

# 2022

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN TENNESSEE

- *DOMESTIC OFFENSE BREAKDOWN*
- *VICTIM ANALYSIS*
- *VICTIM-OFFENDER RELATIONSHIPS*



A PUBLICATION OF THE TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTER | CRIME STATISTICS UNIT



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**DAVID B. RAUSCH**  
Director

December 15, 2023

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Each year the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation releases annual reports on crimes reported by law enforcement agencies to the Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System (TIBRS) program in seven different reports. The TIBRS data contains a wide range of incident level information including victim and offender demographics.

The issue of domestic violence is by no means a novel problem in American society. The persistence of domestic violence and the large number of related incidents reported to law enforcement necessitate continued awareness about this issue. In an effort to gain more insight into the problem of domestic violence within the state of Tennessee, the current study analyzes crime data collected from the Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System, hereafter referred to as TIBRS. Utilizing this TIBRS crime data, offenses flagged as domestic violence for 2022 are included in the report.

I would like to thank all contributing agencies for their hard work and contributions to making this report a thorough and accurate picture of crime in Tennessee. It is only with their support the state continues to maintain such a successful program.

Sincerely,

David B. Rausch  
Director



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The issue of domestic violence is by no means a novel problem in the American society. However, the persistence of domestic violence and the large number of related incidents reported to law enforcement necessitate continued awareness about this issue. In an effort to gain more insight into the problem of domestic violence within the state of Tennessee, this study analyzes recent crime data collected from the Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System (TIBRS). Utilizing this TIBRS crime data, offenses flagged as domestic related in 2022 were examined.

## **OVERALL FINDINGS**

Upon initially examining the TIBRS data submitted for domestic violence offenses, several parameters for the study were established. The data included in this study had to meet the following criteria: Crimes Against Persons offense(s); offense(s) flagged by the law enforcement agency as being domestically related; and victim gender could not be reported as Unknown. The total number of domestic violence victims reported in the state for 2022 amounted to 62,217. It should be noted that individuals who reported domestic abuse in more than one incident during the study period will be duplicated accordingly in this report's victim count. The majority of these victims were female (71.20%) outnumbering male victims by almost 3 to 1.

An analysis of race breakdown revealed that White victims, the race majority for all offenses, accounted for 54.58% of victims reported in 2022. A total of 6,813 juveniles, or individuals under age eighteen, accounted for 10.97% of all victims. When examining relationship types, domestic violence occurred predominately in Boyfriend/Girlfriend relationships at 40.25%, followed by Spouse at 16.15% in 2022. The most common weapon reported was Personal Weapons (hands, feet, teeth, etc.) at 39,746. A total of 65.26% of domestic violence cases were cleared in 2022.

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSES**

Crimes identified as domestically related in TIBRS must always have the victim type of Individual. Crimes Against Society and Crimes Against Property cannot be flagged as domestic violence in TIBRS. There are 17 offenses considered to be Crimes Against Persons. Of these, 12 were included in the study with the five omitted offenses being Negligent Manslaughter, Negligent Vehicular Manslaughter, Justifiable Homicide, Commercial Sex Acts, and Involuntary Servitude. Findings found that from 2021 to 2022, domestic violence offenses decreased 8.37%.

<b>Domestic Violence Offense Type</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Murder	99	88	97
Kidnapping/Abduction	1,442	1,549	1,286
Rape	729	718	598
Sodomy	161	160	138
Sexual Assault W/Object	66	94	73
Fondling	754	692	653
Incest	38	12	10
Statutory Rape	116	90	67
Aggravated Assault	11,190	11,067	10,447
Simple Assault	46,264	44,302	40,499
Intimidation	8,576	8,106	7,397
Stalking	870	1,023	952
<b>Total</b>	<b>70,305</b>	<b>67,901</b>	<b>62,217</b>

<b>Statewide Violent Offense Totals</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Murder	697	711	611
Kidnapping/Abduction	2,065	2,221	1,954
Rape	2,318	2,411	2,156
Sodomy	479	466	472
Sexual Assault W/Object	236	294	225
Fondling	2,395	2,774	2,968
Incest	44	28	17
Statutory Rape	427	371	317
Aggravated Assault	37,974	38,564	36,692
Simple Assault	73,393	74,764	72,801
Intimidation	24,473	25,145	24,918
Stalking	1,607	1,851	1,838
<b>Total</b>	<b>146,108</b>	<b>149,600</b>	<b>144,969</b>

Note: The above chart has been generated from data gathered from the 2022 "Crime in Tennessee" publication.

