Colorado Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board

Annual Report

2019

Phil Weiser

Attorney General

Chair

Per C.R.S.§ 24-31-702(4), this report is respectfully submitted to the Health and Human Services and Judiciary Committees of the Colorado Senate and the Public Health Care and Human Services and Judiciary Committees of Colorado House of Representatives.

This report is available on the web site of the Colorado Department of Law at the following link: https://coag.gov/office-of-community-engagement-state-impact-programs/.

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Dedication to the Victims Killed in Domestic Violence Related Incidents in 2018

The Colorado Department of Law enlisted the assistance of the staff of the Denver Metro Domestic Violence Fatality Review in collecting information on domestic violence related fatalities in the state of Colorado that occurred in 2018 in order to assist the work of the Colorado Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board. The data collected includes information on murders, murder/suicides, suicides, collateral deaths, familicides, and any other death determined to be the result of, or occurring within, the context of domestic violence. This report provides an overview of 2018 data and a complete list of incidents can be found at www.DDVCC.org/fatality-review.

Dedicated to the 32 victims who were killed in Colorado in 2018 as a result of domestic violence, and to victims and survivors of domestic violence everywhere.

Amy Garcia (41)	Olivia Hector (22)
Julene Isaacson (61)	Greg G. Baker (60)
Autumn Rivera (21)	Melissa Prettyman (37)
Kimberly Ambrose (51)	James Box, Jr. (42)
Keleshia Nash (22)	Parvez Daruwala (64)
Deborah DePinto (44)	Kelsey Berreth (29)
Madeline Loh (27)	Ticoa Brown (43)
Clarissa Wilkens (30)	Jennifer Garrus (45)
Joshua Callison (27)	Shanann (34), Bella (4), & Celeste (3) Watts
Shawn Jones, Jr. (26)	Danielle Harding (32)
Briseidy Camila Jimenez-Oretga (20)	Tania Arbaiza (37)
Jerwarren Jackson (23)	Wayne Carter (19)
Michelle Peters (41)	Anthoni Readus (25)
Nicole Lindsey (23)	Shakir Cook-Troynel (23)
Destini Martinez (22)	Jacob Emerson (25)

Note: An additional 11 people who died in domestic violence related incidents were determined to be perpetrators and are not named here.

Message from Attorney General Phil Weiser

Dear partners in domestic violence prevention,

In the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board's second year, we continue to learn invaluable lessons from the specific incidents catalogued in this report along with the overall data provided by domestic violence fatality review teams around the state. The findings in this report can and should be integrated into our state's policies around domestic violence response and prevention.
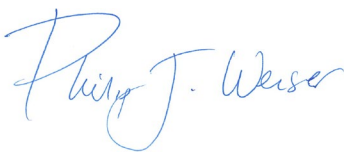
The goal of this work is to improve in every way—and, most of all, to prevent domestic violence fatalities and near-death incidents. This is no easy task given the many factors and variables that go into any one incident. Yet, with the pathbreaking work of the team of experts on the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board, led by Jenn Doe of the Denver Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, we have made important findings that will no doubt inform the work of practitioners across Colorado.

For example, it is noteworthy that the majority of domestic violence fatalities in the past year occurred by use of firearms, which accounted for 62% of fatalities—almost four times the rate of the next highest type of injury that led to death, stabbing.

As chair, I would especially like to extend a heartfelt thanks to DoraLee Larson, who recently ended her term as longtime executive director of the Denver Domestic Violence Coordinating Council. She remains a model advocate for survivors and victims.

By continuing to work collaboratively with diverse voices across the state, we will continue to illuminate this important topic, all with the goal of working to prevent these tragedies and the related trauma that extends to family members, friends, and colleagues. We are grateful to all our partners as we continue to stand with victims and survivors to build a better Colorado.

In solidarity,

Philip J. Weiser

Colorado Attorney General

Introduction to Domestic Violence Fatality Review in Colorado

The Denver Metro Domestic Violence Fatality Review (DMDVFR) was one of the first domestic violence fatality review teams (DVFRTs) formed in the United States and is the longest running team in Colorado. Formed in 1996 with funds from the U.S. Office on Violence Against Women, the DMDVFR is a multi-disciplinary group of more than twenty-five members from criminal and civil legal systems and community-based entities. The DMDVFR's goals include increasing victim and community safety and offender accountability, as well as helping to reduce the number of deaths related to domestic violence.

A long-time aspiration of the DMDVFR has been to increase and broaden its focus and functions and to expand this work statewide. This was achieved with the passage of Senate Bill 2017-126, which resulted in the creation of the Colorado Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board (CDVFRB). With bipartisan support led by Senators Lucia Guzman and Bob Gardner and Representatives Millie Hamner and Yeulin Willet, the bill was passed by the Colorado General Assembly and signed into law by Governor John Hickenlooper on June 8, 2017 as Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) 24-31 (702, 705). The new law enables communities across Colorado to form DVFRTs in order to enhance existing efforts to prevent domestic violence fatalities.

The Colorado Department of Law has the statutory authority to lead the CDVFRB with the Colorado Attorney General as the chair. This leadership by a state elected official helps to improve collection of domestic violence fatality data, resulting in deeper understanding of the dynamics related to domestic violence fatalities and the development of meaningful policy and practice recommendation aimed at improving domestic violence prevention and response services. The DMDVFR continues to work with the Colorado Attorney General's Office and the CDVFRB by gathering and analyzing data and from local DVFRTs and engaging in statewide outreach to support the formation of additional DVFRTs.

While it is too early to determine the specific results or outcomes the CDVFRB and Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams across the state may have, anecdotal information from reports of other states suggests that the process revitalizes coordinated community responses to domestic violence and provides an enhanced focus for interagency liaison work and communication.

Executive Summary

Per C.R.S. § 24-31-702(2)(a), the Colorado Attorney General serves as the chair of the Colorado Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board (CDVFRB), which is charged to:

a. examine data collected by review teams during the preceding year;

b. identify measures to help prevent domestic violence fatalities and near-death incidents;

c. establish uniform methods for collecting, analyzing, and storing data relating to domestic violence fatalities and near-death incidents; and

d. make annual policy recommendations concerning domestic violence to the Colorado General Assembly.

The findings presented in this report are compiled from basic information collected on incidents across the state where domestic violence resulted in a fatality, as well as more detailed data gathered from select cases that were reviewed in-depth by local domestic violence fatality review teams (DVFRTs).[1]

In 2018 the state of Colorado had *at least*[2] 37 incidents where domestic violence resulted in a fatality and 43 people died as a result of these incidents. Of the individuals killed, 26 were the primary victim of domestic violence, 2 were collateral children, 4 were collateral adults, and 11 were the primary perpetrator of domestic violence. The plurality (20, or 47%) were women killed by a current or former male partner, consistent with research showing that domestic violence fatalities (DVFs) are highly gender-based phenomenon. Children were involved in 11 (30%) DVFs, and in 7 (19%) of those, one or more children were in the home at the time and/or witnessed the fatal incident. In one incident, a child was injured during the DVF and in another, two children were killed. There was also one incident in which a 12-year-old was arrested in connection with the murder of his father's girlfriend. In these 37 incidents, gunshot wounds were the most common cause of death, with 27 (63%) people dying as a result of this type of injury. Of these 27 people killed by gunshot wounds, 10 were male perpetrators who died by suicide, were killed in self-defense, or were killed by responding law enforcement.[3]

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[1] Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.
[2] There may be additional cases that have not been captured in this data and/or additional information may come to light in the future that would result in changes to this data.
[3] This is consistent with the National Violent Death Reporting System's 2015 data which indicates that around half of female-victim DVFs are due to firearms (Gollub & Gardner, 2019).

Eleven Colorado DVF (or near fatality/attempted murder) cases were reviewed in-depth by local DVFRTs. In this sample, all of the DV victims were women, all of the perpetrators were men, and the couples were primarily intra-racial (the same race/ethnicity). One victim was an undocumented immigrant and her perpetrator was a *documented* (non-US citizen) immigrant.[4] Of the 10 people killed in the cases reviewed, 7 were the primary DV victim and 3 were perpetrators who died by suicide. The perpetrators murdered or attempted to murder the DV victims by gunshot (28.6%, n = 2),[5] stabbing (28.6%, n = 2), beating (14.3% n = 1), strangling (14.3% n = 1), blunt force object trauma (14.3% n = 1), and blunt force object trauma combined with running over with a car (14.3% n = 1).

Seventy percent (n = 7) of the cases involved couples who had separated at least once, and 3 (27.3%) involved couples with many separations.[6] Nearly one-third (36%) of the couples in this study had joint children and over half (56%) had children from prior relationships.[7] In one case, multiple children (ranging from age 4 to 15) were present and tried to intervene, and in another, the perpetrator's 6-year-old son witnessed his father's murder of the victim with a machete. Over half (54.5%) of the cases reviewed occurred in the perpetrator's and victim's joint residence. Notably, one "joint residence" was a hotel room in which the couple lived and was the place of employment for the victim and another was in the office of a storage facility. Another DVF involved a couple with insufficient money to pay their rent.[8] Related to this, 7 of the 10 legally employed perpetrators were coded as "underemployed"[9] and research indicates that DVF perpetrators are disproportionately under or unemployed men.

The most likely potential social supporters who had received disclosures of abuse prior to the DVF were the victims' friends and co-workers (both at 70.0%). The most frequent potential system/official supporters who had received such disclosures were law enforcement (police or sheriffs) (n = 4), followed by attorneys/legal services and civil courts (e.g., divorce and custody). In this study, 3 perpetrators had prior DV arrests, with 2 having 1 and 2 having more than 4.[10] One victim and 1 perpetrator had a protection order violation arrest prior to the fatal incident. Additionally, one victim and 3 perpetrators were on probation, and 1 perpetrator was on parole.

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[4] Research indicates immigrant/refugee victims, particularly if undocumented, are at disproportionate risk of DVF.

[5] These findings indicate a far lower rate of firearms in DVFs than the statewide data presented in the previous section, showing that the cases reviewed in-depth by DVFRTs are not representative of DVFs statewide.

[6] Many DVF studies have found separation as a significant risk factor (e.g., Wathen et al., 2007).

[7] A recent study found "mutual children" as a significant predictor in DVFs (Vatnar, Friestad, & Bjørkly, 2018).

[8] These cases indicate housing marginalization, financial struggles, and/or isolation as potential risk factors.

[9] Underemployment refers to when one's education or prior employment are consistently higher than one's current employment, and/or when their employment is seasonal, sporadic, or inconsistent.

[10] A recent review of DVF research reported that "70% to 80% of intimate partner homicides (IPHs) involve prior male-perpetrated physical abuse" (Harper, 2017, p. 224).

When cases are reviewed by a DVFRT, there is extensive discussion about "red flags" or risk factors that were present prior to the fatal incident. In this study, the most common of these were as follows, in order of frequency:

- perpetrator felt abandoned/betrayed and/or had a perceived loss of control (n=10, 90.9%)

- perpetrator history of drug/alcohol abuse and/or possessiveness of victim (n= 9, 81.8%)

- perpetrator financially dependent on victim, had history of DV assaults, had pending legal actions, was un(der)employed, and/or was stalking/monitoring victim (n=8, 72.7%)

- perpetrator was experiencing financial struggles, was known to use a weapon, and/or experienced a loss of housing (n=7, 63.6%)

- perpetrator had access to firearms, made prior threats to kill victim, was emotionally dependent on the victim, had escalated suicide threats, and/or was experiencing estrangement or separation from victim (n=6, 54.5%)

- perpetrator had history of non-DV assaults, changes in daily living, and/or showed a loss of coping mechanisms (n=5, 45.5%)

- perpetrator exploited victim's care-taking tendency, experienced loss of contact with/custody of children, made prior threats with a firearm, had stepchildren in the home, and/or had violated protection orders (n=4, 36.4%)

- perpetrator showed signs of mental decompensation, had known mental health issues/diagnosis, was known to carry a weapon, had a history of strangulation, had experienced a loss of employment, and/or separation from victim was imminent (n=3, 27.3%)

- perpetrator threatened to kill DV victim's children, family and/or friends (n=2, 18.2%)

- perpetrator had a gambling problem (n=1, 9.1%)

One goal of implementing a statewide CDVFRB was to document and address the potential differences in rural/Western Slope locations. Although the size of the sample limits statistical analyses, it is worth noting a possible trend that the rural/Western Slope cases locations indicate unique DVF characteristics (i.e., exceptional isolation of DV victims, use of firearms, etc.). Many lessons are learned and missed opportunities for intervention are identified in the process of reviewing DVF cases, and as more DVFRTs form in Colorado and more cases are reviewed, the data will become richer and more comprehensive. The CDVFRB used this data, as well as other research in the area, to develop the policy recommendations included in the next section of this report.

