

A NATIONAL EPIDEMIC:

FATAL ANTI-TRANSGENDER VIOLENCE IN THE UNITED STATES IN 2019



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN
FOUNDATION™

FROM PRESIDENT ALPHONSO DAVID



At this moment, transgender women of color are living in crisis. Over the past several years, more than 150 transgender people have been killed in the United States, nearly all of them Black transgender women.

At the time of publication of this report, we know of at least 22 transgender and gender non-conforming people who have been killed this year in this country.

While the details of the cases differ, it is clear that the intersections of racism, sexism and transphobia conspire to deny so many members of the transgender community access to housing, employment and other necessities to survive and thrive.

As the stories documented in this report make clear, this is a national crisis that demands the attention of lawmakers, law enforcement, the media and every American.

For transgender women of color who are living in crisis, their crisis must become our crisis as well. We must recognize that the killings of Black and Latinx transgender women reflect a deep level of indifference and fear, and we must directly combat it. For too long, our system has failed the transgender community. And by depending on that system, we have also failed the transgender community. We must look outside of the existing paradigm to create new systems to support transgender people in the communities they call home.

That is why the Human Rights Campaign launched a new Transgender Justice initiative. We are working with local activists and

advocates who have been doing this work for decades to provide additional support, advance programs and ultimately change systems to drive long-term change across this country. With our partners, we are working to support advocates through capacity building, leverage our strengths with our corporate and community partners to deliver new economic and training opportunities, and work with local governments to drive systematic change in areas most needed – public safety, healthcare, housing, education and employment.

This is urgent work — and it requires all of us to engage. In this report, the Human Rights Campaign's team of researchers, policy experts and programmatic specialists have laid out steps that every person can take to help eliminate anti-transgender stigma, remove societal barriers and reduce risk factors. We must continue to fight for real change in our laws, in our policies and our local communities so that every transgender person is treated with the dignity and respect every one of us deserves.

In unity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. David', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Alphonso David

President

Human Rights Campaign Foundation

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INTRODUCTION

At least 22 transgender and gender non-conforming people have been killed in the U.S. since the beginning of 2019.

91%

of them were Black women.

81%

were under the age of 30.

68%

lived in the South.

This is not a new problem. In the seven years that the Human Rights Campaign Foundation has tracked anti-transgender violence, an average of at least 22 transgender and gender non-conforming people have been victims of fatal violence per year.

We say “at least” because the stories detailed in this report very likely undercount the number of transgender and gender non-conforming people who were killed in the United States this year. Although advocates, bloggers and media groups have elevated the epidemic of violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people in the past several years, **data collection is often incomplete or unreliable when it comes to violent and fatal crimes against transgender and gender non-conforming people.** Some victims' deaths may go unreported, while others may not be identified as transgender or gender non-conforming in the media, often because authorities, journalists and/or family members refuse to acknowledge their gender correctly.

In this report, we hope to shed light on several factors related to anti-transgender violence, many of which are drawn from our tracking of anti-transgender violence since 2013. We present statistics and analysis on demographics, legislation, safety, reporting and enforcement, revealing disturbing but important trends about violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people in the U.S. Finally, based on these statistics, we provide action items that can help end the violence.

Across the United States, anti-transgender stigma and systemic discrimination heighten the vulnerability of transgender and gender non-conforming people from an early age. For Black transgender women, who comprise the vast majority of victims of anti-transgender murders, these challenges are further exacerbated by and intertwined with racism and sexism.

Even in the face of physical danger, hatred and discrimination — sometimes ruthlessly endorsed and enforced by those at the highest level of our government — transgender and gender non-conforming people live courageously and overcome unjust barriers in all corners of our country. But until we as

a country address and dismantle these barriers, transgender and gender non-conforming people will continue to face higher rates of discrimination, poverty, homelessness and violence. You can learn more about the multiple intersecting obstacles that transgender and gender non-conforming people face in the U.S. in the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's 2019 report [“Dismantling a Culture of Violence.”](#)

In life, each of the individuals memorialized in this report went to extraordinary lengths to live authentically. In death, we must honor their truth and bravery with action.

WHO IS TRANSGENDER?

For the purpose of this report, we use the phrase **“transgender and gender non-conforming”** to describe a collective community of individuals whose gender identities, expressions and/or lived experiences differ from — and may in fact transcend — what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

This includes transgender men and women, as well as individuals who identify as:

NON-BINARY

Non-binary people do not identify exclusively as men or women — and may not identify with either. A non-binary person may also use the terms “genderqueer” or “genderfluid” to describe their gender identity.

GENDER NON-CONFORMING

Some people are gender non-conforming in expression, which includes their outward presentation and behavior. Any person, regardless of their gender identity, can be gender non-conforming.

GENDER-EXPANSIVE

Gender-expansive is a term that conveys a wider, more flexible range of identity and/or expression beyond the culturally defined behavior and/or expression associated with one gender, including, but not limited to, the terms listed here.

As with any language that attempts to succinctly capture the human experience, the usage of these terms and sense of identity among the transgender and gender non-conforming community varies widely. Meanwhile, virtually every culture has its own terminology and differing concepts of gender, including who is considered to be transgender or gender non-conforming.

NOTE ON VICTIM IDENTIFICATION

Violence is often committed against those who do not present in a way that aligns with their gender assigned at birth. Because of this, we track cases involving the transgender community, as well as cases where the individual presented in a gender non-conforming way. Thus, in this report, we use the phrase “transgender and gender non-conforming” to refer to victims of violence, as it is the most broad and accurate term we can use without being able to directly ask the victims’ gender identities.

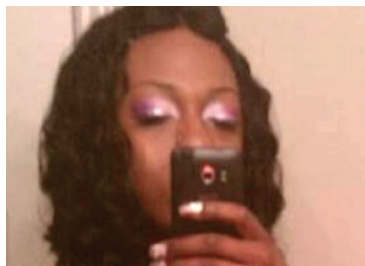
We have taken every effort to ensure our memorials reflect the most accurate depiction of each individual’s identity, based on their own words, the accounts of loved ones and the ways in which they presented themselves and interacted with the world. Sadly, for some cases, there is little information available.

In several of the stories in this report, law enforcement, media and even loved ones have denied, ignored or intentionally erased victims’ gender identities. Using correct identifiers and pronouns isn’t just about accuracy — it’s about affording all individuals the respect and dignity that everyone deserves. Moreover, in order to end anti-transgender violence, we must acknowledge the true identities of its victims and address the ways in which societal attitudes regarding these identities may have played a role in their deaths.

IN MEMORIAM

2019 DEATHS

In commemoration of Transgender Day of Remembrance, HRC remembers the lives and mourns the loss of the following individuals:

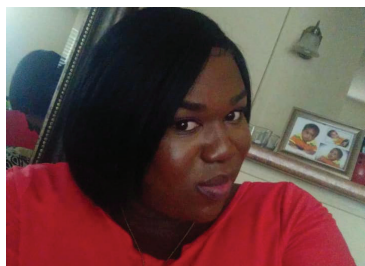


DANA MARTIN

Montgomery, Alabama

[Dana Martin](#), 31, was a Black transgender woman killed in Montgomery, Alabama, on January 6. Local reports stated that Dana was found in a roadside ditch in her vehicle with a fatal gunshot wound. She was pronounced dead at the scene. No arrests have been made and the investigation is ongoing.

Cruz Barnett, Dana's friend of 12 years, said "she was a very private, sweet person. Dana didn't bother nobody, period. Everybody liked Dana and the people that didn't like her just didn't know her. Dana was very quiet and reserved for the most part, very easy to get along with and mild-mannered." Daroneshia Duncan-Boyd, founder of Transgender Advocates Knowledgeable Empowering, said "she was a person that was loved by many."



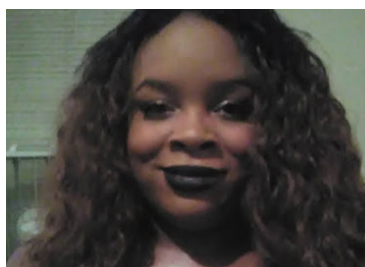
JAZZALINE WARE

Memphis, Tennessee

[Jazzaline Ware](#), 34, was a Black transgender woman living in Memphis, Tennessee, who was found dead in her apartment in March. There is unfortunately very little publicly available information about her death.

Her friends and family came together to organize a fundraiser for her memorial and burial. Her sister posted about Jazzaline saying, "I love you forever my sister! RIP MY LUV!"

Note: Some sources say that this death may have been due to natural causes, however at the time of publishing, local and national advocates, including HRC, are still investigating.

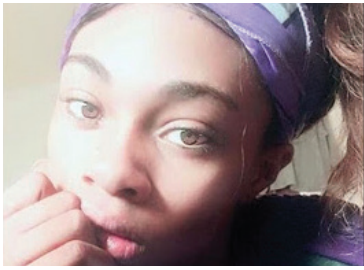


ASHANTI CARMON

Prince George's County, Maryland

[Ashanti Carmon](#), 27, was a Black transgender woman killed in Prince George's County, Maryland, on March 30. She was shot multiple times and was pronounced dead at the scene. An arrest has not yet been made.

