



Governor's Crime Commission
NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Justice Analysis Review

A PUBLICATION OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ANALYSIS CENTER

Reported Domestic and Family Violence in North Carolina

Introduction

In 2025, law enforcement agencies reported that over 63,000 people in North Carolina were the victim of a crime committed by their spouse, partner, former spouse or partner, or family member. The Criminal Justice Analysis Center (CJAC) refers to these crimes as domestic and family violence (DFV), following our 2023 report on [Identifying Domestic Violence in North Carolina](#). We define domestic and family violence as any crime against a person (i.e. homicide; assault or intimidation; sex offenses; kidnapping; or human trafficking) in which at least one offender is either a current or former intimate partner or a family member. This report examines trends in these offenses, looking at changes over the past six years (2020-2025) and patterns in victimization in the past three years (2023-2025), and comparing them against other crimes against persons.

Key Takeaways

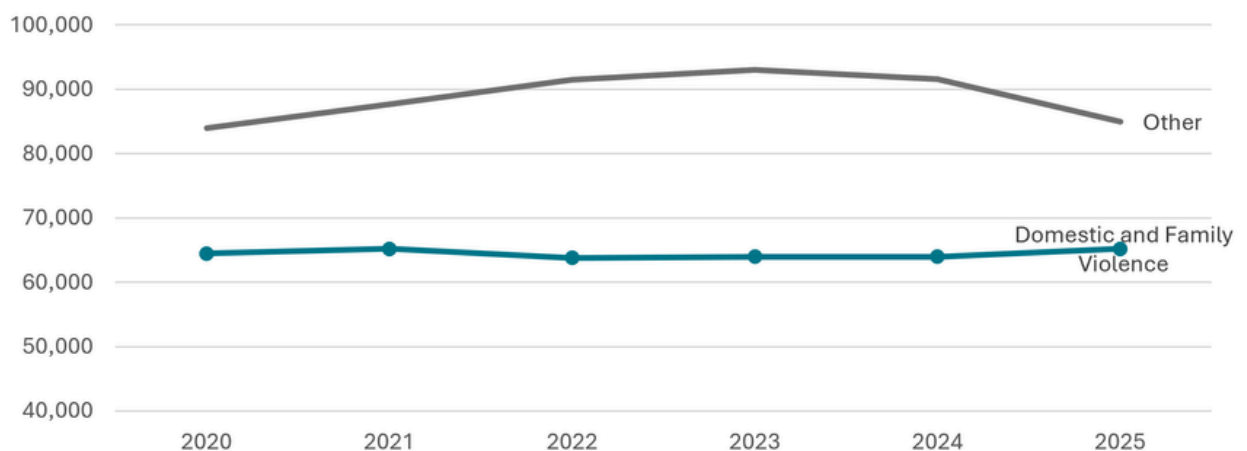
- Reported domestic and family violence remained steady while other crimes against persons declined.
- In the last two years, domestic and family violence accounted for a majority of murders of women and girls in North Carolina.
- Intimate partners were responsible for about half of reported kidnappings or abductions.
- Statutory rape and criminal sexual contact were often reported as being committed by family members.
- Women, Black people, and those aged 25–34 had the highest rates of reported DFV victimization.

Data Source

We rely primarily on data from the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), which includes information on incidents that were reported to law enforcement agencies. Agencies that submitted data to NIBRS have covered approximately 97% of North Carolina's population since 2020. We also consider data on domestic violence convictions from North Carolina's Computerized Criminal History system.

Trends in Domestic and Family Violence

Figure 1: Crime Against Person Victims in North Carolina



While reported person crimes committed by outside-family offenders have declined since 2023, domestic and family violence has held steady (**Figure 1**). As a result, the percentage of reported person crimes that are classifiable as domestic and family violence has increased.