Policy and Practice Change Recommendations

1. Explore and study the need for standardized treatment and age-appropriate responses to juvenile teen dating violence (TDV) and abuse offenders, as well as comprehensive prevention programs for youth.

Effective, age-appropriate intervention with juvenile TDV and abuse offenders is critical at the early stages of adolescent development in order to change behavior and prevent future offenses. Research on victimization shows that more than 22% of female victims of domestic violence and 15% of male victims experienced some intimate partner violence for the first time between the ages of 11 and 17 years.[11] A 2017 study found that relationship violence in youth is increasing and may in turn be accepted by many adolescents as acceptable behavior.[12]

In Colorado, juvenile TDV and abuse offenders do not fall under the criminal definition of domestic violence because it is codified in Title 18 of Colorado Revised Statutes pertaining to adults. We have learned from the substance abuse field and the sex offender treatment field that interventions for youth must be developmentally appropriate in order to be effective, yet there are limited intervention options for juvenile TDV and abuse offenders.[13] The Colorado Domestic Violence Offender Management Board, in partnership with Violence Free Colorado, has been convening a stakeholder group since January 2018 to develop guidelines for intervention with juvenile TDV and abuse offenders in the hopes of preventing future perpetration. However, additional study and resources will be necessary to implement the guidelines that ultimately come from this work.

In addition to intervention, primary prevention with youth and communities is integral to this work and will promote more systemic and cultural changes to support healthy relationships and the recognition of abusive behavior. Data from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention related to risk and protective factors for youth indicate the need for better education and programming on healthy relationship practices. Without such guidance, we can expect that

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[11] National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey. 2010, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[12] Higgins, G.E., Marcum, C.D., Nicholson, J., & Weiner, P. (2017). Predictors of physical and dating violence in middle and high school students in the United States. *Crime & Delinquency*, 64(5), 1-25. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011128717719428.

[13] DVOMB Literature Review and Survey on Youth who have Committed Domestic Violence, Special Report of Findings. https://cdpsdocs.state.co.us/dvomb/Research/SpecialReport.pdf

forms of domestic, intimate partner, and relationship violence among youth will continue to increase and juvenile TDV and abuse offenders will continue to perpetrate into adulthood.

Therefore, the CDVFRB is recommending additional study on effective interventions for juvenile TDV and abuse offenders, as we as resources to support such interventions and comprehensive prevention programs.

2. Explore and study the need for enforcing mandates of domestic violence offender treatment following jail-based sentences and pre-release planning that incorporates assessment of risk for intimate partner violence and lethality.

Colorado Revised Statutes section 18-6-801(1)(a) states that "a trial court must, in addition to any sentence that it may impose, order a defendant who has committed a crime of domestic violence to complete a domestic violence treatment program." In Section 18-6-801(2), an exception to that rule is provided, which states that "if the court sentences a defendant to prison, it cannot order the defendant to complete a domestic violence treatment program." A recent decision by the Colorado Court of Appeals in the case of *People v. Trujillo* asserts that this exception does not apply to a defendant sentenced to jail, which is "decidedly different" than being sentenced to prison.[14]

The decision by the Court of Appeals explains that when the defendant in this case "pled guilty to third degree assault, he stipulated that (1) the offense involved domestic violence; (2) he would be incarcerated in a jail for two years; and (3) he would participate in a certified domestic violence treatment program. His plea and the three stipulations accompanying it triggered the requirements of subsection (1)(a)."[15] Because Section 18-6-801(1)(a) uses the word "shall", it therefore "requires the trial court to order a defendant convicted of a domestic violence crime to complete a treatment program."[16] The court also affirmed that the trial court's order to complete treatment was "in addition to," and not part of the defendant's sentence.[17]

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[14] 2019 COA 74, ¶ 23.
[15] *Id.* at ¶ 24.
[16] *Id.* at ¶ 23.
[17] *Id.* at ¶ 9.

The defendant also argued that the court unlawfully placed him on "court probation" by requiring him to complete treatment after his jail sentence.[18] This describes a form of probation "in which the offender . . . reports only to the sentencing judge rather than [to] a probation officer."[19] Because probation is generally considered an alternative to a jail sentence, the defendant "contends that the court could not enter the treatment order because it lost jurisdiction over him after he had finished his jail sentence."[20] The Court of Appeals disagreed with this position because after the defendant's objection, "the court decided that it would not set such a hearing, which meant that it did not have a supervisory role in ensuring that defendant completed domestic violence treatment."[21]

Based on this case, the CDVFRB submits to the General Assembly to explore and study possible sentencing options that would allow for courts to enforce an order requiring domestic violence offender treatment for jail-based sentences. Additionally, research discussing the use of risk assessment and pre-release planning within the criminal justice system states that the "release from correctional institutions presents a critical time point for assessing for risk of offending and matching individuals to the appropriate level and types of services." [22] Therefore, the CDVFRB also recommends the consideration of pre-release planning that incorporates IPV risk and lethality risk assessment for domestic violence offenders in the interest of enhancing community and victim safety.

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[18] *Id.* at ¶ 29.
[19] *Id.*
[20] *Id.* at ¶ 30.
[21] *Id.* at ¶ 32.
[22] Cynthia Fraga Rizo et al., *Characteristics and Factors Associated With Intimate Partner Violence–Related Homicide Post-Release From Jail or Prison*, J. Interpersonal Violence 1 (Nov. 13, 2019), https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260519888195.

2018 Statewide Findings on Domestic Violence Related Fatalities

A. Data Collection Process

The Denver Metro Domestic Violence Fatality Review (DMDVFR) maintains a comprehensive list of fatalities in Colorado resulting from an incident determined to be an act of, or in the context of, domestic violence or intimate partner abuse. The information is gathered from public sources, including media reports, arrest affidavits, and information provided by law enforcement representatives. This data is more limited in scope than the data collected for cases reviewed in-depth by a local domestic violence fatality review team (DVFRT), which you will see in the next section, but it provides a snapshot of the scope of this issue on a statewide level. Due diligence has been given to compiling the most accurate information possible and we appreciate all of the feedback received from law enforcement, prosecution, victim services and any other agencies and individuals statewide, to help ensure this research is as accurate and complete as possible. It is acknowledged that there may be additional cases that have not been captured in this data and that additional information may come to light in the future that would result in changes to this data.

For the purposes of this report, the definition of a domestic violence related fatality includes murder, murder suicide, collateral deaths (friends, family members, neighbors, or other bystanders), suicides (this includes suicides that occurred after a homicide, as well as perpetrator or victim suicides only), and any other death determined to be related to domestic violence. Complete definitions of the types of fatalities for which information is collected can be found at www.DDVCC.org/fatality-review, along with online form for entering basic information about fatal incidents that appear to be domestic violence related. A compilation of domestic violence fatalities from across the state for the current report year and past years can also be found via that link. Comments and questions about the process can be directed to denverdvcouncil@gmail.com.

B. Summary of Colorado Domestic Violence Fatalities

The following information describes what we know about domestic violence related fatalities that occurred in Colorado in 2018. Note: Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding. *In 2018 the state of Colorado had at least 37 incidents where domestic violence resulted in a fatality and 43 people died as a result of these incidents.* Of the 43 individuals killed, 26 were

the primary victim of domestic violence, 2 were collateral children, 4 were collateral adults, and 11 were the primary perpetrator of domestic violence.

FIGURE 1 shows the number and percentage of individuals killed by category. The majority (20, or 47%) were women killed by a current or former male partner, followed by men who died by suicide (7, or 16%). Men killed by a female intimate partner or ex-partner were the next most common category (5, or 12%), followed by collateral deaths of men (4, or 9%). The "Other" category includes 2 deaths that resulted from law enforcement action, and 2 deaths determined to have been self-defense, and also represents 9% of 2018 domestic violence related deaths. Tragically, 2 children (5%) were killed, along with their mother, in a domestic violence related incident. Finally, 1 male (2%) was killed by an acquaintance during a domestic violence incident. It was reported in this case that the female who the deceased man was in a relationship with may have also shot her partner during an argument, but it was a male acquaintance of the couple who fired the fatal shot "to put him out of his misery". In total, 26 (60%) of the individuals killed were determined to be victims of domestic violence, 2 (5%) were children killed as collateral victims, 4 (9%) were adults killed as collateral victims, and 11 (25.5%) were determined to be perpetrators of domestic violence.

FIGURE 1: NUMBER OF PEOPLE KILLED IN DV-RELATED INCIDENTS IN 2018

Women Killed by Male Partner/Ex-Partner	20	47%
Women Killed by Female Partner/Ex-Partner	0	0%
Collateral Women Killed	0	0%
Suicides by Women	0	0%
Men Killed by Female Partner/Ex-Partner	5	12%
Men Killed by Male Partner/Ex-Partner	0	0%
Men Killed by other Men	1	2%
Collateral Men Killed	4	9%
Suicides by Men	7	16%
Children Killed	2	5%
Other (LE, Self-Defense, Etc.)	4	9%

Figure 2, shown on page 15, describes the types of fatal domestic violence incidents that occurred in Colorado in 2018. Most common was "only" murder (26, or 70%) and in three of those incidents the deceased were collateral victims, including one incident in which a woman was killed by her husband, who also went on to kill their two children. The next most common were incidents involving solely a perpetrator suicide (4, or 11%), although in one of those incidents the perpetrator attempted to kill his wife before he died by suicide, but she survived

life-threatening injuries. The third most common type of domestic violence-related fatal incidents were murder followed by suicide of the domestic violence perpetrator (3, or 8%). In one of these cases, the perpetrator attempted to kill his former intimate partner, but she survived, and he killed her new partner, then himself. The final two categories (killed by law enforcement and self-defense) each represent 5% of the fatal domestic violence related incidents. Two incidents involved law enforcement killing a perpetrator after gunfire was exchanged during a domestic violence call and the other two include a perpetrator killed by the new partner of his ex-partner, and a perpetrator killed by his intimate partner's adult the son after he stabbed the woman multiple times, but she survived.

