

DHSC Statsheet

Delaware Health Statistics Center

Division of Public Health
Department of Health
and Social Services

Homicides in Delaware

In Delaware, death by assault (homicide) was the 18th leading cause of death in 2004-2008, and accounted for .7 percent of all deaths. Three-quarters of all homicide deaths in 2004-2008 were residents of New Castle County. Decedents who lived in the balance of New Castle county, outside of Wilmington, accounted for 44%; those who lived in Wilmington accounted for 32% of the total homicide deaths.

In 2004-2008, homicide was the 13th most common cause of death for males, and the 4th most common cause of death for black males.

- Male age-adjusted death rates (AADRs) for homicide were 4.8 times that of females. Black AADRs for homicide were 5.6 times that of whites.
- Mortality rates were highest for those ages 15-24.

Nationally, homicide was the 15th leading cause of death in 2007, accounting for .8 percent of all deaths.

The most recent trend in U.S. homicide mortality rates showed a slight decrease, which was reflected in the trend of white homicide mortality rates. However, black homicide mortality rates did not decline, and the disparity between black and white rates widened to a factor of 5.7.

Table 1. Homicide Decedent Demographics by Time Period, Delaware 1999-2003 & 2004-2008

1a. 1999-2003

	Number	Percent	AADR ²
Gender			
Male	104	74%	5.3
Female	37	26%	1.8
Race/Ethnicity			
White	61	43%	2
Black	76	54%	8.8
Hispanic ¹	14	10%	---
			Age-specific Rate
Age			
<15	6	4%	0.7
15-24	44	31%	8.1
25-44	57	40%	4.9
45-64	30	21%	3.3
65+	4	3%	0.8
Total	141	100%	3.5

1b. 2004-2008

	Number	Percent	AADR ⁴
Gender			
Male	203	82%	10
Female	44	18%	2.1
Race/Ethnicity			
White	89	36%	2.9
Black	156	63%	16.3
Hispanic ¹	23	9%	7.5
			Age-specific Rate
Age			
<15	8	3%	1.0
15-24	83	34%	14.4
25-44	119	48%	10.3
45-64	31	13%	2.8
65+	6	2%	1.0
Total	247	100%	5.8

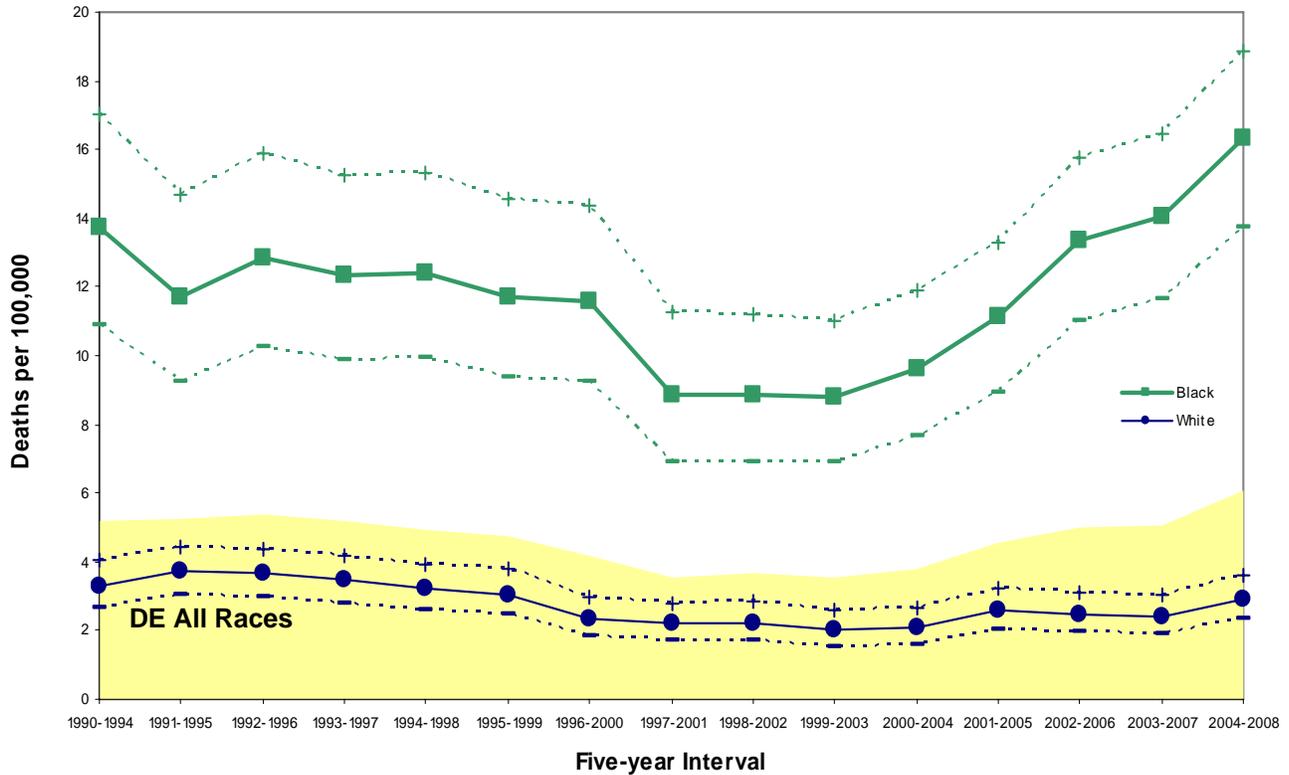
Notes:

1. Hispanic may be of any race.
2. AADR (Age-adjusted Death Rates) are age-adjusted per 100,000, using the 2000 U.S. standard population.
3. "--" Rate does not meet standards of reliability or precision; less than 20 deaths in the numerator.
4. Hispanic AADR calculated using census population figures.

Source: Delaware Health Statistics Center

Between 1999-2003 and 2004-2008 the age-adjusted homicide mortality rate rose 70 percent, from 3.6 to 6 deaths per 100,000 population. During that same time, black homicide mortality rates increased 85 percent (from 8.8 to 16.3), while white rates increased 44 percent (from 2.0 to 2.9).

Figure 1. Five-year Age-adjusted Homicide Mortality Rate by Race, Delaware 1990-2008



Note:
Rates are adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard population.
Source: Delaware Health Statistics Center

If the rate had not increased and had remained at the 1999-2003 level, 96 fewer homicides would have occurred in 2004-2008. Black males accounted for 69 percent of the excess deaths. Geographically, the increase was split between the balance of New Castle County (44 percent), Wilmington (33%), and Kent County (21%).

Figure 2. Distribution of Excess Assault (homicide) Mortality between 1999-2003 and 2004-2008

Race/Sex	1999-2003		2004-2008		Excess deaths	Percent of Excess
	Number	Crude Rate	Number	Crude Rate		
All Races	141	3.5	247	5.8	96	100%
Males	104	5.4	203	9.9	92	96%
Females	37	1.8	44	2.0	4	4%
Black	76	9.4	156	17.4	71	74%
Males	65	17.0	139	32.5	66	69%
Females	11	2.6	17	3.6	5	5%
White	61	2.0	89	2.8	25	26%
Males	36	2.4	62	4.0	24	25%
Females	25	1.6	27	1.6	1	1%

Source: Delaware Health Statistics Center

References

1. Xu JQ, Kochanek KD, Murphy SL, Tejada-Vera B. Deaths: Final data for 2007. National vital statistics reports; vol 58 no 19. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2010.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Compressed Mortality File 1999-2007. CDC WONDER On-line Database, compiled from Compressed Mortality File 1999-2007 Series 20 No. 2M, 2010. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/cmfi-icd10.html> on Feb 4, 2011 1:31:37 PM
3. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/hus2009tables/Table041.pdf> Accessed Feb 4, 2011.



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Division of Public Health

If you have comments, suggestions, and/or questions, please contact the Delaware Health Statistics Center at (302) 744-4541.

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