Some offenses were more likely to be associated with domestic and family violence than others. **Table 1** shows the number of victims of each offense reported in 2023-2025 along with the percent that were victims

TABLE 1

Prevalence of Domestic and Family Violence by Offense, 2023-2025

Offense	Total	Domestic and Family Violence	Percent Intimate Partner	Percent Within Family	Percent DFV
Kidnapping/Abduction	5,568	3,136	46%	10%	56%
Simple Assault	269,176	141,212	34%	18%	52%
Statutory Rape	1,698	733	11%	32%	43%
Criminal Sexual Contact	10,655	3,999	4%	34%	38%
Rape	9,016	3,013	18%	16%	33%
Aggravated Assault	93,471	25,149	17%	10%	27%
Human Trafficking, Commercial Sex Acts	118	31	9%	17%	26%
Human Trafficking, Involuntary Servitude	98	25	11%	14%	26%
Intimidation	73,203	17,266	15%	9%	24%
Murder and Non-negligent Manslaughter	2,384	529	11%	11%	22%
Negligent Manslaughter	211	35	5%	11%	17%
Total	465,978	195,465	27%	15%	42%

Note: Incest, while a person crime, is not listed in this table because by definition it is committed by a family member.

Figure 2: Kidnapping Victims by Sex and Domestic and Family Violence Classification

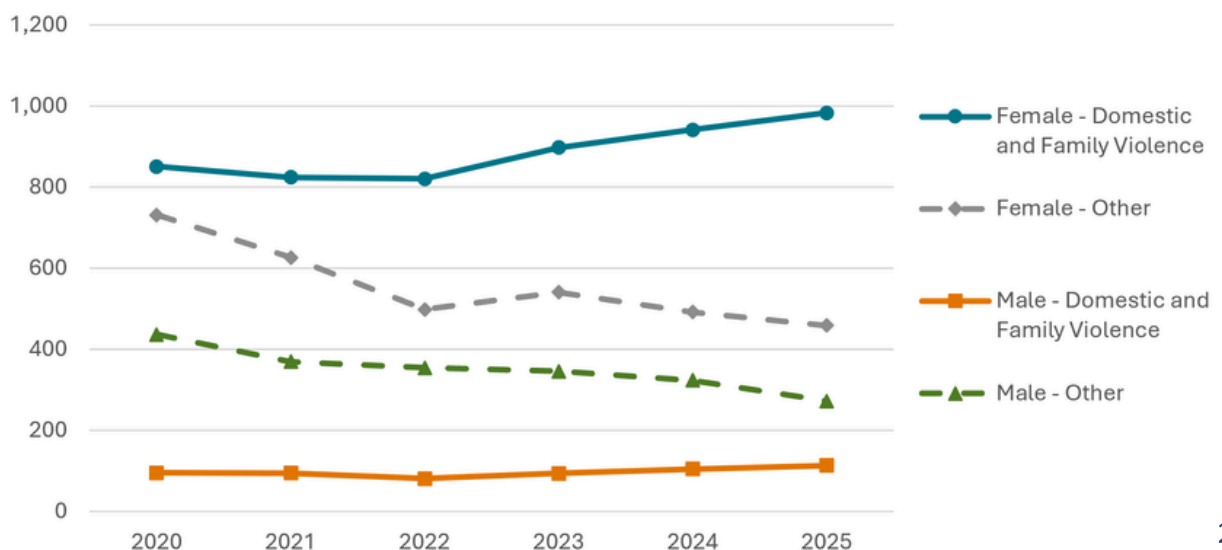
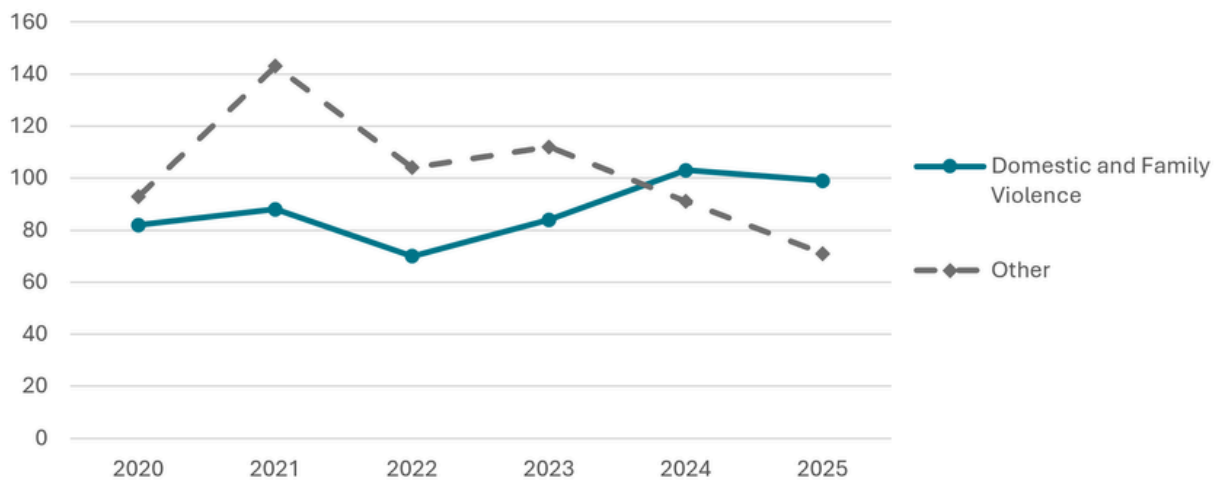