FIGURE 2: TYPE OF DV-RELATED INCIDENTS
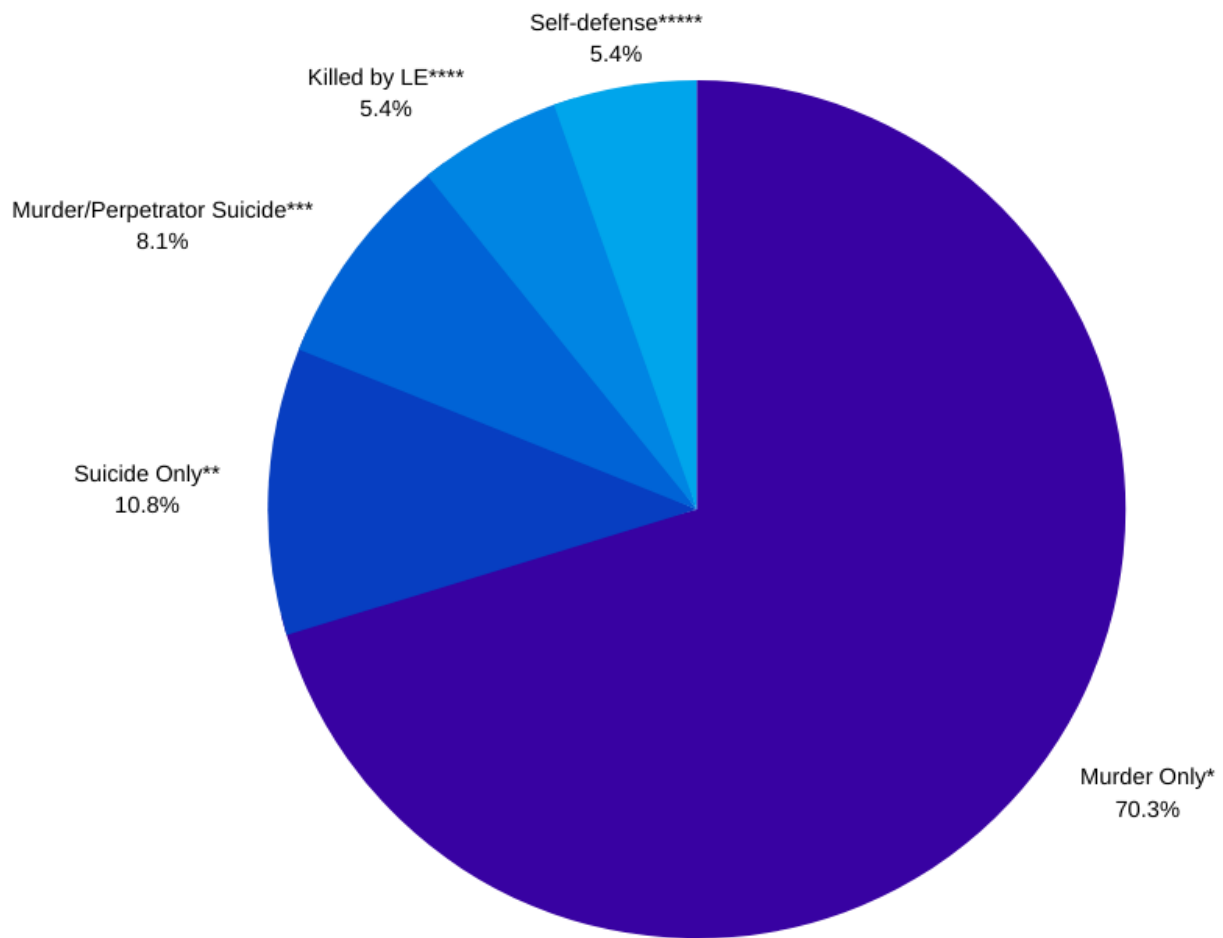
*3 involved collateral victim(s), 1 also included an attempted suicide

**all were DV perpetrators, 1 also involved an attempted murder

***1 involved the attempted murder of the DV victim and the murder of a collateral victim, prior to the perpetrator suicide

****Both were DV perpetrators who exchanged gunfire with officers

*****one was a DV perpetrator shot by the new partner of his ex-partner, one was a DV perpetrator killed by his female partner's son after she was stabbed by him

Figures 3 and 4 provide data on the locations of fatal domestic violence-related incidents occurring in 2018. The largest concentration of incidents (8, or 22%) occurred in the City and County of Denver, which included 5 murders, 2 murders followed by perpetrator suicide, and one perpetrator killed in self-defense. Adams County had the next highest rate, with 6 (16%) fatal domestic violence related incidents. Of these six incidents, 1 (3%) involved the deaths of two collateral victims in Aurora, 1 (3%) was a murder followed by perpetrator suicide in Brighton, and 2 (5%) were murders that occurred in Thornton, one of which included an attempted suicide by the perpetrator. Westminster had 3 (8%) fatal domestic violence related incidents, including one murder and one perpetrator suicide within the boundaries of Adams County, as well as one murder within boundaries of Jefferson County. Jefferson County had the third highest rate of fatal domestic violence related incidents, with 5 cases (14%) occurring. As previously noted, one of those occurred in Westminster, 2 (5%) occurred in Lakewood, including one murder and one perpetrator suicide, and 1 each (3%) occurred in Wheat Ridge and Morrison, both of which were murders. El Paso County had 3 (8%) fatal domestic violence related incidents, all of which were murders occurring in Colorado Springs, including one collateral murder.

FIGURE 3: FATAL DV-RELATED INCIDENTS BY COUNTY

County	Incidents	Percentage
Adams	6	16%
Arapahoe	2	5%
Boulder	2	5%
Delta	1	3%
Denver	8	22%
El Paso	3	8%
Fremont	1	3%
Huerfano	1	3%
Jefferson	5	14%
Larimer	1	3%
Mesa	1	3%
Montezuma	1	3%
Pueblo	2	5%
Teller	1	3%
Weld	2	5%

Arapahoe, Boulder, Pueblo, and Weld counties each had 2 (5%) fatal domestic violence related incidents. In Arapahoe County 1 (3%) incident in which law enforcement shot and killed a perpetrator, occurred in Centennial, and 1 (3%) murder occurred in Littleton. Incidents in Boulder County included 1 (3%) murder in the city of Boulder and 1 (3%) perpetrator killed in self-defense in Longmont. In Pueblo County, 2 (5%) incidents occurred in the city of Pueblo, one of which was a murder and one of which involved a perpetrator killed by law enforcement. Weld County had 1 (3%) perpetrator suicide that also involved attempted murder in Greeley, as well as 1 (3%) familicide in Frederick, in which a husband/father killed his wife and 2 children. Finally, Delta, Fremont, Huerfano, Larimer,

Mesa, Montezuma, and Teller counties each had 1 (3%) fatal domestic violence related incident in 2018. Of these, 1 (3%) was a murder in Hotchkiss, 1 (3%) was a perpetrator suicide in Cañon City, and 1 (3%) was a murder near Walsenburg in which a man and his 12-year-old son were both involved in the murder of the man's girlfriend, 1 (3%) was a murder in Fort Collins, 1 (3%) was a murder in Grand Junction, 1 (3%) was a murder on Forest Service Land, and 1 (3%) was a murder in Woodland Park in which the body of the victim has never been located.

FIGURE 4: FATAL DV-RELATED INCIDENTS BY CITY

City	Incidents	Percentage
Aurora	1	3%
Boulder	1	3%
Brighton	1	3%
Cañon City	1	3%
Centennial	1	3%
Colorado Springs	3	8%
Commerce City	1	3%
Denver	8	22%
Forest Service Land	1	3%
Fort Collins	1	3%
Frederick	1	3%
Grand Junction	1	3%
Hotchkiss	1	3%
Lakewood	2	5%
Littleton	1	3%
Longmont	1	3%
Morrison	1	3%
Near Walsenburg	1	3%
Pueblo	2	5%
Thornton	2	5%
Westminster	3	8%
Wheat Ridge	1	3%
Woodland Park	1	3%

Figure 5 describes the type of injury that resulted in death in each incident. Gunshot wounds were involved in 23 (62%) incidents, making this the most common type of fatal injury. Of these incidents, 3 were suicide only, 3 were murder followed by perpetrator suicide, 2 each were self-defense and law enforcement involved, and 13 were murder only. Stab wounds were the cause of fatal injury in 6 (16%) incidents, followed by strangulation, which was the cause of fatal injury in 5 (13%) incidents. Notably, in one strangulation incident there were 3 victims, a mother (who was pregnant at the time) and two children. Blunt trauma accounted for the fatal injuries in 2 (5%) incidents and hanging was the cause of fatal injury in 1 (3%) incident.

FIGURE 5: FATAL DV-RELATED INCIDENTS BY INJURY TYPE
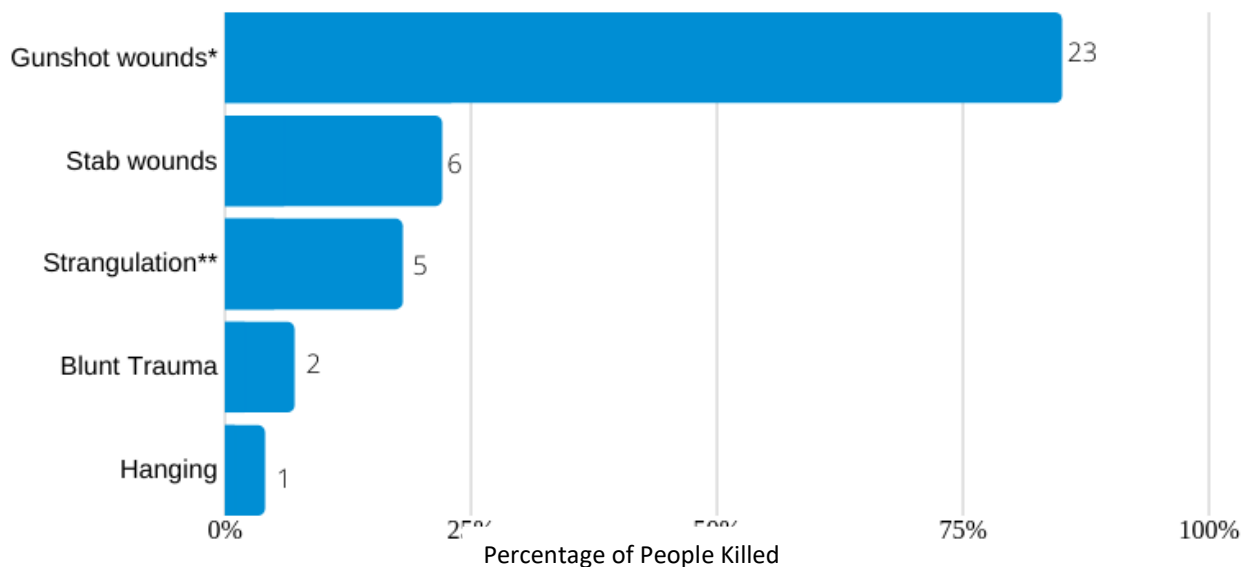
*3 were suicide, 3 were murder followed by suicide, 2 were self-defense, 2 were law enforcement involved, and 13 were murder

**1 involved multiple victims

Table 6 goes on to provide a breakdown of the number of people killed by each type of injury. Again, gunshot wounds were the most common, with 27 (63%) people dying as a result of this type of injury. Strangulation resulted in the death of 7 (16%) people, including the 3- and 4-year-old daughters of one perpetrator. In this incident, which received national media attention, the perpetrator strangled his wife to death in their home, drove her body to a remote location with their two daughters in the car, and strangled both daughters to death. Media reports indicate that, before she was killed, the 4-year-old daughter witnessed her father dragging her mother's body out of the home and was seated next to her younger sister in the car as her father strangled her. The perpetrator then buried his wife in a shallow grave and immersed the bodies of his two daughters in oil tanks. Initially, he denied know what happened to his family and even went on the news to plead for his wife and daughters' safe return after they were reported missing. He has since plead guilty and confessed to all three murders. Stab wounds were responsible for the deaths of 6 (14%) people and blunt trauma accounted for 2 (5%) deaths. Of the deaths caused by blunt trauma, one was the result of the victim being pushed from moving car, and the other is believed to have been caused by injuries resulting from being beaten with a baseball bat, although the victim's body has never been found. Finally, 1 (2%) death was the suicide of a perpetrator who hung himself after stabbing his wife multiple times, but she survived.

FIGURE 6: DV-RELATED DEATHS BY INJURY TYPE
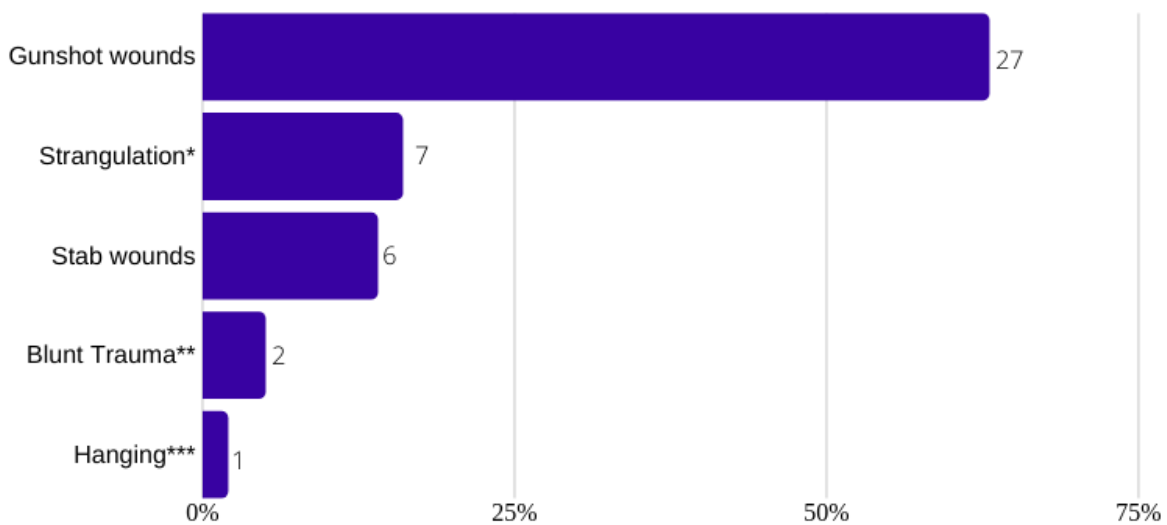
*2 strangulation victims were the perpetrator's daughters, ages 3 and 4. Media reports indicate that the older daughter watched her father strangle her sister, after he had strangled their mother

**one death caused by blunt trauma was the result of being pushed from moving

Figures 7 through 10 provide information about the ages of individuals killed in fatal domestic violence related incidents. Of the domestic violence victims killed in 2018, the youngest was 20 and the oldest 64, with an average age of 36. Of the domestic violence perpetrators killed, the youngest was 18 and the oldest 56, with an average age of 32. Age was unknown for 1 of the domestic violence perpetrators killed. Collateral adult victims killed ranged in age from 19 to 25, with an average age of 23, and of the collateral child victims killed, one was 3 years old and one was 4 years old.