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS**

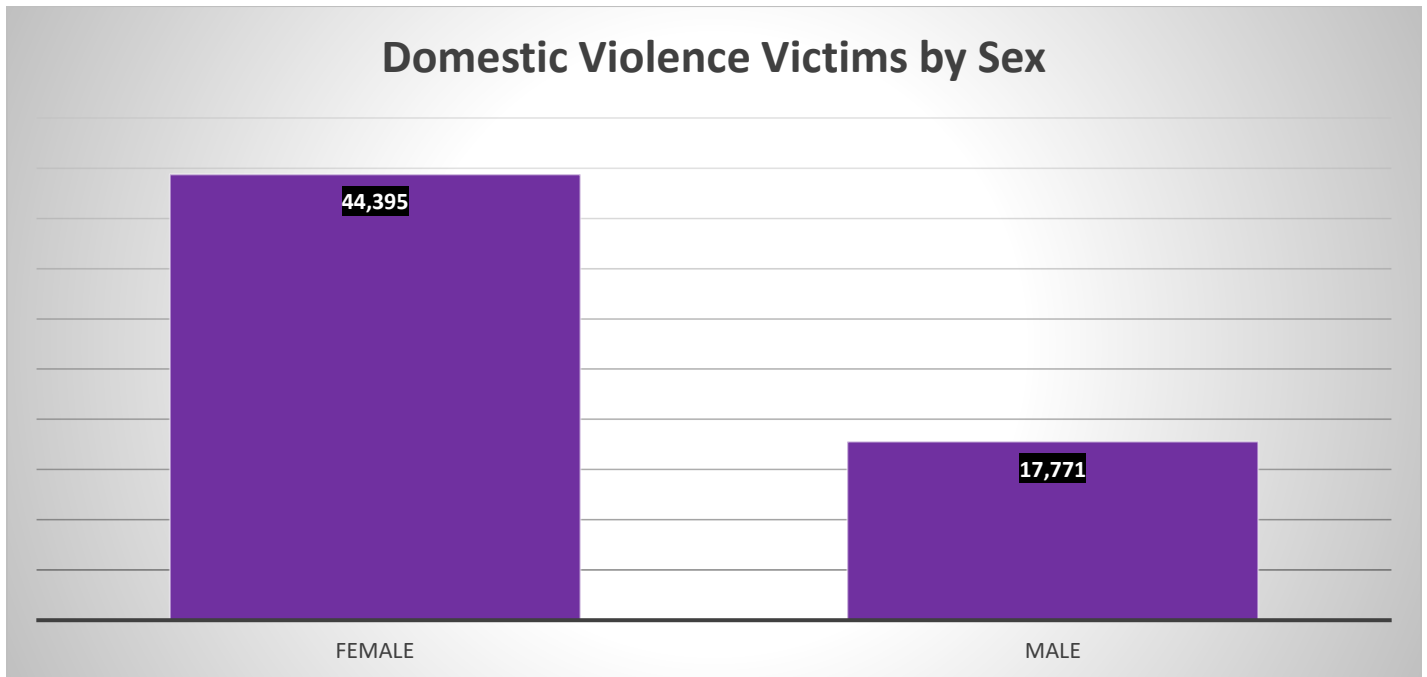
Domestic violence may often be perceived as violence against women. There are numerous agencies nationally and locally which advocate specifically for battered and abused women. The current analyses of domestic offenses in the state of Tennessee support this notion that domestic violence is most often reported as being committed toward a female victim.

## Total Percentage of Victims by Offense

Offense	Female		Male		Unknown		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Murder	60	0.14%	37	0.21%	0	0.00%	97	0.16%
Kidnapping/Abduction	909	2.05%	375	2.11%	2	3.92%	1,286	2.07%
Rape	592	1.33%	6	0.03%	0	0.00%	598	0.96%
Sodomy	85	0.19%	53	0.30%	0	0.00%	138	0.22%
Sexual Assault W/Object	68	0.15%	5	0.03%	0	0.00%	73	0.12%
Fondling	558	1.26%	93	0.52%	2	3.92%	653	1.05%
Incest	6	0.01%	4	0.02%	0	0.00%	10	0.02%
Statutory Rape	54	0.12%	13	0.07%	0	0.00%	67	0.11%
Aggravated Assault	6,882	15.50%	3,559	20.03%	6	11.76%	10,447	16.79%
Simple Assault	28,630	64.49%	11,833	66.59%	36	70.59%	40,499	65.09%
Intimidation	5,748	12.95%	1,644	12.95%	5	9.80%	7,397	11.89%
Stalking	803	1.81%	149	0.84%	0	0.00%	952	1.53%
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,395</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>17,771</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>62,217</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