"Until I leave this Earth, I'm going to continue on loving her in my heart, body, and soul," said Philip Williams, Ashanti's fiancé. "She did not deserve to leave this Earth so early, especially in the way that she went out. She did not deserve that."



CLAIRE LEGATO

Cleveland, Ohio

[Claire Legato](#), 23, was a Black transgender woman who was fatally shot in Cleveland on April 15. Local media reported that Claire was shot after an argument broke out between her mother and the suspect. She was taken to a nearby hospital and died from her injuries on May 14.

Friends and family took to social media to mourn Claire's death, remembering her as someone who was "full of life."



MUHLAYSIA BOOKER

Dallas, Texas

[Muhlaysia Booker](#), 23, was a Black transgender woman who was fatally shot in Dallas on May 18. Local media reported that Muhlaysia was found dead near a golf course in east Dallas, lying face down with a gunshot wound.

One month prior, Muhlaysia had been viciously attacked in what Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings described as "mob violence." After that attack, Muhlaysia had spoken out courageously against the violence she experienced. Her own words have been re-shared across social media in the wake of her death.

Friends, family and advocates across the country also expressed their shock and disbelief about her attack and murder. "Such a beautiful spirit taken too soon," wrote one person. "She lived her life and loved all of who she was."

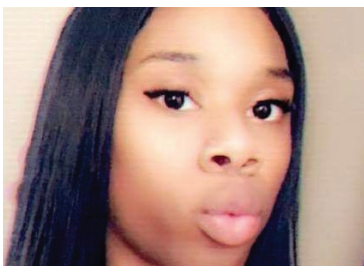


MICHELLE "TAMIKA" WASHINGTON

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

[Michelle "Tamika" Washington](#), 40, was a Black transgender woman fatally shot in Philadelphia on May 19. Law enforcement found Michelle with several gunshot wounds and transported her to Temple University Hospital where she was pronounced dead. A suspect was arrested two days later.

Friends and loved ones remembered Michelle, who was also known by the name Tamika, as a beloved sister and "gay mother." In a Facebook post, Deja Lynn Alvarez wrote, "Your memory will live and light will shine on through us."



PARIS CAMERON

Detroit, Michigan

[Paris Cameron](#), 20, was a Black transgender woman who was among three people killed in an anti-LGBTQ shooting in a home in Detroit on May 25. Alunte Davis, 21, and Timothy Blancher, 20, two gay men, were also found dead at the scene. Two other victims were shot but survived. A suspect has been arrested and charged with three counts of first-degree murder.

Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy's office identified the three victims as members of the LGBTQ community and alleged that they were targeted based on their identities. "This case illustrates the mortal danger faced by members of Detroit's LGBTQ community, including transgender women of color," Fair Michigan President Alanna Maguire said.



CHYNAL LINDSEY

Dallas, Texas

[Chynal Lindsey](#), 26, was a Black transgender woman found dead in Dallas on June 1. Chynal's body was found with "obvious signs of homicidal violence," according to Dallas Police. An arrest was made later that month.

Friends, family and community members took to social media to share their shock at her death, describing her as "smiling" and "a person I had never seen mad."



CHANEL SCURLOCK

Lumberton, North Carolina

[Chanel Scurlock](#), 23, was a Black transgender woman found fatally shot in Lumberton, North Carolina, on June 6. Robeson County sheriff's deputies responded to reports of gunfire and found Chanel's body in a field. An arrest was made a week later.

"RIP baby," wrote a friend on Facebook. "You [lived] your life as you wanted. I'm proud of you for being unapologetically correct about your feelings and expectations of YOU."



ZOE SPEARS

Prince George's County, Maryland

[Zoe Spears](#), 23, was a Black transgender woman killed in Prince George's County, Maryland, on June 13. Zoe was found lying in the street with signs of trauma and was pronounced dead at the scene. An arrest was made in the case in July.

"She was my daughter — very bright and very full of life," said Ruby Corado, transgender advocate and executive director of Casa Ruby in Washington, D.C. "Casa Ruby was her home. Right now, we just want her and her friends and the people who knew her to know that she's loved."



BROOKLYN LINDSEY

Kansas City, Missouri

[Brooklyn Lindsey](#), 32, a Black transgender woman, was killed in Kansas City, Missouri, on June 25. Police found Brooklyn dead on the front porch of an abandoned home early that morning. An arrest was made later that July.

Friends and family took to social media to mourn Brooklyn. "I love you, Brooklyn Lindsey," wrote one person. "I shall live on for you. Rest in power, sista."

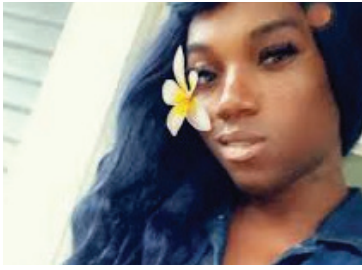


DENALI BERRIES STUCKEY

North Charleston, South Carolina

[Denali Berries Stuckey](#), 29, a Black transgender woman, was fatally shot on July 20 in North Charleston, South Carolina. She was found lying by the side of a road shortly after 4 a.m. An arrest was made in the case later that August.

Family and friends took to social media to mourn Denali. "I lost my best friend, first cousin," wrote one person. "We were more than cousins. We were like brother and sister. I love you so much, Pooh."



TRACY SINGLE

Houston, Texas

[Tracy Single](#), 22, a Black transgender woman, was found dead at a gas station in Houston on July 30. It took nearly two weeks for law enforcement, with the help of local LGBTQ activists, to identify her. Her boyfriend was later arrested in connection with the death.

Houston city officials honored Tracy by lighting the City Hall building and bridges over U.S. Route 59 in the colors of the transgender flag for two nights. “Rest in power and peace Tracy,” wrote Monica Roberts, a Houston-based transgender advocate. “You were taken away from us way too soon.”



KIKI FANTROY

Miami, Florida

[Kiki Fantroy](#), 21, a Black transgender woman, was found in Miami in the early hours of July 31 after being shot multiple times. She was taken to a nearby hospital where she died of her injuries. An arrest was made the following month.

Kiki’s mother remembered her as having “a heart of gold” and being “a very loving person.” She also pleaded for justice in her daughter’s death, saying to reporters, “My baby, my baby. Please help bring justice to my baby.”



BUBBA WALKER

Charlotte, North Carolina

[Bubba Walker](#), 55, was a Black transgender woman who was killed in Charlotte, North Carolina, in late July. Bubba was reported missing on July 26 and her body was found in the rubble of a house fire a day later. Her death is currently being investigated as a homicide. No arrests have been made.

Bubba is remembered by friends and family as “a cautious, funny and sometimes reserved person.” Clarabelle Catlin, a transgender woman who knew Bubba through the local transgender community, told the *Charlotte Observer* that “she was one of those people who was really fun to be around. She was very kind and she loved helping people.”

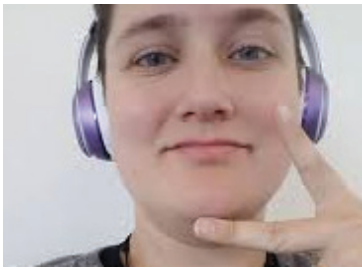


PEBBLES LADIME “DIME” DOE

Allendale County, South Carolina

[Pebbles LaDime “Dime” Doe](#), 24, was a Black transgender woman who was killed on August 4 in Allendale County, South Carolina. Pebbles was found dead with gunshot wounds in a car parked in a driveway. Further details have not been released about the case as the investigation is ongoing.

Pebbles’ friends and family remembered her on social media as having a “bright personality,” being someone who “showed love,” and was “the best to be around.” Another friend wrote, “If I knew Friday was my last time seeing you, I would have hugged you even tighter.”



JORDAN COFER

Dayton, Ohio

[Jordan Cofer](#), 22, a transgender man who was among the nine victims killed in a mass shooting in Dayton, Ohio, on August 4. The shooting suspect is Cofer's sibling.

Jordan, who is remembered by friends as "extremely bright" and "well-liked," appears to have been out to a handful of close friends, including one who said, "He identified with he/him pronouns to people he trusted and knew would support him. Jordan was probably one of the sweetest people you would ever meet, a true saint ... He tried to give the best to everyone."



BAILEY REEVES

Baltimore, Maryland

[Bailey Reeves](#), 17, was a Black transgender woman found late on September 2 in Baltimore after being shot multiple times. She was taken to a nearby hospital where she died of her injuries. An arrest has not yet been made.

"She was a person who lived her life to the fullest," said her brother Thomas Reeves. Anneke "Pee Wee" Corbitt, a friend of Bailey's, sobbed into the arms of Bailey's brother and other friends at the vigil. "Not many people in our community get this kind of respect," Corbitt said.



BEE LOVE SLATER

Clewiston, Florida

[Bee Love Slater](#), 23, was a Black transgender woman found burned in a vehicle in Clewiston, Florida, on September 4. An arrest was made later that month.

Bee Love is remembered by loved ones as someone "with a really, really sweet heart" who "never harmed anyone."

"Bee Love was loved by many family, friends and neighbors," her funeral home wrote in a Facebook statement.



