



2024 Opportunity Counties Fact Sheet

Developed by [Wellstone Collaborative Strategies](#) for Trailhead Institute

In Colorado, 44 out of 64 counties (about 67%) have high rates of firearm-related deaths for at least one population (see **Figure 1**). These include deaths from homicide, suicide, and intimate partner violence. Eighteen counties have high rates in more than one category. See **Table 1** for details by county and this [link](#) for the code descriptions. This information allows us to identify geographic disparities within a population.

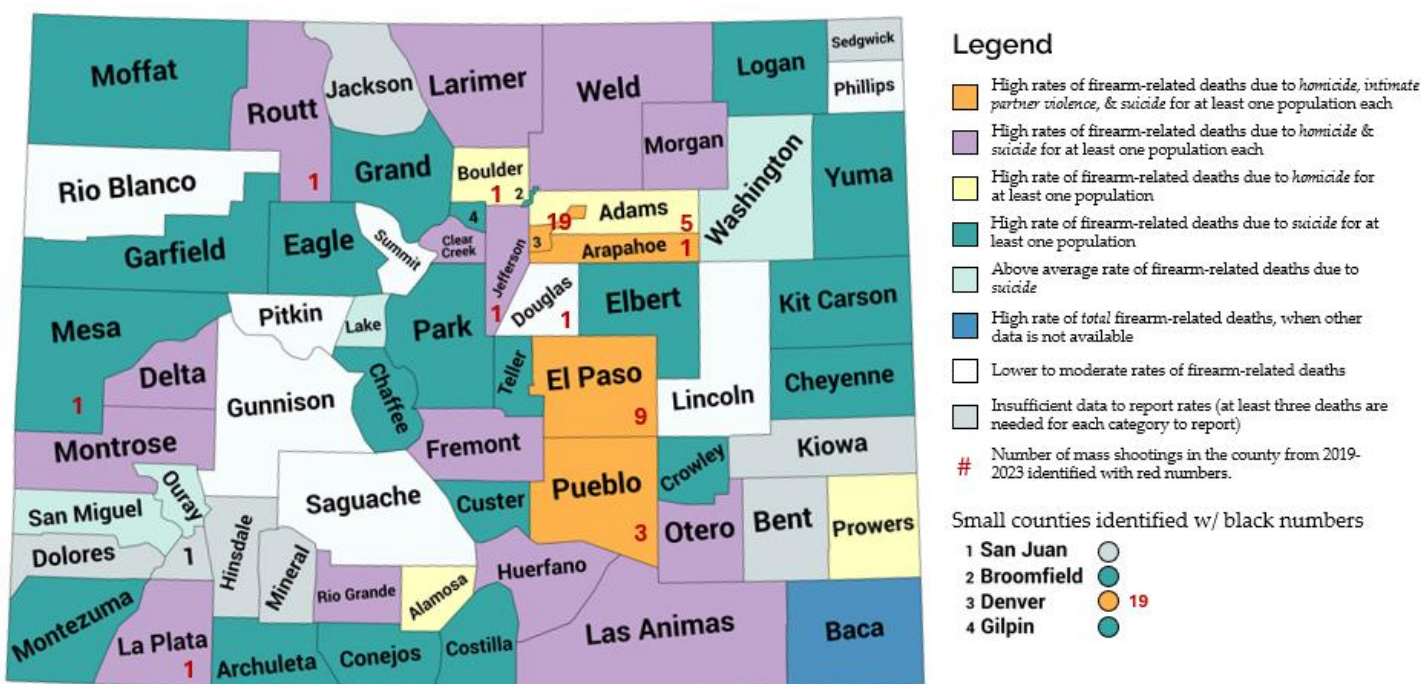


Figure 1. County opportunity map, representing counties with high rates (in the top 1/3) of firearm-related deaths for at least one population based on race and ethnicity or sex. Source: Colorado Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

Figure 1 also includes the number of mass shootings, as shown by the red numbers. Taken together, it's clear that while the urban Front Range struggles with firearm-related homicides, this region also struggles with suicide. Similarly, many rural areas struggle with suicide and community violence.

Disparities between populations are also critically important for counties to grapple with. For instance:

- **Homicide:** Black and African American Coloradans have 5 times the firearm-related homicide rate compared to the general population. Men are also 3.8 times as likely as women to die by homicide.

- **Suicide:** Men of all ages are more than 7 times as likely as women to die by suicide using a firearm; men 65 and over are 11 times more likely. White and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander Coloradans have higher rates compared to other populations.

Important Notes:

- **Counties:** Each county has its own challenges with harm and violence that it may not want to address, even if it doesn't appear on the map.
- **Sources:** Data for the map and table come from the: *Colorado Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment*. Data was from years 2019-2023 where available, and from 2020-2023 for race and ethnicity-related data. Data on mass shootings is from the [Gun Violence Archive](#) from 2019-2023.