Figure 3: Female Murder Victims, 2020-2025



of domestic or family violence. Simple assault was the most common form of reported domestic or family violence, as well as the offense with the second-highest DFV share. The offense of kidnapping or abduction, which also includes detaining someone against their will, was most commonly committed by intimate partners. Meanwhile, statutory rape and criminal sexual contact were often reported as being committed by family members of the victim.

Figures 2 and 3 show recent trends in murder and kidnapping, with a focus on female victims. Reported kidnappings by intimate partners or family members increased over the last few years, even while other kidnappings decreased. This is true for both female and male victims, although females are the majority. **Figure 3** shows female murder victims each year from 2020 to 2025. In the last two years, domestic and family violence has accounted for a majority of murders of women and girls in North Carolina.

However, this pattern does not apply to all offenses. Notably, rape (including offenses reported as Rape, Sodomy and Sexual Assault with an Object) does not show an increase in domestic and family violence as a percent of victimizations. **Figure 4** shows the percentage of reported rape victimizations that fell under domestic and family violence. About one-third of reported rapes have consistently been committed by partners or family of the victim.

Figure 4: Rape Victims, 2020-2025

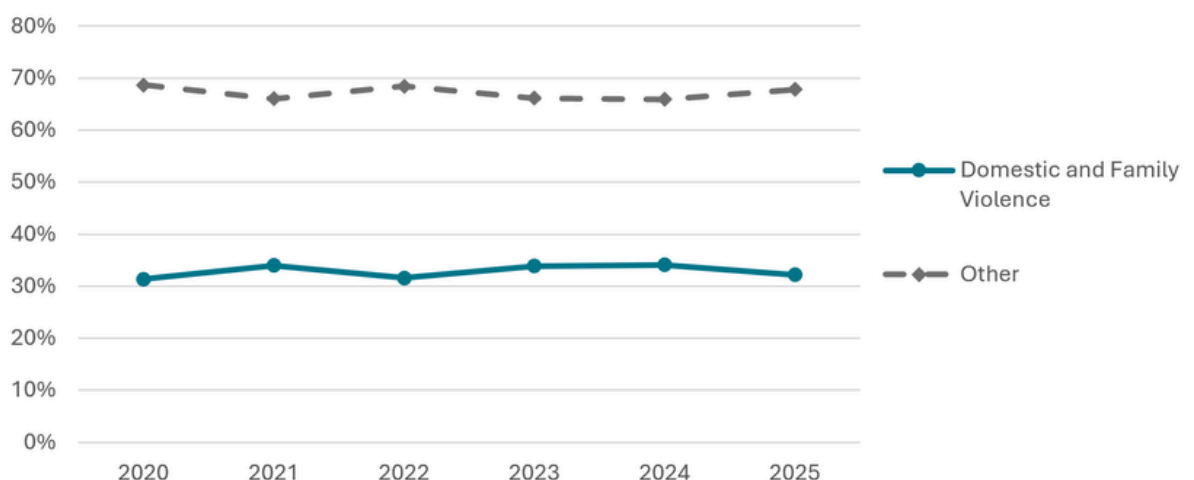


Figure 5: DFV Victimization Rate by County, 2023-25

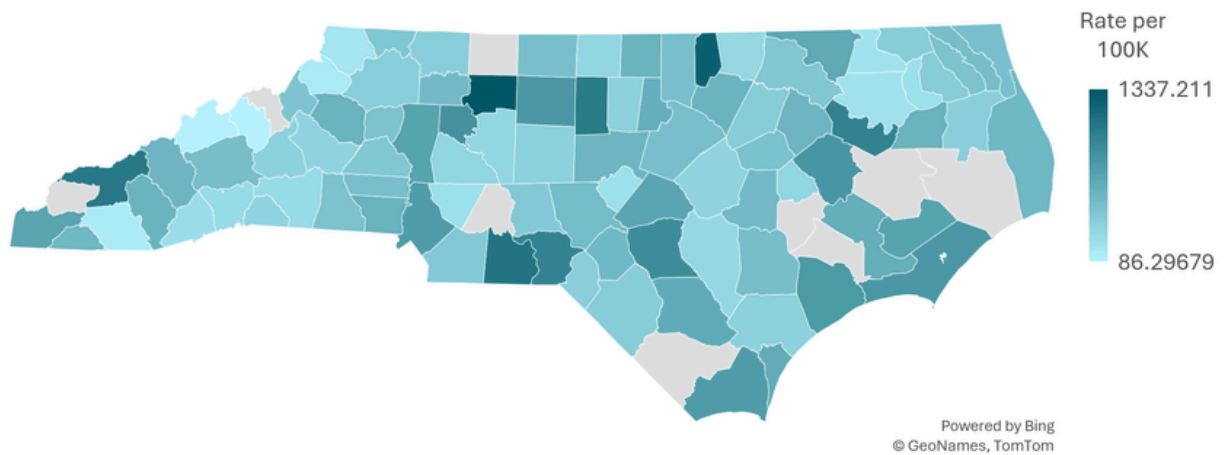


Figure 5 shows the rate of reported domestic and family violence victimization by county in 2023-25. Counties are excluded if there were fewer than 20 total victims or if less than 80% of the county was covered by agencies that reported to NIBRS on average across the three years. The three counties with the highest rates of reported domestic and family violence were Forsyth, Vance, and Anson.

As seen in **Table 2**, reported victimization rates were highest in urban counties and lowest in rural counties, although there was considerable variation within each group. To classify counties, we used the county designations established by the [NC Rural Center](#), which are based on population density in 2020. A full list of counties, along with DFV victimization rates by sex, can be found in the appendix.

