The California Violent Death Reporting System (CalVDRS) is housed in the Injury and Violence Prevention Branch in the California Department of Public Health. CalVDRS is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to conduct statewide surveillance on violent deaths that occur in California. Violent deaths include homicide (including legal intervention deaths that result from law enforcement acting in the line of duty), suicide, unintentional firearm deaths, and deaths for which the intent could not be determined. CalVDRS collects data from multiple sources (death certificates, medical examiner/coroner reports, and law enforcement reports) in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the circumstances surrounding these deaths. The goal of this system is to assist stakeholders in the development of public health prevention strategies, interventions, and policies to reduce the number of violent deaths that occur each year.

There were 6,832 violent deaths in California in 2018. Reports were abstracted for 3,468 deaths in 21 counties, described here.

Note: Counts may not equal total numbers due to unknown information.

Note: 86 legal intervention deaths are included in homicide death counts.

PI: Pacific Islander; AI/AN: American Indian/Alaska Native
CalVDRS Deaths in 2018

Suicide

- Sharp Instrument: 73
- Poisoning: 288
- Other: 280
- Hanging or Strangulation: 899
- Firearm: 795

Homicide

- Sharp Instrument: 139
- Poisoning: 4
- Other: 153
- Hanging or Strangulation: 20
- Firearm: 713

**Firearms** were used in **34%** of deaths by suicide and in **69%** of homicide deaths. Overall, firearms were used in **44%** of violent deaths, representing **1,529** deaths.

**Gang-Related Homicides**

- Gang-related: 33%
- Not Gang-related: 67%

**Male-Victim Homicide**

- IPV-related: 38
- Not IPV-related: 633

**Female-Victim Homicide**

- IPV-related: 86
- Not IPV-related: 96

Suicide and Mental Health

**Mental Health Problem**

- Yes: 47%
- No/Unknown: 53%

**Recently Disclosed Suicide Intent**

- Yes: 20%
- No/Unknown: 80%

**Alcohol and/or Substance Abuse Problem**

- Yes: 26%
- No/Unknown: 74%

**26%** of those who died by suicide were noted to have been in a **depressed mood**. **Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Anxiety, and Schizophrenia** were the most common mental health diagnoses of those who died by suicide.

For more information about CalVDRS, or enhanced surveillance for overdose deaths, please contact the Cal-Enhanced program at Cal-Enhanced@cdph.ca.gov.