

Section 8

HOMICIDE CIRCUMSTANCES

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Circumstances known: Circ

Name	Definition
Circ	Indicates if any information is available about the circumstances associated with the incident

Uses

This variable operates as a stem question.

Discussion

Do not code this variable as “No” until you have reviewed all of the data from this source that you intend to review for this case.

Name	Label	Table	Type	Field Length	Priority	Primacy
Circ	Circumstances known:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR

Response Options:

Circ	0	No
	1	Yes

Precipitated by another crime: Crime

Name	Definition
Crime	The homicide was precipitated by another serious crime (e.g., drug dealing, robbery)

Uses

This variable identifies the proportion of homicides that are related to other criminal activity. The criminology literature often divides homicides into two broad categories: felony-related (e.g., stemming from a felony such as robbery or drug-trafficking) and non-felony-related (e.g., stemming from interpersonal issues such as arguments, insults, abuse, jealousy, mental illness). This variable identifies those that fall into the first category. It uses a somewhat broader definition than that used by the Supplementary Homicide Report system — which counts felony-related homicides as only those that occur while another felony is in progress.

Discussion

Code a victim as “Yes” for “Crime” if the incident occurred as the result of another serious crime. Serious crimes, such as drug trafficking, robbery, burglary, motor vehicle theft, arson, and witness intimidation/elimination are felonies. These are crimes that carry a sentence of one or more years in prison. Misdemeanors such as traffic infractions, shoplifting, petty larceny (e.g., stealing someone’s jacket), public drunkenness, and minor assaults (no injury or deadly weapon involved) are not considered serious crimes. This variable uses a broader definition of felony-related than is used in the SHR and includes homicides committed in revenge over a previous felony or to protect ongoing criminal activity. The simple existence of an additional crime other than the homicide in an incident is not sufficient grounds for endorsing “Crime”, as homicide suspects are frequently charged with more than one crime (e.g., carrying a gun without a permit, destroying evidence). The other crime must be a precipitative factor in order for a “Crime” to be endorsed.

Case Examples

Yes

- A robbery of a convenience store is in progress and one of the customers is shot.
- A man kills the person who murdered his brother to avenge his death.
- A drug dealer kills a rival dealer who was encroaching on his territory.
- A drug dealer kills the man who robbed him last week to dissuade other would-be robbers.
- An arsonist torched an apartment building and an elderly woman dies in the blaze.
- A man is attempting to rob a couple. One of them pulls out a gun and shoots him.

No

- A woman killed her husband during an argument; she then set the house on fire in an attempt to cover up the crime. (While intentionally setting fire to property is a felony, the arson was not a precipitative event.)
- A youth shot another boy after having accused him of stealing his gym shoes. (While the suspected theft was a precipitative factor, it was not a serious crime.)
- The suspect violated a restraining order, broke into his ex-wife’s house, tortured her over a period of several hours, and then shot her with a stolen gun. (While there are many crimes going on in this incident, all of the offenses were part of the violence itself. There was not a separate crime type like a robbery or a drug deal that lead to the homicide. The precipitative factor was the intimate partner violence itself.)

Name	Label	Table	Type	Field Length	Priority	Primacy
Crime	Precipitated by another crime:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR

Response Options:

Crime

- 0 No, Not available, Unknown
- 1 Yes

Data Standards or Guidelines

NVISS

Nature of first other crime: NtCrM1

Nature of second other crime: NtCrM2

Name	Definition
NtCrM1	Nature of the first crime that precipitated the homicide (Applies only to crime-related homicides)
NtCrM2	Nature of the second crime that precipitated the homicide (Applies only to crime-related homicides with more than one precipitative crime)

Uses

For cases in which the homicide was precipitated by another serious crime, these two variables identify the specific type of crime involved. The information is used to better characterize the types of criminal violence that lead to homicide.

Discussion

Code definitions:

Drug trade – The buying, selling, or passing of drugs from one person to another in exchange for goods or money.

Robbery – Taking, or attempting to take, anything of value from another person or persons by force or threat of force or violence. If money or goods are stolen without force or threat of force (e.g., a bookkeeper stealing money from a company, thieves stealing equipment from a loading dock), the theft is not a robbery, but larceny, and should be coded as “Other”.

Burglary – The unlawful entry into a building or other structure without the owner’s consent with the intent to commit a felony or a theft.

