

Michigan Domestic Violence and Guns

October 2014

Michigan has certain restrictions on firearms access by domestic abusers. However, more can be done to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous persons.

State gun and domestic violence overview

Michigan is home to a staggering amount of gun violence.

- From 2002 to 2011, 10,904 people were killed with guns in Michigan. 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 Michigan every 7.5 hours: In 2011 alone, there were 1,156 gun deaths in the state.²

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

- According to the FBI, there were 341 domestic violence homicides in Michigan from 2003 to 2012, which include both male and female victims.
- Of those homicides, more than half of the victims—51.3 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 1,148 female homicide victims in Michigan from 2003 to 2012, 258 were killed as a result of a domestic violence incident.⁴
- Firearms accounted for the murders of 645 women in Michigan from 2002 to 2011.⁵

Overview of Michigan laws to protect women from abusers and stalkers

Michigan law currently prevents some domestic abusers from having easy access to guns.

- Michigan gives courts discretion to prohibit the purchase or possession of firearms by a person subject to a personal protection order.⁶
- Michigan law prevents any person subject to a domestic violence protective order or protective order against stalking from obtaining a handgun purchase license.⁷

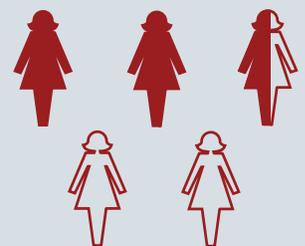
Michigan can do more to prevent abusers from having easy access to guns.

- Michigan does not prohibit individuals convicted of domestic violence or stalking misdemeanors from purchasing or possessing firearms or ammunition.

From 2002 to 2011, 10,904 people were killed with guns in Michigan. That is almost twice the number of all U.S. combat deaths in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan combined.



From 2003 to 2012, 53.5 percent of female domestic violence homicide victims in Michigan were killed with a gun.



- Michigan does not require courts to notify domestic abusers when they become prohibited from possessing firearms or ammunition under federal law.
- Michigan does not require the surrender of firearms or ammunition by domestic abusers who have become prohibited from possessing firearms or ammunition under federal law.
- Michigan does not require law enforcement to remove firearms at the scene of a domestic violence incident.
- Michigan 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 Michigan

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

- In a February 2013 poll conducted by EPIC-MRA, 86 percent of those surveyed supported closing the gun-show loophole and requiring background checks on all purchases at gun shows.⁸

Case study

We need universal background checks and other important measures to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous abusers.

- In July 2011, Rodrick Dantzler went on a shooting spree, hunting down ex-girlfriends and their families. He murdered seven people before killing himself in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Dantzler had a long record of criminal convictions and was prohibited from owning a gun as a convicted felon. Past girlfriends, and his own mother, had taken out restraining orders against Dantzler, and all reported intense domestic abuse and threats. Michael James Allen, who sold the gun to Dantzler, admitted that he knew Dantzler was a convicted felon and should not have been sold the gun. Allen was sentenced to 10 years in prison in February 2014.⁹

Where does Michigan 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 Michigan voters support closing the gun show loophole.



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. Mich. Comp. Laws Serv. §§ 600.2950(1)(e), 600.2950a(2), (3)(c), (26).
7. Mich. Comp. Laws Serv. §§ 28.422, 552.14, 600.2950, 600.2950a.
8. Chad Selweski, "Voters oppose 'Obama' gun restrictions but strongly favor gun control," Daily Tribune, February 15, 2013, available at <http://www.dailytribune.com/article/20130215/NEWS01/130219711/voters-oppose--145-obama-146-gun-restrictions-but-strongly-favor-gun-control>.
9. MSNBC, "Police: Killer of 7 was 'hunting' ex-girlfriends, relatives," July 8, 2011, available at http://www.nbcnews.com/id/43677328/ns/us_news-crime_and_courts/t/police-killer-was-hunting-ex-girlfriends-relatives/#.U9-n_PldV8E; Elizabeth Klynstra, "Man Sentenced in Connection to Dantzler Murders," Wood TV, February 3, 2014, available at <http://woodtv.com/2014/02/03/man-sentenced-in-connection-to-dantzler-murders/>.