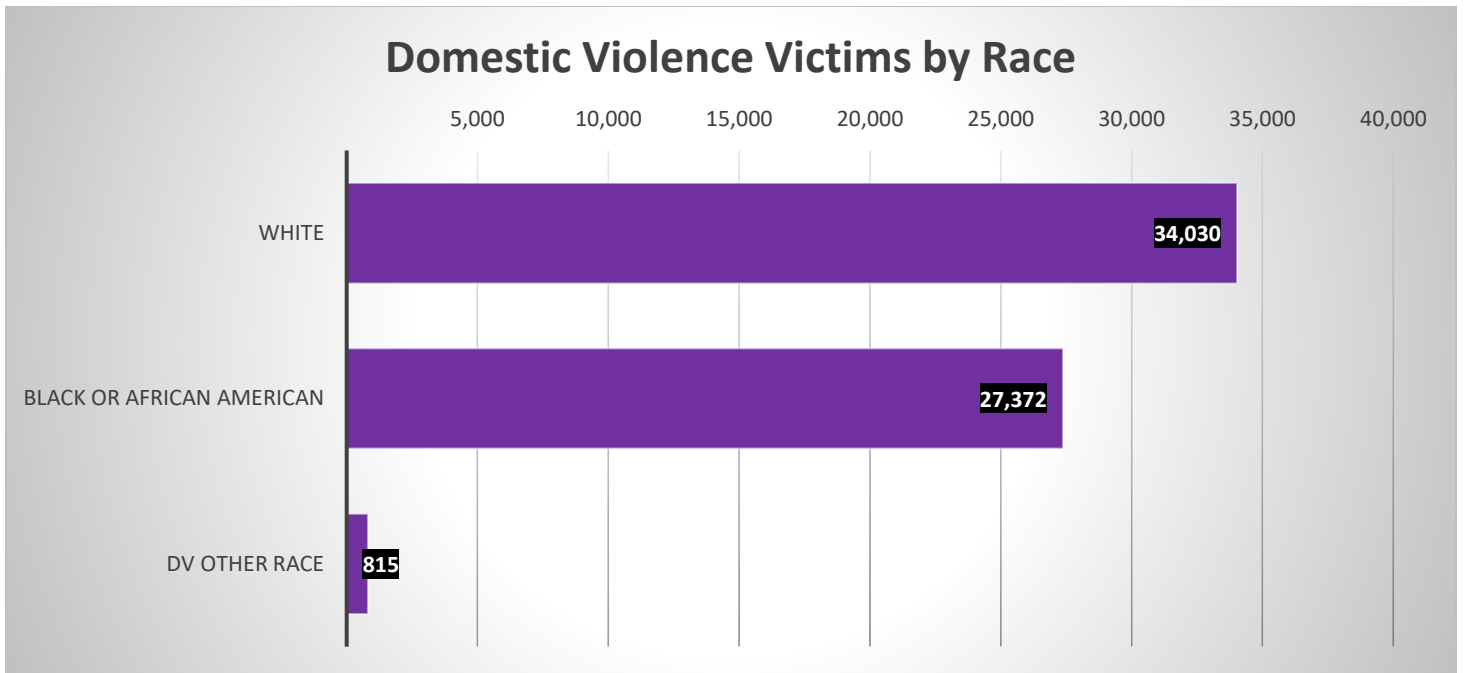
Note: Unknown is listed in this table to accurately represent data reported in 2022. The category of unknown will not be listed in other tables or charts throughout this report.

In 2022, a total of 62,217 domestic violence victims were reported to the TIBRS program. Per TIBRS reporting guidelines, up to 10 offenses may be reported per each incident, such as the ones listed in the above table.



Domestic violence victims in 2022 were overwhelmingly Female, accounting for 71.20% of victims of a known sex. This makes up nearly triple the amount of Male victims, who make up 28.80% of domestic violence victims.

