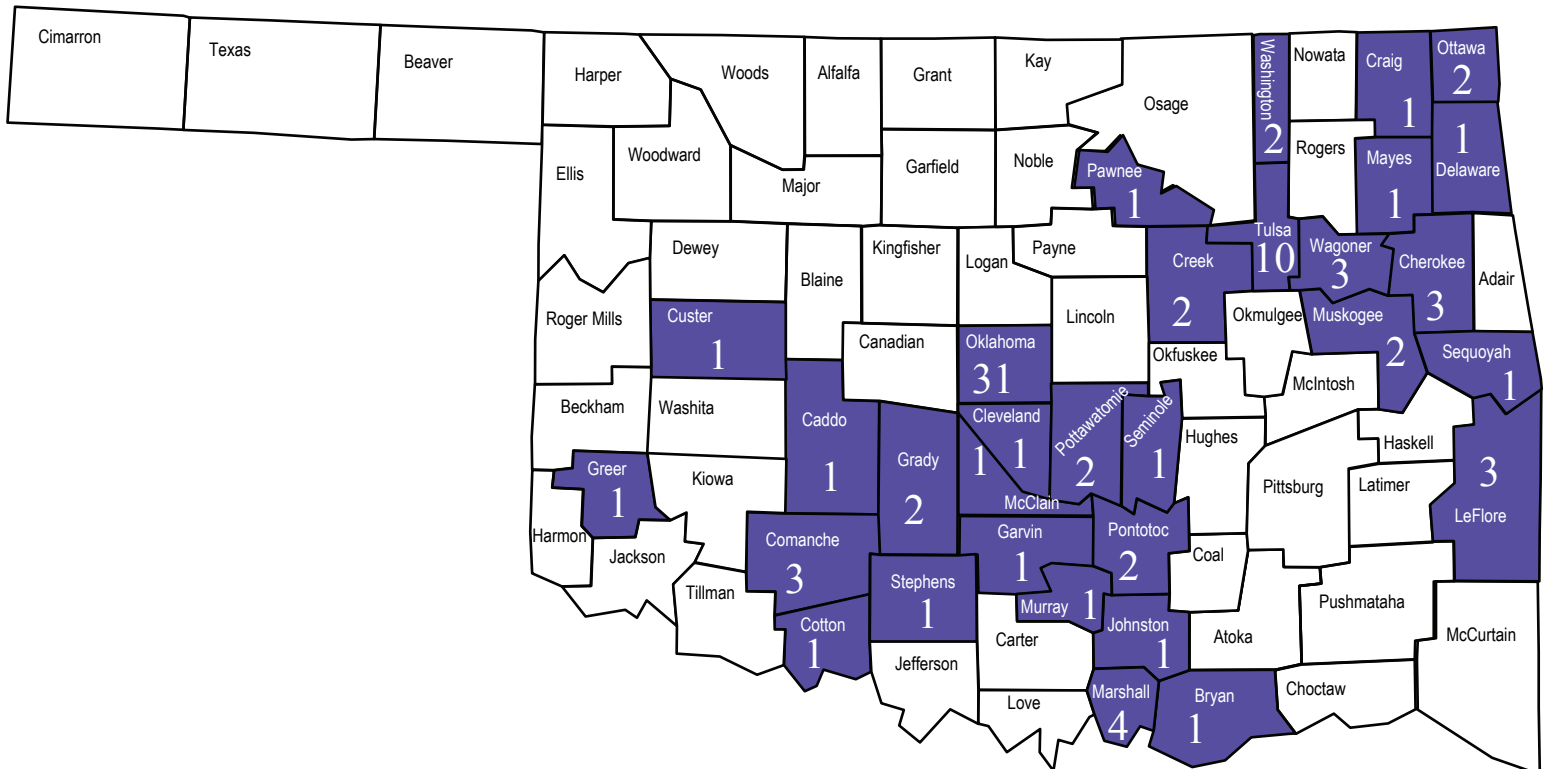


# Domestic Violence Homicide in Oklahoma



**A Report of the  
Oklahoma Domestic Violence  
Fatality Review Board  
2013**

## Executive Summary

Dear Stakeholder,

The Oklahoma Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board (ODVFRB) was established in July, 2001, pursuant to O.S. 22 §1602. The board is an eighteen-member multidisciplinary team composed of representatives from state agencies and other organizations, agencies and associations who convene eleven times each year (two of which are joint meetings with the Child Death Review Board [CDRB]), to review domestic violence fatalities in Oklahoma and propose recommendations to improve and coordinate the response across the multiple systems that serve victims of domestic violence in our state.