Motor vehicle theft – The theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle, includes the stealing of automobiles, trucks, buses, motorcycles, motorscooters, snowmobiles, etc. Does not include taking a motor vehicle for temporary use by those persons having lawful access, nor does it include stealing motor vehicle parts. Stealing motor vehicle parts without force or the threat of force is larceny and should be coded as “Other”.

Arson – To unlawfully and intentionally damage, or attempt to damage, any building, real estate, or personal property by fire or incendiary device. This code will generally be used for deaths that occur when an arsonist or building owner burns down a building for economic advantage and someone dies in the fire. The victims are considered victims of a criminal homicide even if their deaths were not intended. This code also applies when “firebugs” set fire to a building or property for kicks and someone dies in the blaze. It does not apply when arson is used to cover up a homicide (because the arson was not a precipitative event).

Rape, sexual assault – Sexual contact without consent. Includes sex with a minor with or without consent. Ranges from the non-consensual touching of an intimate part of the body to forced, manipulated, or coerced penetration. It can involve verbal coercion and threats, physical restraint, intimidation, or violence.

Gambling – To play games of chance for money or other stakes with the hope of gaining something beyond the amount played. This includes dealing, operating, or maintaining any game.

Assault/homicide – An unlawful fatal or nonfatal attack by one person upon another. To qualify as a serious crime, the assault should be an aggravated assault (one that involves bodily injury or threat with a deadly weapon). The following cases would qualify as Crime-Related, and “NtCrm1” should be coded as Assault/homicide: gang kills a rival gang member in retaliation for a previous homicide (the current homicide was precipitated in part by the previous homicide); police shoot a man who is stabbing a woman (the aggravated assault on the woman precipitated the officer shooting). The following case would NOT qualify as Crime-Related: two men are engaged in a fistfight; the fight escalates and one man shoots the other. (In an incident involving mutual assault that escalates to homicide, the initial assault is an integral part of the incident and not a separate precipitative crime).

Witness intimidation/elimination – To prevent a witness from providing information to the authorities about a crime either by killing, harming, or removing the witness, or by intentionally saying or doing something that would cause the witness to be fearful of providing information.

Name	Label	Table	Type	Field Length	Priority	Primacy
NtCrm1	Nature of first other crime:	Person	Number	2	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR
NtCrm2	Nature of second other crime:	Person	Number	2	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR

Response Options:

NtCrm1
and
NtCrim2

- 1 Drug trade
- 2 Robbery
- 3 Burglary
- 5 Motor vehicle theft
- 6 Arson
- 7 Rape, sexual assault
- 9 Gambling
- 10 Assault, homicide
- 11 Witness intimidation/elimination
- 66 Other (specify in narrative)
- 88 Not applicable
- 99 Unknown

Data Standards or Guidelines

FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program, Supplementary Homicide Report

First other crime in progress: InProg

Name	Definition
InProg	The precipitative crime was in progress at the time of the homicide

Uses

For homicides that are precipitated by criminal activity such as drug dealing and robbery, InProg identifies whether the associated crime was in progress. The Supplementary Homicide Report system defines felony-related homicides only in terms of in-progress felonies. Because NVDRS uses a broader definition, this variable identifies only those that qualify as felony-related using the narrower definition.

Discussion

An in-progress crime is one that is being committed or attempted at the time of the homicide. This includes fleeing the scene.

Name	Label	Table	Type	Field Length	Priority	Primacy
InProg	First other crime in progress:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR

Response Options:

InProg	0	No, Not Available, Unknown
	1	Yes

Data Standards or Guidelines

NVISS

Argument over money/property: Argue

Name	Definition
Argue	An argument or conflict over money or property led to the homicide

Uses

This variable distinguishes homicide incidents that involve conflicts over money or property from more general interpersonal conflicts. This is useful for specifying the context in which drug-related homicides occur.

Discussion

Code when an interpersonal conflict between a victim and suspect involves conflict over money, property, or drugs.

Case Examples

Yes

- The victim and suspect are overheard arguing about who owns a sofa that belonged to the victim, but was left in the suspect’s apartment.
- The victim and suspect argue about how to divide up the cocaine they just purchased.
- The victim owed the suspect money.

No

- The victim and the suspect, who were cousins, were heard arguing. The subject of the argument is unknown.