## Domestic Violence Victims by Race

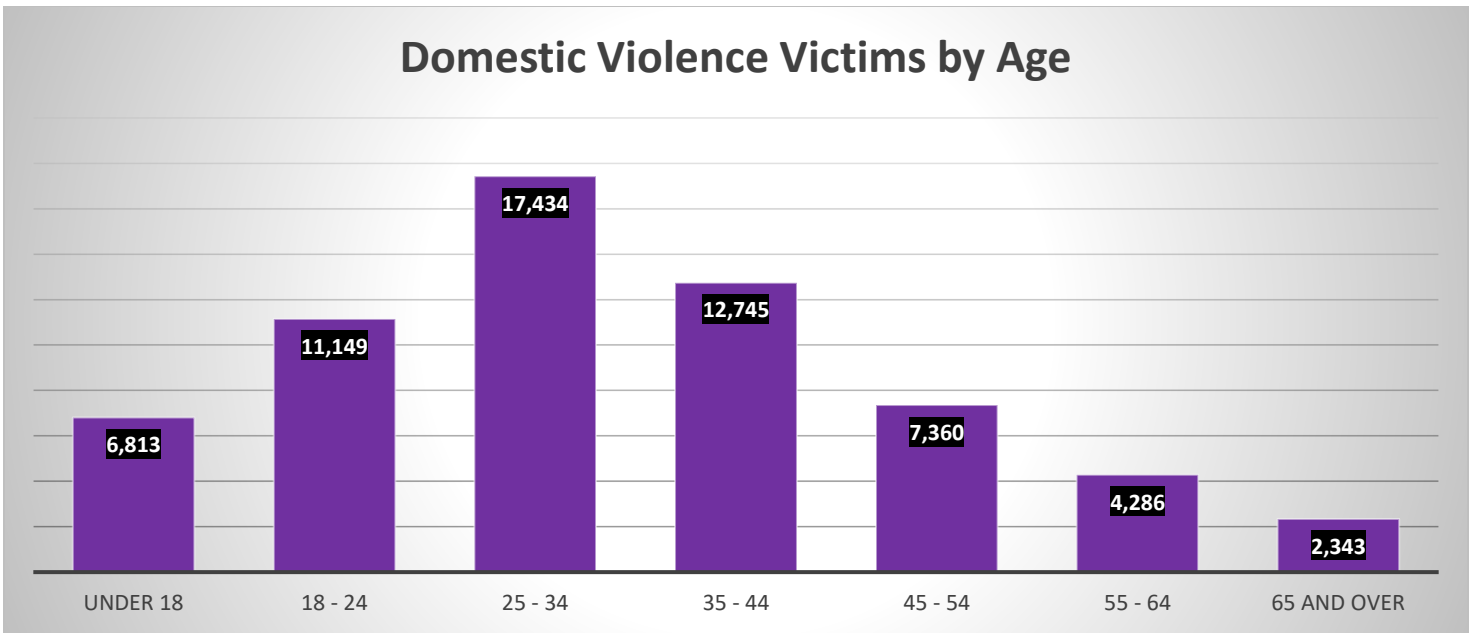


The races of victims of domestic violence in 2022 almost entirely fell into either the category of White or Black or African American, with all other races making up 1.31% of reported victims. Of the groups with a larger portion of reports, White victims made up the majority at 54.70% of reported victims and Black or African American provided the remaining 43.99% of victims.

Offense Type	White	Black or African American
Murder	55	40
Kidnapping/Abduction	630	638
Rape	417	170
Sodomy	83	52
Sexual Assault W/Object	53	18
Fondling	489	147
Incest	5	5
Statutory Rape	47	17
Aggravated Assault	5,080	5,268
Simple Assault	23,329	16,618
Intimidation	3,331	3,970
Stalking	511	429

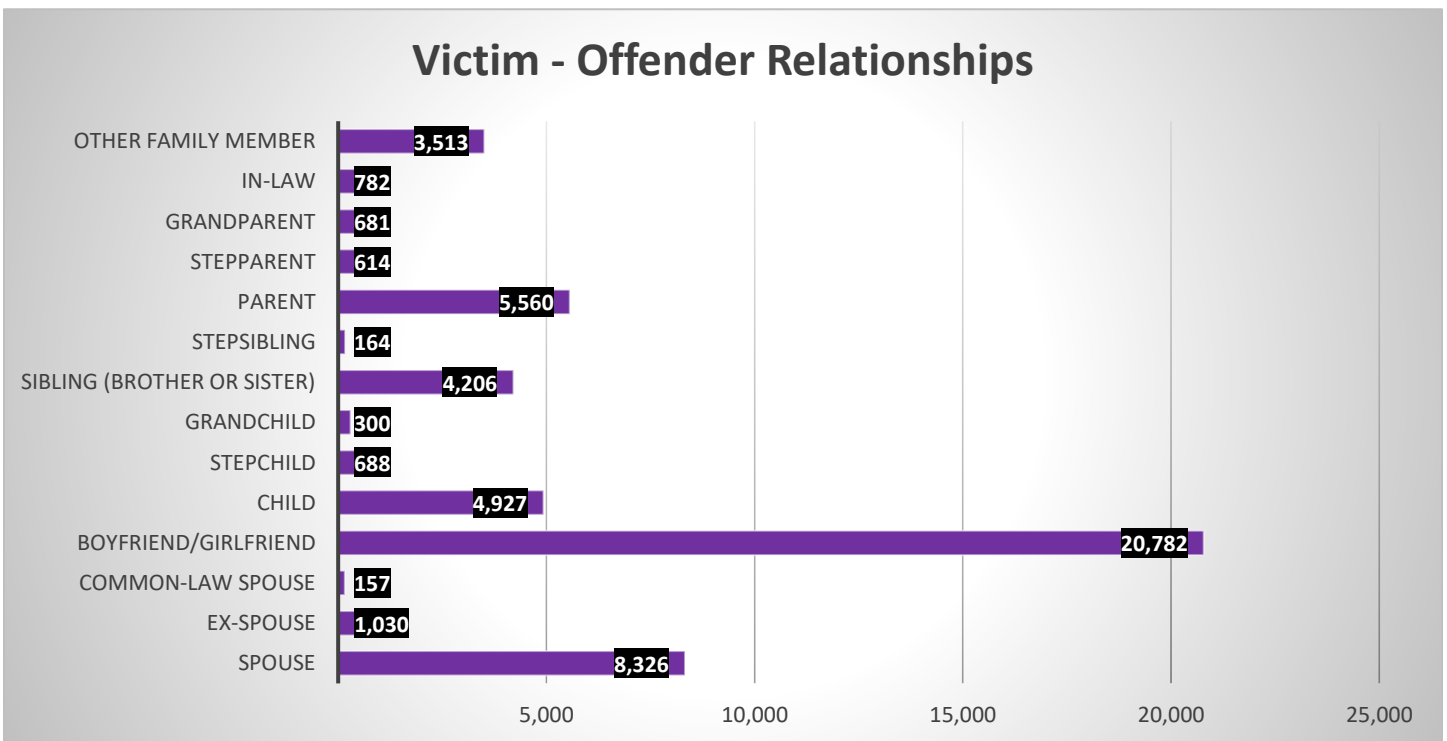
When breaking down different domestic violence offenses between White and Black or African American victims, a few notable details emerge. Firstly, while reported victims categorized as White make up a higher amount of most offenses as would be expected, the opposite is true for Kidnapping/Abduction, Aggravated Assault, and Intimidation crimes, where the majority of victims are reported as Black or African American. While White victims make up the majority of victims most types of domestic violence, the difference is especially apparent with sex crimes, where in the cases of Rape, Sexual Assault with an Object, Fondling, and Statutory Rape, there are over twice as many reported White victims than Black or African American victims.