The board tracks and catalogs homicides meeting the statutory definition of domestic violence, including victims killed by partners and ex-partners; family members killed by family members; children killed by intimate partner perpetrators or other family members; bystanders killed by intimate partner perpetrators; roommates killed by roommates; and suicide deaths of intimate partner perpetrators. Ongoing case reviews and trend analyses continue to shed light on the gaps that exist in our systems and serve to inform the development of recommendations to close these gaps. It is the objective of the board that recommendations serve as an opportunity for our legislature, state agencies, and community organizations to continue to review and update policies, protocols, administrative procedures and professional practices in order to better serve victims of domestic violence and their children. Recommendations encourage systems to work together to achieve positive outcomes for victims. Ultimately, the long-term goal is to strengthen the safety net for victims and prevent domestic violence homicide in Oklahoma.

In addition to identifying gaps, case reviews also highlight the leadership, vision and commitment of Oklahoma's many agencies and the exceptional service of the dedicated professionals serving victims in our state - every day - the "unsung heroes".

Thank you for your support.

**Domestic violence is a serious crime that affects thousands of Oklahoma families each year. We must continue to raise awareness of the problem and find new ways to prevent and end the cycle of violence."**

*Oklahoma Attorney  
General  
E. Scott Pruitt*

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**Cover:** *The highlighted counties and numbers represent the 109 men, women, and children who died as a result of domestic violence in Oklahoma in 2012, as compiled by the Oklahoma Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board.*

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## 2012 Domestic Violence Fatalities in Oklahoma by County

County	Homicide Victim	Suicide (Murder/Suicide)	Suicide (Perpetrator Died/Victim Survived)
Bryan	1		
Caddo	1		
Cherokee	3		
Cleveland	1		
Comanche	3	1	
Cotton	1	1	
Craig	1		
Creek	2	1	
Custer	1		
Delaware	1	1	
Garvin	1		
Grady	2		
Greer	1		
Johnston	1		
Leflore	3		
Marshall	4	1	
Mayes	1	1	
McClain	1		
Murray	1		
Muskogee	2	2	
Oklahoma	31	6	2
Ottawa	2		
Pawnee	1		
Pontotoc	2		
Pottawatomie	2		
Seminole	1		
Sequoyah	1		
Stephens	1		
Tulsa	10	1	2
Wagoner	3	1	1
Washington	2		
	<b>88 Victims</b>	<b>16 Perpetrators</b>	<b>5 Perpetrators</b>

## 2012 Domestic Violence Fatalities in Oklahoma

Domestic Violence homicide in Oklahoma in 2012 emerged from the backdrop of the state’s 2011 ranking of 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation for women killed by men in single victim, single offender homicides (Violence Policy Center, 2013). In addition, the Centers for Disease Control’s, National Violence Against Women 2010 Survey, found that the lifetime prevalence of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking towards women by an intimate partner to be greater in Oklahoma than in any other state.

In 2012, a total of 219 homicides, of which 53 were classified as domestic abuse murders, were reported by various law enforcement agencies to the Oklahoma Bureau of Investigation; 73.1% of the reported homicides involved a firearm (State of Oklahoma Uniform Crime Report [UCR], 2012).

### Domestic Violence Fatalities

In this same year, the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board identified 109 women, men and children who lost their lives in Oklahoma as a result of domestic violence.

**Oklahoma is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>  
in the nation for women killed  
by men in single victim,  
single offender,  
homicides.**

*Violence Policy Center  
2013*



## Spotlight on Domestic Violence in Oklahoma

Data from the **Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation** (OSBI), Crime in Oklahoma 2012 report, selected findings on domestic abuse crimes in Oklahoma include:

<b>Domestic Violence by Offense</b>	
Murder.....	53
Sex Crimes.....	931
Assault .....	2,354
Assault & Battery.....	21,942
Total.....	25,280

## Law enforcement responded to 2,354 incidents of domestic abuse-related assaults in 2012

*Source: Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI), State of Oklahoma, Uniform Crime Report, 2012*

