

2017–2018 Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) Data Analysis



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Biannual Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) 2017–2018

The Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) is an innovative strategy being used to help identify victims of domestic violence who are at the highest risk of being seriously injured or killed by their intimate partners. LAP uses a standardized, evidence-based lethality assessment instrument to identify someone in high danger and immediately connect them to a local domestic violence services program. The nationally recognized LAP model was developed by the Maryland Network to End Domestic Violence in 2005, and has been used in Virginia since 2012 through collaboration between the Office of the Attorney General, the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), and the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance.

This report provides aggregated data on LAP screenings, responses to some lethality assessment questions, victim response to seeking services, and law enforcement and victim homicide data for the 24-month period from January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2018.

During 2017 and 2018, the number of participating and reporting LAPs in Virginia increased substantially. During the first reporting period of 2017 (January–June), there were nine participating domestic violence (DV) agencies and 13 participating law enforcement agencies (LEAs). Presently, 41 LEAs have partnered with 20 DV agencies across the state to implement LAP. New lethality assessment programs were implemented in some areas, and additional LEAs signed onto existing LAPs in others. The variance in the numbers of programs and participating agencies over the reporting period makes it difficult to compare the raw numbers reported by the programs. To make the data comparable for this report, statewide averages were calculated based on the number of responses received to each question for each month. Thus, for each question, the chart indicates the total number of responses reported by the agency, the number of agencies providing data, and the average per agency.

The ultimate goal of utilizing LAP is to decrease the number of intimate partner homicides, decrease law enforcement injuries and fatalities, and increase victim safety by connect more individuals with counselors and services that can positively impact and possibly even save their lives. Continued data collection from participating localities will help DCJS assess the effectiveness of LAP overtime in Virginia by looking at trends over the course of several years.

Lethality Assessment Screening

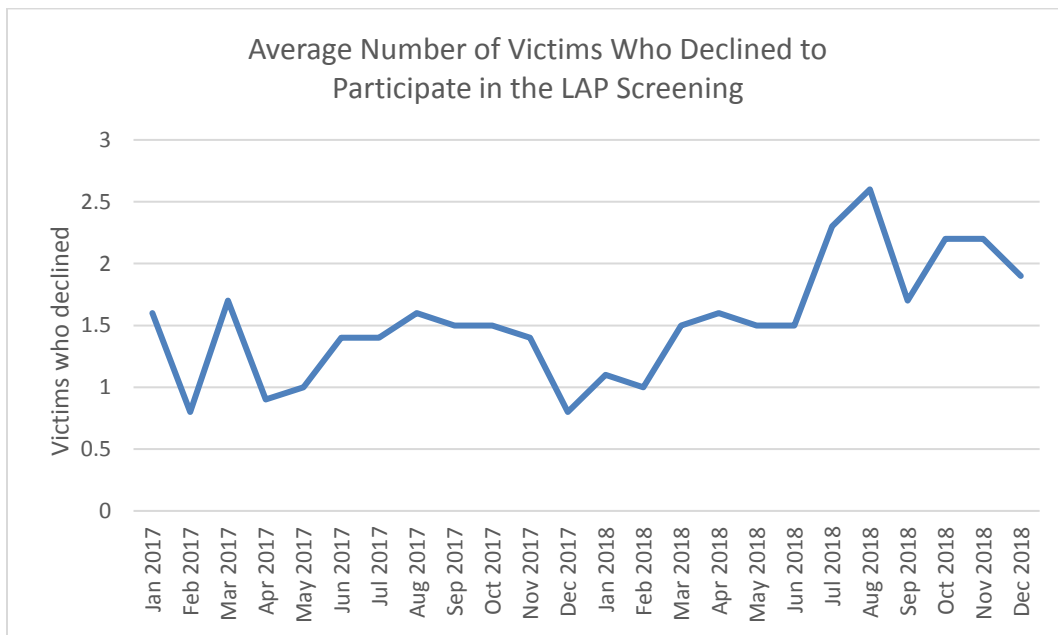
Law enforcement officers ask victims of intimate partner domestic violence (IPDV) whether they are willing to respond to a set of questions (lethality assessment screening questions) to assess their level of danger. Victims may decline, or agree to answer the questions.

How many victims declined to participate in the LAP questionnaire?

Number of victims that declined to respond to lethality assessment screening questions during each month of this reporting period.

