Interpersonal Firearm Injury and Death in Portland, Oregon: 2018-2021

Portland saw a steep rise in interpersonal firearm injury and death during the COVID-19 pandemic, experiencing higher rates of fatal and non-fatal interpersonal firearm injury than San Francisco and Seattle. Portland communities with greater social and economic disadvantage were most affected. Prevention strategies are urgently needed that address the ongoing systemic social and economic inequities that impact the risk of firearm injury and death in Portland communities.

From 2018-2021, in Portland:

- 483 interpersonal firearm injury events occurred, and
- 589 people were injured or killed in those events.

- 156 people suffered fatal and 433 suffered non-fatal interpersonal firearm injuries.

- In 21 of the interpersonal injury events, three or more people were injured and in 7 of those events four or more people were injured.

The data presented here are from the Gun Violence Archive (GVA), an independent data collection and research group that provides an online archive of gun violence events collected from law enforcement, media, government, and commercial sources. In this analysis, interpersonal firearm injury and death is defined as assault, bystander shooting, or murder-suicide/assault-suicide events (suicide and other self-harm injuries are excluded from counts).

Fatal and Non-Fatal Interpersonal Firearm Injuries in Portland by Quarter and Year, 2018-2021


During the pandemic, Portland had higher rates of both fatal and non-fatal interpersonal firearm injury than Seattle and San Francisco.

**Fatal and Non-Fatal Interpersonal Firearm Injury Rates per 100,000 in Portland, Seattle, and San Francisco, 2018-2021**

- **Portland non-fatal**: 11.0
- **Portland fatal**: 7.9
- **Seattle non-fatal**: 8.2
- **Seattle fatal**: 10.1
- **San Francisco non-fatal**: 3.1
- **San Francisco fatal**: 10.0

Neighborhoods with greater social and economic disadvantage experienced higher interpersonal firearm injury and death.

70% of firearm injuries in Portland occurred in census tracts with medium-high or high social vulnerability.

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The Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC’s) 2018 Social Vulnerability Index uses U.S. Census Track data to rank each census tract on 15 sociodemographic indicators such as poverty, unemployment, and education level to identify social vulnerability.

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