JAMAGIO JAMAR BERRYMAN (sometimes went by Ja'leyah-Jamar)

Kansas City, Kansas

[Jamagio Jamar Berryman](#), who also sometimes went by Ja'leyah-Jamar, was a 30-year-old Black LGBTQ person who was killed in Kansas City, Kansas, on September 13.

Reports vary regarding Jamagio's gender identity and pronouns. While initial reports suggested Jamagio was transgender, local advocates reported that Jamagio did not identify as transgender, used "he/him" pronouns consistent with being assigned male at birth and was gender non-conforming in expression.

Local activists and community members joined family and friends at a vigil, and loved ones took to social media to mourn Jamagio. A cousin posted, "Ja'leyah-Jamar didn't ask for this life... God made us to live and love and to grow..."

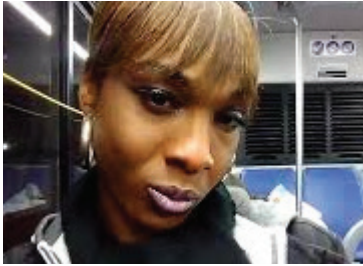


ITALI MARLOWE

Houston, Texas

[Itali Marlowe](#), 29, was a Black transgender woman who was killed in Houston on September 20. Police found Itali in a driveway with multiple gunshot wounds. She was transported to a nearby hospital where she was pronounced dead. A suspect was arrested the following month.

“Rest in Power, Itali,” said transgender activist Monica Roberts. “We won’t rest until this perpetrator is caught, prosecuted and incarcerated for your murder.”



BRIANNA “BB” HILL

Kansas City, Missouri

[Brianna “BB” Hill](#), who also spelled her name as Breonna Be’Be Hill, was a 30-year-old Black transgender woman who was killed in Kansas City, Missouri, on October 14. Brianna was shot by a man who is currently in custody.

Brianna was a beloved member of her community, a fan of the Kansas City football team and loved spreading joy by sharing funny videos on her Facebook page.

OTHER DEATHS IN 2019

HRC is deeply concerned about two other fatal incidents in 2019 that we are following closely. For both of these individuals, HRC calls for further investigation into the causes of their deaths, including whether discriminatory bias toward transgender people played a motivating factor.



JOHANA "JOA" MEDINA

El Paso, Texas

[Johana Medina](#), 25, was a Latinx transgender woman who died at a hospital in El Paso, Texas, on June 1, just hours after being released from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody. She suffered severe health complications that went untreated while she was in detention. Her exact cause of death is not yet known. Her family filed a wrongful death and personal injury claim against ICE and the Department of Homeland Security.

LGBTQ immigrants are detained twice as long as other immigrants and also face lengthy stays in solitary confinement despite ICE regulations that stipulate its use as a last resort. ICE also reported that LGBTQ people accounted for less than 1% of the people detained by ICE in 2017, but made up 12% of reported sexual assault and abuse cases.

Johana dreamed of coming to the U.S. to become certified as a nurse, since she was unable to practice as a transgender woman in her home country.



LAYLEEN CUBILETTE-POLANCO

New York, New York

[Layleen Cubilette-Polanco](#), 27, was an AfroLatinx transgender woman found dead in a solitary confinement cell at Riker's Island in New York City on June 7. In their autopsy report, the medical examiner's office said that Layleen died from "sudden unexplained death in epilepsy (SUDEP)."

"Today we also received documentary confirmation that Layleen's epilepsy was well known to [the Department of Corrections], and she suffered multiple seizures on Riker's," tweeted the law firm representing her. "On 5/30, a jail doctor approved her placement in punitive segregation, despite her epilepsy. That became her death warrant." She was being held on \$500 bail for two misdemeanor charges.

Layleen was also known as Layleen Xtravaganza, and was a member of the House of Xtravaganza ballroom community. Indya Moore, the star of FX's *Pose* and a fellow member of the house of Xtravaganza said on Instagram, "I knew Layleen growing up. I remember desiring to be beautiful like her. She was cool, and funny too, like all of us she had dreams of escaping poverty and the misery of social ostracization."

UPDATE ON 2018 DEATHS

This is the fifth year HRC Foundation has published a report tracking fatal violence against transgender people in the U.S. The following two transgender women were killed following the publishing of the 2018 report. When including these deaths, the final count of known transgender and gender non-conforming victims of fatal violence in 2018 rises to 27, 23 (85%) of whom were transgender women of color.



TYDI DANSBURY

Baltimore, Maryland

[Tydi Dansbury](#), 37, was a Black transgender woman fatally shot in Baltimore on November 26, 2018. Tydi was found with gunshot wounds and rushed to a local hospital in grave condition. She died two days later from her wounds. At this time, an arrest still has not been made.

“This is a tragedy beyond words or understanding. Our community is heartbroken,” said Merrick Moses, a transgender advocate in Baltimore. “As we enter this holiday season and so many of us have struggles with our families of origin, this especially cuts deep, because our community is our family -- chosen family. We mourn along with her loved ones.”

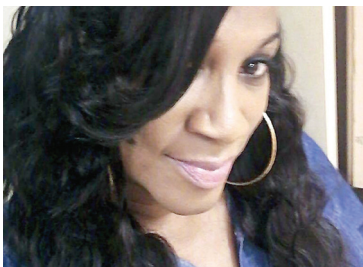


KEANNA MATTEL (also went by Kelly Stough)

Detroit, Michigan

[Keanna Mattel](#), 35, was a Black transgender woman killed in Detroit on December 7, 2018. Police found Keanna, who also went by the name Kelly Stough, dead of a gunshot wound in her neighborhood. LGBTQ advocates suggested that Keanna may have been specifically targeted. A suspect is currently in custody awaiting trial for murder.

Keanna’s friends posted on social media, noting that she was “a sweet, caring individual” and “a beautiful spirit” who was “loved.” Another friend posted that she had a “beautiful bold personality” and was like a mother to her. Friends also posted videos remembering Keanna was an active member in Detroit’s ballroom scene, calling her “a sweetheart and beautiful character and personality.”



REGINA DENISE BROWN

Orangeburg, South Carolina

[Regina Denise Brown](#), 53, was a Black transgender woman killed in Orangeburg, South Carolina on October 10, 2018. Firefighters found Regina after her home was set on fire. Investigators initially charged a suspect with second-degree arson and grand larceny after officials allege he “willfully and maliciously set fire” to Regina’s home, and later charged him with murder after he confessed to killing Regina during a physical altercation.

Before Regina’s untimely death, she worked as a licensed cosmetologist. “[Regina] always was smiling and happy,” said someone close to Regina. “She always gave encouragement to the younger trans women always highlighting our best features and strong traits. Just an all around great lady with a big heart.”

THE STATISTICS

Since January 2013, the HRC Foundation and other advocates have recorded at least 157 transgender and gender non-conforming individuals who were victims of fatal violence in the U.S.

This section details statistics calculated over the past seven years. It is divided into four parts: first, a general overview of demographic data, such as race, gender and geography; second, data about U.S. laws and policies, analyzing the effects of hate crimes laws and non-discrimination protections; third, safety data, exploring cause of death, gun violence and sex work data; and finally, reporting and enforcement data, exploring data about arrests, hate crimes and reporting misgendering.

Throughout this section, we say “at least” for most statistics. This is because we recognize that most data likely undercount and fail to capture the lived experiences of several victims for whom we have very little information. Unfortunately, tracking and researching these risk factors

among victims is limited by information reported by the media or available elsewhere online (e.g., on social media or other accounts by loved ones).

While scientific studies are extremely useful for providing evidence and confirming trends, they also often confirm what many advocates on the ground already know. It is important to remember that this analysis is not exhaustive nor definitive, but simply provides a snapshot into the landscape of fatal anti-transgender violence. That being said, this data provides us with one of many useful tools in fighting for justice for transgender and gender non-conforming people across the U.S. and combatting violence against them.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Fatal anti-transgender violence disproportionately affects transgender women, people of color, young people and people in the South.

At least 127 victims of anti-transgender fatal violence since 2013 were transgender women of color (81%). Black transgender women were critically impacted, representing 71% of all known victims since 2013, and all but two of the 22 known victims in 2019.

GENDER

In the past seven years of data, we have found that nearly 9 in 10 victims were transgender women. Since 2013, at least **137 transgender women** were victims of fatal violence, as well as:

- **Eight transgender men,**
- **Two drag queens,**
- **One non-binary person,**
- **One Two-Spirit person, and**
- **Eight other people who were otherwise gender non-conforming.**

Information about victims' gender identities was carefully gathered using the widest array of sources possible, which often included social media, testimonies by friends and families and the guidance of community leaders. However, because victims were unable to directly express their genders to us, our analysis is likely operating within a margin of error.