Name	Label	Table	Type	Field Length	Priority	Primacy
Argue	Argument over money/property:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR

Response Options:

Argue

- 0 No, Not Available, Unknown
- 1 Yes

Data Standards or Guidelines

FBI Supplementary Homicide Report

Jealousy (lovers’ triangle): Jealous

Name	Definition
Jealous	Identifies cases in which jealousy or distress over an intimate partner’s relationship or suspected relationship with another person lead to the homicide

Uses

This variable will better specify the nature of violence between intimate partners and sexual rivals, for more accurate characterization of these incidents.

Discussion

In general, assume that if an incident involves sexual rivals; “Jealous” should be coded as “Yes” unless the circumstances clearly do not involve jealousy.

Case Examples

Yes

- An ex-wife is getting married to new boyfriend. Ex-husband waits for them to leave ex-wife’s apartment, then shoots both.
- A woman stabs her boyfriend after learning that he has been cheating on her.

No

- An ex-boyfriend is buying drugs from his ex-girlfriend’s new boyfriend when the new boyfriend is shot. Records indicate that the homicide was drug-related and do not indicate jealousy as a factor.

Name	Label	Table	Type	Field Length	Priority	Primacy
Jealous	Jealousy (lovers’ triangle):	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR

Response Options:

Jealous

- 0 No, Not Available, Unknown
- 1 Yes

Data Standards or Guidelines

FBI Supplementary Homicide Report

Intimate partner violence related: IPV

Name	Definition
IPV	Identifies cases in which a homicide is related to conflict between current or former intimate partners

Uses

This variable will (1) track homicides in which one intimate partner kills another and (2) track deaths that are associated with intimate partner conflict/violence but are not deaths of the intimate partners themselves. It will be used to evaluate policies and programs aimed at reducing domestic violence.

Discussion

An intimate partner is defined as a current or former girlfriend/boyfriend, date, or spouse. If other people are also killed (a child, friend of the victim, a bystander) or if the intimate partner is not (the child of the intimate partner is the victim), code “Yes” for those victims as well. It will be apparent in the Victim-Suspect Relationship variable whether the victim and suspect were intimate partners or not. The definition of intimate partner includes first dates.

Case Examples**Yes**

- A woman and her lawyer are getting into a car; the woman’s ex-boyfriend walks up to the woman and shoots her and the lawyer. (Code “Yes” for both the woman and the lawyer.)
- A man and his boyfriend are out at a party. The ex-boyfriend of the man is outraged that he would show up at a party with his new boyfriend. The ex-boyfriend pulls out a gun and shoots both. (Also code “Jealous” as “Yes”.)
- A man and woman are out on their first date. They go back to her apartment after the date. The man tries to force the woman into bed and strangles her to death.
- A man shoots the child of his ex-girlfriend to get back at her for leaving him. The woman is not killed.
- A man is beating his ex-girlfriend. The son of the woman intervenes and stabs the boyfriend to death.

No

- A man administers an overdose to his terminally-ill wife in a mercy killing. Wife leaves note indicating her request that her husband end her life.

Person/CFR-CME-PR/Circumstance Elements/Homicide Circumstances

Name	Label	Table	Type	Field Length	Priority	Primacy
IPV	Intimate partner violence related:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR

Response Options:

IPV

- 0 No, Not Available, Unknown
- 1 Yes

Data Standards or Guidelines

NVISS

Other argument, abuse, conflict: OthArg

Name	Definition
OthArg	An argument or other interpersonal conflict such as abuse, insult, grudge, or personal revenge that precipitated the killing. Excludes arguments over money/property (Argue), intimate partner violence (IPV), and jealousy between intimate partners (Jealous)

Uses

In conjunction with Argue, IPV, and Jealous, this variable can be used to assess how often violence-related deaths are associated with interpersonal conflict or abuse.

Discussion

This variable is designed to capture all other types of interpersonal conflicts, arguments or abuse that are not already covered by “Argument over money,” “Jealousy,” or “Intimate partner violence related.” Cases that appear to involve child abuse, elder abuse, and abuse by a caretaker should be coded “Yes” for “OthArg”. It may seem awkward not to have a specific variable called “abuse.” However, different practitioners in the various fields of abuse prevention apply different definitions of abuse. For example, some definitions require that the suspect be a caretaker of the victim (information that is captured in the variable, CareTk) and some require that there be a history of ongoing abuse (captured in the variable Abuse), both of which are in the victim-suspect relationship table. Using a combination of OthArg, CareTk, Victim-suspect relationship, and Abuse should give analysts flexibility in identifying cases that appear to be abuse-related according to a variety of definitions.