## Domestic Violence Victims by Age



Another facet of reported domestic violence victims examined was to look at them by their age. When examining reported age groups, the peak number of reported victims were in the age range 25-34, accounting for 28.06% of domestic violence victims. After age 34, reported victims taper off until victims aged 65 or older make up the smallest age group at 3.77%.

## VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIPS

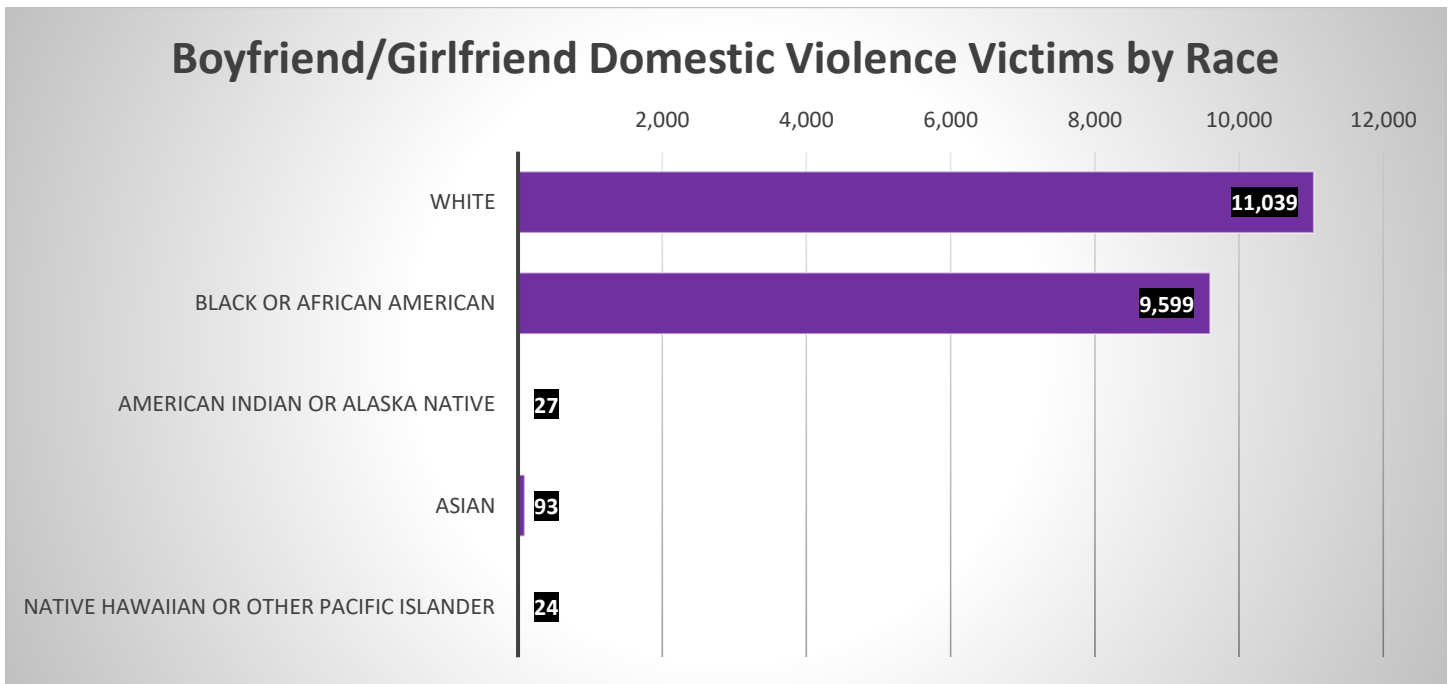


When breaking down domestic violence reports by victim offender relationships, the most commonly reported relationship by far is Boyfriend/Girlfriend, with 40.17% of reported relationships. Following that, Spouse was the second most reported relationship at 16.10%.