FIGURE 7: AGES OF DV VICTIMS KILLED

Age	# of Victims
20	1
21	1
22	3
23	2
26	1
27	2
29	1
30	1
32	1
34	1
37	2
41	2
42	1
43	1
44	1
45	1
51	1
60	1
61	1
64	1
Average Age	**36**

FIGURE 8: AGES OF DV PERPETRATORS KILLED

Age	# of Victims
18	1
27	1
28	2
33	1
35	1
38	1
40	1
48	1
56	1
Unknown	1
Average Age	**32**

FIGURE 10: AGE OF COLLATERAL CHILD VICTIMS KILLED

Age	# of Victims
4	1
3	1
Average Age	**3.5**

FIGURE 9: AGE OF COLLATERAL ADULT VICTIMS KILLED

Age	# of Victims
19	1
23	1
25	2
Average Age	**23**

Figure 11 provides information about fatal domestic violence related incidents involving children. In 2018 in Colorado, children were involved in a total of 11 (30%) out of 37 fatal domestic violence related incidents. In 7 (19%), one or more children were in the home at the time and/or witnessed the fatal incident. In 1 (3%) incident, a child was injured during the fatal incident and in 1 (3%), two children were killed. There was also one incident in which a 12-year-old was arrested in connection with the murder of his father's girlfriend. His father was also arrested and, according to media reports, it is believed that both the father and son shot the victim before burning her body beyond recognition in a car on the side of the road in rural southwestern Colorado. The father in this case pled guilty to second-degree murder and has been sentenced to 42 years in prison, but it is unclear what his son was charged or what the status of that case is.

FIGURE 11: FATAL DV-RELATED INCIDENTS IN WHICH CHILDREN WERE INVOLVED

In the home and/or witnessed an incident*	7	19%
Injured during incident**	1	3%
Killed during incident***	1	3%
Involved in perpetration of incident****	1	3%

*1 or more children in the home

**1 child injured

***2 children killed

****12-year-old arrested in connection with murder of his dad's girlfriend

Finally, **Figure 12** provides a comparison of the number of domestic violence-related fatalities in Colorado over the past five years, based on information obtained from media sources and/or reported to the DMDVFR and the Colorado Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board. Definitions of the types of fatalities referenced and complete lists with descriptions of fatal domestic violence related incidents in Colorado can be found at www.DDVCC.org/fatality-review. Questions about this data should be directed to DMDVFR staff at 720-337-4470 or via email at denverdvcouncil@gmail.com.

FIGURE 12: TOTAL DV-RELATED DEATHS IN COLORADO BY YEAR (at least)
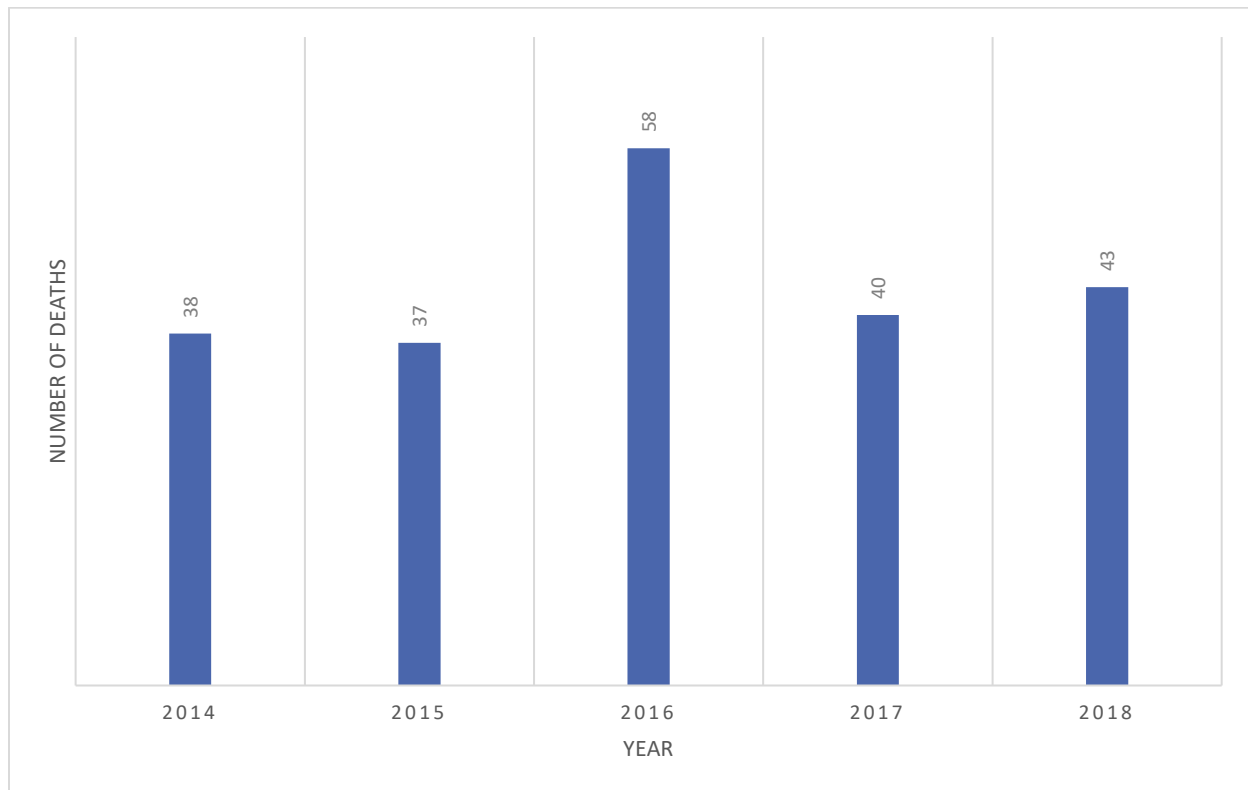
The five-year average of DV-related deaths in Colorado is 43 per year.

Bridget's Story of Survival

Bridget met the man she would later marry while they were in high school in Canada. He was dating her friend at the time, so it wasn't until a few years later that he and Bridget would get together. They married in 1987, had their first child, a daughter, in 1994 followed by a son in 1997, and moved to Colorado in 2002. Bridget described their early relationship as tumultuous and said living with him was like "walking on eggshells." She said that he would have random fits of rage and was controlling and abusive. He was rough with her, and with the kids, but he made sure he never left bruises where anyone could see.

But then, in the spring of 2014, Bridget's husband put his hands around her neck and strangled her during an argument, while asking her "Is this what you want me to do, kill you?" Bridget was terrified that he would kill her, so she began sleeping in the guest room and barricaded the door with a workout bar and a dresser to keep him from getting in, before eventually initiating a separation and divorce. Bridget did not call police about this incident because she did not want her kids to see their dad taken away in handcuffs and did not seek medical attention for her injuries, but she did tell a neighbor and coworkers about what had happened. A few years before the divorce, after Bridget had moved out, their daughter called the police during an incident in which her father was being abusive toward her. When law enforcement responded, Bridget's husband told them everything was fine and he would not let the officers speak to their daughter, so no charges were filed.

During the divorce process, Bridget had a pro-bono attorney, while her husband had two attorneys, and she told the magistrate about the strangulation incident and asked for protection because she feared for her safety. Unfortunately, she was told that "something would have to happen" for her to receive a protection order and she was not informed about services available to her as a victim of domestic violence, so Bridget went through the process without advocacy or support. The divorce took 18 months to finalize, because her husband lied about his income and, in the end, he was ordered by the court to pay Bridget $300 a month. She only received one payment from her ex-husband, and he deducted $200 because he had paid for their son's passport renewal and felt Bridget should split that cost with him. Several months after their divorce, he was fired from his job due to embezzlement and was sued by the company he had worked for.

In the early morning hours of December 6, 2016, law enforcement responded to an apartment complex after receiving a call about a female lying in the parking lot kicking, screaming, moaning, and bleeding. Officers arrived to find Bridget lying in a pool of blood between two cars, fading in and out of consciousness. Witnesses reported seeing a suspicious man riding

around the complex earlier in the evening on a bicycle, which was found in a nearby dumpster. Bridget's son was asleep in her apartment, where he lived with her, and after being awoken by law enforcement, he went to the hospital to find his mother in critical condition and on life support due to a severe head injury.

Later that day, a call came in to dispatch of a possible suicide at a nearby hotel and officers arrived to find Bridget's ex-husband in the bathtub of a hotel room with self-inflicted wounds. He was transported to the hospital and claimed he had been having drinks with an escort that evening, woke up in the tub surrounded by paramedics, and had no idea what had happened to Bridget. Police later determined that the bicycle found in the dumpster belonged to him and they reviewed surveillance video that showed him leaving the hotel room shortly before Bridget was found. Her ex-husband and the father of her children had attacked her with a blunt object as she returned home from work. He then placed her head under the tire of her vehicle, backed up, pulled forward and parked the vehicle, then left her for dead. After he was arrested, he told the detective investigating the case that he would rather see her dead than give up the house.

Bridget spent the next 4 months in a coma and her family gave up hope that she would recover and made the difficult decision to take her off life support. Bridget has always been feisty, and to say that she's a fighter would be an understatement, so against all odds, she began to recover. She woke up from the coma and spent the next several months in rehabilitation. As a result of her head injury, Bridget has undergone 7 brain surgeries, along with suffering a broken vertebrae and injuries to her chest and face due to the attempted murder. In July of 2019, Bridget saw her neurologist, who told her she had "graduated"; he fixed what was broken and his work was done, so the rest was up to her. Bridget courageously accepted this challenge and has made a full recovery, despite having no memory of the brutal attack or the months after.

Today, Bridget is happily employed, volunteers as a Victim Advocate, and has been accepted to participate in the Citizen's Police Academy. She received a Purple Ribbon Award from Violence Free Colorado at the 2019 Colorado Advocacy in Action Conference and is passionate about sharing her story of survival and resilience in order to help others and create change. She hopes that this will teach people working with victims of domestic violence to take their concerns seriously and provide them with the support and protection they need early on to prevent other victims from having to go through what she and her children went through. Bridget is a shining example of how a person can transform from victim to victor and, in her own words, "Miracles happen, and I hate to sound cliché, but I think I was a small one somehow."

2018 Case Review Data on Domestic Violence Related Fatalities

A. Data Collection

The following data is based on cases reviewed in 2018 by Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams (DVFRTs) in Colorado. Cases are selected for review based on several factors, including status of the case (must be closed with no civil action pending), availability of records, recommendations by DVFRT members, and incident location. In 2018, there were three active DVFRTs in Colorado. Case information is compiled with the cooperation of respective law enforcement agencies and/or prosecutors' offices, as well as any other entities authorized to release information related to the case. The case is then presented to members of the respective DVFRT, a coding manual is completed, and data is analyzed by Dr. Joanne Belknap, Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of Colorado Boulder. The following report provides detailed information about the findings of Dr. Belknap's research, based on data from the eleven cases reviewed by DVFRTs in Colorado in 2018. The complete coding manual and more information on case review procedures are available at www.DDVCC.org/fatality-review.