TABLE 2
Domestic and Family Violence Rate by County Class, 2023-2025

Class	Victimizations	Rate per 100K
Rural	54,666	518
Suburban/Regional City	52,975	555
Urban	85,556	729

Victim Demographics

Table 3 shows reported domestic and family violence victimization counts and rates by victim sex, race, and age group. Ethnicity is not shown because 26% of victims' ethnicities were unknown. Reported victimization rates were over twice as high for women as for men. Reviewing rates by race and gender (**Table 4**), we find that Black women had the highest victimization rate, followed by Black men and then white women. The age group with the highest victimization rate was ages 25-34, followed by 18-24. While American Indian/Alaska

TABLE 3

Domestic and Family Violence Rate by Victim Demographics, 2023-2025

Demographic	Victimizations	Rate per 100K
Sex		
Female	134,065	786
Male	58,949	367
Race	52,975	555
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1,670	289
Asian	1,817	139
Black	90,528	1,319
White	95,754	418
Age Group		
Under 18	27,445	394
18-24	31,220	963
25-34	49,929	1,163
35-44	39,351	916
45-54	22,778	548
55-64	13,474	327
65+	8,005	132

TABLE 4

Domestic and Family Violence Rate by Victim Race and Sex, 2023-2025

Race	Sex	Victimizations	Rate per 100K
American Indian/Alaskan Native	Female	1,205	424
	Male	464	158
Asian or Pacific Islander	Female	1,300	190
	Male	517	84
Black	Female	63,068	1,730
	Male	27,434	853
White	Female	66,246	567
	Male	29,476	263

Native people in North Carolina are at higher risk of some types of violence, like gun violence, this analysis found that they had lower rates of DFV.¹

When comparing the demographics of domestic and family violence victims to those of other crimes against persons (**Table 5**), we find that DFV victims were considerably more likely to be female, more likely to be 25-44 years old, and less likely to be under 18. Additionally, the distribution of reported domestic and family violence across urban, suburban, and rural counties was similar to that for person crimes overall.

