

Louisiana Domestic Violence and Guns

October 2014

This fact sheet contains a correction.

Louisiana has weak laws restricting access to firearms by domestic abusers. More can be done to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous persons, including convicted domestic abusers, stalkers, and persons subject domestic violence protective orders.

State gun and domestic violence overview

Louisiana is home to a staggering amount of gun violence.

- From 2002 to 2011, 8,544 people were killed with guns in Louisiana. That is more than the total number of all U.S. combat deaths in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan combined.¹
- Somebody is killed with a gun in Louisiana every 10 hours: in 2011 alone, there were 865 gun deaths in the state.²

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

- According to the FBI, there were 351 intimate partner homicides in Louisiana from 2003 to 2012, which includes both male and female victims.³
- Of these victims of domestic violence, 61 percent were killed with guns.⁴

Women are far more at risk to be victims of fatal domestic violence, and guns play a big role in that violence.

- From 2003 to 2012, more than 30 percent of female homicide victims in Louisiana were killed in a domestic violence incident; a total of 250 women were murdered in domestic violence disputes. Of those 250 homicides, 66 percent were committed with a gun.⁵
- Firearms accounted for the murders of 649 women in Louisiana from 2002 to 2011.⁶

Overview of Louisiana laws to protect women from abusers and stalkers

Louisiana law currently prevents some domestic abusers from possessing guns.

- In 2014, Louisiana passed a law prohibiting domestic violence misdemeanants and abusers subject to domestic violence protective orders from possessing firearms.⁷

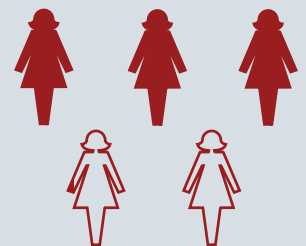
Louisiana still has many loopholes that can let some abusers have easy access to guns.

- Louisiana does not prohibit misdemeanor stalkers from possessing a firearm.
- Louisiana does not require the surrender of firearms by domestic abusers who have become prohibited from possessing firearms.

From 2002 to 2011, nearly twice as many people were killed with guns in Louisiana than U.S. soldiers killed in combat in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.



From 2003 to 2012, 66 percent of female victims of domestic violence homicides were killed with a gun.



- The firearms prohibition for domestic abuse misdemeanants does not extend to people who have abused members of the same sex or people with whom they shared a non-cohabitating dating relationship.⁸
- Louisiana does not require a background check for all gun buyers, including those sold at gun shows or over the Internet.

Support for doing more to protect women from abusers and stalkers in Louisiana

Voters in Louisiana strongly support expanding background checks to keep guns from criminals, domestic abusers, and other dangerous people.

- In a May 2013 poll conducted by Public Policy Polling, 71 percent of voters in Louisiana supported universal background checks.⁹

Case study

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

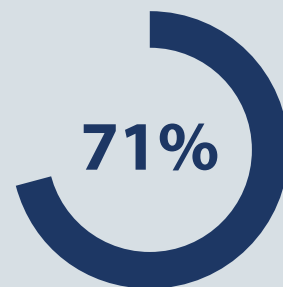
- On June 9, 2007, Brandon Brue shot and killed his estranged wife, Yarnell, and injured a bystander at her home in Pointe Coupee Parish, Louisiana. The week prior, Yarnell had contacted the state police to file a complaint of abuse and various threats Brue had made toward her, after she found her home ransacked and received threats to her life. Before she could get her statement to the police, Brue used a gun to murder her, a gun he should have been barred from purchasing as a convicted felon.¹⁰

***Correction, October 15, 2014:** This fact sheet has been corrected to accurately reflect that Louisiana does prohibit individuals subject to domestic violence protective orders from possessing guns, but does not prohibit convicted stalkers.

Where does Louisiana 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 Louisianans support background checks required on all gun sales.



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. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplementary Homicide Data (U.S. Department of Justice, 2003–2012).
6. 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).
7. La. Rev. Stat. §§ 14:95.10, 46:2136.3 (enacted by La. H.B. 753 (2014)).
8. La. Rev. Stat. §§ 14:35.3(B)(3), 14:95.10.
9. Public Policy Polling, "Hagan, Landrieu helped by gun votes," Press release, May 2, 2013, available at http://www.publicpolicypolling.com/pdf/2011/PPP_Release_BackgroundChecks_502.pdf.
10. State of Louisiana, Court of Appeal, State of Louisiana v. Brandon Brue (2010), available at <http://statecasefiles.justia.com/documents/louisiana/first-circuit-court-of-appeal/2009ka2281-1.pdf?ts=1387486151>.