Case Examples

Yes

- The suspect was trying to quiet a crying baby when he lost his temper and shook the baby to death. Also indicate whether there was evidence of ongoing abuse on the victim-suspect relationship table.
- The victim and suspect were arguing over a parking spot.
- The victim is killed by an acquaintance in retaliation for a dispute they had on the basketball court earlier in the evening.

No

- The victim is shot by an acquaintance for an unknown reason.

Name	Label	Table	Type	Field Length	Priority	Primacy
OthArg	Other argument, abuse, conflict:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR

Response Options:

OthArg

- 0 No, Not Available, Unknown
- 1 Yes

Data Standards or Guidelines

NVISS

Drug involvement: Drug

Name	Definition
Drug	Drug dealing or illegal drug use is suspected to have played a role in precipitating the homicide

Uses

Identifying drug involvement homicides will assist in more fully measuring the social costs of drug activity and evaluating the impact of policies and programs aimed at reducing drug trafficking and use.

Discussion

Code “Drug” as “Yes” if the homicide was related to illegally trafficking a controlled substance (e.g., drug deal gone bad, drug market turf battle, theft of drugs or money from a dealer during a drug deal, etc.) or drug use (e.g., addict committing robbery to obtain money for drugs, arguments over drugs). This variable can be coded based on suspicion of drug-relatedness. For example, if the victim’s body was found in a crack house or the victim had illegal drugs on their person at the time of death, code “Drug” as “Yes” unless it is noted in the record that the precipitative circumstance was not drug-related.

Case Examples

Yes

- A drug purchaser argues with a drug dealer about being cheated on the last deal and the dealer shoots him.
- A young dealer kills his grandmother because she will not allow him to sell drugs out of her home.
- A drug dealer has a rival drug dealer murdered because he has been encroaching on the first dealer’s territory.
- A crack addict robs someone on the street for money to buy drugs.
- A 16 year-old addict kills his mother during a fight after she flushes his drugs down the toilet.
- Two men break into the apartment of a drug dealer because they know he’s holding on to a large sum of cash from a recent deal; they kill him and take the money.
- A homicide victim is found in his car with a large quantity of crack cocaine on the seat next to him; no other information is available about what precipitated the homicide.

No

- A known drug dealer is murdered by his girlfriend after she discovers that he has been sleeping with another woman. (Although he is a known drug dealer, the facts of the case are known to be related to sexual jealousy and intimate partner violence, not drug dealing.)

Name	Label	Table	Type	Field Length	Priority	Primacy
Drug	Drug involvement:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR

Response Options:

Drug

0 No, Not available, Unknown

1 Yes

Data Standards or Guidelines

NVISS

Gang related: Gang

Name	Definition
Gang	Gang rivalry or gang activities that are suspected to have played a role in precipitating the homicide

Uses

This variable identifies the proportion of homicides that are attributable to gang activity. It can be used to evaluate the impact of programs or policies aimed at redirecting gang activity or reducing gang membership.

Discussion

Gang members are persons who are members of an association or organization that has, as one of its purposes, the commission of crime. Gangs include both youth gangs and organized crime gangs. Code “Gang” as “Yes” if the police or CME report indicates that the homicide resulted, or is suspected to have resulted, from gang rivalry or gang activity. Do not endorse “Gang” if the victim or suspect is a gang member, but the homicide did not appear to result from gang activity.

Case Examples

Yes

- A gang member shoots a rival gang member in revenge over an earlier shooting.
- A member of a gang that controls drug trafficking in the neighborhood shoots a man who robbed one of their dealers.

No

- A man shoots another young man over an insult the young man made about the suspect’s girlfriend. The victim is a gang member. (Although the victim is a gang member, the incident is not related to gang activity. Indicate in the narrative that the victim is a gang member.)