RACE

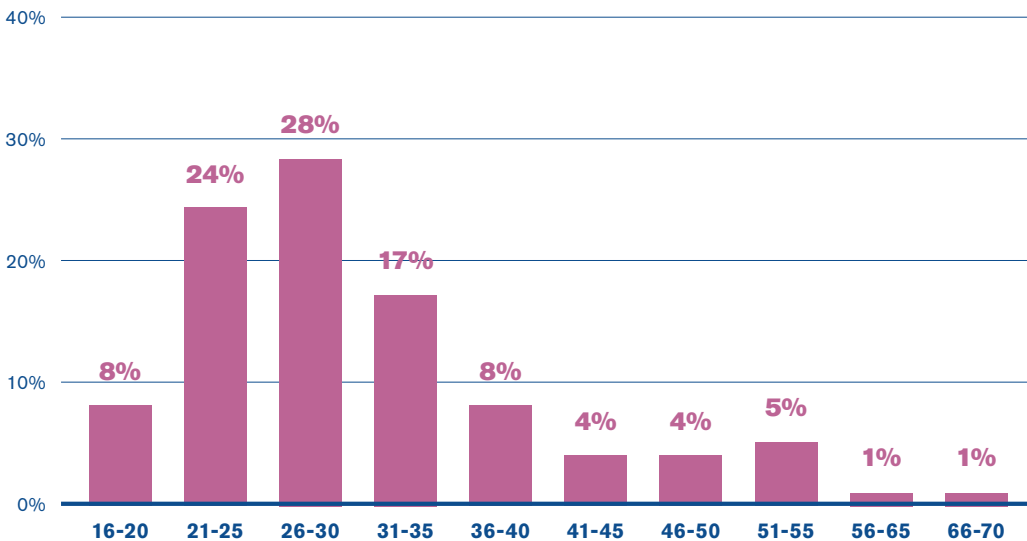
Anti-transgender fatal violence disproportionately affects people of color. Since 2013, at least 139 (89%) victims of anti-transgender violence were people of color, including:

- **One hundred and twenty-two Black and African-American people,**
- **Fifteen Latinx people,**
- **One multiracial person, and**
- **One Native American person.**

AGE

Since 2013, the majority of victims of fatal anti-transgender violence were under 30, and more than three-fourths were under 35.

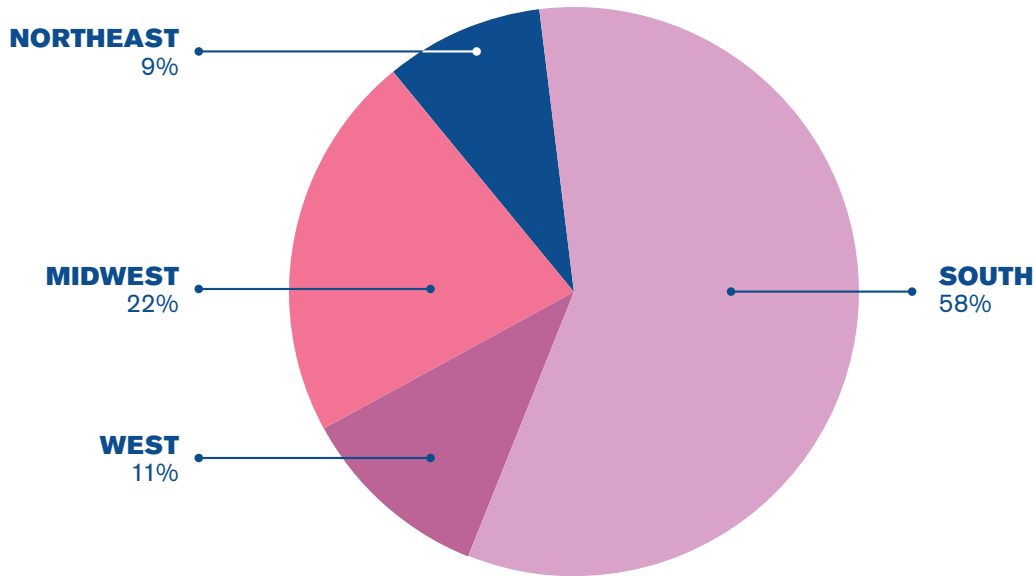
MOST VICTIMS TO FATAL ANTI-TRANS VIOLENCE ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 35



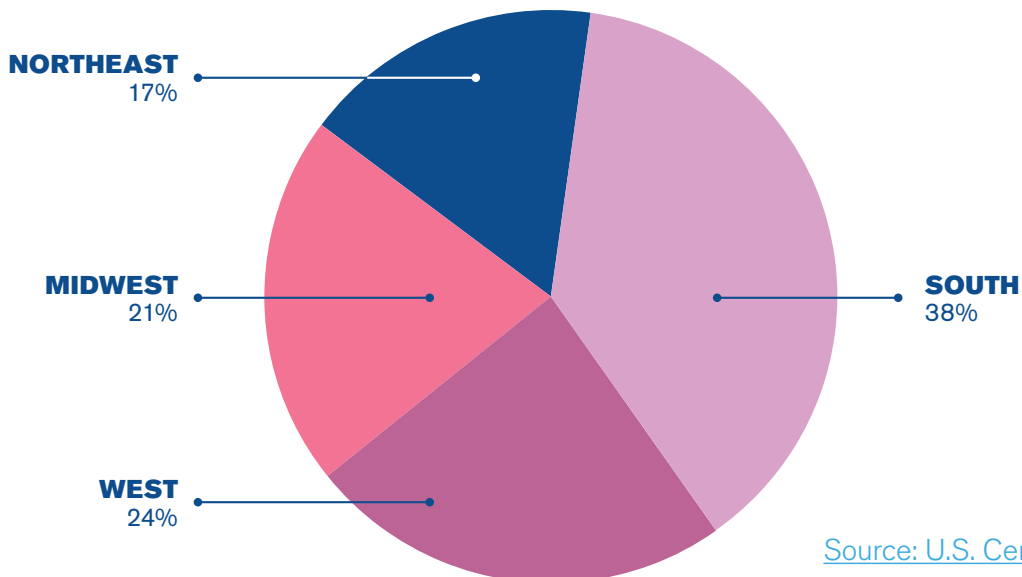
GEOGRAPHY

Since 2013, the majority of fatal violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people has taken place in the South. The proportion of deaths that took place in the South is outsized when considering the population of each region. While the South holds 38% of the U.S. population and 35% of the U.S. adult LGBTQ population, 58% of fatal anti-transgender violence since 2013 has taken place there.

PERCENT OF FATAL ANTI-TRANS VIOLENCE BY CENSUS REGION (2013 – 2019)

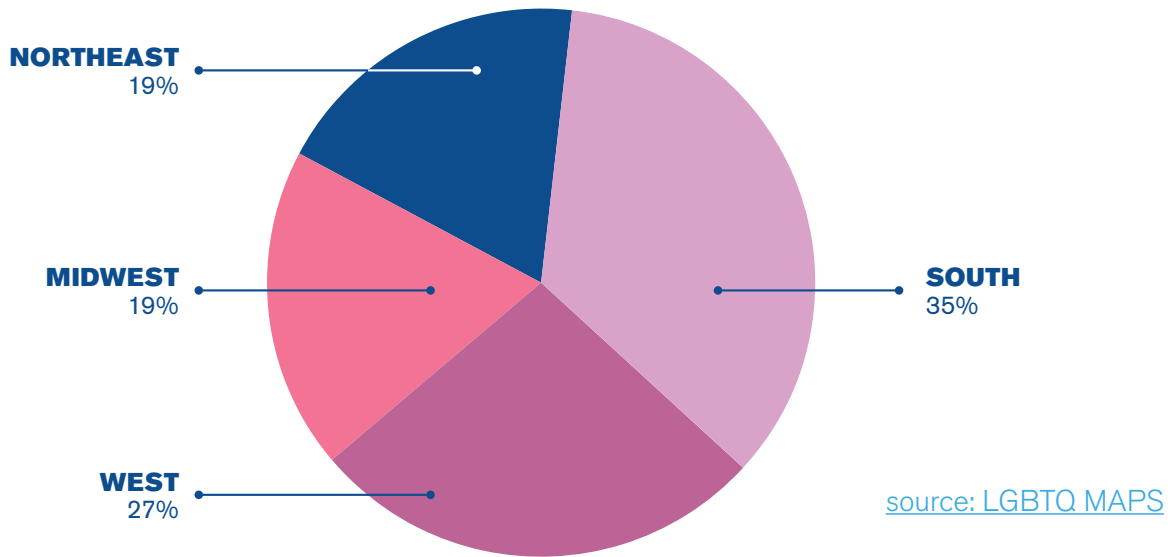


U.S. POPULATION BY REGION IN 2018



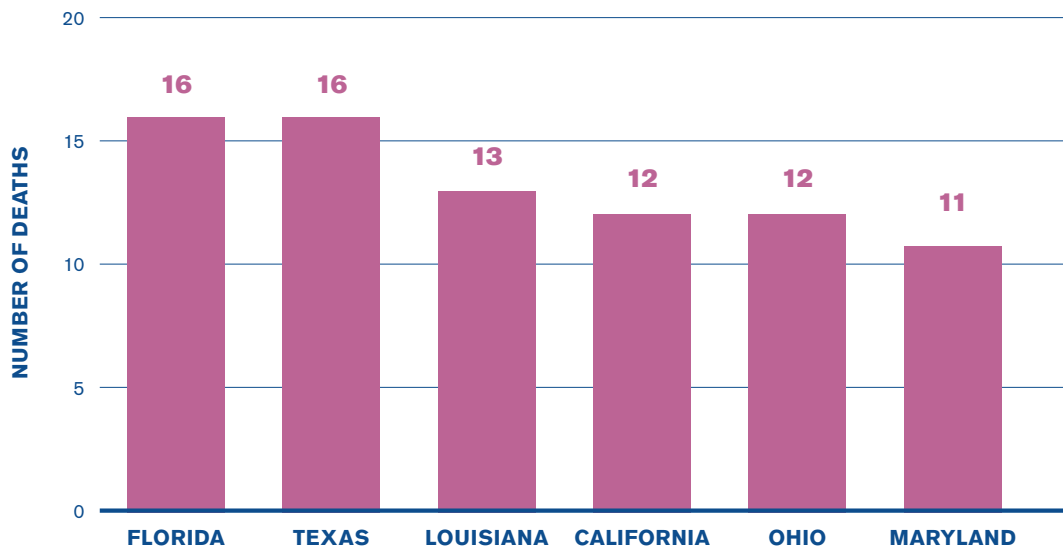
Source: [U.S. Census](#)