B. Introduction

Domestic violence fatalities (DVFs), also referred to as intimate partner homicides (IPHs), are "a major social problem, and it is important to determine the predictors of this violent behavior."[23] DVFs/IPHs are a type of gender-based abuse, that is, one where the victims are primarily women/girls and the perpetrators are largely men/boys.[24] The primary goal of the Colorado Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board (CDVFRB), housed within the Department of Law, is to provide in-depth data on the many factors potentially increasing the risk of DVFs/IPHs. Thus, our detailed codebook documents the characteristics of the DVFs (e.g., completed and near/attempted murders, perpetrators' completed and attempted suicides, collateral victims, location, and witnesses) in order to provide better determinations of associated factors, as well the types of DVFs (e.g., completed v. attempted/near murders, child witnesses, collateral victims).

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[23] Cunha, O.S., & Gonçalves, R.A. (2019). Predictors of Intimate Partner Homicide in a Sample of Portuguese Male Domestic Offenders. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *34*(12), 2573–2598. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260516662304

[24] Belknap, J. (2015). *The invisible woman: Gender, crime, and justice* (4th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning. WorldCat (870646590).

Although we do not currently have the bandwidth to compare DVFs to NFDV (non-fatal DV) cases, some other recent studies have, most of which have been outside of the U.S. One such study in Portugal addressed this through data collected on 96 incarcerated male DVF perpetrators and 76 community male DV perpetrators in DV intervention programs or under supervision by probation or child protection services. They found the DVF perpetrators were more likely than the DV non-fatal abusers to be older, exhibit more suicidal threats/intentions, and exhibit more homicidal threats/intentions, while the DV non-fatal abusers were more likely to have been victimized in childhood and to not be single.[25] A Canadian study comparing DVF and NFDV perpetrators found few demographic or criminal history differences, except that the DVF perpetrators were more likely to have older victims, have had a prior DV incident, and, unexpectedly, were less likely to be unemployed and less likely to have substance abuse problems.[26] A study comparing DVF and NFDV cases in Spain found no differences in psychological problems, intoxication during the offense, an alcohol history problem, a drug problem, educational attainment, employment, or social disadvantage.[27] However, compared to DVF perpetrators, the NFDV perpetrators were younger, had an elevated criminal history, and were found to be more "reckless," defined as "a temperamental disposition related to a chronic need to carry out risky activities, to have new experiences and to reject routine or isolated activity."[28]

A recent and large Australian study comparing male IPH to male-on-male homicide (MMH) perpetrators found that although both "have a history of offending… the extensiveness of this offending differs," whereby the IPH perpetrators "reported lower offending prevalence, less frequent and versatile offending, and later offending onset compared with MMH offenders."[29] Moreover, the IPH perpetrators were more likely than the MMH perpetrators "to come to the attention of" the criminal legal system and to "be classified as 'high risk'"; indicating the need for "ensuring that other areas of risk are recognized and responded to in appropriate ways through extensive screening or surveillance."[30]

[25] [25] Belknap, J. (2015). *The invisible woman: Gender, crime, and justice* (4th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning. WorldCat (870646590).

[26] Jung, S., & Stewart, J. (2019). Exploratory comparison between fatal and non-fatal cases of intimate partner violence. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*. https://doi.org/10.1108/JACPR-11-2018-0394

[27] Loinaz, I., Marzabal, I., & Andres-Pueyo, A. (2018). Risk Factors of Female Intimate Partner and Non-Intimate Partner Homicides. *European Journal of Psychology Applied to Legal Context*, *10*(2), 49–55. https://doi.org/10.5093/ejpalc2018a4

[28] Ibid, 52.

[29] Eriksson, L., Mazerolle, P., Wortley, R., Johnson, H., & McPhedran, S. (2019). The offending histories of homicide offenders: Are men who kill intimate partners distinct from men who kill other men? *Psychology of Violence*, *9*(4), 471. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/vio0000214

[30] Ibid, 471.

C. 2018 Case Review Findings

Location of Completed, Attempted, and Near Fatalities

Eleven Colorado domestic violence fatality (or near fatality/attempted murder) cases were reviewed in-depth, using the extensive CDVFRB Coding Manual. **Table 1** summarizes the locations of these 11 incidents. Three were in Garfield County, 2 each in Adams, Mesa, and Jefferson Counties, and 1 each in Arapahoe and Douglas Counties. The site of the cases was predominantly, over half (54.5%), in the perpetrator's and victim's joint residence, 2 were in the victim's residence (18.2%) 2 (18.2%) in another person's home, and 1 (9.1%) in a hotel the perpetrator and victim had both checked into. Notably, another "joint residence" was also in a hotel room in which the couple lived and was the place of employment for the victim. Yet another DVF involved a couple with insufficient money to pay their rent. Another "joint residence" was in the office of a storage facility where the couple lived. These cases indicate extreme housing marginalization and/or isolation as a potential risk factor for DV fatalities. Of the 11 cases, most occurred in 2015 (27.3%), followed by two each in 2016 and 2017 (18.2% in each year), and finally, 1 case each occurred in 2009, 2010, 2013, and 2018. The cases most frequently occurred in July and December (27.3%, n = 3 for each month), followed by January (18.2%, n = 2), and then 1 case (9.1%) each in February, June, and October.

Table 1: Locations and Dates of Fatal Incidents (N = 11)	%	(n)
Adams County	18.2	(2)
Brighton	9.1	(1)
Westminster	9.1	(1)
Arapahoe County		
Glendale	9.1	(1)
Douglas County		
Castle Rock	9.1	(1)
Garfield County	27.3	(3)
Carbondale	9.1	(1)
Rifle	9.1	(1)
Silt	9.1	(1)
Jefferson County	18.2	(2)
Lakewood	9.1	(1)
Unincorporated	9.1	(1)
Mesa County	18.2	(2)
Fruita	9.1	(1)

Grand Junction	9.1	(1)
Site of Incident (N = 11)[b]		
Victim's & Perpetrator's Joint Residence	54.5	(6)
Victim's Residence	18.2	(2)
Other home/private residence	9.1	(2)
Other	18.2	(1)
Year of Incident		
2009	9.1	(1)
2010	9.1	(1)
2013	9.1	(1)
2015	27.3	(3)
2016	18.2	(2)
2017	18.2	(2)
2018	9.1	(1)
Month of Incident		
January	18.2	(2)
February	9.1	(1)
June	9.1	(1)
July	27.3	(3)
October	9.1	(1)
December	27.3	(3)

[b] The "other" site was a hotel room. Another was also in a hotel room, but one the couple lived in where the victim worked. Yet another was in the office of a storage facility where the couple lived.

The DV Couples' Demographic Characteristics

Table 2 presents the domestic violence couple victims' and perpetrators' demographic characteristics. In this sample of 11 cases, all the DV victims were women and all of the perpetrators were men. The victims ranged in age from 26 to 54 years with an average age of 39.1 years. The perpetrators' ages ranged from 28 to 53 years, with an average of 44.4 years. The couples were primarily intra-racial (the same race/ethnicity). Ten (90.9%) victims were White and (9.1%) was Latina, and 9 (81.8%) perpetrators were White and 2 (18.2%) were Latino. Only one victim was not a U.S. citizen and was an undocumented immigrant, and in this same couple, her perpetrator was a *documented* (non-US citizen) immigrant. This is consistent with findings on the risk of immigrant status, particularly undocumented immigrant status for

DV, and DVF specifically.[31] Moreover, rates of DVFs against Latinas have increased over the past 5 years.[32]

About four-fifths (81.8%) of the victims and nine-tenths (90.0%) of the perpetrators were legally employed, and only 1 (9.1%) victim and 1 perpetrator were unemployed. Notably, 7 of the 10 legally employed perpetrators (and 0 of the 9 legally employed victims) were coded as "underemployed." Underemployment refers to when one's education or prior employment are consistently higher than one's current employment, and/or when their employment is seasonal, sporadic, or inconsistent. Moreover, research documents that underemployment is closely linked with depression.[33] Although research also indicates underemployment as a risk factor for DV victimization (as well as perpetration)[34], none of the victims in this sample were identified as "underemployed" or having illegal employment. None of the victims or perpetrators in this study were retired or students (see **Table 2**).

Table 2 also includes information on the victims' and perpetrators' education, although there was a significant amount of missing data, particularly for perpetrators. For the 6 cases where victim education was known 66.7% (n = 4), the highest attainment was high school graduation. In the three cases where perpetrators' education was known, 66.7% (n = 2) high school graduation was again the highest level of education. Among both victims and perpetrators, 1 of each (9.1%) were identified as mentally ill (and they were not in the same couple/case). Among both victims and perpetrators, 1 of each (.1%) were coded as having a disability, but only the victim with a disability was receiving SSI (Supplemental Security Income). The victim's disability was severe epilepsy and the perpetrator's was a traumatic brain injury. In the case of the victim with a disability, the perpetrator identified himself to the police as her guardian and in charge of her disability monies. Military status was only known for 7 victims and 5 perpetrators. None

[31] Sabri, B., Nnawulezi, N., Njie-Carr, V. P. S., Messing, J., Ward-Lasher, A., Alvarez, C., & Campbell, J. C. (2018). Multilevel Risk and Protective Factors for Intimate Partner Violence Among African, Asian, and Latina Immigrant and Refugee Women: Perceptions of Effective Safety Planning Interventions. *Race and Social Problems*, *10*(4), 348–365. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12552-018-9247-z;

Villalón, R. (2010). *Violence against Latina immigrants: Citizenship, inequality, and community*. New York: New York University Press.

[32] Stansfield, R., Mancik, A., Parker, K. F., & Delacruz, M. (2019). County Variation in Intimate Partner Homicide: A Comparison of Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Victims. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 0886260519861657. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260519861657

[33] See: Dooley, D., Prause, J., & Ham-Rowbottom, K. A. (2000). Underemployment and Depression: Longitudinal Relationships. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, *41*(4), 421. https://doi.org/10.2307/2676295

[34] Gilroy, H., Nava, A., & McFarlane, J. (2019). Developing a Theory of Economic Solvency for Women Who Have Experienced Intimate Partner Violence. *Violence Against Women*, 107780121985336. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801219853366

of the victims had been in the military and 40.0% (n = 2) of the perpetrators had a history of military service.

Table 2: Victim and Perpetrator Characteristics (N = 11)							
Characteristic	Victim				Perpetrator		
	N	%	(n)		N	%	(n)
Gender/Sex							
Female	11	100.0	(11)		11	0.0	(0)
Male		0.0	(0)			100.0	(11)
Age[a]	11				11		
26-39		63.6	(7)			9.1	(1)
40-55		36.4	(4)			81.8	(9)
56+		0.0	(0)			0.0	(0)
Ethnicity	11				11		
White		90.9	(10)			81.8	(9)
Latinx		9.1	(1)			18.2	(2)
African American		0.0	(0)			0.0	(0)
Asian American		0.0	(0)			0.0	(0)
Native American		0.0	(0)			0.0	(0)
Other		0.0	(0)			0.0	(0)
U.S. Citizenship Status	11				11		
U.S. Citizen		90.9	(10)			90.9	(10)
Documented Immigrant		0.0	(0)			9.1	(1)
Undocumented Immigrant		9.1	(1)			0.0	(0)
Employment Status[b]	11				11		
Legally Employed		81.8	(9)			90.9	(10)
Unemployed		9.1	(1)			9.1	(1)
Retired		0.0	(0)			0.0	(0)
Disabled/SSI		9.1	(1)			0.0	(0)
Student		0.0	(0)			0.0	(0)
Underemployed		0.0	(0)			63.6	(7)
Illegally Employed		0.0	(0)			9.1	(1)
Education	6				3		
Some high school		0.0	(0)			0.0	(0)

High School Grad.		66.7	(4)			66.7	(2)
Technical School		16.7	(1)			0.0	(0)
Some College		16.7	(1)			0.0	(0)
College Graduate		0.0	(0)			33.3	(1)
Post Graduate		0.0	(0)			0.0	(0)
Indication of Mental Illness	11	9.1	(1)		11	9.1	(1)
Disability	9	11.1	(1)		6	9.1	(1)
Military Status	7				5		
No Military History		100.0	(7)			60.0	(3)
Military Veteran		0.0	(0)			40.0	(2)

[a]

Victim ages ranged from 26 - 54 years (μ = 39.1). Perpetrator ages ranged from 28 – 53 years (μ = 44.4). The perpetrators' ages ranged from 5 years younger to 17 years older than their victims with a mean age of 5.4 years older.
[b]Some cases are not mutually exclusive. For example, 7 of the 10 perpetrators who were legally employed were also "underemployed."