Racial Breakdown of Spouse/Ex-Spouse Domestic Offenses		
Spouse	2022	%
<b>Male</b>	<b>2,144</b>	
White	1,520	16.38%
Black or African American	624	6.72%
<b>Female</b>	<b>6,106</b>	
White	4,531	48.83%
Black or African American	1,575	16.97%
<b>Ex-Spouse</b>	<b>2022</b>	
<b>Male</b>	<b>282</b>	
White	201	2.17%
Black or African American	81	0.87%
<b>Female</b>	<b>748</b>	
White	545	5.87%
Black or African American	203	2.19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,280</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Note: Due to the racial groups White or Black or African American being reported in the vast majority of cases, other racial groups were not statistically significant enough to be included in the above table.

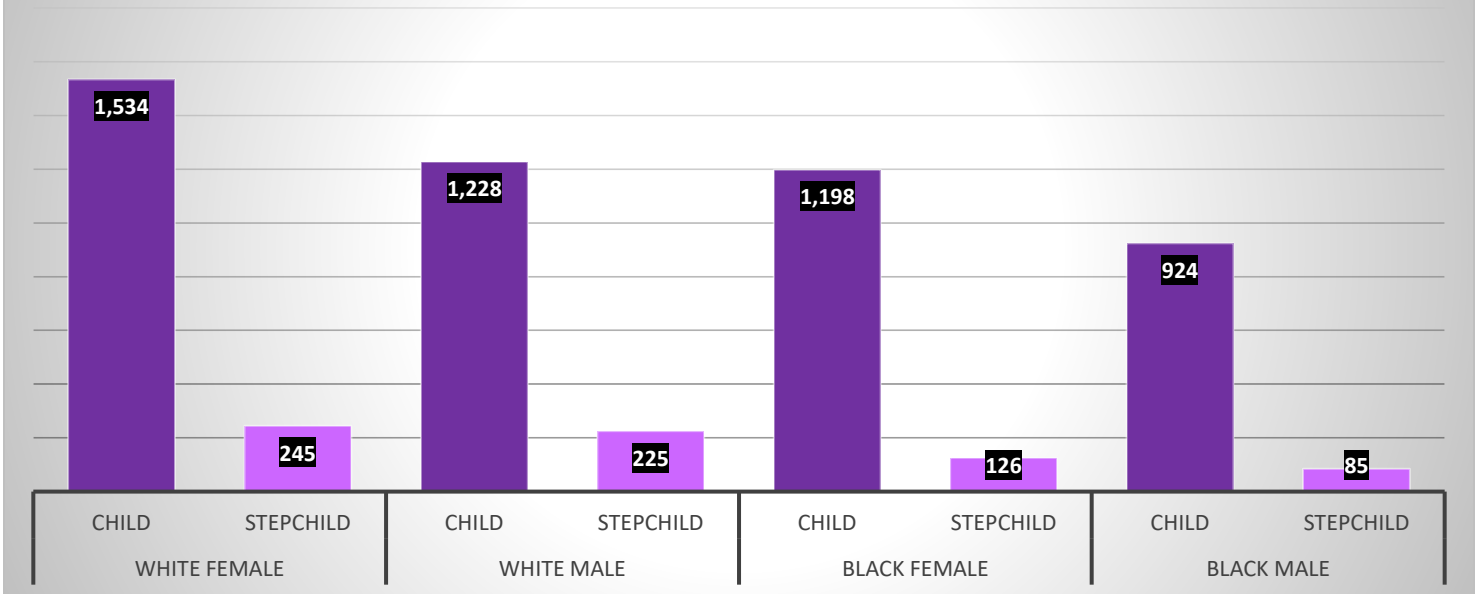
In all Spouse and Ex-Spouse domestic violence incidences, the number of victims reported as White outnumber those reported as Black or African American, with most categories that have reported White victims having nearly 3 times as many reports.



As with the race breakdown in overall domestic violence incidents, White and Black or African American make up the two main groups represented by victims categorized as Boyfriend/Girlfriend, accounting for 99.31% of reported relationships between the two. More specifically, White victims accounted for 53.12% of these victims, with Black or African American victims composing the remaining 46.19%.