- Adams - H; H18-24; MR; F, M
- Alamosa - H; H25-44; Hi; M
- Arapahoe - H, H under 18; M | IPV | S under 18
- Archuleta - S; S25-44; Wh; M
- Baca - Total (not enough data for specifics)
- Boulder - HF45-64
- Broomfield - S under 18; M under 18
- Chaffee - S; Wh, 65+, F, FS45-64, M, MS65+
- Cheyenne - S
- Clear Creek - H | S45-64, MS45-64
- Conejos - S65+
- Costilla - S; Wh, Hi; S25-44; M
- Crowley - S; Wh
- Custer - S; S45-64, S65+; M, MS65+
- Delta - HWh; F | S; Wh, Hi; S25-44, S65+, F, FS25-44, M, MS65+
- Denver - H, all ages; Bl, Hi; F, M | IPV | Bl-S
- Eagle - FS45-64
- Elbert - MS45-64
- El Paso - A-H, AIAN-H, MR-H, H25-44, F, FH25-44, FH45-64 | IPV | Bl-S, MR-S; S under 18; FS18-24, FS25-44, M under 18
- Fremont - Wh-H; MH45-64 | S; Wh; S18-25, S65+; F, FS18-64; M, MS18-24, M65+
- Garfield - S18-24, S65+; MS18-24, MS65+
- Gilpin - S; Wh; S45-64; MS45-64
- Grand - S25-44, M, MS24-44
- Huerfano - H | S; Wh, S25-44, M
- Jefferson - Bl-H | A-S
- Kit Carson - S; Wh; S25-64; M, MS25-64
- La Plata - H45-64; MH45-64 | HiS; S25-44, MS25-44
- Larimer - FH under 18, FH45-64 | FS65+
- Las Animas - H25-44 | S; Wh, Hi; S25-44, S65+
- Logan - WhS; S65+, F; MS65+
- Mesa - AIAN-S; S45-64; FS65+, MS45-64
- Moffat - S; Wh; S25-64, F, M; MS25-65+
- Montezuma - S; Wh, Hi; WS45-64; M; MS45-64
- Montrose - Wh-H; H45-64 | S; Wh; S18-44, S65+; F, FS25-64, M, MS18-44, M S65+
- Morgan - MH25-44 | MS25-44
- Otero - H; Hi; H25-44; M; M25-44 | S; Hi; S18-24, S45-64; M, MS18-64
- Park - S; Wh; S18-65+; F, FS25-44; M, MS18-65+
- Prowers - H; Wh; H45-64, M
- Pueblo - H; Wh, Hi; all ages, F, M; M all ages | IPV | SHi; S under 18-24; FS18-65+; MS under 18-24
- Rio Grande - H; Hi, M | S25-44; M; MS25-44
- Routt - Wh-H | S; S45-64, M; MS25-44
- Teller - S; Wh; S25-65+, F, M; MS25-65+
- Weld - H65+; FH65+ | FS65+
- Yuma - S45-64, MS45-64

Table 1. County population categories in the top 1/3 of firearm-related deaths for at least one category. Use this [link](#) for code descriptions.

Other Data Sources

Colorado's vital statistics databases lack two critical pieces of information: firearm-related deaths among the LGBTQIA+ populations, and mass and targeted shootings (events with four or more killed or injured).

LGBTQ+: The [2023 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey](#) shows that young, LGBTQIA+ Coloradans experience much higher risks for suicide, community violence, and intimate partner violence than the general population. Consider, for instance, the

percent of youth who did not go to school over the past 30 days because they felt unsafe: 9.3% of cisgender youth, 23.1% of transgender youth, and 20.2% of youth unsure of their gender identity. Questions on intimate partner violence and suicidal ideation show similar or greater disparities by gender identity and sexual orientation. Similar disparities by gender exist for adults. According to 2022 and 2023 [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System \(BRFSS\)](#) data, LGBTQ+ adults experience greater rates of suicidal ideation compared to heterosexual and cisgender adults. Specifically, 21.5% of gay, lesbian, or bisexual adults (or did not specify an identity) and 25% of transgender adults reported thoughts of suicide, while 5% of heterosexual adults reported thoughts of suicide.

Mass Shootings: According to the Colorado Firearm Dashboard, “there was a sudden increase in the number of mass shootings in 2020 (11), followed by the most mass shootings in 2021 and 2022 (13 each year). 2021 had the highest number of people killed (44 killed, 41 injured), and 2022 had the highest number of people injured (57 injured, 23 killed).” An interactive map of US mass shootings since 2015 is available [here](#).



Wellstone Collaborative Strategies