TABLE 5

Comparison of Victim Demographics in Person Crimes, 2023-2025

	Percent of Domestic and Family Violence Victims	Percent of Other Person Crime Victims
Sex		
Female	69%	48%
Male	31%	52%
Unknown Sex	<1%	<1%
Age		
Under 18	14%	22%
18–24	16%	15%
25–34	26%	21%
35–44	20%	16%
45–54	12%	11%
55–64	7%	7%
65+	4%	4%
Unknown Age	1%	3%
Race		
American Indian/Alaskan Native	<1%	1%
Asian	<1%	<1%
Black	47%	43%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<1%	<1%
Unknown Race	2%	3%
White	50%	52%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic	10%	10%
Not of Hispanic Origin	63%	60%
Unknown Ethnicity	26%	30%
County Class		
Rural	28%	27%
Suburban/Regional City	27%	28%
Urban	44%	45%

¹ The victimization rates for American Indians/Alaska Natives may be affected by underreporting in specific jurisdictions. However, it is unlikely that this finding would be invalidated.

Up to this point, the numbers in this report have represented counts of victims. However, the following two figures will instead show the number of reported offenses.²

Figure 6: Firearm Usage in Selected Offenses, 2023-2025

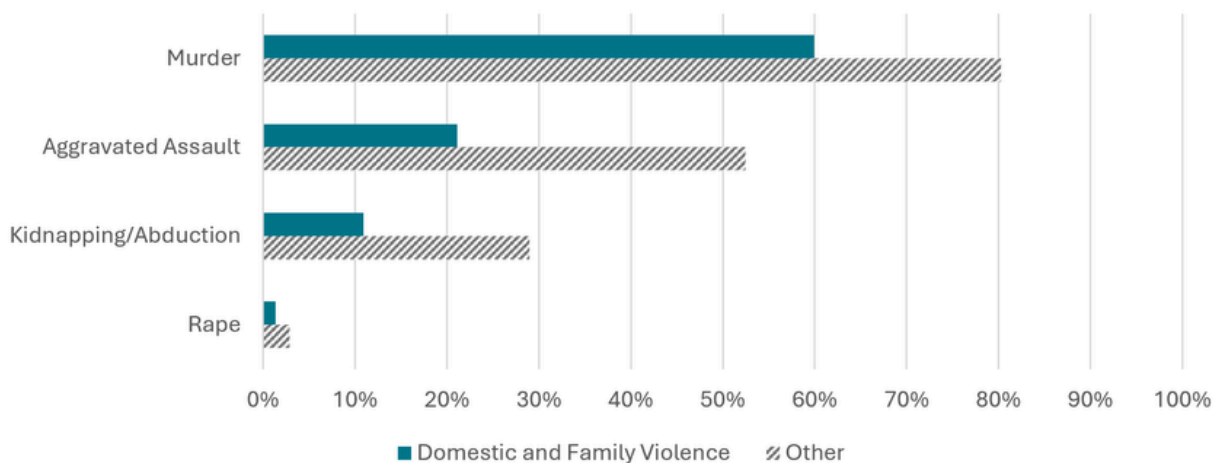


Figure 6 compares the percentage of firearm usage between reported domestic and family violence offenses and other crimes against persons. Across offenses, firearms were less likely to be used in domestic and family violence offenses compared to other crimes against persons. However, the majority of reported domestic and family violence murders still involved firearms.