## 2012 Domestic Violence Fatalities in Oklahoma

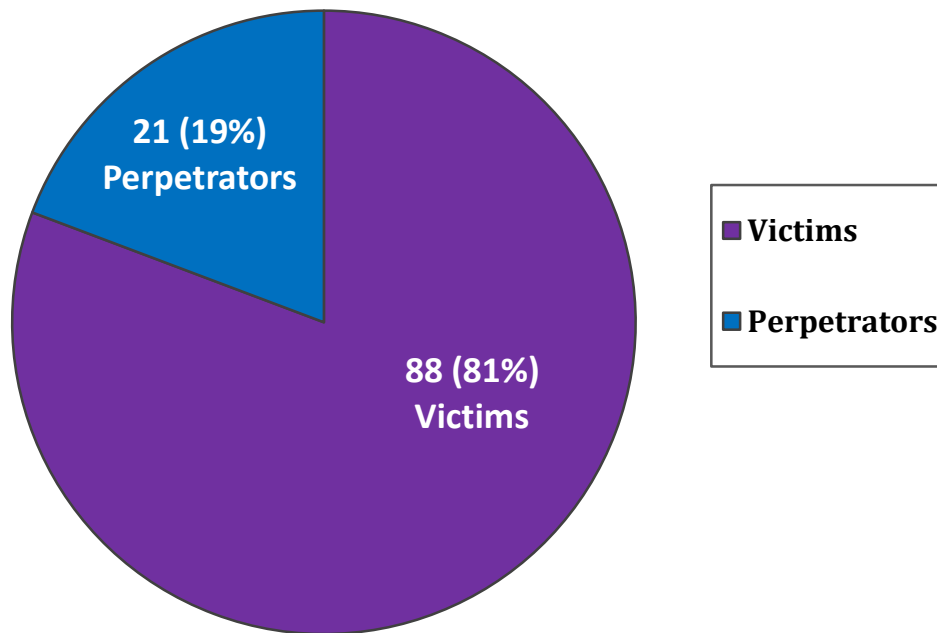
In 2012, the Oklahoma Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board (DVFRB) identified 109 people in Oklahoma who lost their lives as a result of domestic violence. These deaths include domestic violence victims killed by partners and ex-partners; family members killed by family members, children killed by abusers or other family members; bystanders killed by abusers; roommates killed by roommates; and suicide deaths of abusers.

Of the 109 people who died, 88 were identified as homicide victims and 21 were identified as homicide perpetrators who died as a result of suicide or law enforcement/bystander intervention (Figure 1). Of the 91 perpetrators, 21 (23%) died as a result of suicide or suicide by police/bystander intervention.

# 109

**People Lost  
Their Lives As A  
Result Of  
Domestic  
Violence**

**Figure 1. Domestic Violence-Related Deaths**



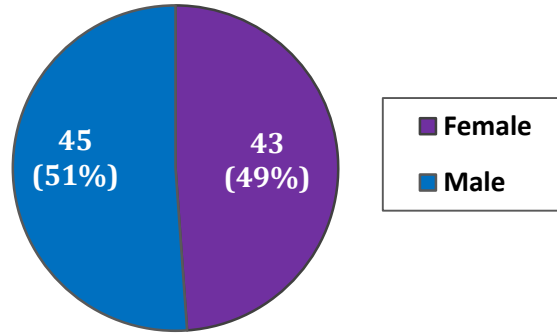
## 2012 Domestic Violence Fatalities in Oklahoma

### 2012 Victim Demographics

#### 2012 Victim Gender

Of the 88 victims, 43 (49%) were female and 45 (51%) were male (Figure 2).

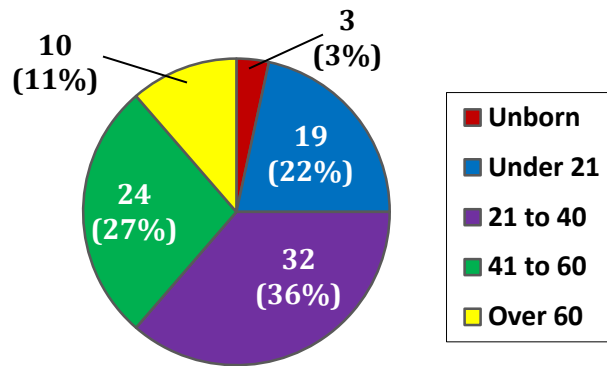
Figure 2. Victims By Gender 2012



#### 2012 Victim Age

The youngest victim, killed by his father, was two months old. The oldest victim, killed by her nephew, was 89 years old (Figure 3). Three victims were not yet born and died as a result of the death of their mothers. The average age of victims was 34.53.