The DV Couples' Relationships

Table 3 summarizes the victim-perpetrator relationship. Of the 11 cases, almost two-thirds (64.6%, n = 7) of the couples were married or common-law partners living together, about a quarter (27.3%, n = 3) were formerly married/common-law but no longer cohabitating. In one case, the couple had been dating for 6 months and lived together for some of that time, but she left after he was arrested for a DV assault and then went to meet him at a hotel, which was where he murdered her. It is also worth noting that in this case, the woman who was killed had been experiencing homelessness when the relationship began. Of the 6 couples who had ever been married (to each other), 4 (66.7%) were currently married and 2 (33.3%) were divorced. Seventy percent (n = 7) of the cases involved couples who had separated at least once, and 3 (27.3%) involved couples with many separations (one couple had separated at least once, but it was unknown whether they had multiple separations). Many DVF studies have found separation as a significant risk factor.[35] Four (36.4%) of the couples had joint children, a total of 11 among these 4 couples. These 11 joint children ranged in age from 4 to 22, and all but 2 were sons. Of these 11 children, 45.5% (n = 5) were under the age of 12 and 72.7% (n = 9) were minors (under 18 years old). Among nine of the couples, it was known that 5 couples (55.6%)

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[35] Wathen, C. N., Jamieson, E., Wilson, M., Daly, M., Worster, A., & MacMillan, H. L. (2007). Risk indicators to identify intimate partner violence in the emergency department. *Open Medicine*, *1*(2), e113–e122.

had children from a previous relationship, of which in 3 cases, the children were under age 18. In 2 of these 3 cases, the couple had shared custody with the other biological parent, who was not involved in the DVF. None of the victims were pregnant at the DOI. A recent multivariate Norwegian study (that did not include step-children) found "mutual children" as a significant predictor in DVFs.[36]

Table 3: Victim-Perpetrator Relationship (N = 11)			
	N	%	(n)
Marital/Common-Law Status at DOI	11		
Current spouse/partner (cohabitating)[a]		63.6	(7)
Former spouse/partner (ex-cohabitating)		27.3	(3)
Other[b]		9.1	(1)
Ever Married (to each other)	11	54.5	(6)
Married on DOI (yes)	6	66.7	(4)
Divorced on DOI (yes)	6	33.3	(2)
Separations[c]			
Couple had ever separated (yes)	10	70.0	(7)
Couple had a history of many separations (yes)	11	27.3	(3)
Couple was separated at DOI (yes)	10	40.0	(4)
If couple still together at DOI, was planning to leave (yes)	5	60.0	(3)
Children			
At least one joint child[d]	11	36.4	(4)
Children from Previous Relationship[e]	9	55.6	(5)
Victim was pregnant on DOI? (yes)	11	0.0	(0)

[a]One couple was common-law who never married. Among the 7 couples who had ever married, their marriages ranged from 2.75 to 28 years, with an average of 10.5 years and a median of 10.0 years.
[b]In one case the relationship was unclear other than that they were never married, and that the victim had stayed with him at least a brief time, was homeless in the end but had gone to meet him at a hotel which is where he murdered her.

[36] Vatnar, S. K. B., Friestad, C., & Bjørkly, S. (2018). Differences in intimate partner homicides perpetrated by men and women: Evidence from a Norwegian National 22-year cohort. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, *24*(8), 790–805. https://doi.org/10.1080/1068316X.2018.1438433

[c]In one case it was known that they had separated at least once, but it one unknown whether they had multiple separations.

[d]Of the 4 couples with at least one joint child, 1 couple had 1 child, 1 couple had 2 children, 1 couple had 3 children, and 1 couple had 5 children. The 11 joint children among these couples ranged in age from 4 to 22 years, with 5 children under the age of 12 and 8 children under the age of 18. Nine of the 11 children were sons and 2 were daughters.

[e]Half (n = 3) of the couples with children from a previous relationship had children who were minors (under age 18). Two of these couples with children from a previous relationship had shared custody, but for only 1 did the child(ren) live with the current couple.

Description of the Fatal or Near-Fatal Events

Table 4 summarizes the deaths, near-deaths/attempted murders, suicides and attempted suicides, and collateral deaths/near-deaths (collateral refers to someone outside of the DV victim and perpetrator). Of these 11 cases, 27.3% (n =3) involved the perpetrator murdering the victim (no other deaths/near deaths, including suicides) and another 27.3% (n = 3) involved the perpetrator murdering the DV victim and then attempting (but not completing) suicide. Two (18.2%) cases were "only" perpetrator suicides, and one each (9.1%) involved the perpetrator murdering the victim then dying by suicide, the perpetrator attempting to murder the victim and then attempting suicide, and a perpetrator attempting to murder a collateral victim. In this last case, the collateral victim was a law enforcement officer to a DV assault call. He was shot by the perpetrator and also shot the perpetrator. Both the perpetrator and the officer survived their gunshot wounds and the officer was likely saved by a bullet-proof vest.

DVFs are more likely to involve perpetrators who subsequently suicide than any other femicides (killing of women/girls).[37] According to a recent review of research, homicide followed by suicide is a "rarity" that is only "4.0 percent of all annual homicides and 1.5 percent of all annual suicides."[38] The predominance of attempted and completed suicides in DVF cases is clearly consistent with the current eleven cases in which 4 (36.4%) DV perpetrators attempted suicide and an additional 3 (27.3%) completed suicide. Thus, *almost two-thirds (63.6%) of the DV perpetrators attempted or completed suicide.* Although DV perpetrator suicide was high in this study, it also appears that some of the perpetrators who attempted suicide (without completion) may not have been actually attempting to kill themselves.

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[37] e.g: Cullen, P., Vaughan, G., Li, Z., Price, J., Yu, D., & Sullivan, E. (2019). Counting Dead Women in Australia: An In-Depth Case Review of Femicide. *Journal of Family Violence*, *34*(1), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-018-9963-6

[38] Fridel, E. E., & Zimmerman, G. M. (2019). Putting homicide followed by suicide in context: Do macro-environmental characteristics impact the odds of committing suicide after homicide?*. *Criminology*, *57*(1), 35. https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9125.12195

The perpetrators murdered or attempted to murder the DV victims by gunshot (28.6%, n = 2), stabbing (28.6%, n = 2), beating (14.3% n = 1), strangling (14.3% n = 1), blunt force object trauma (14.3% n = 1), and blunt force object trauma combined with running over with a car (14.3% n = 1) (see **Table 4**). These findings indicate a far lower rate of firearms in DVFs than the statewide data presented in the previous section. This is an important distinction which shows that the cases reviewed in-depth by DVFRTs are not representative of DVFs statewide, but as additional teams begin reviewing cases, that will change. Notably, the National Violent Death Reporting System's 2015 data indicate that half of female-victim DVFs are due to firearms,[39] which is more consistent with the statewide data presented in this report. Among the three perpetrators who suicided, two shot and one hung himself. Among the four perpetrators who attempted suicide, 2 stabbed/cut themselves, 1 shot himself, and one caused a car accident he was in. The findings on guns in these 11 cases are noteworthy given a recent large national study that found "living in a state with laws that prohibited firearm ownership for convicted MCDV [misdemeanor crimes of domestic violence] offenders decreased the likelihood of firearm ownership among families with high-conflict males by 62%."[40]

 The extreme violence and injuries present in these cases, including the perpetrator who shot himself in front of his victim, is consistent with a Chinese study whereby, compared with stranger homicides, DVF/IPH deaths involved significantly more head, neck, and face wounds, as well as more total number of wounds.[41] For example one victim was murdered with a machete in front of the perpetrator's 6 year old son, which involved many wounds, and another died from at least 4 hits to the head with a blunt object, but her head was too injured for the autopsy to be sure how many more blows the perpetrator made to the head with what the coroner believed was a shovel, baseball bat or rock. Another victim died from the perpetrator shooting her in the head with a shotgun and yet another died after the perpetrator snuck in when she was sleeping and repeatedly hit her in the head with a wine bottle and then strangled her. A victim who survived did so with extreme head injuries after the perpetrator knocked her (in the head) unconscious and then ran over her head with her car.

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[39] Gollub, E. L., & Gardner, M. (2019). Firearm legislation and firearm use in female intimate partner homicide using National Violent Death Reporting System data. *Preventive Medicine*, *118*, 216–219. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2018.11.007

[40] Prickett, K. C., Martin-Storey, A., & Crosnoe, R. (2018). Firearm Ownership in High-Conflict Families: Differences According to State Laws Restricting Firearms to Misdemeanor Crimes of Domestic Violence Offenders. *Journal of Family Violence*, *33*(5), 297. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-018-9966-3

[41] Li, F., Liu, S., Lu, X., Ou, Y., & Yip, P. S. F. (2018). Application of the injury scales in homicides. *Forensic Science International*, *292*, 83–89. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.forsciint.2018.09.010

Thus, the total number of deaths/fatalities among these 11 cases was 10, of which 7 (70.0%) were the primary DV victim and 3 (30.0%) were perpetrator suicides. **Table 4** also reports on deaths, near deaths, suicides, and so on, by case (compared to total number of deaths). The most common among these deaths/near deaths was 63.6% (n = 7) of the cases involving a murdered DV victim, and the next most common phenomenon was 36.4% (n = 4) of the cases involved a perpetrator attempting (not completing) suicide. Notably, in addition to the 7 murdered DV victims, in 2 cases the perpetrators attempted to murder the victims, and in one of these the victim survived without physical injuries (but experienced the perpetrator's threats to kill her) due to police arrival, and the other involved a DV victim with very severe head injuries. No cases involved a DV victim killing in self-defense, collateral murders, or police killing anyone (although as noted, a law enforcement officer was the victim of a perpetrator attempting to murder him and this perpetrator survived the officer's returned gun fire).

Significantly, minor children were present in 27.3% (n = 3) of the cases, 2 of which were murders and one of which was an attempted murder (see **Table 4**). In 2 cases, 1 child was present and in another, 4 children were present. In the case with multiple children (ranging from age 4 to 15), they tried to intervene and ran for help. In one of the cases with one child present, the child was the perpetrator's 6-year-old son who witnessed his father's murder of the victim with a machete. The other case with 1 child present was the victim's 13-year-old grand-daughter who recorded the event and called 911, likely saving her grand-mother's life.

Table 4: Case Type, Fatalities, and Other Context DOI Variables (N = 11 Cases)		
	%	(n)
_____		
Combinations Completed and Attempted Murders and Suicides		
Perpetrator Murdered DV Victim ("Only" Death)	27.3	(3)
Perpetrator Murdered DV Victim & Attempted Suicide	27.3	(3)
Perpetrator Suicided ("Only" Death)	18.2	(2)
Perpetrator Murdered DV Victim & Suicided	9.1	(1)
Perpetrator Attempted Murder of DV Victim & Attempted Suicide	9.1	(1)
Perpetrator Attempted Murder of DV Victim & Attempted Collateral Murder[a]	9.1	(1)
Number of Deaths/Fatalities per Incident (Including Suicides)		
0	18.2	(2)
1	72.7	(8)
2	9.1	(1)
Cause of DV Victim's Death (N = 7)		
Gunshot	28.6	(2)

Stabbing	28.6	(2)
Beating	14.3	(1)
Strangulation	14.3	(1)
Other[b]	14.3	(2)
Case Death and Near Death and Suicide Characteristics[c] (N = 11)		
Domestic Violence Murder Victims	63.6	(7)
Domestic Violence Attempted Murder/Near Death Victims[d]	18.2	(2)
Collateral Murder	0.0	(0)
Collateral Attempted Murder[e]	9.1	(1)
Perpetrator Attempted Suicide[f]	36.4	(4)
Perpetrator Killed by Victim in Self-Defense	0.0	(0)
Perpetrator Killed by Police or Someone Else[g]	0.0	(0)
Perpetrator Suicided[h]	27.3	(3)
Minor Children Present	27.3	(3)

[a]In this case, the perpetrator shot the police and the police shot the perpetrator and both survived.
[b]Of the "other" causes of death, both involved blunt force trauma combined with another act of violence. In one case the victim was hit in the head with a wine bottle and strangled, and in the other victim was hit in the head with an unknown object, then run over by a car.
[c]Cases could have more than one of the characteristics so these do not sum to 100.0%.
[d]In one case the primary DV had no physical injuries, "just" threats (and was able to get to safety when the police arrived), and in another the surviving DV victim had severe head injuries.
[e]One attempted murder/surviving collateral victim was a police officer who survived the perpetrator shooting him.
[f]Of four surviving perpetrator suicide attempts, 2 cut/stabbed selves, one shot himself, and one intentionally causing a car accident.
[g]One perpetrator was shot by responding law enforcement but survived.
[h]Of the 3 perpetrators who suicided, 2 shot and one hung themselves.