Figure 7: Location of Person Offenses, 2023-2025

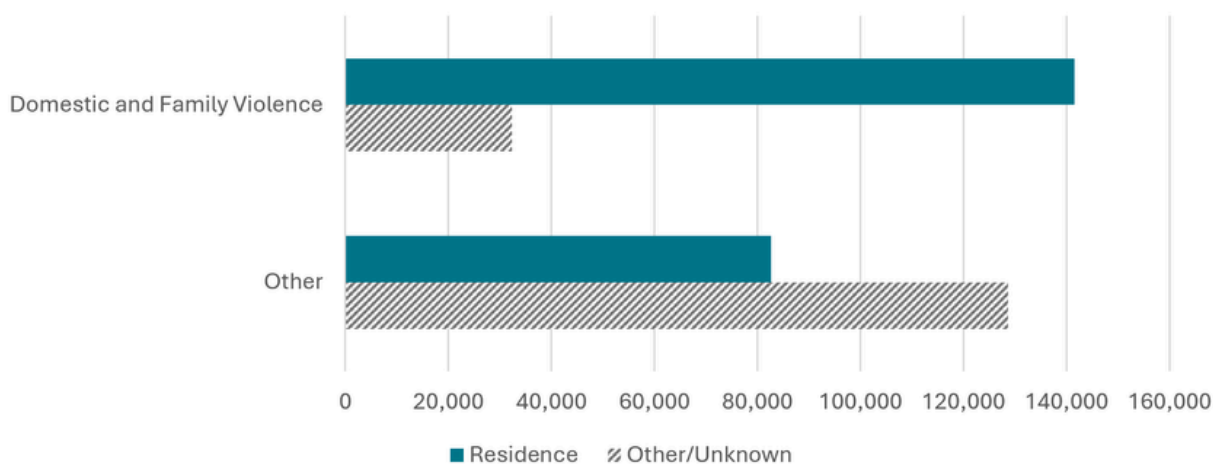


Figure 7 compares the number of reported domestic and family violence and other crimes against persons that occurred in residences versus other locations. Unsurprisingly, most domestic and family violence offenses occurred at homes, while other crimes against persons were more likely to occur elsewhere.

² Information in NIBRS may be associated with a criminal incident, an offense within that incident, or a person such as a victim. We used counts of offenses for location types and weapons because both are associated with the offense rather than the victim or incident.

Domestic Violence in North Carolina Criminal History

North Carolina's Computerized Criminal History File contains information on individuals who have been arrested for felonies or particular misdemeanors that require fingerprinting, including crimes of domestic violence. We examined the prevalence of a domestic violence flag, which indicates that the presiding judge has determined that a defendant has been found guilty of a domestic violence offense.

The number of convictions flagged as domestic violence decreased from 2020 through 2025. As a percentage of all court filings, domestic violence convictions were highest in 2022, then decreased sharply through 2025. As this does not correlate with the reported crime numbers, it may be a result of a change in usage of the domestic violence flag over time or in the conviction rate of domestic violence offenders. These numbers also do not necessarily align with DFV cases reported to DFV service providers, who do not report seeing significant declines in reported victimizations.

Conclusions

Domestic and family violence remains a significant problem in North Carolina, and it makes up an increasing share of reported person crimes. While reported DFV is more prevalent in urban areas, domestic and family violence occurs across the state. The demographics of reported victims reflect in some ways the demographics of person crimes in general; victims are disproportionately Black and are likely to be younger adults. While overall violent crime is falling in North Carolina, this analysis indicates that reported domestic and family violence is not declining in the same way. Domestic and family violence may require additional attention and specialized interventions.

Appendix: Data Tables

TABLE 6

Domestic and Family Violence Victimization and Rate by County, 2023-2025

County	Class	Victims	Rate per 100K*	Female Rate per 100K*	Male Rate per 100K*	Reporting %
Alamance	Suburban/Regional City	5,789	1,048	1,378	675	100
Alexander	Rural	506	467	570	358	100
Alleghany	Rural	152	443	623	249	100
Anson	Rural	627	1,093	1,572	679	87
Ashe	Rural	160	200	277	116	100
Avery	Rural	239	447	646	278	97
Beaufort	Rural	371	-	-	-	27
Bertie	Rural	107	227	334	119	93
Bladen	Rural	540	653	827	462	94
Brunswick	Rural	3,693	772	1,021	518	99
Buncombe	Suburban/Regional City	4,208	508	702	299	100
Burke	Rural	850	327	467	184	98
Cabarrus	Suburban/Regional City	1,783	235	312	152	100
Caldwell	Rural	1,461	599	822	359	99
Camden	Rural	164	506	674	335	100
Carteret	Rural	1,719	812	1,000	621	100
Caswell	Rural	210	316	449	186	100
Catawba	Suburban/Regional City	1,991	437	598	264	91
Chatham	Rural	1,324	574	741	378	100
Cherokee	Rural	604	712	961	453	96
Chowan	Rural	99	240	318	146	100
Clay	Rural	200	565	739	391	100
Cleveland	Rural	1,425	473	639	294	99
Columbus	Rural	247	-	-	-	21
Craven	Rural	1,896	641	797	473	96
Cumberland	Suburban/Regional City	8,917	896	1,259	507	100
Currituck	Rural	463	489	610	366	100
Dare	Rural	647	565	724	398	100
Davidson	Suburban/Regional City	1,579	310	421	195	100
Davie	Rural	1,129	851	1,013	678	100
Duplin	Rural	725	506	672	325	97
Durham	Urban	6,310	624	854	360	100