	2017											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	19	9	20	13	14	19	31	36	34	38	37	21
N LEAs	12	12	12	14	14	14	22	22	23	26	26	25
Average	1.6	0.8	1.7	0.9	1.0	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.4	0.8

	2018											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	22	20	31	35	33	32	74	82	53	73	73	64
N LEAs	20	21	21	22	22	22	32	32	32	33	33	33
Average	1.1	1.0	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.5	2.3	2.6	1.7	2.2	2.2	1.9



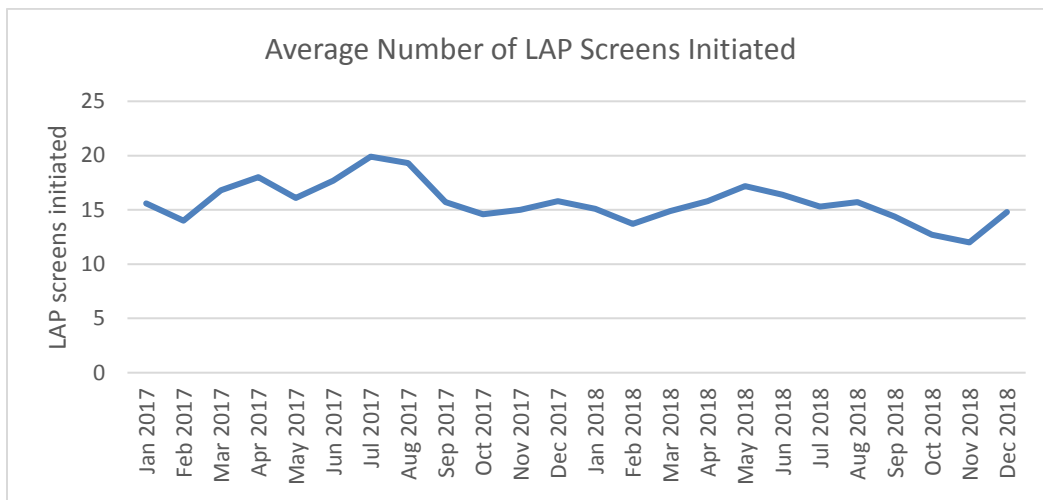
When victims agree to respond to the screening questions, a LAP screen protocol is initiated.

How many LAP screens were initiated?

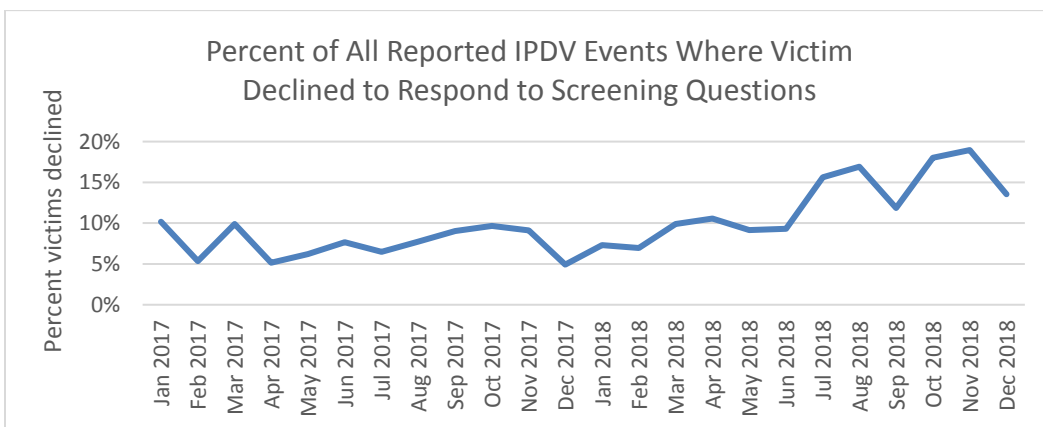
Number of lethality assessment screenings that occurred each month during this reporting period.

