

Tennessee Domestic Violence and Guns

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Tennessee has strong restrictions on access to firearms by domestic abusers. However, more can be done to prevent access to guns by cohabitating and non-cohabitating dating partners.

State gun and domestic violence overview

Tennessee is home to a staggering amount of gun violence.

- From 2002 to 2011, 9,285 people were killed with guns in Tennessee. That is almost twice the number of all U.S. combat deaths in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan combined.¹
- Somebody is killed with a gun in Tennessee every nine hours: In 2011 alone, there were 948 gun deaths in the state.²

Domestic violence fatalities are prevalent in Tennessee, and they are frequently a result of gun crime.

- According to the FBI, there were 443 domestic violence homicides in Tennessee from 2003 to 2012, which include both male and female victims.
- Of those homicides, more than one-half of the victims—59.1 percent—were killed with guns.³

Women are far more at risk to be victims of fatal domestic violence, and guns play a significant role in that violence.

- Of the 889 female homicide victims in Tennessee from 2003 to 2012, 322 were killed as a result of a domestic violence incident.⁴
- Firearms accounted for the murders of 531 women in Tennessee from 2002 to 2011.⁵

Overview of Tennessee laws to protect women from abusers and stalkers

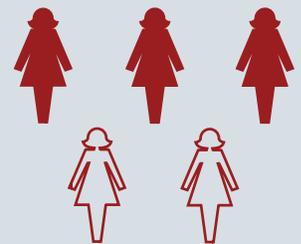
Tennessee has some laws to prevent abusers from having easy access to guns.

- Tennessee prohibits domestic violence misdemeanants from possessing firearms.⁶
- Tennessee prohibits the sale of firearms to any person convicted of stalking.⁷
- Under Tennessee law, subjects of a domestic violence protective order are barred from possessing guns.⁸
- Tennessee law requires persons subject to a domestic violence protection order or convicted of domestic assault to surrender all firearms. State law establishes specific procedures for relinquishing firearms.⁹

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From 2003 to 2012, 61.2 percent of female domestic violence homicide victims in Tennessee were killed with a gun.



Tennessee can do more to protect its citizens from domestic violence.

- Tennessee does not require a background check for all gun buyers, including those at gun shows or over the Internet.

Support for doing more to protect women from abusers and stalkers in Tennessee

Most Tennessee voters strongly support expanding background checks to keep guns from criminals, domestic abusers, and other dangerous people.

- In a February 2013 poll conducted by Middle Tennessee State University, 84.5 percent of Tennessee voters supported background checks on all gun sales.¹⁰

Where does Tennessee stand on laws to protect women from abusers and stalkers?

- Misdemeanant domestic abusers prohibited?
- Individuals subject to a domestic violence protective order prohibited?
- Stalkers prohibited?
- Background checks required on all gun sales?

A majority of Tennessee voter support background checks on all gun sales.



Endnotes

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "WISQARS™ (Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System)," available at <http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal.html> (last accessed August 2014); U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Casualty Status (2014), available at <http://www.defense.gov/NEWS/casualty.pdf>.
2. Ibid.
3. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplemental Homicide Data (U.S. Department of Justice, 2003–2012).
4. Ibid.
5. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "WISQARS™ (Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System).".
6. Tenn. Code Ann. § 39-17-1307(f)(1)(A).
7. Tenn. Code Ann. § 39-17-1316(a)(1).
8. Tenn. Code Ann. § 39-17-1307(f)(1)(B). The order of protection must fully comply with federal law, 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(8).
9. Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 36-3-604(c), 36-3-625(a), (h)(1), 39-13-111.
10. Middle Tennessee State University, "Frequency Tables" (2013), available at <http://mtsusurveygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/MTPS13-Gun-Laws-Poll-frequencies.pdf>.