U.S. LGBTQ ADULT POPULATION IN 2018

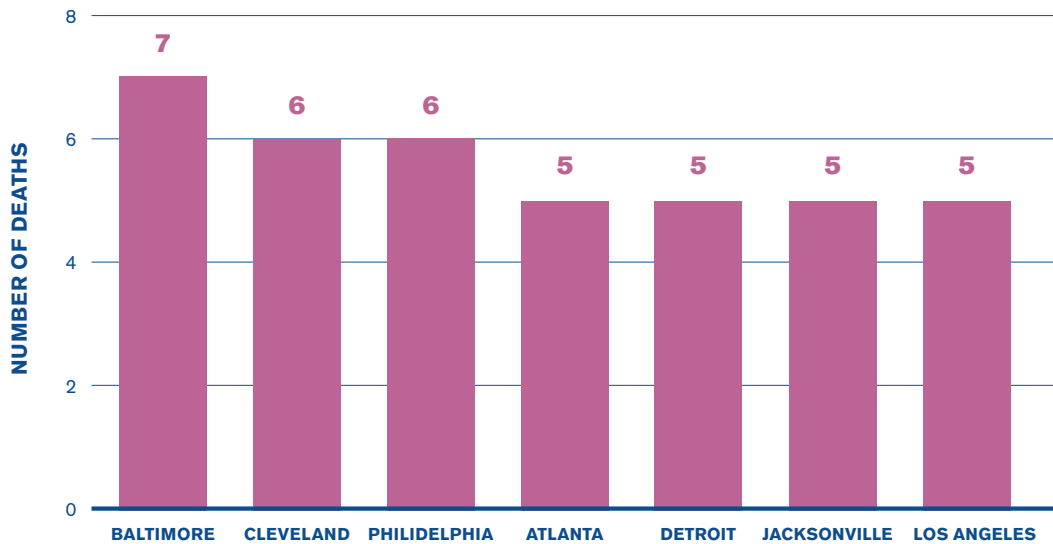


Half (51%) of the cases of fatal anti-transgender violence over the past seven years took place in just six states: Florida, Texas, Louisiana, California, Ohio and Maryland. About 25% of all cases occurred in one of seven cities, each of which has had at least five deaths.

STATES WITH THE MOST INSTANCES OF FATAL ANTI-TRANS VIOLENCE (2013 – 2019)



CITIES WITH THE MOST INSTANCES OF FATAL ANTI-TRANS VIOLENCE (2013–2019)



The vast majority (90%) of deaths since 2013 occurred in areas that had a poverty rate above the [2018 U.S. average](#) of 11.8%.

90%



**of deaths since 2013
occurred in areas that had
a poverty rate above the
2018 U.S. average (11.8%)**

LAW & POLICY DATA

Non-discrimination, anti-violence and hate crimes legislation can play a pivotal role in safeguarding transgender and gender non-conforming people from discrimination and violence, and help ensure proper reporting and prosecution. Below is a summary of statistics related to existing laws in jurisdictions where anti-transgender fatalities have occurred.

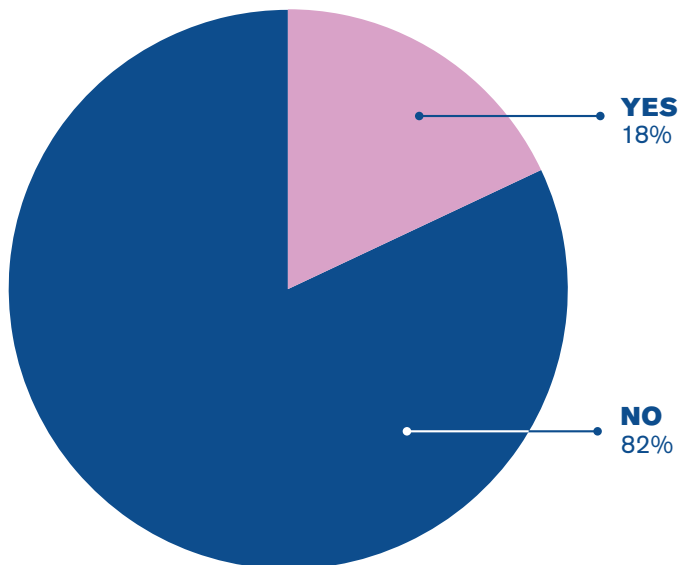
HATE CRIMES PROTECTIONS

The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act plays a vital role in deterring hate-motivated violence and providing recourse for victims of these crimes and their families. While this federal law explicitly covers gender identity, it only permits the federal government to prosecute in select circumstances. The vast majority of hate crimes are investigated and prosecuted at the state level, thus, states must also enact LGBTQ-inclusive hate crimes laws close gaps in their current laws.

As of October 2019, only 20 states and Washington, D.C. have laws that address hate or bias crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

82% of victims of fatal anti-transgender violence since 2013 were killed in states without gender identity-inclusive hate crimes protections in place at their time of death. This number greatly underscores the need to enact such protections.

VICTIM WAS IN A STATE WITH GENDER IDENTITY INCLUSIVE HATE CRIMES PROTECTIONS AT THE TIME OF DEATH (2013 – 2019)



NON-DISCRIMINATION PROTECTIONS

Transgender and gender non-conforming people face devastating levels of discrimination. Something that is especially prevalent when transgender and gender non-conforming people are trying to attain employment, housing and public accommodations.

With limited access to workplaces, housing, and public accommodations that are guaranteed to be affirming and inclusive, transgender and gender non-conforming people are put at greater risk for poverty, homelessness and involvement with criminalized work. Together, these factors put transgender and gender non-conforming people at an increased risk of violence and danger.

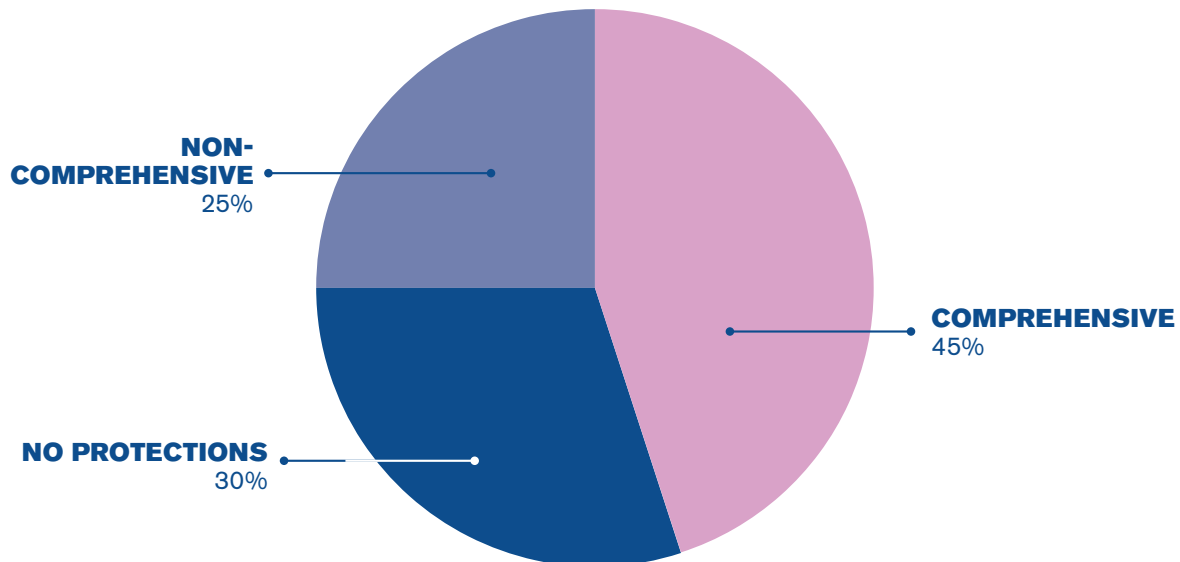
HRC Foundation compiled data on non-discrimination protections for gender identity at the city, county and state level for the location of death of each victim of fatal anti-transgender violence from 2013-2019. Locations with explicit comprehensive housing, employment and public accommodations protections for gender identity of these three jurisdictional levels were coded as “comprehensive.” Locations with explicit housing, employment and/or public accommodations non-discrimination protections

for gender identity that were not comprehensive but still existed in some form were coded as “non-comprehensive.” Locations with no explicit housing, employment or public accommodations protections for gender identity at any level were coded as “no protections.”