2017												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	187	168	202	252	225	248	477	464	376	394	406	427
N LEAs	12	12	12	14	14	14	24	24	24	27	27	27
Average	15.6	14	16.8	18	16.1	17.7	19.9	19.3	15.7	14.6	15.0	15.8

2018												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	301	288	313	331	361	344	474	485	447	405	385	473
N LEAs	20	21	21	21	21	21	31	31	31	32	32	32
Average	15.1	13.7	14.9	15.8	17.2	16.4	15.3	15.7	14.4	12.7	12.0	14.8



Based on data reported by participating LAP programs, the percent of all IPDV calls where the victim declined to respond to screening questions was calculated. The two-year average of victims that declined was 10%. The range was a low of 5% and a high of 19%



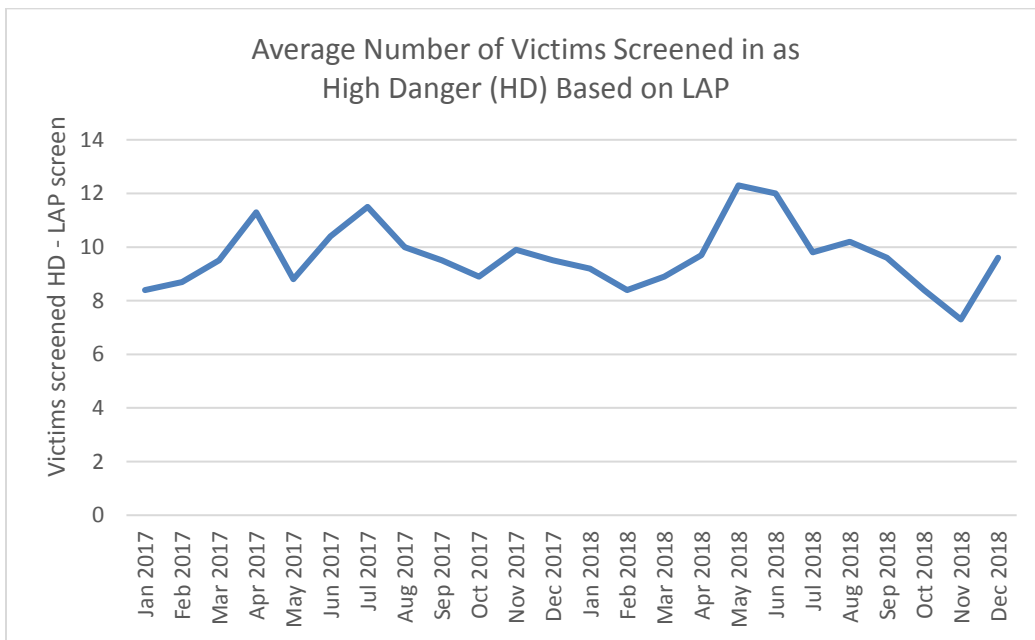
After the questionnaire is completed, a victim’s level of danger is assessed based on their responses to the set of questions.

How many victims screened in as “high danger” based on the LAP?

Of all of the lethality assessment screenings conducted, what was the number of victims that screened as in high danger based on their lethality assessment screening during each month of this reporting period.

2017												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	101	104	114	158	123	145	253	221	219	232	257	247
N LEAs	12	12	12	14	14	14	22	22	23	26	26	26
Average	8.4	8.7	9.5	11.3	8.8	10.4	11.5	10.0	9.5	8.9	9.9	9.5

2018												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	184	176	187	214	270	264	314	325	306	276	240	317
N LEAs	20	21	21	22	22	22	32	32	32	33	33	33
Average	9.2	8.4	8.9	9.7	12.3	12.0	9.8	10.2	9.6	8.4	7.3	9.6



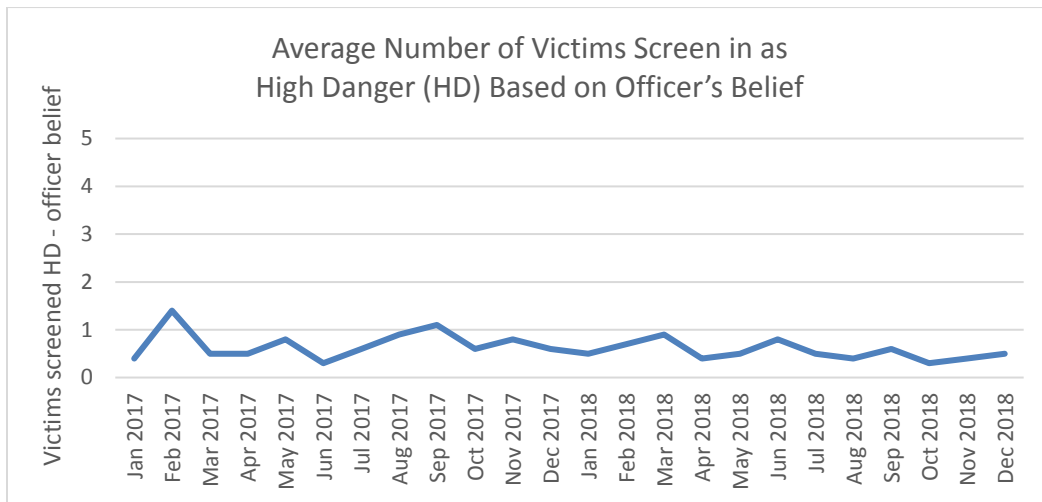
Law enforcement officers can also decide that a victim is high danger based on what they observe.

