

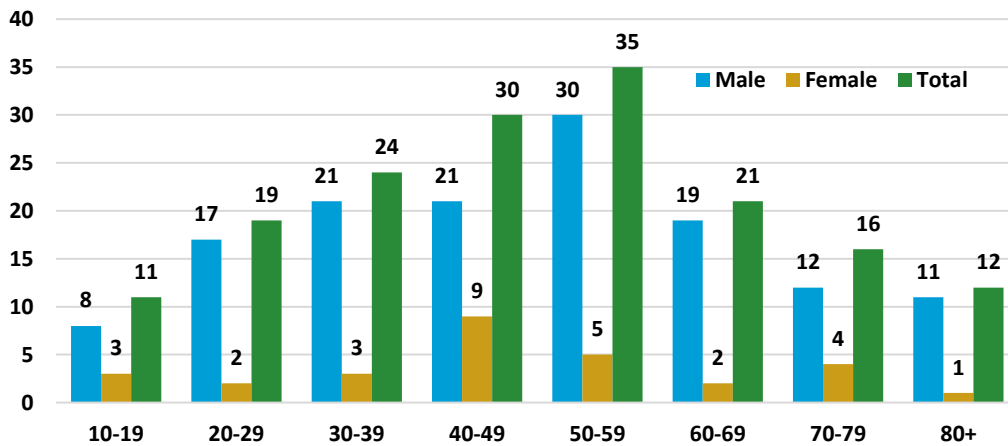
SUICIDE DEATHS IN WESTMORELAND COUNTY, 2018-2020

BACKGROUND

Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania is an urban county with a 2018-2020 combined population of 1,054,000 people (517,000 males and 537,000 females). During 2018-2020, Westmoreland County had 168 suicide deaths (139 males and 29 females) which occurred at a rate of 15.9 suicide deaths per 100,000 people. The Pennsylvania Violent Death Reporting System (PAVDRS) worked closely with the Bureau of Health Statistics and Registries, the Westmoreland County Coroner’s Office, and Westmoreland County law enforcement to gather detailed information about each violent death. Below are some results of those collaborations. For more information about the PAVDRS program, please call 717-787-5900 or email RA-DHPAVDRS@pa.gov

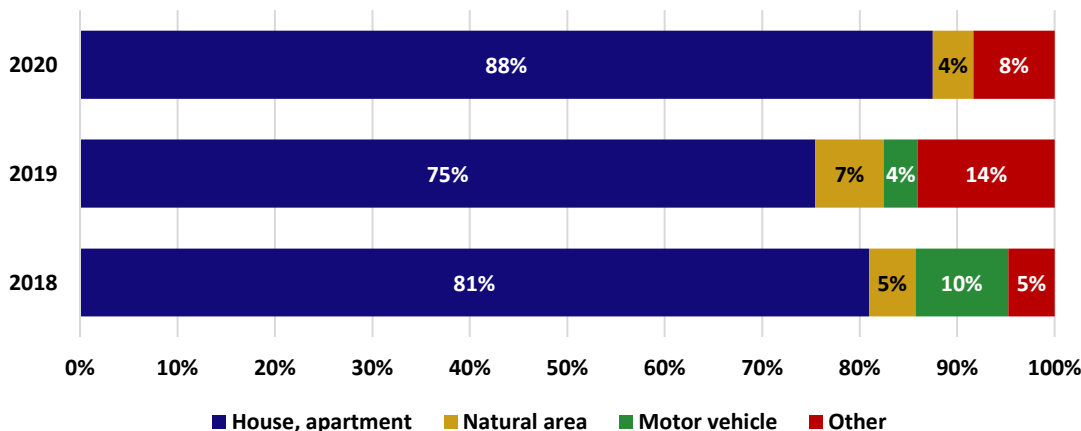
- During 2018-2020, Westmoreland County averaged more than 5 suicide deaths per month.
- Males in Westmoreland County were almost 5 times more likely to die by suicide than females. Nationally, males die by suicide at a rate of approximately 4 times that of females¹.
- Overall, suicide rates in Westmoreland County during this time span were slightly higher than the state average:
Westmoreland County Crude Rates: 15.9 deaths per 100,000 population (males 26.9 and females 5.4).
Pennsylvania Rates: 14.6 deaths per 100,000 population (males 23.5 and females 5.9)¹.

Sex-specific Suicide Counts by Age:



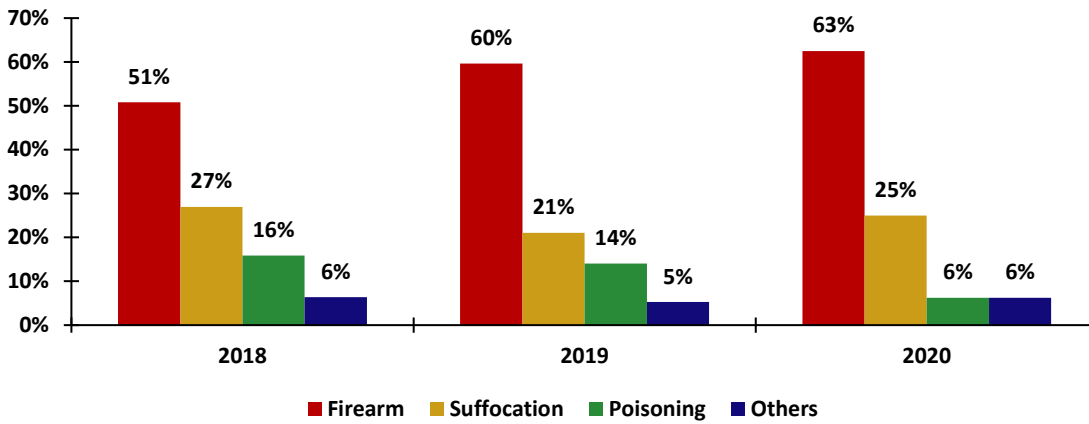
- The total number of suicides steadily increased from age groups 10-19 to 50-59 then steadily decreased among older age groups.
- Teen victims accounted for 7% of all suicides.

Location of Suicide Victims:



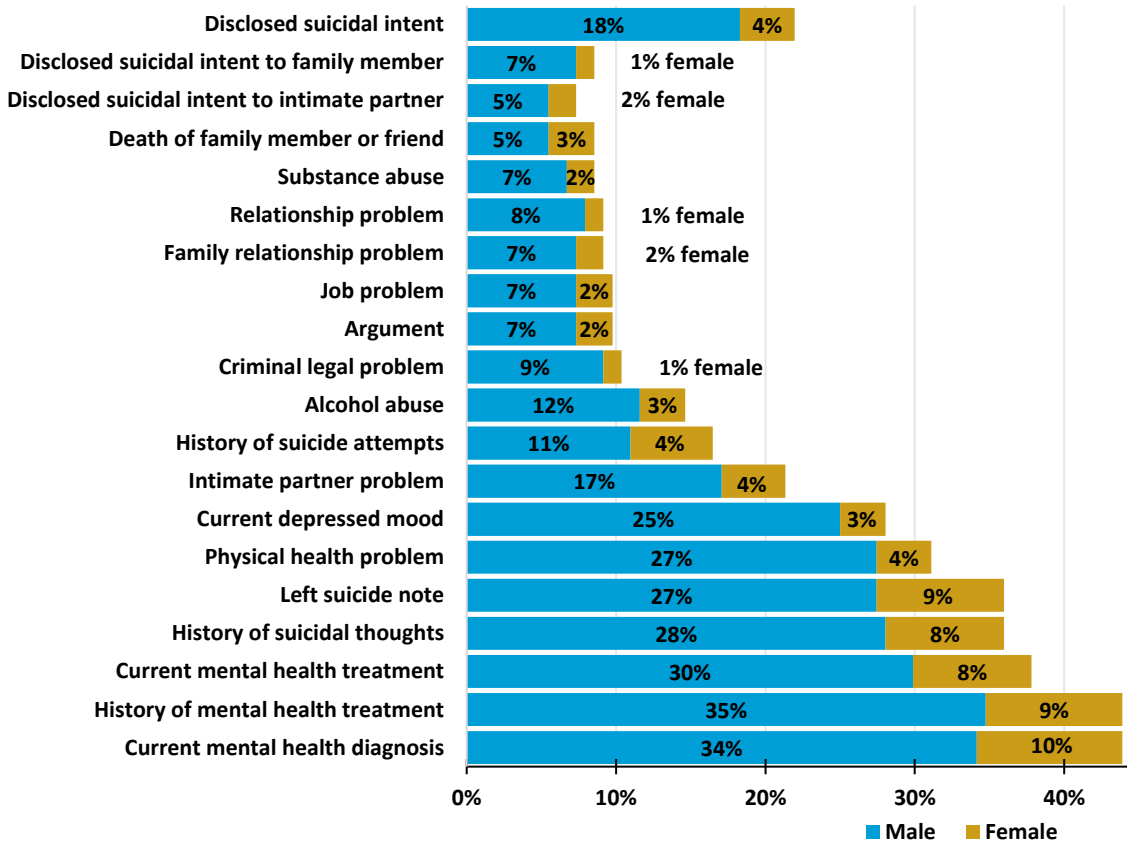
- Almost 90% of all suicides occurred in a house or apartment in 2020.
- During 2018-2020, most suicides occurred in the victim’s home.

Leading Cause of Suicide Deaths:



- Suicides by firearm trended upward while suicides by poisoning, trended downward over the 3-year period.
- Suicides by hanging and suffocation decreased by 6% from 2018 to 2019 and then slightly increased in 2020.

Most Common Precipitating Circumstances:



- Twenty-two percent of suicide victims disclosed suicidal intent in the month before their death.
- Thirty-eight percent of suicide victims received mental health or substance abuse treatment in the two months before their death.
- Forty-four percent of all suicide victims had a diagnosed mental health problem at the time of death.

Notes: The denominator for Most Common Precipitating Circumstances is the sum of CME and LE records that have information about the circumstances associated with the violent death. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, WISQARS, Fatal Injury Reports, National, Regional and State: <https://wisqars.cdc.gov/fatal-reports>