C:25-24, the thirty-eighth annual report on domestic violence in New Jersey is submitted. This report contains statistics related to the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act. All information is based on domestic violence offense reports submitted to the New Jersey Uniform Crime Reporting System by every New Jersey law enforcement agency for the year 2020.

This report has evolved through the cooperation of all New Jersey law enforcement agencies. It is being forwarded for your information and presentation to the Governor and members of the Legislature.

Respectfully,

Patrick J. Callahan  
Colonel



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## Introduction

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, domestic violence is the willful intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behavior as part of a systematic pattern of power and control perpetrated by a current or former intimate partner, household member and/or an individual in a dating relationship against another. It can include physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, economic abuse and emotional abuse. The frequency and severity of domestic violence can vary dramatically; however, domestic violence is always comprised of one individual's consistent efforts to maintain power and control over the other.

Domestic violence affects individuals and families in every community regardless of age, economic status, sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, or nationality. Domestic violence can result in physical injury, psychological trauma, and in severe cases, even death. The devastating physical, emotional, and psychological consequences of domestic violence can cross generations and last a lifetime.

In the State of New Jersey, domestic violence is defined as the occurrence of one or more of the following criminal offenses inflicted upon a person protected under the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act of 1991, c.261 (2C:25-17 et al.).

<b>Homicide</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:11-1 et seq.	<b>False Imprisonment</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:13-3	<b>Criminal Mischief</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:17-3
<b>Assault</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:12-1	<b>Criminal Coercion</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:13-5	<b>Burglary</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:18-2
<b>Terroristic Threats</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:12-3	<b>Sexual Assault</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:14-2	<b>Criminal Trespass</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:18-3
<b>Stalking</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:12-10	<b>Criminal Sexual Contact</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:14-3	<b>Contempt</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:29-9b
<b>Kidnapping</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:13-1	<b>Lewdness</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:14-4	<b>Harassment</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:33-4
<b>Criminal Restraint</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:13-2	<b>Robbery</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:15-1	<b>Cyber-Harassment</b> N.J.S.A. 2C:33-4.1

In addition, domestic violence acts can also include any other crime involving risk of death or serious bodily injury to a person protected under the "Prevention of Domestic Violence act of 1991," P.L. 1991, c.261 (2C:25-17 et al.)

In 1982, the Domestic Violence Act was instituted to protect battered victims and to study the complex problems that spark such aggressive behavior. This legislation also provided the opportunity to identify the causes of violence in the home and put forth a more comprehensive effort to combat the crime of Domestic Violence.

Improvements since the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act are continuing. Pursuant to a change in N.J.S.A. 2C:25-24 enacted June 9, 1999, arrest data is presented by county. Domestic Violence restraining order violations are also captured and reported. Revised investigation and reporting procedures by the police; improved processing of domestic complaints by the courts; mandatory in-service training for police and court personnel have all enabled the victim to come forward and implement the constitutional rights granted to all Americans.

The data presented within the attached excel spreadsheet is the result of gathered information pertaining to domestic violence offenses reported to municipal and State police throughout the State of New Jersey. It is important to note, that according to domestic violence advocacy groups throughout the State, that only a small portion of domestic violence victims report their victimization to law enforcement; therefore, the numbers of actual domestic violence offenses in the State of New Jersey are most likely higher than stated in this report. It is the goal of the New Jersey State Police to use the analysis of this data to better understand victims and offenders of domestic violence and work towards the prevention of future violence.

**Uniform Crime Reporting**  
**Data Compilation Disclaimer**

During this reporting period, the New Jersey State Police, serving as the state program manager for the Uniform Crime Reporting program, deployed a web-based UCR reporting application which required each law enforcement agency to enter Domestic Violence Reports for each domestic violence incident that occurred within their jurisdiction.

As per N.J.S.A. 2C:25-24, statewide law enforcement agencies submit their Domestic Violence reports to the NJ UCR program. During this year, the Domestic Violence data was received from 468 municipal police departments. The New Jersey State Police serves as the reporting agency for 77 municipalities without local police services.

The data provided herein has been submitted to the New Jersey State Police Uniform Crime Reporting Unit through the UCR application. The reporting agency is solely responsible for the accuracy of their data. Any questions concerning the published data should be addressed to the reporting agency.

The 2020 Domestic Violence data is presented in an Excel spreadsheet format. The spreadsheet contains the data of all municipal police departments, including the New Jersey State Police, broken down by county.

***NOTE: The UCR figures provided are a snapshot of data entered into the New Jersey State Police Uniform Crime Reporting Repository. Please be mindful UCR data is fluid and therefore subject to change as law enforcement agencies enter or modify their data within the reporting repository.***

# 2020 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Overview of the 2020 domestic violence statistics are listed below:

- There were 63,058 domestic violence offenses reported by the police in 2020, a 6 percent increase compared to the 59,645 reported in 2019
- Murders decreased 26 percent in 2020 (29) when compared to 2019 (39)
- Assaults accounted for 41 percent (26,120) and harassment accounted for 42 percent (26,192) of the reported offenses in 2020
- Arrests were made in 36 percent (22,603) of the offenses reported for 2020, an increase when compared to arrests made in 2019 (21,836)
- The most frequent day of the week for domestic violence incidents was Sunday (10,504), closely followed by Saturday (9,884)
- Children were actively involved or present during 14,930 incidents or 24 percent of all domestic violence incidents occurring in 2020
- The number of domestic violence complaints that had prior court orders issued against the offender increased from 10,761 in 2019 to 12,669 in 2020
- Alcohol and/or drugs were involved in 21 percent (13,092) of the reported offenses occurring in 2020
- Persons age 60 or over (elderly) were victims in 8 percent (4,933) of all reported domestic violence offenses that occurred in 2020