How many victims screened in as high danger based on officer’s belief?

Number of victims screened as in high danger *based on the responding officer’s belief* during each month of this reporting period.

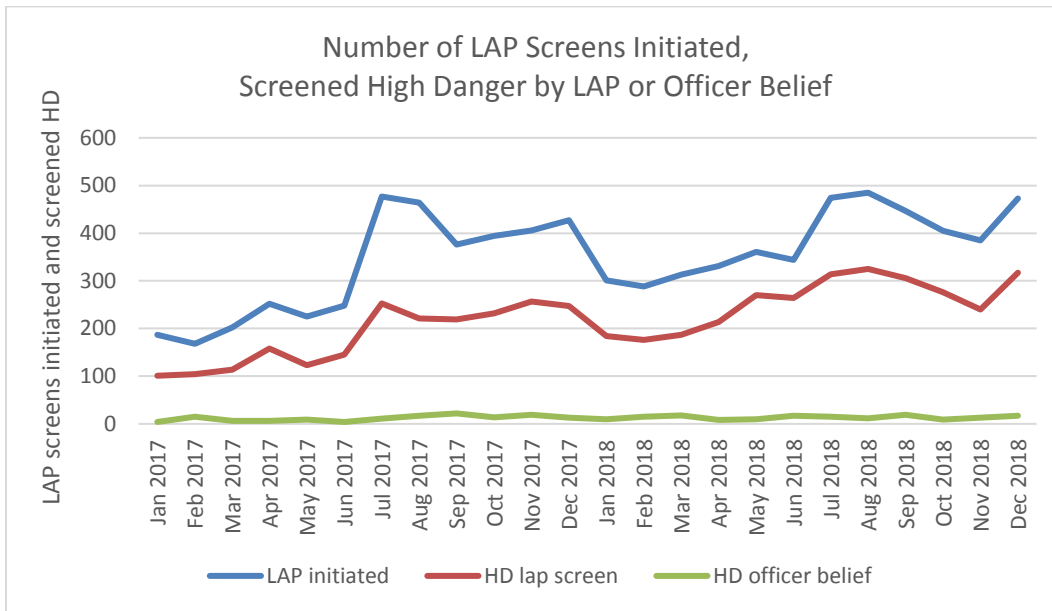
	2017											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	4	15	6	6	9	4	11	17	22	14	19	13
N LEAs	11	11	11	12	12	12	20	20	20	23	23	23
Average	0.4	1.4	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.3	0.6	0.9	1.1	0.6	0.8	0.6

	2018											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	10	15	18	8	10	17	15	12	19	9	13	17
N LEAs	20	21	21	22	22	22	31	30	31	32	32	32
Average	0.5	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.5	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.5



A closer examination of how victims are screened in as high danger

The following chart shows the number of all LAPs initiated each month, victims that screened in high danger based on the LAP assessment, and those that screened in high danger based on officer belief. Victims screened in high danger based on an officer’s belief happened relatively infrequently, while the number of LAPs initiated and the high-danger LAP screens trended very similarly over the two-year period.



The tables below show the total number of all high-danger screens, along with the percentage of which were determined by a LAP screen versus based on officer belief.