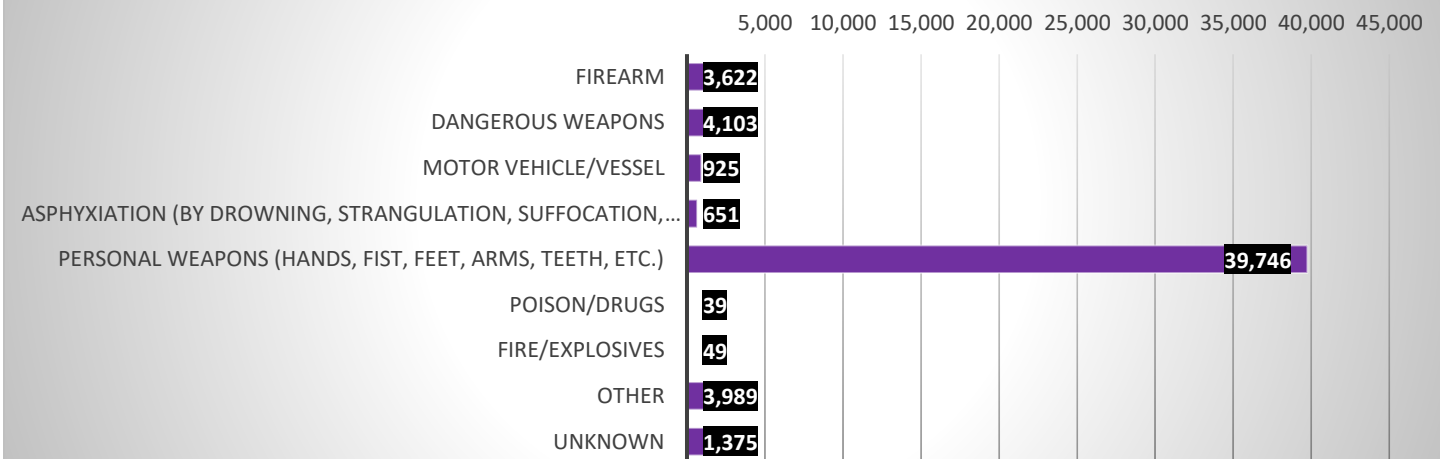
## Child and Stepchild by Race and Sex



Domestic Violence victims categorized as Child happened drastically more often than those reported as Stepchild, with the two totaling 4,884 and 681 victims respectively. Despite a lower amount of Black or African American victims when compared to White victims, both show the same general trend of victims within their respective groups.

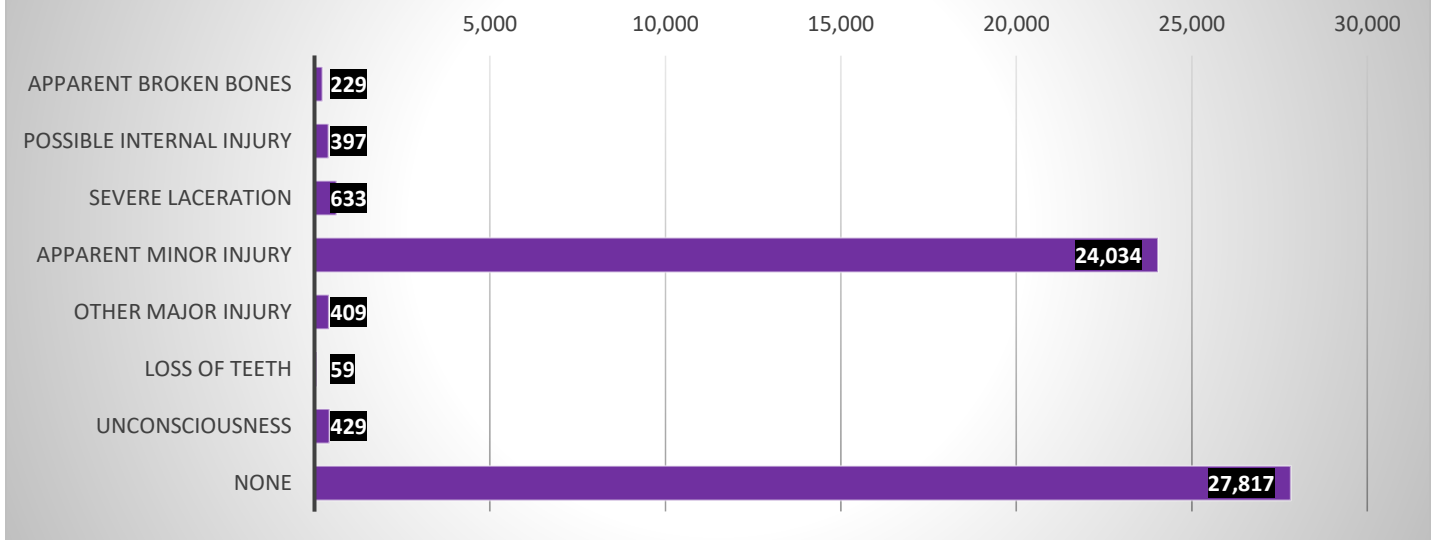
## WEAPONS AND INJURIES

### Domestic Violence Weapons Used



In TIBRS, up to three weapons may be submitted per offense when reporting weapons used. In 2022, a total of 88,600 weapon types were reported. Given the fact that Simple Assault counted for the majority of reported domestic violence offenses, Personal Weapons accounted for the vast majority, at 72.93% of reported weapon types. The other weapon types with a relatively significant amount of reports were Dangerous Weapons, Other, and Firearms, with 7.53%, 7.32%, and 6.65% of reported weapon types respectively.

