



Domestic Violence and Guns

Did You Know?

- In 2012, 924 women were killed by male intimate partners (Violence Policy Center, 2014)
- Women in the US are 11 times more likely to be murdered with a gun than in other developed nations (Mayors Against Illegal Guns, 2013)
- 1 in 3 female murder victims and 1 in 20 male murder victims are killed by intimate partners (Bridges et al, 2008)
- 2/3 of females murdered by intimate partners were killed with guns (Bridges, et al, 2008)
- Having a gun in the home increases the risk of homicide 20 times when there is a history of domestic violence (John Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research, 2010)
- 1/5 of homicide victims with restraining orders are murdered within two days of obtaining the order; 1/3 are murdered within the first month (Vittes & Sorenson, 2008)
- 48.6% of women killed by intimate partners were killed by dating partners (Cooper & Smith, 2011)
- 76% of women murdered by intimate partners were stalked (McFarlane et al, 1999)

Current Law

A person who has been convicted of the felony or misdemeanor crime of domestic violence toward a spouse, former spouse, cohabitating intimate partner or a person with whom the offender shares a biological child is prohibited from owning firearms. Likewise, a person under a permanent restraining order is not permitted to own firearms.

Gaps

Current law does not prohibit the following people from possessing firearms:

- People convicted of domestic violence against a current or former dating partner
- People convicted of stalking
- People under an ex parte (temporary) restraining order

Many people who are legally prohibited from owning guns are able to purchase them, because:

- Local records do not contain sufficient detail to flag offenders
- Offenders can purchase firearms at gun shows or from private sellers, thereby bypassing the background check system

Our Position

Federal gun laws are essential for protecting the lives of victims of domestic violence. We support strengthening gun safety laws to protect *all* victims of domestic violence, including dating partners, people who have been stalked, and people who have been granted an ex parte restraining order. We also support measures to close loopholes that allow offenders to bypass the background check system.