County	Class	Victims	Rate per 100K*	Female Rate per 100K*	Male Rate per 100K*	Reporting %
Edgecombe	Rural	812	579	735	394	98
Forsyth	Urban	15,794	1,337	1,730	896	99
Franklin	Rural	1,347	598	811	385	100
Gaston	Suburban/Regional City	4,342	604	795	399	100
Gates	Rural	120	391	459	320	100
Graham	Rural	47	-	-	-	32
Granville	Rural	916	499	717	310	99
Greene	Rural	194	321	507	160	100
Guilford	Urban	13,783	812	1,066	528	100
Halifax	Rural	566	441	626	235	92
Harnett	Rural	2,966	697	921	464	100
Haywood	Rural	1,083	567	753	368	100
Henderson	Suburban/Regional City	1,000	276	367	177	100
Hertford	Rural	117	213	335	101	93
Hoke	Rural	904	546	739	327	100
Hyde	Rural	9	-	-	-	67
Iredell	Suburban/Regional City	4,382	723	937	504	100
Jackson	Rural	755	588	819	358	100
Johnston	Suburban/Regional City	2,316	325	446	199	99
Jones	Rural	26	-	-	-	39
Lee	Rural	485	241	309	167	100
Lenoir	Rural	1,419	-	-	-	57
Lincoln	Suburban/Regional City	1,403	495	688	299	100
Macon	Rural	151	132	167	95	100
Madison	Rural	47	86	92	81	84
Martin	Rural	593	985	1,283	644	94
McDowell	Rural	453	346	445	243	98
Mecklenburg	Urban	27,156	774	1,096	440	100
Mitchell	Rural	30	-	-	-	15
Montgomery	Rural	319	412	530	274	100
Moore	Rural	1,654	526	668	371	97
Nash	Rural	1,130	388	536	226	98
New Hanover	Urban	4,558	649	858	421	97
Northampton	Rural	277	680	948	394	82
Onslow	Suburban/Regional City	4,743	796	1,071	536	100
Orange	Suburban/Regional City	1,627	354	466	230	100

County	Class	Victims	Rate per 100K*	Female Rate per 100K*	Male Rate per 100K*	Reporting %
Pamlico	Rural	272	721	989	474	100
Pasquotank	Rural	593	474	599	344	100
Pender	Rural	716	357	444	264	99
Perquimans	Rural	152	398	541	240	96
Person	Rural	698	591	765	399	100
Pitt	Suburban/Regional City	4,448	829	1,098	517	100
Polk	Rural	197	333	394	264	100
Randolph	Rural	1,560	359	474	230	100
Richmond	Rural	1,236	973	1,338	592	100
Robeson	Rural	1,345	383	542	213	100
Rockingham	Rural	1,372	495	650	326	100
Rowan	Suburban/Regional City	1,337	318	461	172	99
Rutherford	Rural	503	278	386	159	93
Sampson	Rural	513	290	405	166	99
Scotland	Rural	358	367	513	200	98
Stanly	Rural	524	-	-	-	61
Stokes	Rural	383	-	-	-	44
Surry	Rural	809	377	509	239	100
Swain	Rural	630	1,053	1,493	588	100
Transylvania	Rural	244	244	322	155	100
Tyrrell	Rural	38	368	577	-	100
Union	Suburban/Regional City	3,110	414	526	295	99
Vance	Rural	1,559	1,256	1,689	764	100
Wake	Urban	17,955	494	648	326	100
Warren	Rural	162	303	405	207	95
Washington	Rural	191	604	845	331	100
Watauga	Rural	274	162	225	92	99
Wayne	Rural	1,845	537	828	238	97
Wilkes	Rural	739	376	506	242	100
Wilson	Rural	1,141	483	671	282	100
Yadkin	Rural	586	528	694	356	98
Yancey	Rural	48	86	127	-	100

*Rates are calculated based on the population covered by agencies that report data to NIBRS. As a population breakdown by sex is not available for these jurisdictions, the male and female populations are estimated based on the percent of the county that is male and female according to the NC State Demographer's vintage 2025 estimates.