Name	Label	Table	Type	Field Length	Priority	Primacy
Gang	Gang related:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR

Response Options:

Gang

- 0 No, Not available, Unknown
- 1 Yes

Data Standards or Guidelines

FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program, Supplementary Homicide Report

OTHER HOMICIDE PRECIPITATING CIRCUMSTANCE

Hate crime:	Hate
Brawl (mutual physical fight):	Brawl
Terrorist attack:	Terror
Victim was a bystander:	Bystd
Victim was a police officer on duty:	PolOff
Victim was intervener assisting crime victim:	Interv
Mercy killing:	Mercy
Other homicide circumstance (specify):	Other

Name	Definition
Hate	The homicide was precipitated by a hate crime (specify type in incident narrative)
Brawl	A mutual physical fight preceded the homicide
Terror	The homicide resulted from a terrorist attack
Bystd	The victim was a bystander, not the intended target of the homicide
PolOff	The victim was a law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty
Interv	An intervener other than a law enforcement officer was killed while assisting a crime victim
Mercy	The victim requested that his or her life be brought to an end so the suspect committed the act to bring about the victim's death
Other	A circumstance not covered by the existing variables was a precipitative factor in the homicide

Uses

These data elements characterize the precipitants of violent deaths and help to identify trends in subtypes of violence over time. They will aid in planning and evaluating prevention programs targeted at specific subtypes of violence.

Discussion

Hate – A crime of aggravated assault, arson, burglary, criminal homicide, motor vehicle theft, robbery, sexual assault, or crime involving bodily injury in which the victim was intentionally selected because of their actual or perceived race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or disability. Specify the type of hate crime in the Incident Narrative.

Brawl – Persons were involved in a mutual, physical fight. The brawl may or may not escalate to involve weapons. Do not code Brawl if the attack was one-sided (e.g., a group beats a single victim to death). Do not code as Brawl if only two people were fighting.

Terror – The victim was injured in a terrorist attack, whether with conventional, chemical, biological, or other weapons. This would include those who died while assisting in rescue operations from the attack. The NVDRS uses the FBI definition of terrorism: “Injuries resulting from the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.” Terrorism is not limited to terrorism by foreign nationals but includes domestic terrorism as well (e.g., abortion clinic bombing, anti-war bombing).

Bystd – The victim was a bystander and not directly involved in the incident (e.g., pedestrian walking past a gang fight, customer in a convenience store at the time of a robbery). Also code the precipitative event (e.g., gang-related, robbery).

PolOff – At the time of the incident, the victim was a law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty. Also code the precipitative event.

Interv – The victim was attempting to assist a crime victim at the time of the incident. Also code the crime in which the victim was intervening. Examples: A woman was being beaten by her boyfriend; her child intervened and the boyfriend killed the child. A firefighter dies from smoke inhalation while trying to put out a fire set by an arsonist.

Mercy – The suspect acts to bring about immediate death allegedly in a painless way and based on a clear indication that the dying person wished to die because of a terminal or hopeless disease or condition. Do not assume that a murder/suicide by a sick, elderly couple is a mercy killing. Code “Mercy” as “Yes” only when there is documentation that the victim wanted to be killed (e.g., left a note, told a relative or friend) and the police are not charging the suspect with an intentional homicide.

Other –

Mentally ill suspect – The suspect’s attack on the victim is believed to be the direct result of the suspect’s mental illness (e.g., the suspect attacks a woman on the street and claims that an angel told him the woman was one of Satan’s minions).

Random violence – The victim was killed by a random act of violence. A random act is one in which the suspect is not concerned with who is being harmed, just that someone is being harmed, such as a person who shoots randomly at passing cars from a highway bridge or opens fire in a crowded shopping mall. This code should not be used for unsolved homicides. It should also not be used for cases in which the overall target was chosen intentionally (such as a white supremacist group opening fire in a daycare center that serves children of color, or a suspect returning to the job from which he was recently fired and kills several people; while the actual individuals may have been selected at random, the place was intentionally targeted).

Drive-by – A drive-by shooting is one in which the suspect or group of suspects drives near an intended victim or target and shoots while driving. Code “Drive-by” even if the actual victim was a bystander and not the intended victim. Drive-by is the mechanism by which the victim was shot; also choose a precipitative circumstance code to document why the drive-by occurred, if known.

Other – Code “Other” only if a precipitative circumstance does not fall under existing circumstance codes. This code should be used infrequently and should not be used for unknown circumstances. Specify the circumstance in the Incident Narrative.