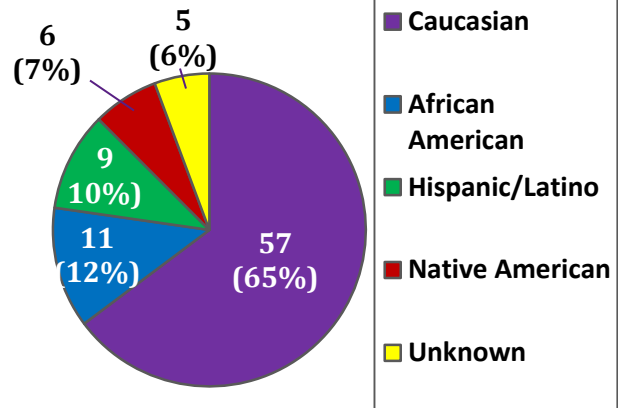
Figure 3. Victims By Age 2012



#### 2012 Victim Race

Of the 88 victims, 57 (65%) were Caucasian, 11 (12%) were African American, 9 were Hispanic'/Latino Origin (10%), 6 (7%) were Native American and 5 (6%) were of unknown race (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Victims By Race 2012



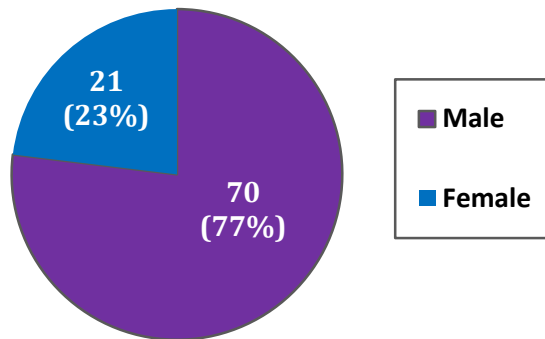
## 2012 Domestic Violence Fatalities in Oklahoma

### 2012 Perpetrator Demographics

#### 2012 Perpetrator Gender

Of the 91 perpetrators, 70 (77%) were male and 21 (23%) were female (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Perpetrators By Gender 2012

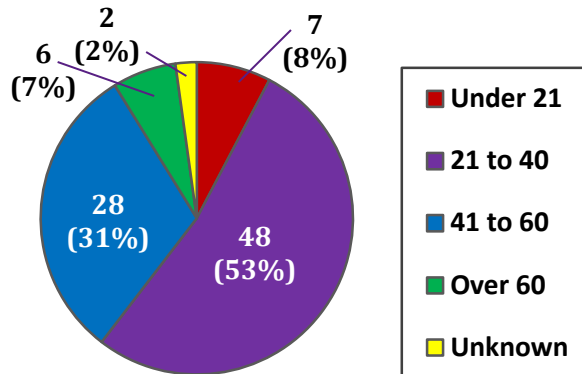


#### 2012 Perpetrator Age

Of the 91 perpetrators, 7 (8%) were under 21, 48 (53%) were 21 to 40, 28 (31%) were 41 to 60, 6 (7%) were over 60, and 2 (2%) were of unknown age (Figure 6).

The average age of perpetrators was 38.12.

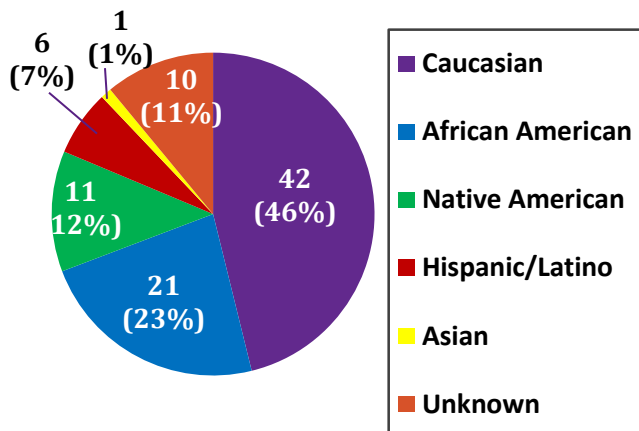
Figure 6. Perpetrators By Age 2012



#### 2012 Perpetrator Race

Of the 91 perpetrators, 42 (46%) were Caucasian, 21 (23%) were African American, 11 (12%) were Native American, 6 (7%) were Hispanic/Latino Origin, 1 (1%) was Asian and 10 (11%) were of unknown race (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Perpetrators By Race 2012





## 2012 Domestic Violence Fatalities in Oklahoma

In 2012, victims were killed with firearms (58%), knife/cutting instruments (17%), blunt force (14%), automobiles (3%), drowning (2%), strangulation (2%), fire (1%), neglect (1%) and other (1%).