More than half of the victims of anti-transgender violence since 2013 were killed somewhere **without adequate non-discrimination protections** for gender identity. 30% of the victims died in areas with no explicit non-discrimination protections for gender identity at any jurisdictional level, while 25% of the victims died in areas that had explicit protections for gender identity that were not comprehensive.

Additionally, only seven (4%) of the victims were killed in states with comprehensive non-discrimination protections for gender identity at the state level. A lack of comprehensive state-wide protections not only leaves a large number of people unprotected from discrimination, but also leaves a gap for anti-transgender legislation to be pushed.

NON-DISCRIMINATION PROTECTIONS IN PLACES OF FATAL ANTI-TRANS VIOLENCE (2013–2019)



LAWS DECRIMINALIZING SEX WORK

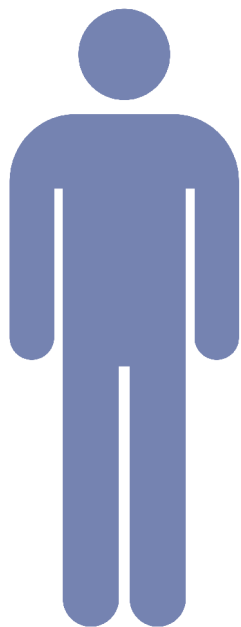
In the face of discrimination and economic barriers, many transgender and gender non-conforming people engage in sex work (i.e., the exchange of sex or sex acts for money or goods) out of survival. Sex work is not well documented, so it is difficult to calculate the true proportion of victims engaged in sex work. However, HRC Foundation estimates that 13-36% of victims of anti-transgender violence since 2013 were engaged in sex work at the time of their death.

In many instances, the criminalization of sex work can exacerbate the epidemic of violence targeting the transgender and gender non-conforming community, particularly transgender women of color. Nearly nine in 10 transgender people engaging in sex work or suspected of engaging in sex work reported being harassed, attacked, sexually assaulted or mistreated in some other way by

police, according to the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey. Out of those who were working in the underground economy at the time they took the survey, nearly 41% were physically attacked in the previous year and more than one-third were sexually assaulted in that same time.

Several jurisdictions in the U.S. have been working to decriminalize sex work. Most recently, the Community Safety and Health Amendment Act of 2019 was introduced in the Washington, D.C., Council. This Act would eliminate criminal prohibitions and penalties for consensual sex work and establish a task force to recommend further improvements to public safety, health and human rights. Decriminalization of sex work is an important movement to combat anti-transgender violence because no person should be put at risk of abuse or violence simply for trying to survive.

PERCENTAGE OF VICTIMS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN SEX WORK (2013 – 2019)



AT LEAST
13-36%

of victims may have been engaged in sex work

OTHER IMPORTANT PROTECTIONS

Violence Against Women Act

The Violence Against Women Act is also pivotal to protecting transgender and gender non-conforming people. This legislation, signed into law 25 years ago, has helped reduce domestic violence and sexual assault and has provided victims and survivors critical lifeline services. Since 2013, the law expressly prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, making it easier for LGBTQ people to receive services.

Equality Act

Despite significant steps forward, LGBTQ Americans lack basic explicit non-discrimination protections in states across the country. The patchwork nature of current laws leaves millions of people subject to uncertainty and potential discrimination that impacts their safety, their families and their day-to-day lives. The Equality Act would provide consistent and explicit non-discrimination protections for LGBTQ people across key areas of life, including employment, housing, credit, education, public spaces and services, federally funded programs and jury service.

The Equality Act passed in the U.S. House of Representatives in June 2019. In order to become law, it must next pass in the U.S. Senate.

LGBTQ Panic Defense

In the vast majority of states, there are no laws expressly banning perpetrators of violent crimes from asserting the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity as a so-called "panic defense." This "panic defense" allows a criminal defendant to argue in court that their discovery of the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity caused the defendant's violent reaction, potentially leading to a reduced charge or sentence. When used in a case of violence against a transgender or gender non-conforming person, this is often colloquially called a "trans panic defense." Thankfully, in recent years a number of states have enacted bans, including California, Illinois, Rhode Island, Nevada, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maine and New York. The passage of such legislation will help to end the legitimization of violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people and ensure that victims obtain equal justice.

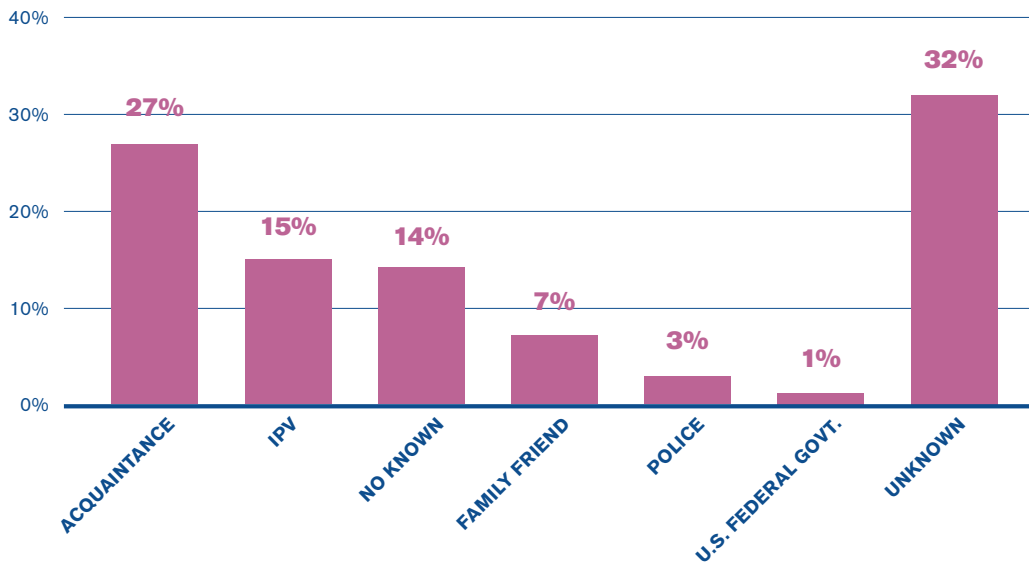
SAFETY DATA

Half of transgender and gender non-conforming people killed since 2013 have been killed by someone they knew. Nearly two-thirds of these deaths involved a firearm.

RELATIONSHIP TO KILLER

At least 49% of transgender and gender non-conforming people killed as a result of fatal violence in 2019 were killed by an acquaintance, friend, family member or intimate partner. Unfortunately, the relationship of the victim to the killer is still unknown in nearly one-third of all known cases.

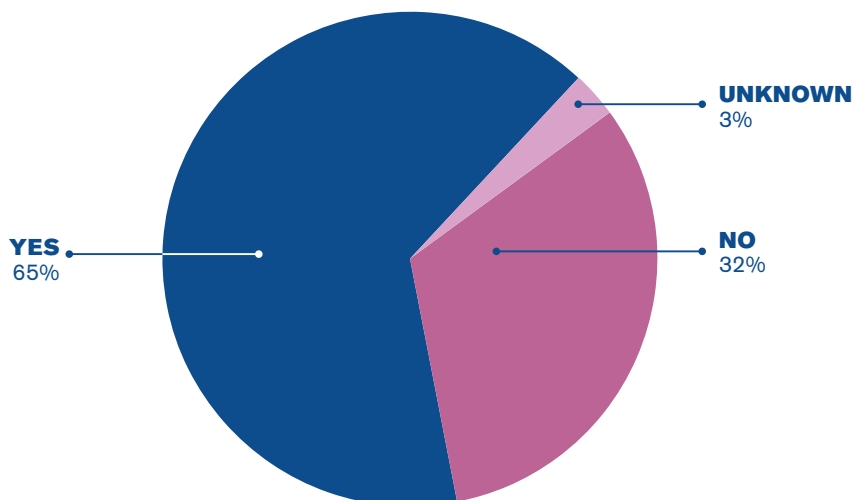
RELATIONSHIP OF VICTIM TO PERPETRATOR OF ANTI-TRANS VIOLENCE



GUN VIOLENCE

Since 2013, nearly two-thirds of all fatal violence toward transgender and gender non-conforming people involved a firearm.

VICTIM WAS IN A STATE WITH GENDER IDENTITY INCLUSIVE HATE CRIMES PROTECTIONS (2013 – 2019)



REPORTING & ENFORCEMENT DATA

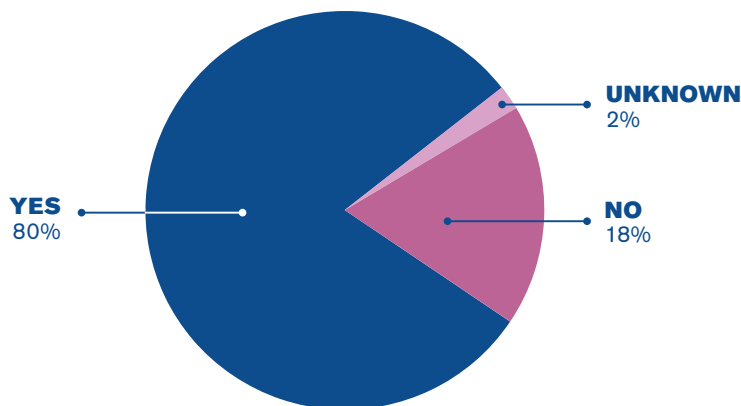
While fatal anti-transgender violence is prevalent, it is consistently reported inaccurately and insufficiently. Victims are consistently misgendered, and crimes against them are consistently underreported.