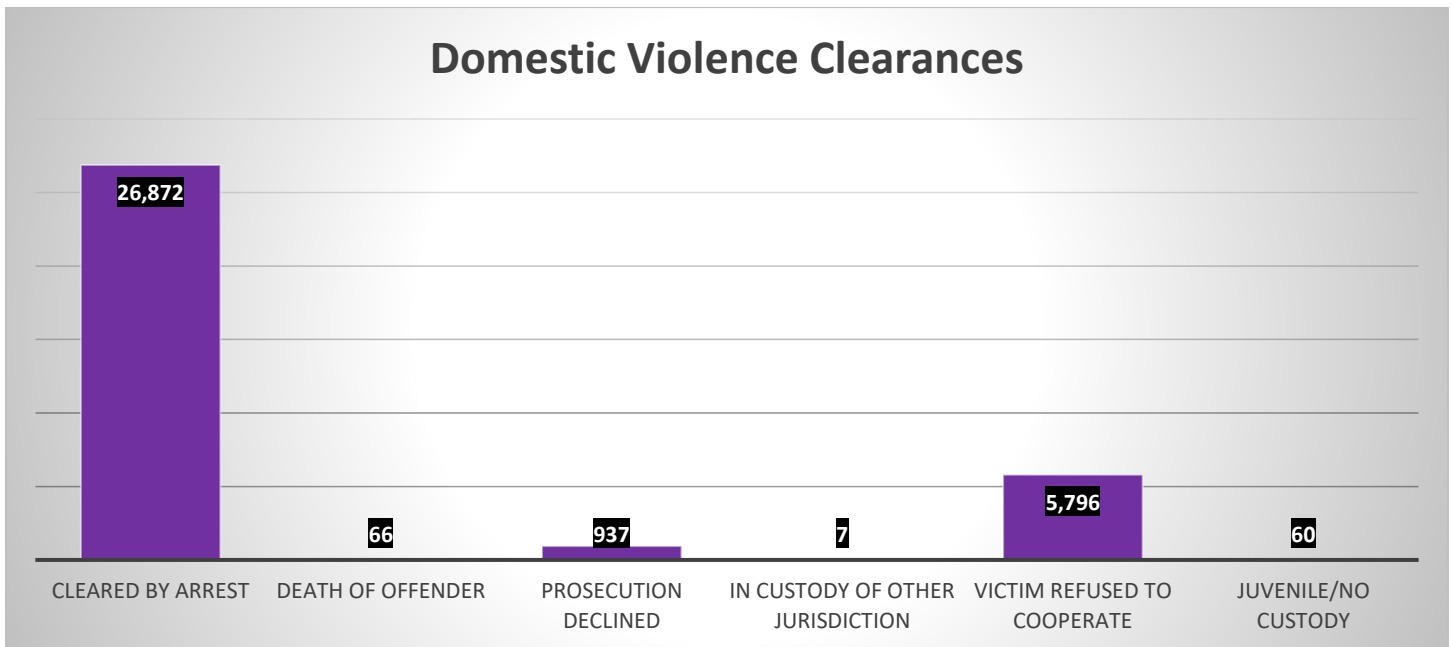
## Domestic Violence Injuries



When examining reported injuries stemming from Domestic Violence incidents, the most commonly reported category was None, accounting for 51.51% of reported injury types, followed by Apparent Minor Injury at 44.50%. All other categories only made up the remaining 3.99% of reported injuries.

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CLEARANCES

### Domestic Violence Clearances



Clearing domestic violence incidents can be difficult when considering the compounding factors that contribute to the cooperation of victims and potential witnesses. Because of the very nature of domestic violence and the close interpersonal relationships that exist between the victim and offender, it can be challenging for law enforcement to complete an arrest. Cohabiting domestic violence victims and offenders can present an obvious challenge in clearing an incident due to victims not cooperating in order to prevent subsequent abuse and turmoil within the household.

In 2022, 54.23% of domestic violence incidents were cleared either by arrest or by exceptional means. In the majority of cases, clearances occurred via arrest, with that occurring for 79.65% of clearances. When looking at exceptional clearances, the majority of occurrences were categorized as Victim Refused to Cooperate, making up 17.18% of total clearances. As defined by TIBRS, Victim Refused to Cooperate can only clear an incident when the victim has actually stated or made it known to the agency that they refuse to cooperate or pursue prosecution of the offender.

## **SUMMARY**

The findings of the study revealed that the number of domestic incidents decreased by 8.37% from 2021 to 2022. Overall, females were roughly three times more likely to be reported as victims than males, and victim Race was most often documented as White (54.70%). Although the injury type of None (27,817) accounted for the highest reported injury type in 2022, Apparent Minor Injury (24,034) was often reported in Simple Assault cases. TIBRS data supports the fact that women generally have the highest potential for domestic abuse victimization. Local, state, and national agencies across several disciplines, including law enforcement and social and child services, avidly oppose domestic violence and advocate for its victims. These various institutions and coalitions battle domestic abuse by providing prevention training, intervention, shelter, and counseling for both victims and potential victims of domestic violence. Hopefully, the current assessment of domestic violence in Tennessee exposes the need for continued and increased efforts in the battle against domestic abuse within our community.



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