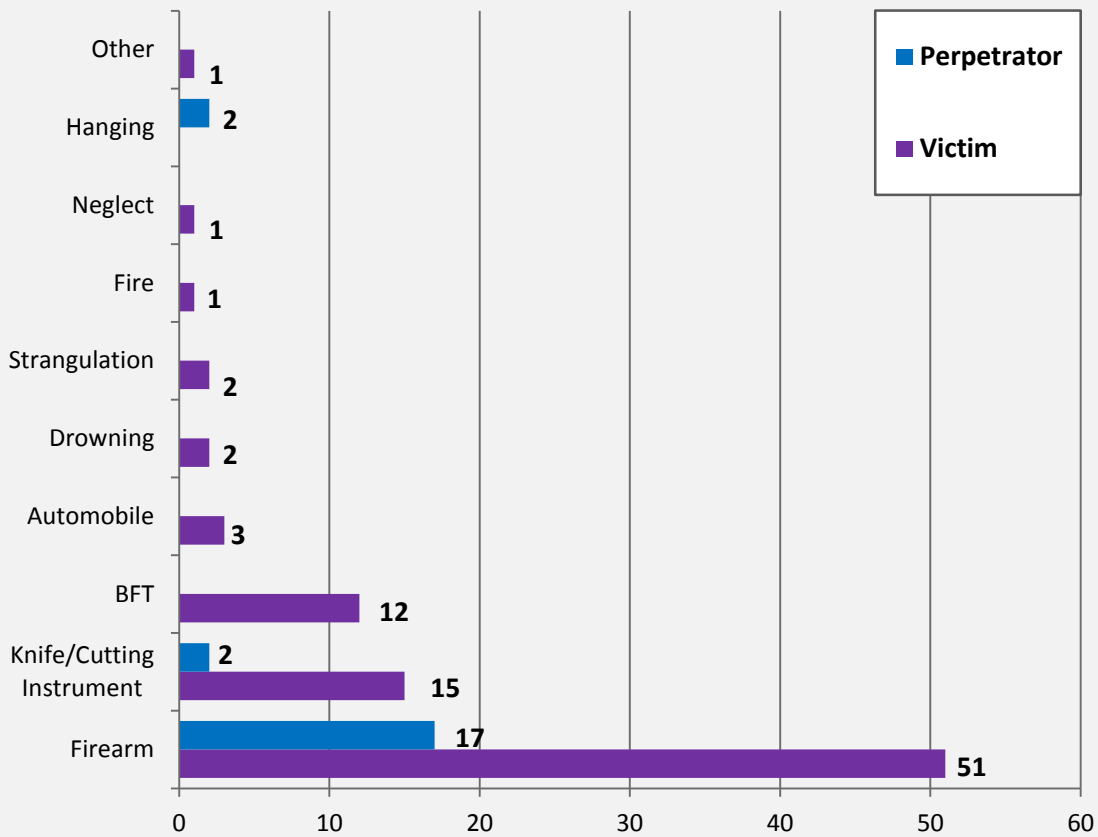
Perpetrators who committed suicide or suicide by police/bystander intervention following the murder were overwhelmingly killed by firearms (81%), hanging (9.5%) and knife/cutting instruments (9.5%) (Figure 8).