MISGENDERING

Far too many transgender and gender non-conforming victims of fatal violence are misgendered after death. Since 2013, at least 80% of all victims have been clearly misgendered by the media or by law enforcement.

While this misgendering is extremely disrespectful, it also impedes investigations and data collection. It is imperative that media and law enforcement work to treat victims of anti-transgender violence with the dignity and respect they deserve.

MISGENDERED BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AND/OR MEDIA (2013 – 2019)

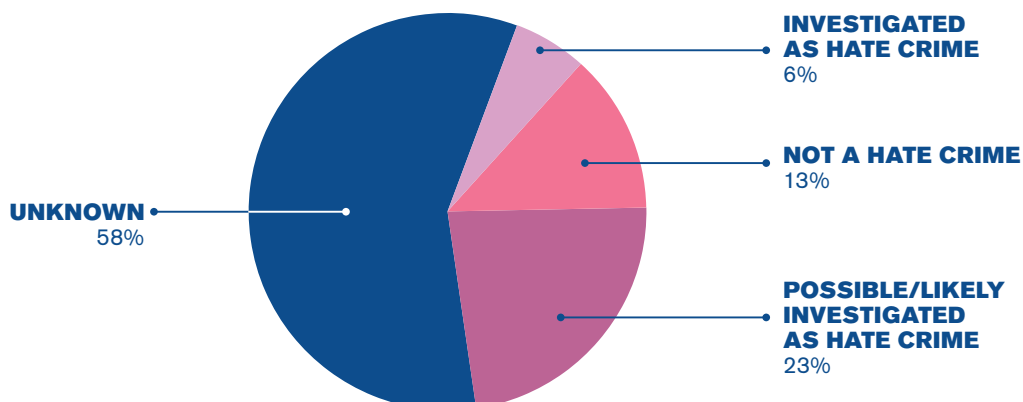


HATE CRIMES REPORTING

Although many crimes may indeed be hate crimes, few are actually pursued as hate crimes through the U.S. criminal justice system. Thus, many hate crimes are not reported or pursued as such.

Of the 157 cases of fatal anti-transgender violence tracked since 2013, we can only confirm that nine (6%) have been investigated as hate crimes. However, advocates suspect that many more were indeed motivated by hate or bias toward the transgender and gender non-conforming community.

HATE CRIMES INVESTIGATION OF FATAL ANTI-TRANS VIOLENCE (2013 – 2019)



Neither state nor municipal law enforcement agencies are required by federal law to report hate crimes data to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Therefore, hate crimes data reported by the FBI are widely believed to be even further underreported.

At the time of publishing, hate crimes data were only available from the FBI through 2017. There were seven cases of fatal violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people tracked by HRC Foundation that were investigated as hate crimes from 2013-2019. None were reported by state or local authorities to the FBI.

- **Four jurisdictions reported zero hate crimes based on gender identity in the year in which the crime occurred.**
- **Three jurisdictions did not report hate crimes data to the FBI for the year in which the crime occurred.**

Of the 26 cases of fatal violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people where the available evidence suggests it is likely that the death was the result of a hate crime, only four jurisdictions reported a hate crime on the basis of gender identity for the year in which the violence occurred.

- **16 jurisdictions reported zero hate crimes based on gender identity in the year in which the likely hate crime occurred.**
- **Six jurisdictions did not report any hate crimes data to the FBI for the year in which the likely hate crime occurred.**

One effective way of ensuring more accurate identification, investigation and reporting of hate crimes against transgender and gender non-conforming people is to mandate hate crimes data reporting for all jurisdictions. This would provide a more complete picture of hate-based violence in the U.S. and allow for targeted efforts

to address areas with high levels of hate crimes. Until reporting hate crimes is mandatory under federal law, police departments must take every step possible to ensure that their hate crimes data is transmitted to the FBI accurately and on time. These actions are imperative to the larger law enforcement community's ability to accurately gauge the scope of bias-motivated crimes and effectively address them.

ARRESTS

The arrest rate for cases of fatal anti-transgender violence tracked by HRC Foundation is 62%. There have been 97 known arrests resulting from the 157 documented cases.

As a society, we must work harder to make sure that anti-transgender violence is reported and adequately prosecuted. Many transgender and gender non-conforming people, especially transgender people of color, avoid interaction with law enforcement because they fear harassment, intimidation, incarceration or violence by law enforcement — leaving transgender and gender non-conforming victims of crime without the legal recourse and protections they critically need. In addition, the victimization of many more transgender and gender non-conforming people likely goes unreported by law enforcement and uncovered by media.

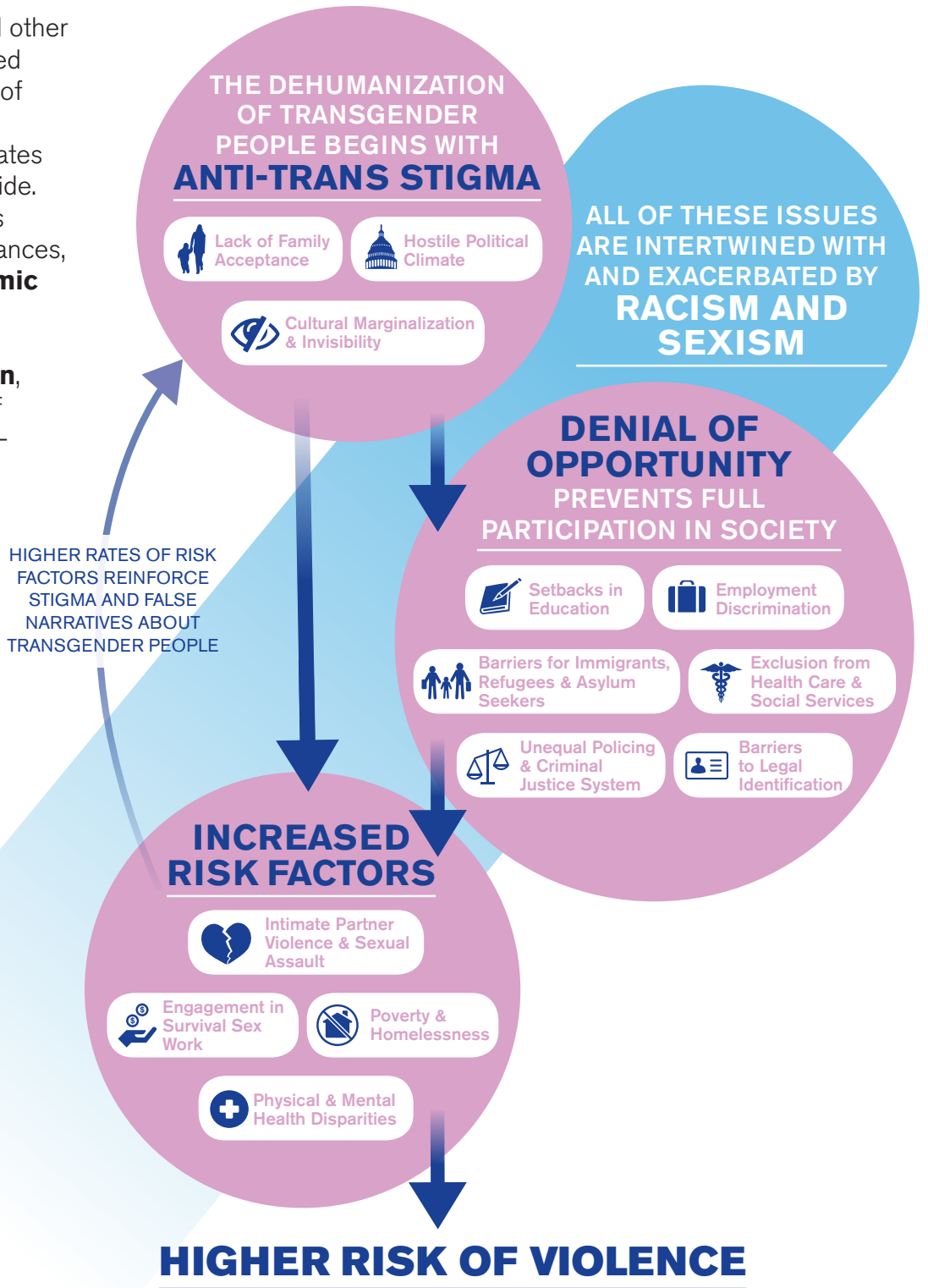
We must work together as a community to better improve conditions so that transgender and gender non-conforming people across the United States feel protected, secure and safe.

WHAT WE CAN DO

It's not enough to grieve the loss of victims of anti-transgender violence. We must honor their memories with action. In the following section, we provide clear ways that each of us, no matter who we are, can make our society a safer place for transgender and gender non-conforming people.

WHAT LEADS TO ANTI-TRANSGENDER VIOLENCE?