Name	Label	Table	Type	Field Length	Priority	Primacy
Hate	Hate crime:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR
Brawl	Brawl (mutual physical fight):	Person	Checkbox	1	O/O/O	CFR/CME/PR
Terror	Terrorist attack:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/O/O	CFR/CME/PR
Bystd	Victim was a bystander:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR
PolOff	Victim was a police officer on duty:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR
Interv	Victim was intervener assisting crime victim:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR
Mercy	Mercy killing:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR
Other	Other homicide circumstance (specify):	Person	Number	1	O/O/O	CFR/CME/PR

Response Options:

- Hate thru Mercy
 - 0 No, Not Available, Unknown
 - 1 Yes
- Other
 - 1 Mentally ill suspect
 - 2 Random violence
 - 3 Drive-by shooting
 - 8 Other

Data Standards or Guidelines

NVISS; FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program, Supplementary Homicide Report

Justifiable self defense/law enforcement: Defens

Name	Definition
Defens	The homicide was committed by a law enforcement officer in the line of duty or was committed by a civilian in legitimate self-defense or in defense of others

Uses

This variable identifies the subset of homicides that involve socially-sanctioned use of lethal force.

Discussion

Justifiable homicides include those that are committed by a law enforcement officer in the line of duty or by a civilian in self-defense or in defense of others. Self-defense is defined as the right of a civilian to repel by force, even to the taking of life, or in defense of his person or property against anyone who attempts by violence or surprise to commit a forcible felony. Essential elements of self-defense are that the civilian does not provoke difficulty and that there must be impending peril without a convenient or reasonable mode of escape. Sufficient evidence is required to support coding a case as a defensive or justifiable act. It is not enough that the police record notes that the suspect claims his or her life was in danger. Acceptable evidence is that either the SHR codes the case as a justifiable homicide or police records indicate that police and prosecutors have classified the case as a justifiable homicide. If a case is coded as “Yes” for “Defens”, be sure to code the precipitative event that led to the killing as well. Any killing by a law enforcement officer in the line of duty is considered a justifiable homicide with the exception of an intentional murder.

Case Examples

Yes

- An armed suspect enters a gas station to commit a robbery; the clerk pulls a gun out from under the counter and kills the suspect.
- An officer is attempting to apprehend a robbery suspect; the suspect pulls a gun and fires at the officer, and the officer returns fire, shooting the suspect.
- An officer stops a man erroneously believed to be a suspect in a robbery. The man reaches for his wallet to prove his identity, but the officer mistakes this as going for a gun and shoots the man. (Whether the killing was truly justifiable is not something that the coder should interpret; because the officer was acting in the line of duty, it should be coded as “Yes”.)

No

- The victim and suspect are arguing and begin shoving one another; the victim pulls out a knife; the suspect pulls out his gun and shoots the victim. The suspect is charged with second-degree murder.
- A woman kills her boyfriend against whom she has a restraining order. She claims self-defense, but she is charged with murder. (Although she may eventually be acquitted of the charges, code based on the current police-designated status of the case.)

- An on-duty police officer drives to his wife’s place of work and kills her. He is arrested for her murder. (Although he is on duty at the time, the killing was not in the line of duty.)

Name	Label	Table	Type	Field Length	Priority	Primacy
Defens	Justifiable self defense/ law enforcement:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/LR/LR	CFR/CME/PR

Response Options:

Defens

- 0 No, Not Available, Unknown
- 1 Yes

Data Standards or Guidelines

FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program, Supplementary Homicide Report

Victim used weapon: UsedWeap

Name	Definition
UsedWeap	The victim used a weapon during the course of the incident

Uses

This variable identifies the subset of homicides that involve armed victims who used their weapon during the course of the incident.

Discussion

Code “UsedWeap” as “Yes” if the victim was armed with a weapon such as a gun, knife, or blunt instrument and used the weapon either to attack or to defend against the suspect or another person during the incident. Please also code this variable as “Yes” when a person made an attempt to use a weapon. For example, if a person made an attempt to pull a gun, but did not actually fire a round.

Case Examples

Yes

- Two men are arguing; one goes after the other with a knife. The suspect shoots the man with the knife.
- A police officer stops a man for a routine traffic violation; the man attempts to run the officer down with his vehicle and the officer shoots the man. (The car is considered a weapon in this scenario.)

No

- At the murder scene, investigators find the victim’s pistol in his shoulder holster.

Name	Label	Table	Type	Field Length	Priority	Primacy
UsedWeap	Victim used weapon:	Person	Checkbox	1	O/O/O	CFR/CME/PR

Response Options:

UsedWeap

- 0 No, Not Available, Unknown
- 1 Yes

Data Standards or Guidelines

NVISS