### Domestic Violence Homicide and Firearms

**58%** of victims were killed by firearms

**81%** of perpetrators were killed (suicide or suicide by police/bystander intervention)

**Figure 8. Domestic Violence Homicide by Weapon 2012**



## 2012 Domestic Violence Fatalities in Oklahoma

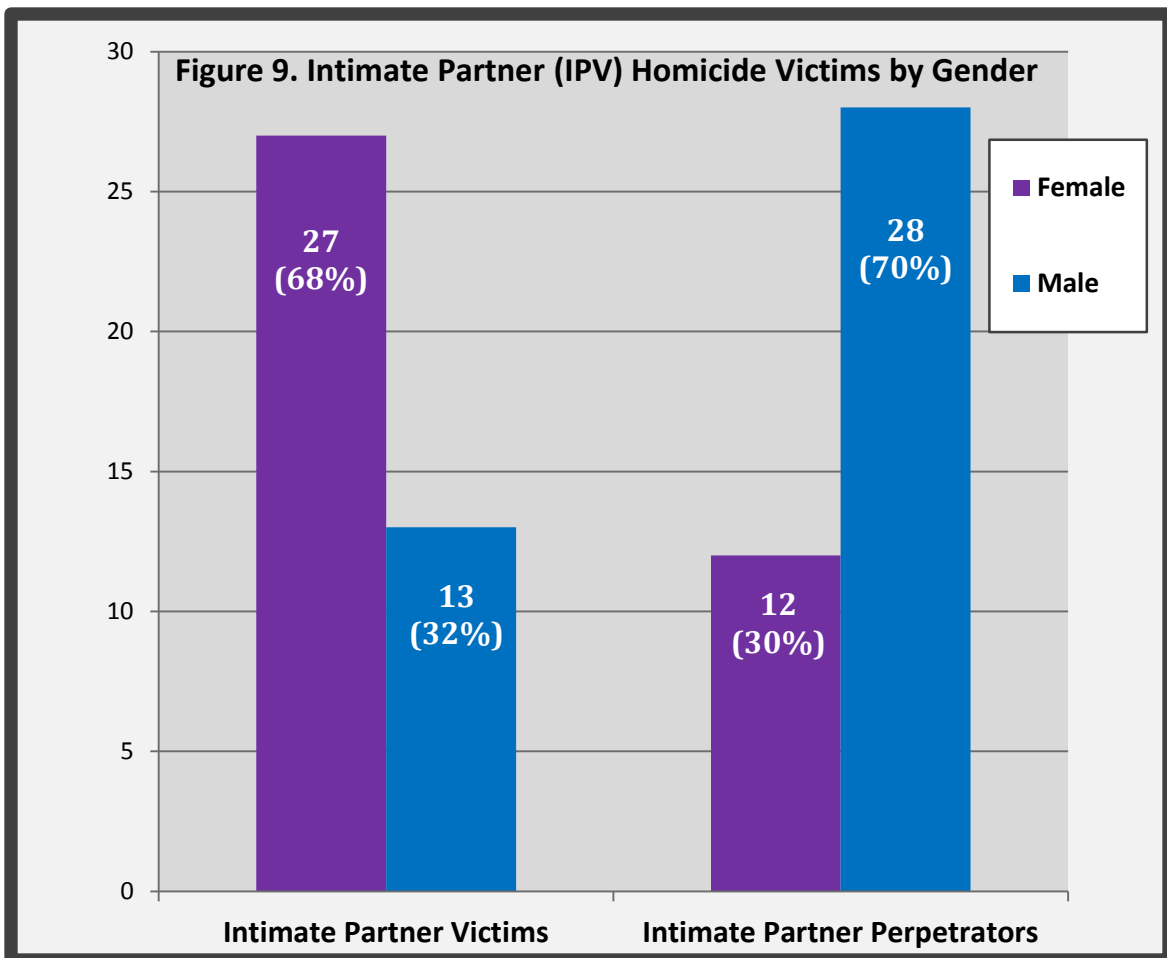
### Intimate Partner Violence Fatalities Specific (IPV)

Approximately 1 in 2.2 (45%) domestic violence homicides in Oklahoma was classified as an intimate partner (IPV) homicide.

Of the 88 domestic violence victims, 40 were killed by domestic violence abusers. The youngest intimate partner victim, killed by her boyfriend, was 15 years old. The oldest intimate partner victim, killed by his wife, was 89 years old. The average age of intimate partner victims was 38.9.

**Three (3%) Intimate Partner Victims Were Pregnant At The Time Of Their Death.**

Women were more likely than men to be killed by an intimate partner. Twenty-seven (68%) intimate partner homicide victims were female and 13 (32%) were male. Twelve (30%) intimate partner homicide perpetrators were female and twenty-eight (70%) were male (Figure 9).



## 2012 Domestic Violence Fatalities in Oklahoma

### Protective Orders (PO) and Victims Information Notification Everyday (VINE)

We found no evidence that any of the intimate partner victims had ever participated in the Victims Information Notification Everyday (VINE) program.

In addition, only 1 of the 88 intimate partner victims had a current protective order against the perpetrator; 6 had a protective order against the perpetrator in the past.

Of the intimate partner perpetrators, 18 had prior protective orders against them from other people; and 7 of the intimate partner victims had protective orders against them from this perpetrator (Based on Oklahoma data only).

### Very Few Homicide Victims Received Domestic Violence Services from an Attorney General Certified Agency

In 2012, only 5 (6%) of the 88 homicide victims received services from an Attorney General certified Domestic Violence Service Provider Agency prior to the death. These services ranged from just a hotline call for some to residing in an emergency shelter for others. *(Data is from a survey of certified domestic violence service provider agencies).*

**“There isn’t one homicide prevention center in America. And the closest we have to a homicide prevention center is a battered women’s shelter because what they’re dealing with is people who, if interventions are not applied wisely, are likely to be killed.”**

*Gavin de Becker from  
“The Gift of Fear”*

### Spotlight on Attorney General Certified Domestic Violence Victim Service Provider Agencies in Oklahoma

#### In 2012...

Total number of certified victim service agencies

**28**

Total number of victims served in certified victim service agencies

**13,218**

Total number of shelter days

**102,917**

Total number of hotline calls

**15,214**

Total number of women turned away from shelter because of capacity

**2,488**

## Recommendations to Improve System Response to Domestic Violence and Prevent Homicide

### 2013 Recommendations

#### Department of Human Services (OKDHS) (Human & Social Services)

1. To encourage safety for victims of domestic violence and their children who are in contact with the child welfare system in Oklahoma and to strengthen OKDHS capacity to provide effective assessment and intervention for families experiencing domestic violence, OKDHS should create an internal position within the agency to act as a liaison between OKDHS and Attorney General Certified Domestic Violence Agencies.