Since 2013, HRC and other advocates have tracked more than 157 cases of anti-transgender fatal violence across 32 states and 98 cities nationwide. Although each case is unique in its circumstances, we know **this epidemic disproportionately impacts Black transgender women**, who comprise 71% of all victims of fatal anti-transgender violence.



Ending this epidemic requires addressing and eliminating anti-transgender stigma and discrimination across all facets of society **and embracing people of all genders for who they are.** Read the following sections to learn how you can take action to help end the violence.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

ELIMINATE ANTI-TRANSGENDER STIGMA

Transgender and gender non-binary people face stigma surrounding who they are from an early age. Often rooted in ignorance, inaccurate beliefs and sometimes politically-motivated attacks on transgender and non-binary identities, this stigma erects barriers in virtually every facet of life, denying transgender and non-binary people the equal opportunity to succeed and be accepted for who they are. Moreover, anti-transgender stigma can have long-term impacts on mental health and affect their economic and housing stability, especially if they experience familial rejection and isolation from social support systems. Here are a few actions you can take to help eliminate anti-transgender stigma.

Educate your friends, family and community about transgender and non-binary inclusion.

Amplify your voice as an ally to educate others about multifaceted forms of discrimination and violence that transgender and gender non-conforming people face in the U.S. Dispute harmful rhetoric that seeks to dehumanize transgender and non-binary people, and educate those who are not informed of the many barriers transgender and non-binary people experience. Advocate for the recognition of transgender and non-binary people as equal members of our society deserving of the same level of dignity, respect, representation and opportunity as every other member of our society. Moreover, by using your voice to support transgender and non-binary people, you can help improve family acceptance of transgender and gender-expansive youth, as lack of information and fear of the unknown may lead many people to initially reject or deny their family members.

Support and elevate transgender and non-binary voices.

Support artists, athletes, activists, political leaders and other transgender public figures who are sharing their stories and lived experiences. Uplift these individuals by elevating their projects and sharing their work among your personal network and communities. We must also ensure that transgender and non-binary voices have a seat at the table where decisions are being made that impact their communities. Raise the profile of transgender and non-binary leaders in your communities, elevate their concerns

and support their work. In addition, more and more transgender and non-binary people are running for elected offices — working on their campaigns and supporting other pro-equality elected officials who are committed to addressing anti-transgender violence is imperative.

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FULL PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY

Discriminatory and unjust barriers deprive transgender and non-binary people the right to full and equal participation in society. Whether formalized through law or policy, or upheld due to cultural misconceptions about gender, these systemic barriers must be abolished in order to end the marginalization and consequent risk of violence transgender and gender non-conforming people face in their daily lives. Here are a few things you can do help create opportunities for transgender and non-binary people across the United States.

Support expansion of non-discrimination and hate crimes prevention laws.

Only [20 states and Washington, D.C.](#) explicitly prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, and places of public accommodation based on gender identity and sexual orientation. Voice your support for legislation at federal, state and local levels, including for the [Equality Act](#), and encourage elected officials in your community to enact comprehensive non-discrimination laws.

Only [20 states and Washington, D.C.](#) have laws that address hate crimes based on gender identity. We must advocate for all states to enact inclusive hate crimes prevention laws. We must also push our elected officials to support mandatory reporting by local, state and federal authorities to relevant data collection agencies at the local, state and federal level.

Combat misinformation about transgender and non-binary people in schools and advocate for transgender- and non-binary-inclusive laws and policies in education.

According to HRC Foundation's [Gender-Expansive Youth Report](#), 84% of transgender and gender-expansive youth do not always feel safe in the classroom. In addition, only 15 states and the District of Columbia have laws that prohibit discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming students. You can work in your community to establish [transgender- and gender-expansive-inclusive training](#) in schools, as transgender and gender-expansive youth must be [supported and affirmed](#) in educational settings to [fully thrive](#) as students and as future leaders. In addition, you can work with your local school board or elected officials to establish school district policies, state department of education requirements and laws to protect transgender and gender-expansive students.

Expand and protect health care coverage for transgender and non-binary people.

Fifty-five percent of transgender people [report](#) that their insurance denies them medically necessary transition-related surgery, while 1 in 4 report that they were denied coverage for hormone therapy. Advocate for health plans at your workplace that include necessary transition-related care. In addition, health care and social work professionals must increase their skills to offer welcoming, inclusive and up-to-date services, which includes abiding by the [National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#) and the LGBTQ-inclusive [policy recommendations](#) already published by the American Medical Association.

Ensure local law enforcement are able to create safe communities for transgender and non-binary people.

Encourage local law enforcement agencies to designate an LGBTQ police liaison and enact policies that ensure respectful, culturally competent and non-discriminatory interactions with transgender and non-binary people. In addition, law enforcement agencies should hold regular mandatory trainings on these policies and offer tools so that officers can better understand the unique challenges that transgender and non-binary people may face in their communities. Advocate for federally mandating hate crimes data reporting for local jurisdictions.

WE NEED MORE DATA ON TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING PEOPLE.

State and federal officials have failed the transgender and non-binary community when it comes to ensuring equal treatment in government data collection efforts. While some federal and state data collection efforts include metrics on gender identity, most state and federal data collection efforts fail to obtain this data. Measures are also omitted from the country's largest demographic data collection endeavors such as the decennial U.S. Census. Municipalities, states and the federal government can and should promulgate policies that require their respective data collection undertakings to be fully inclusive of the transgender and non-binary community.

REDUCE RISK FACTORS

Although every tragic case is unique, many victims of anti-transgender violence share common experiences that put them at a higher risk. Women of color, who must also contend with racism and sexism prevalent in our society, are even further impacted by these issues. Some people use inaccurate statistics and research to erroneously (or maliciously) blame victims for their plight. Instead, we know that both stigma and the denial of opportunity they face from an early age are responsible. We must ensure that everyone in our society has an equal opportunity to succeed. Here are a few substantial actions you can take to help reduce risk factors for violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people in the U.S.

Ensure that transgender and gender non-conforming working people have a pathway to economic stability.

The unemployment rate among transgender people is three times higher than that of the general population. In addition, approximately 30% of transgender employees report having been fired, denied a promotion or experiencing another form of mistreatment in the workplace due to their gender identity or expression. We must provide avenues for transgender and non-binary people to obtain the education, training and skills that far too many have been denied due to systemic barriers.

We must provide transgender- and non-binary-inclusive career fairs, mentorship, networking opportunities and career coaching for transgender and non-binary workers and raise awareness about their rights as employees. In addition, encourage your employer to establish internal non-discrimination policies that fully include transgender and non-binary colleagues, including providing transgender and non-binary inclusive health benefits, cultural competency training and expanded recruiting and hiring practices.

Decriminalize sex work and provide additional resources and support to people who engage in sex work.

Denial of opportunities across the board lead many transgender and gender non-conforming people to resort to the underground economy for survival. We must create spaces where people who engage in sex work can receive judgment-free care, support and resources, especially as we look to resolve the higher rates of health disparities and violence they face.

In addition, the criminalization of sex work directly impacts already strained interactions with and trust of law enforcement. [86%](#) of transgender people who have engaged in sex work report being mistreated by police officers. Meanwhile, [one-third](#) of Black transgender women who have interacted with law enforcement in the past year report that officers assumed they were sex workers.

We must educate policy makers on how the criminalization of sex work contributes to a higher risk of violence for transgender and gender non-conforming people. Additionally, we must hold law enforcement agencies accountable to equally serving transgender and non-binary individuals regardless of their engagement in sex work.

Demand transgender- and non-binary-inclusive resources for low-income individuals and individuals experiencing homelessness.

Nearly one in five transgender people [reports](#) negative treatment in a public assistance or government benefits office. In addition, more than [one](#) in four of transgender people who have experienced homelessness avoided shelters out of fear of mistreatment. These resources, designed to assist individuals in escaping poverty, need to be accommodating and knowledgeable of the unique challenges transgender and non-binary people face while experiencing poverty and homelessness.

Protect transgender and non-binary people from intimate partner violence.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) and sexual assault can have a devastating impact on any person, but transgender people face elevated risks and challenges to care and justice. It is important to [learn the signs](#) of the common types of abuse transgender people experience. In addition, we must continue to support the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which since 2013 has expressly prohibited discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, making it easier for LGBTQ survivors of IPV to access critical lifeline services.

End the transgender panic defense.

The vast majority of states do not have a law expressly banning perpetrators of violent crimes from asserting the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity as a so-called "panic" defense. This "panic defense" allows a criminal defendant to argue in court that their discovery of the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity caused the defendant's violent reaction, potentially leading to a reduced charge or sentence. The passage of legislation banning this defense will help to end the legitimization of violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people and ensure that victims obtain equal justice.

We can all do our part to support transgender and non-binary community advocates throughout the U.S. Transgender and non-binary people across the country lead communities and organizations both large and small, frequently advancing crucial policies and programs supporting the transgender and non-binary community. Yet, these communities and organizations are yet are often vastly under-resourced and under-recognized. Together — transgender and non-binary people and cisgender allies — we can all work together to uplift and empower transgender and non-binary communities across the country in the fight for lasting change.



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