

# Overview of U.S. Gun Deaths: 2020

## U.S. Gun Deaths Reached Highest Level Ever in 2020

According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2020 gun deaths in the U.S. reached the highest level ever recorded – driven by a dramatic rise in gun homicides. In 2020, more than 45,000 Americans died from gun violence. The increase coincided with a record increase in gun sales in 2020.<sup>1</sup>

### Major findings from 2020 CDC data include:

- **In 2020, there were 45,222 gun deaths in the U.S., the highest number of gun deaths ever in the U.S.,** and a 15% increase in the gun death rate from 2019. There were 19,384 gun homicides and 24,292 gun suicides.
  - Firearm homicides increased by nearly 5,000, or 34% from 2019 to 2020. Non-firearm homicides only increased by 10% during the same period. The firearm homicide spike was experienced in communities across the country – both rural and urban.
  - For children and teens under 18, gun homicides increased by 47% from 2019 to 2020.
  - For the second time in three years, more than 24,000 Americans died by gun suicide.
- **The increase in homicides was driven almost exclusively by guns.**
  - 79% of homicides were by firearm in 2020, the highest proportion on record.
- **Black and Hispanic/Latino Americans are much more likely to be killed by a gun than White Americans.**
  - In 2020, there was a 49% increase in Black females who died by gun homicide compared to 2019.
  - In 2020, 1 in every 1,000 Black males ages 15-34 was killed by firearm homicide.
  - In 2020, Black males ages 15-34 were 21 times more likely to be killed by a gun than their White counterparts.
  - In 2020, Hispanic/Latino males ages 15-34 were three times as likely to be killed by a gun than their White counterparts.

<sup>1</sup> Barton, C. (2021). What new data on gun recoveries can tell us about increased violence in 2020. *The Trace*.