	2017											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
All high danger	105	119	120	164	132	149	264	238	241	246	276	260
% LAP screen	96%	87%	95%	96%	93%	97%	96%	93%	91%	94%	93%	95%
% officer belief	4%	13%	5%	4%	7%	3%	4%	7%	9%	6%	7%	5%

	2018											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
All high danger	194	191	205	222	280	281	329	337	325	285	253	334
% LAP screen	95%	92%	91%	96%	96%	94%	95%	96%	94%	97%	95%	95%
% officer belief	5%	8%	9%	4%	4%	6%	5%	4%	6%	3%	5%	5%

Based on LAP assessment tool

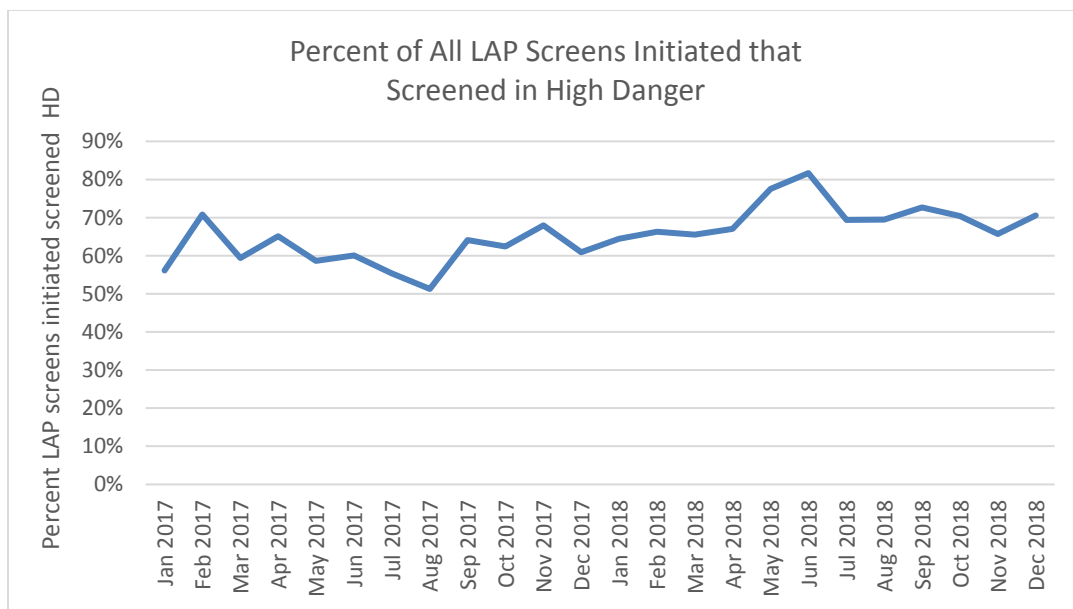
- Over the two-year period, an average of 95% of all high-danger screens were based on the outcome of the LAP assessment.
- The range over the same period was a low of 87% and a high of 95%.

Based on officer belief

- Over the two-year period, an average of 5% of all high-danger screens were based on officer beliefs.
- The range over the same period was a low of 3% and a high of 13%.

The following table and chart show the percent of all LAP screens that resulted in a high-danger screening (includes both LAP HD screens and HD by officer belief).

	Percent of All LAP Screens Initiated that Were High Danger											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2017	56%	71%	59%	65%	59%	60%	55%	51%	64%	62%	68%	61%
2018	64%	66%	65%	67%	78%	82%	69%	69%	73%	70%	66%	71%



Over the two-year period, the average of all LAP screens initiated that screened in high danger was 66%. The range over the same period was a low of 51% and a high of 82%.

DV Hotline Calls and Victim Response to DV Services

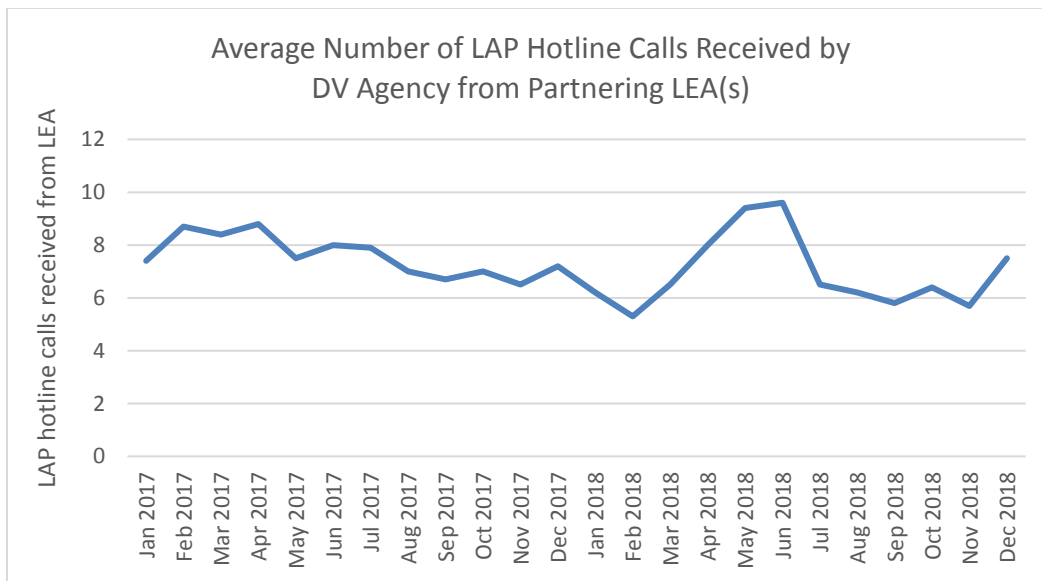
The LAP protocol states that a law enforcement officer should place a call to the partnering DV agency’s hotline when a victim is identified as high danger.