The DV Victims' and Perpetrators' Criminal Histories

Table 5 summarizes the DV victims' and perpetrators' criminal histories. Eight (72.7%) of the victims and 7 (63.3%) of the perpetrators had no DV arrests. Of the 2 victims who had prior DV arrests, 1 had one arrest and the other had more than 4. Among the perpetrators, 2 had 1 arrest and 2 had more than 4. One (10.0%) DV victim and 3 (27.3%) DV perpetrators had prior DV convictions. The one victim with prior DV convictions had 3 such convictions and 1 of the perpetrators had 1 prior DV conviction and 2 had 2 prior DV convictions. No instances of arrests for other assaults or non-drug/alcohol offense arrests were found among the victims, yet such arrests were found for 5 of the perpetrators. A recent review of DVF research reported that "70% to 80% of intimate partner homicides (IPHs) involve prior male-perpetrated physical

abuse."[42] None of the perpetrators yet 1 of the victims had attended DV intervention/treatment, based on the information that was known to DVFRTs. While DV perpetrator treatment is mandated for anyone convicted of a DV related crime in Colorado, such treatment involves a clinical relationship, so information if often privileged and not available in the case review process. None of the victims had DUI/possession arrests, and 8 (72.7%) of the perpetrators did. One victim and 1 perpetrator had a protection order violation arrest. One victim and 3 perpetrators were on probation, and no victims and 1 perpetrator were on parole on the date of incident.

Table 5: Perpetrators' and Victims' Criminal History (N = 11)							
Event History		Victim				Perpetrator	
	N	%	(n)		N	%	(n)
Prior DV Arrests	11	18.2	(2)		11	36.4	(4)
Number of DV Arrests[a]	11				11		
0		72.7	(8)			63.6	(7)
1		9.1	(1)			18.2	(2)
2		0.0	(0)			0.0	(0)
3		0.0	(0)			0.0	(0)
4+		9.1	(1)			18.2	(2)
Prior DV Convictions[b]	10	10.0	(1)		11	27.3	(3)
Number of DV Convictions	4				6		
0		75.0	(3)			50.0	(3)
1		0.0	(0)			16.7	(1)
2		0.0	(0)			33.3	(2)
3		25.0	(1)			0.0	(0)
4+		0.0	(0)			0.0	(0)
Other Criminal History Indications[c]							
Non-drug/alcohol, Non-DV arrests	8	100.0	(0)		9	55.6	(5)
DV Intervention/Treatment	11	9.1	(1)		8	0.0	(0)
DUI/Possession Arrest	7	0.0	(0)		11	72.7	(8)
Protection Order Arrest	10	10.0	(1)		9	11.1	(1)

[42] Harper, S. B. (2017). No Way Out: Severely Abused Latina Women, Patriarchal Terrorism, and Self-Help Homicide. *Feminist Criminology*, *12*(3), 224. https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085116680743

On Probation at DOI	9	11.1	(1)		11	27.3	(3)
On Parole at DOI	10	0.0	(0)		11	9.1	(1)

Potential Social and System Supporters Who Knew about the DV

Table 6 summarizes who knew about the domestic violence. These are listed in the order of potential *social* and potential *official* (or system) supporters. The most likely potential social supporters were the victims' friends and the victims co-workers (both at 70.0%), followed by the perpetrators' friends (n = 5), the victims' siblings (n = 4), neighbors (n = 3) and in 2 cases each, the perpetrators' co-workers, the victims' parents, the perpetrators' parents, and childcare or school staff/teacher knew about the abuse. No cases indicated clergy/religious persons knowing about the domestic violence. The most frequent potential system/official supporters listed were law enforcement (police or sheriffs) (n = 4), followed by attorneys/legal services and civil courts (e.g., divorce and custody), which was for 3 cases each, and 2 cases included DV shelters/programs who knew about the DV and social services/child protection were also aware in 2 cases. It is worth noting that most community based DV programs are unable to share information about victims they have served, even after a victim is deceased. When this information is known in DVF case reviews, it is often because the victims had told someone that they were accessing community based DV services, thus this information may have been obtained through witness reports or other sources, rather than from the agency that provided such services. One multivariate study found that a major predictor of DV cases that become DVFs among Black women was "the use of legal resources" (in addition to victims' fear of their partners and victims with PTSD).[43] Only 1 case involved someone from the medical field (e.g., a doctor or nurse) who knew about the DV.

Table 6: Who Knew of DV (N = 11)			
Identities of People/Agencies Who Knew	**N**	**%**	**(n)**
_____			
Potential Social Supporter[a]			
Victim's Friend(s)	10	70.0	(7)
Victim's Coworker(s)	10	70.0	(7)
Perpetrator's Friend(s)	8	62.5	(5)
Victim's Sibling(s)	7	57.1	(4)
Neighbor(s)	8	37.5	(3)

[43] Sabri, B., Stockman, J. K., Campbell, J. C., & O'Brien, S. (2014). Factors Associated With Increased Risk for Lethal Violence in Intimate Partner Relationships Among Ethnically Diverse Black Women. *Violence and Victims*, *29*(5), 719. https://doi.org/10.1891/0886-6708.VV-D-13-00018

Perpetrator's Coworker(s)	7	28.6	(2)
Victim's Parent(s)	7	28.6	(2)
Perpetrator's Parent(s)	7	28.6	(2)
Childcare staff/Teacher/School	9	22.2	(2)
Perpetrator's Sibling(s)	6	16.7	(1)
Clergy/Religious Person(s)	6	0.0	(0)
Potential System Supporter[a]			
Police/Sheriff	11	36.4	(4)
Attorney/Legal Services	8	37.5	(3)
Civil Court (e.g., divorce or custody)	10	30.0	(3)
DV Shelter/Program	8	25.0	(2)
Social Services/Child Protection	10	20.0	(2)
Medical Provider (e.g., nurse or doctor)	6	16.7	(1)

[a]The relationships of "who knew" about the DV is listed in the order of frequency they were indicated across the reviewed cases, not in the order they
are listed in the codebook.

The Fatality/Near-Fatality Case Outcome

Table 7 reports the outcome of the case in the criminal legal system. Given that 3 perpetrators died by suicide, the outcomes are reported on 8 cases. The most common primary charge filed at arrest was for 1st degree murder (62.5%, n = 8), followed by attempted murder (25.0%, n = 2) and finally, 2nd degree murder (12.5%, n = 1). Four cases went to trial and in the other 4 the perpetrator entered a plea. The primary disposition in 3 cases (37.5%) was 1st degree murder, followed by 2 cases (25.0%) each with primary dispositions of 2nd degree murder and attempted murder, and 1 (12.5%) case resulted in manslaughter. The manslaughter verdict is consistent with Canadian homicide findings that "an offender who killed intimate partners received shorter sentences than other offenders, despite the intimate partner homicide appearing more serious in nature."[44] Three sentences were life without parole (as required in Colorado for 1st degree murder) and the remaining sentences ranged from 12 to 48 years with an average of 29.9 years.

Notably, the case resulting in the manslaughter conviction involved a victim with no criminal history and a perpetrator who had a prior DV arrest with this same victim, which did not result in a conviction because the murder occurred while he was on bond for that crime. In this case, the perpetrator caused the victim's death by strangling her multiple times and the victim

[44] Dawson, M., & Sutton, D. (2017). Similar sentences, similar crimes? Using deep sample analysis to examine the comparability of homicides and punishments by victim-offender relationship. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, *49*, 58–70. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijlcj.2017.02.002

struggled with severe alcohol abuse and homelessness. Prosecutors believe that these factors impacted the jury's perception of the victim, thus resulting in their decision to convict him of manslaughter, indicating that more public education on domestic violence and strangulation is needed. Despite the fact that manslaughter usually results in a maximum sentence of 6 years, the judge in this case sentenced the perpetrator to 12 years based on aggravating factors. *Also notable is that this murder occurred just weeks before assault by strangulation became a felony charge in Colorado.* This case also had the largest age gap (17 years) between the perpetrator and defendant.

Table 7: Criminal Legal System Response to the Incident (N = 8)[a]		
Primary Charge Filed at Arrest[b]	%	N
1st Degree Murder	62.5	(5)
2nd Degree Murder	12.5	(1)
Attempted Murder	25.0	(2)
Process		
Went to Trial	50.0	(4)
Accepted a Plea Bargain	50.0	(4)
Primary Disposition		
1st Degree Murder	37.5	(3)
2nd Degree Murder	25.0	(2)
Attempted Murder	25.0	(2)
Manslaughter	12.5	(1)
Sentence[c]		
Probation	0.0	(0)
1 – 10 years	0.0	(0)
11- 20 years	12.5	(1)
21-30 years	25.0	(2)
31-40 years	12.5	(1)
41+ years	12.5	(1)
Life, no parole	37.5	(3)

[a]Three perpetrators suicided, so the N = 8.
[b]In addition to the primary charge, additional charges included attempted murder, assault on a police officer, child abuse, false reporting, tampering with evidence, and criminal mischief.
[c]The non-life sentences ranged from 12 to 48 years with an average of 29.9 years.

The Presence of Risk Factors Associated with DV Fatalities

Table 8 lists the frequencies of the known (or suspected) risk factors associated with DV fatalities. These factors are listed in the order they were most commonly known in these 11 cases. Ten (90.9%) cases included the *perpetrator feeling abandoned/betrayed* and the *perpetrator experiencing a perceived loss of control*, followed by 9 (81.8%) cases that reported a *perpetrator history of drug/alcohol abuse* and *perpetrator possessiveness of the victim.* Eight (72.7%) of the cases included each of the following 5 risk factors: *perpetrator financially dependent on the victim, perpetrator had a history of DV assaults, perpetrator had pending legal actions, perpetrator un(der)employed,* and *perpetrator stalking/monitoring the victim*. Seven (63.6%) of the cases included these 3 risk factors: *financial struggles, perpetrator known to use a weapon,* and *perpetrator's loss of housing.* Six (54.5%) of the cases included perpetrators' *access to firearms, threats to kill the DV victim, emotional dependence on the DV victim, escalated suicide threats,* and *estrangement or separation from the DV victim.* Five (45.5%) cases included perpetrators' *history of non-DV assaults, changes in daily living,* and *loss of coping mechanisms.* One study found male DVF perpetrators who are depressed are more likely to commit homicide-suicide and to exhibit more of other DVF risk factors.[45] Four (36.4%) of the cases included: perpetrators' *exploiting DV victim's care-taking tendency, loss of contact with/custody of children, prior threats with a firearm, stepchildren in the home,* and *violation of protection orders*. Three cases (27.3%) included perpetrators' *mental decompensation, known mental health issues/diagnosis, known to carry a weapon, prior strangulation attempts, imminent separation from the DV victim,* and a *loss of employment.* Two cases (18.2%) included perpetrators who *threatened to kill the DV victim's children, family and/or friends*, and one (9.1%) of the cases included a perpetrator with a *gambling problem*.