The position should act as a liaison to help coordinate domestic violence services for families, advance collaborative relationships between OKDHS and Attorney General Certified Domestic Violence Victims and Batterers Intervention Services, and should understand best practices related to domestic violence for working with families experiencing domestic violence.

#### Health Care

1. Using the National Consensus Guidelines on Identifying and Responding to Domestic Violence Victimization in Health Care Settings, (<http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/Consensus.pdf>), educate/train all healthcare providers in:
  - Traumatic nature of domestic violence & post-traumatic stress disorder
  - Oklahoma's domestic violence reporting law
  - Assessment of domestic violence
  - Referral to appropriate services for care
  - Documentation in the medical record
2. All health care providers should be familiar with current domestic violence reporting laws. 22 Okl.St. Ann. § 58, which can be found at the following link: <http://www.oscn.net/applications/oscn/DeliverDocument.asp?CiteID=442192>

\*\*For a simplified discussion of the requirements of the law, see Oklahoma's Nursing Times at: [http://www.okcnursingtimes.com/newsletter/newsletter\\_view.asp?newsid=2642 &catid=256&active=0](http://www.okcnursingtimes.com/newsletter/newsletter_view.asp?newsid=2642&catid=256&active=0) \*\*

## Update on Past Recommendations and Achievements

### Making a Difference in Oklahoma

Since 1998, the DVFRB has submitted recommendations based on their case review and analysis of trends. Recommendations are centered on system improvements, ranging from increased awareness, and training for allied professionals, policy and protocol considerations for the court system, law enforcement, child welfare, batterer intervention programs and others. Always, the goal is to close safety gaps across the multiple systems that intersect with victims of domestic violence and their children.

### Past DVFRB Recommendation

#### Implement training for Mental Health Professionals in Oklahoma

Findings from the DVFRB show that homicide victims consistently come into contact with mental health professionals prior to their deaths. One specific finding from reviewed cases (1998 to 2012), revealed that 40% of couples had contact with the Department of Human Services and/or the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services prior to the death. In efforts to promote safety for victims, training recommendations for mental health professionals have been made by the DVFRB and others spanning several years.

In November, 2012, an interim study was conducted as an initiative recommended by the DVFRB to determine the need for this training in Oklahoma. The interim study determined that mental health professionals would benefit from having access to introductory training in domestic violence. Under the direction of a DVFRB member, the interim study led to the development of a Mental Health and Domestic Violence Committee comprised of multiple mental health and substance abuse agencies and organizations in Oklahoma including the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS). Other partners included the Oklahoma Office of the Attorney General, Victim Services Unit (DVFRB) together with the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and the YWCA Oklahoma City.

Committee activities include an ODMHSAS led project to develop a web-based online domestic violence training for mental health and substance abuse professionals as well as a “domestic violence liaison” project which places a liaison in all ODMHSAS contracted agencies in the state. The role of the liaison is to coordinate safe referrals to OAG certified domestic violence service providers and to provide a link between the two service systems.

## Update on Past Recommendations and Achievements

### Past DVFRB Recommendation

#### Training for Oklahoma Department of Human Services Workers

In 1999, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) presented principles of “safety, well-being, and stability for all victims of family violence and the need to hold batterers accountable for their violence” ((NCJFCJ, 1999 p. 6). The project included recommendations developed from diverse social and legal systems and with strong representation from judicial leaders. The recommendations have come to be known as the “Greenbook Recommendations” (NCJFCJ, 1999). An understanding that successful collaborations are built through “cross-communication” and cross- training for system partners is central to the development of these recommendations. In efforts to promote safety for victims, training recommendations for the Department of Human Services have been made by the DVFRB spanning several years.

In July, 2012, the Oklahoma Department of Human Services released the “Domestic Violence Manual for Child Welfare Professionals: A Desk Reference Guide”. The initiative to develop a best practice guide for workers was the result of a year- long collaborative effort between the department and external stakeholders, including state and local experts in the field of domestic violence. The reference guide is disseminated to child welfare workers across the state and is used extensively in training to assist workers with screening, safety planning and danger/lethality assessment at the very complex intersection of child maltreatment and domestic violence. The overall goal of this initiative was to encourage safety for those victims of domestic violence and their children who are in contact with the child welfare system in Oklahoma.