Table 8: Perpetrator DV Fatality Risk Factor Checklist (N = 11)		
Known Risk Factor[a]	%	(n)
Experiencing Feelings of Abandonment/Betrayal	90.9	(10)
Significant Loss of Perceived Control	90.9	(10)
History of Drug/Alcohol Abuse	81.8	(9)
Possessiveness of Victim	81.8	(9)
Financially Dependent on Victim	72.7	(8)
History of DV Assaults	72.7	(8)
Pending Legal Actions	72.7	(8)
Perpetrator Underemployed/Unemployed	72.7	(8)
Stalking/Monitoring	72.7	(8)

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[45] Cheng, P., & Jaffe, P. (2019). Examining Depression Among Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Homicide. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 088626051986715. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260519867151

Financial Struggles	63.6	(7)
Known to Use a Weapon	63.6	(7)
Significant loss of housing	63.6	(7)
Access to Firearm	54.5	(6)
Believes or Knows Victim is in New Relationship	54.5	(6)
Emotionally Dependent on Victim	54.5	(6)
Escalated Threats of Suicide	54.5	(6)
Estrangement/Separation from Victim	54.5	(6)
Threat to Kill Victim	54.5	(6)
History of non-DV Assaults	45.5	(5)
Perpetrator's Changes in Daily Living	45.5	(5)
Significant Loss of Coping Mechanisms	45.5	(5)
Whirlwind Courtship/Relationship	45.5	(5)
Exploits Victim's Tendency to "Caretake"	36.4	(4)
Loss of Contact/Custody Regarding Children	36.4	(4)
Prior Threats with Firearm	36.4	(4)
Stepchildren in the Home	36.4	(4)
Violation of Protection Orders	36.4	(4)
Decompensation Indication	27.3	(3)
Dependent on Victim for Social Interaction/Support	27.3	(3)
Known Mental Health Issues/Diagnosis	27.3	(3)
Known to Carry a Weapon	27.3	(3)
Prior Strangulation Attempts	27.3	(3)
Separation Imminent	27.3	(3)
Significant Loss of Employment	27.3	(3)
Threats to Kill Victim's Children, Family, &/or Friends	18.2	(2)
Gambling	9.1	(1)
Believes Victim is Pregnant	0.0	(0)
Death of Close Friend/Family Member	0.0	(0)
History of Animal Cruelty	0.0	(0)
Indication of Obsession with Weapons	0.0	(0)
Perpetrator and Victim Meet "One Last Time"	0.0	(0)
Unusual Enmeshment with Mother	0.0	(0)

[a]If anything, these risk factors are underreported. Coders are given a list and asked to check all that they know occurred, thus all cases coded as "yes" are "known," but "no" cases could be that they are unknown.

Atypical Considerations Identified by the Colorado DVFR Teams

In addition to the items listed as risk factors in our codebook, we left a space for the codebook completers to describe any other atypical considerations that their DVFRT members thought might have been risk factors. These included:

- Unusual living situations [listed by 3, included living in a hotel, living at work, whole family living in one room]

- Age difference [listed by 2]

- Met online [listed by 2]

- Attorney withdrew from case [in reference to divorce proceedings]

- Perpetrator had a sexual relationship with the victim's daughter during a previous separation

- Expensive and dangerous pets

- Drug manufacturing

- Previous sexual assault and kidnapping of the victim

- Perpetrator and victim had a history of significant other and triangular intimate relationships.

Interventions Identified by the Colorado DVFR Teams

Another open-ended question asks the codebook completers to list any interventions used. These were some of the responses:

- Law enforcement (4)

- Victim's family (4)

- Department of Human Services (3)

- Victim's friends (2)

- Victim's co-workers (2)

- System-based advocates (2)

- LE responses wearing safety equipment

- Immediate medical attention

- Victim compensation

- Arrest from a previous incident

- Community advocates

- Victim's physical resistance (barricading door)

- Victim attended AA

Missed Interventions Identified by the Colorado DVFR Teams

Finally, the codebook completers were asked to list any potential interventions that may have been missed. These included:

- Court (in)actions (6, e.g., judge denying a PO in divorce, repeat perpetrator sentenced to diversion instead of habitual offender, severity of offenses minimized, unsupervised probation, unsupervised exchange of child)

- Law enforcement (5, e.g., not referring victim to services; prior arrests of perpetrator, but lack of DV treatment)

- Victim's co-workers (2)

- Victim's family (2)

- System-based advocates (2)

- Community advocates (2)

- DV arrest of the *victim*

- Department of Human Services

- Medical attention from previous strangulation attempt

- Lawyers (divorce attorney didn't refer to DV services)

- Neighbors who heard fighting

- Perpetrator's coercive control

- Witnesses to previous DV who didn't report

- Mental health evaluation of perpetrator as violent

- Perpetrator still in possession of handgun despite previous DV arrest, PO and probation

Patterns for Future Consideration Regarding Rural/Urban Differences

Although the size of the sample limits statistical analyses, some trends are worth noting, particularly as we collect more data in future years. In particular, one goal of implementing a statewide CDVFRB was to document and address the potential differences in rural/Western Slope locations. Again, although the data set is too small to find significant differences between the urban/Eastern Slope and rural/Western Slope Colorado DVF cases, it is worth noting a possible trend that the rural/Western Slope cases to be more likely with firearms, to occur in a joint residence, to involve more isolating tactics by perpetrators, and to *less likely* involve disclosing the abuse to both potential social and system/official individuals or agencies, including to pursue legal help. This is consistent with other research on DVF.[46]

D. Summary of Key Findings and Patterns from the CDVFRB Reports

The findings in this report are similar in many ways to other DVF reports. For example, a recent such report from Slovenia concluded "the bases of these acts are strong traditional or patriarchal attitudes on partner relationships and gender roles and especially male feelings of the ownership of their female partners."[47] Additionally, consistent with a national U.S. study of over 6,000 DVFs occurring from 2003 to 2015, the current report also found DVFs to be highly gender-based (women victims and men perpetrators) and a "staggering proportion of these homicides involve suicides of the suspects."[48] A recent assessment of DVF homicide-suicides, is also consistent with the many of the findings in this report: DVF homicide-suicides "are predominantly committed by men, usually married, cohabiting, or recently separated from

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[46] Bosch, K., & Schumm, W. R. (2004). Accessibility to resources: Helping rural women in abusive partner relationships become free from abuse. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, *30*(5), 357–370.

Reckdenwald, A., Szalewski, A., & Yohros, A. (2019). Place, Injury Patterns, and Female-Victim Intimate Partner Homicide. *Violence Against Women*, *25*(6), 654–676. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801218797467

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their partner, with a medium-low employment status; the victim is usually the current or former female partner."[49]

Some Important Statistics from the 2018 Colorado DVF Reviews:

1. Two-thirds of couples in this study were still married and living together at the time of the attempted or completed DVF.

2. Nearly one-third (36%) of the couples in this study had joint children and over half (56%) had children from prior relationships. Most children were under 18.

3. Minor children were present in 27% of the cases.

4. No perpetrators and one (9%) of the DV victims were known to have had DV intervention/treatment.

5. The most common primary disposition was first degree murder (38%), followed by second degree murder and attempted murder (each 25%), and one (12%) manslaughter disposition. Notably, the manslaughter case was likely the most socially and economically marginalized DV victim.

Findings in this Report Consistent with Extant DVF Research and Indications for Future DVFR Research and Intervention:

1. DVFs are highly gender-based phenomenon.

2. DVFs disproportionately include perpetrators who suicide and attempt suicide.

3. DVFs are predominantly intra-racial phenomenon.

4. The average age of the DV victims was 39 years and the average age of the DV perpetrators was 44 years.

5. Immigrant/refugee victims, particularly undocumented ones, are at a disproportionate risk of DVF.

6. DVFs occur disproportionately in couples with current and/or past separations, and typically, many past separations.

7. DVF perpetrators are disproportionately under or unemployed men.

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[49] Zeppegno, P., Gramaglia, C., di Marco, S., Guerriero, C., Consol, C., Loreti, L., … Sarchiapone, M. (2019). Intimate Partner Homicide Suicide: A Mini-Review of the Literature (2012–2018). *Current Psychiatry Reports*, *21*(2), 21. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11920-019-0995-2

8. Many missed opportunities for intervention are identified in hindsight.

9. Rural (and in Colorado's case, Western Slope) locations indicate unique DVF characteristics (i.e., exceptional isolation of DV victims, use of firearms, etc.).

10. Potential DVF Risk Factors/Red Flags
    a. extreme living situations (i.e., couples living in hotels, an office, homeless, and in a position to not be able to afford the next rent payment);

    b. a large age gap of a far older male perpetrator than the female victim;

    c. having a physical disability may be both a risk factor for DVF victimization and perpetration;

    d. military service may be a risk factor for DVF perpetration (perhaps due to untreated PTSD);

    e. DV perpetrators who commit injuries to/assaults of the face, head, and neck;

    f. A female DV victim being arrested for DV against a man (this may dissuade a victim from seeking help from law enforcement in the future).

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Thanks to DoraLee Larson for her years of service and for all that she has done for the movement to end domestic violence. Under her leadership, the DMDVFR has continued to thrive for more than two decades and we have seen this work expand statewide as new teams form across Colorado. Though DoraLee retired this year, her legacy continues through reports such as this one.

Thanks to Katyie Wells, and Barb Lamanna for their diligent efforts to collect and compile the important data presented in this report so that we can all learn from these tragic cases and work to prevent future domestic violence related deaths.

And, last but certainly not least, thanks to all of the domestic violence fatality review teams (DVFRTs), agencies, and individuals across the state who provided us with data for this report, and to the Colorado Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board (CDVFRB) and the Colorado Department of Law for their efforts to make meaning of and help disseminate this information.

Appendices

Appendix A: Colorado Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board Members

1. City attorney's office in Colorado who has experience working with victims of domestic violence or prosecuting domestic violence offenders
   - **Linda Loflin-Pettit, Manager of Government and Community Relations, Denver City Attorney's Office**

2. Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
   - **Tomie Kuehl, MPA, Interpersonal Violence Prevention Unit Supervisor**

3. Colorado District Attorneys' Council Designee
   - **Brian Mason, Chief Trial Deputy District Attorney, 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office (Current Designee)**

4. Criminal Defense Attorney
   - **David J. Thomas, JD, O'Brien, Thomas & Bibik, LLC**

5. Denver Metro Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team member
   - **Linda Johnston, EVAW Project Director, Colorado District Attorney's Council**

6. Department of Human Services' Adult Protection Services
   - **Kathleen Calderon, Adult Protection Services Specialist, Division of aging and Adult Services, Office of Access and Independence**

7. Department of Human Services' Child Protection Services
   - **Dr. Lucinda Wayland-Connelly, Manager, Child Protection Services Unit, Division of Child Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families**

8. Domestic Violence Survivor (one of two positions)
   - **Tracey Swindle, RN, FRN, Emerus SCL Health**

9. Domestic Violence Survivor (second of two positions)
   - **Phillip Clark, Senior Facilities Technician, LenderLive**

10. Domestic violence advocate representing a shelter or other domestic violence service organizations
    - **Carmen Hubbs, Executive Director, Rise Above Violence (aka Archuleta County Victim Assistance Program), Pagosa Springs**

11. Domestic violence offender management board

- **Jesse Hansen, DV Offender Management Board Program Coordinator, Colorado Department of Public Safety**

12. Domestic violence treatment provider specializing in offender treatment
    - **Dr. Brenna Dee Tindall, Director Treatment and Evaluation Services, Ft. Collins-Greeley**

13. Judge or magistrate
    - **Judge Shannon Gerhart, 4th Judicial District, El Paso County Court**

14. Law enforcement agency
    - **Sgt. Lonnie Chavez, Grand Junction Police Department**

15. Medical professional with forensic experience:
    - **Megan L. Lechner, Forensic Nurse Examiner, UCHealth Memorial Hospital (El Paso County)**

16. Probation, parole, or community corrections program
    - **Lindsey Dixon, Probation Officer Supervisor, Pretrial Services and Electronic Monitoring, City and County of Denver, Department of Safety, Division of Criminal Corrections**

17. Statewide nonprofit organization that offers training and expert advice to domestic violence programs that serve survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking
    - **Deborah Bittner, Division Director, Domestic Violence Services, Family Tree**

18. Attorney General Selected Appointee (first of two):
    - **Andrew Steers, Senior Deputy District Attorney, 18th Judicial District**

19. Attorney General Selected Appointee (second of two):
    - **Jan Schiller, Executive Director, S.H.A.R.E., Fort Morgan**

Appendix B: Definitions and Guidelines for Colorado DVFRTs

Complete definitions and guidelines for Colorado DVFRTs can be found online at
www.DDVCC.org/fatality-review. These documents were developed by the Denver Metro
Domestic Violence Fatality Review/Denver Domestic Violence Coordinating Council and have
been endorsed by the Colorado Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board.

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