### Past DVFRB Recommendation

#### Training for Batterer Intervention Programs

In 2012, the DVFRB made a recommendation for Attorney General Certified Batterer Intervention Programs (BIP’s) to conduct lethality assessment/reassessment throughout participation in the program. The Office of the Attorney General’s Victim Services Unit created a “BIP Training Committee” comprised of several agencies and domestic violence experts in the state to conduct Batterer Intervention Training for Certified BIP program managers and facilitators. The committee developed a 16 hour training curriculum. So far, approximately 150 BIP program staff have participated in this training. This initiative continues to grow. A list of Attorney General Certified Batterer Intervention Programs can be found at the following link: <https://www.oag.ok.gov/oagweb.nsf/v-cert.htm.l>

## Acknowledgements

The members of the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board and the staff of the Oklahoma Office of Attorney General gratefully acknowledge the time and effort rendered during this project. The outcomes of this project would not have been possible without the gracious cooperation and collaboration of the officials and their staffs acknowledged here:

- Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation
- Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
- Oklahoma Department of Human Services
- Oklahoma State Department of Health
- Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs

Many thanks to all of the County Sheriffs, Police Chiefs, District Attorneys, Court Clerks and their staffs who have helped us gather the case materials. We realize many of you already are pushing the boundaries of time and we appreciate your hard work. A special thanks to the Oklahoma Violence Against Women Act Board through the Oklahoma District Attorneys Council. The S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Act Grant funds this project. Without this support, this project would not be possible.

Special thank you to Brandi Woods-LittleJohn for her work as the Program Manager for the Oklahoma Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board from 1998 to 2013 and for the design and presentation of many aspects of this report. Her efforts have made a difference to victims of domestic violence in Oklahoma.

Staff must also acknowledge the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence for inspiring the new presentation of data in this report.

## 2012 Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board Members

### Office Represented

### Member

### Designee

#### *Listed Directly In Statute*

Chief Medical Examiner	Eric Pfeiffer, M.D.	
Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services	Terri White, M.S.W.	Karen Frensley
State Commissioner of Health	Terry Cline, Ph.D.	Patricia Damron
Chief of Injury Prevention Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health	Pam Archer, MPA, Chief	Sheryll Brown, MPH Andrea Hamor- Edmondson Pat Damron
Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation	Stan Florence, Director	Beth Green
Office of the Attorney General	Scott Pruitt, Attorney General	Lesley March, Chief Victim Services Unit Fara Brown
Oklahoma Department of Human Services	Howard H. Hendrick, Dir.	Casey Halford
Office of Juvenile Affairs	Gene Christian, JD	Donna Glandon, JD

#### ***Appointed by the Attorney General of Oklahoma for two-year terms***

Oklahoma Sheriffs Association	County Sheriff	Mike Booth, Sheriff
Oklahoma Assoc. of Chiefs of Police	Chief of Police	W. Don Sweger, Chief
Oklahoma Bar Association	Private Attorney	G. Gail Stricklin, J.D.
District Attorneys Council	District Attorney	Jeff Smith, District 16
Oklahoma State Medical Association	Physician	Martina Jelley, M.D (Chair)
Oklahoma Osteopathic Association	Physician	Lori Hake, D.O.
Oklahoma Nurses Association	Nurse	Janet Wilson, Ph.D., RN
Oklahoma Supreme Court	District Judge	Dan Allen, J.D.
Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault	Survivor Citizen Citizen	Shelly Collins Marcia Smith, Director Sunshine Gross
DVFRB Staff Oklahoma Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board		Brandi Woods-LittleJohn, Program Manager



## Oklahoma Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board

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Email: Jacqueline.Steyn@oag.ok.gov

Please go to  
<https://www.oag.ok.gov>

- This report
- Enabling Legislation
- The DVFRB Mission, Purpose and Definitions
- Methods and Limitations of data collection and data
- History of the Board

**Please disseminate this report widely.**

If you or someone you know needs help in a Domestic Violence situation, please call:

**Safeline**  
**1-800-522-SAFE (7233)**

If you need general information about Domestic Violence, please call:

Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
and Sexual Assault – (405) 524-0700

The Office of the Attorney General,  
Victim Services Unit – (405) 521-3921

If you need more information about the Oklahoma Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board, please call:  
The Office of the Attorney General  
(405) 522-1984

**If you are in an emergency situation please dial 9-1-1 immediately.**

Publication prepared by the Oklahoma Office of Attorney General, E. Scott Pruitt on behalf of the Oklahoma Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board, 2013.

Written by: Jacqueline Steyn, Program Manager  
Claire Collins, Intern

With assistance from Lesley March, Chief,  
Victim Services Unit, and Staff

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