How many LAP hotline calls did the DV agency receive from partnering LEAs?

Number of hotline calls received by domestic violence agencies from the law enforcement agencies.

2017												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	67	78	76	97	82	80	150	132	127	153	142	158
N LEAs	9	9	9	11	11	10	19	19	19	22	22	22
Average	7.4	8.7	8.4	8.8	7.5	8.0	7.9	7.0	6.7	7.0	6.5	7.2

2018												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	124	112	137	177	206	211	200	193	181	206	183	240
N LEAs	20	21	21	22	22	22	31	31	31	32	32	32
Average	6.2	5.3	6.5	8.0	9.4	9.6	6.5	6.2	5.8	6.4	5.7	7.5



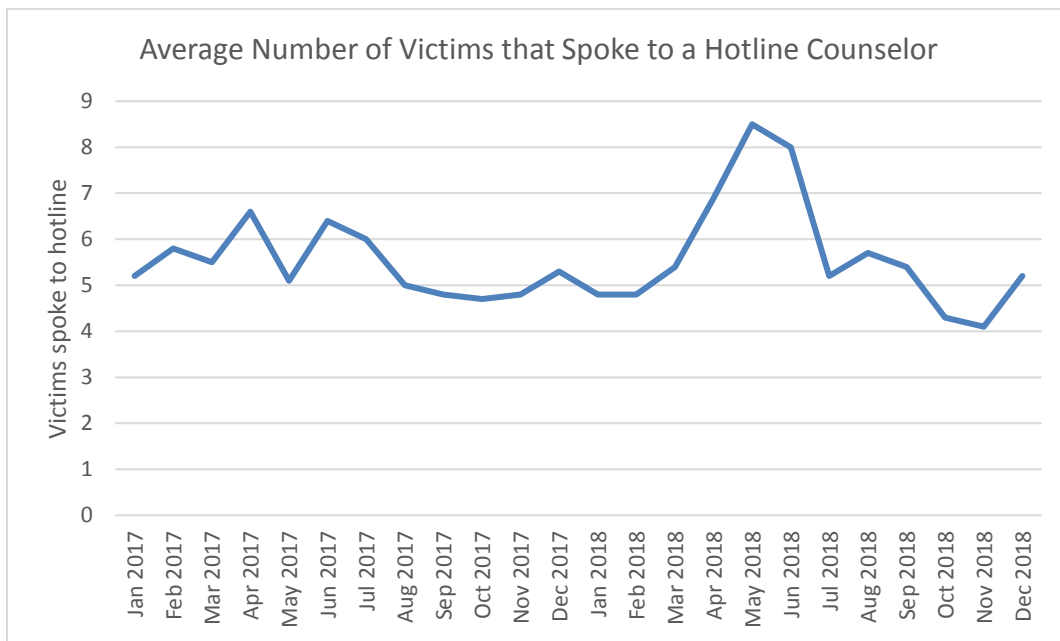
After the officer places the call to the DV hotline, the victim is given the opportunity to speak with the hotline counselor. The victim may agree or decline.

How many victims spoke to a hotline worker?

Number of victims that agreed to speak with a domestic violence hotline worker as part of the lethality assessment process during each month of this reporting period.

2017												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	62	69	66	93	72	89	144	121	116	126	130	142
N LEAs	12	12	12	14	14	14	24	24	24	27	27	27
Average	5.2	5.8	5.5	6.6	5.1	6.4	6.0	5.0	4.8	4.7	4.8	5.3

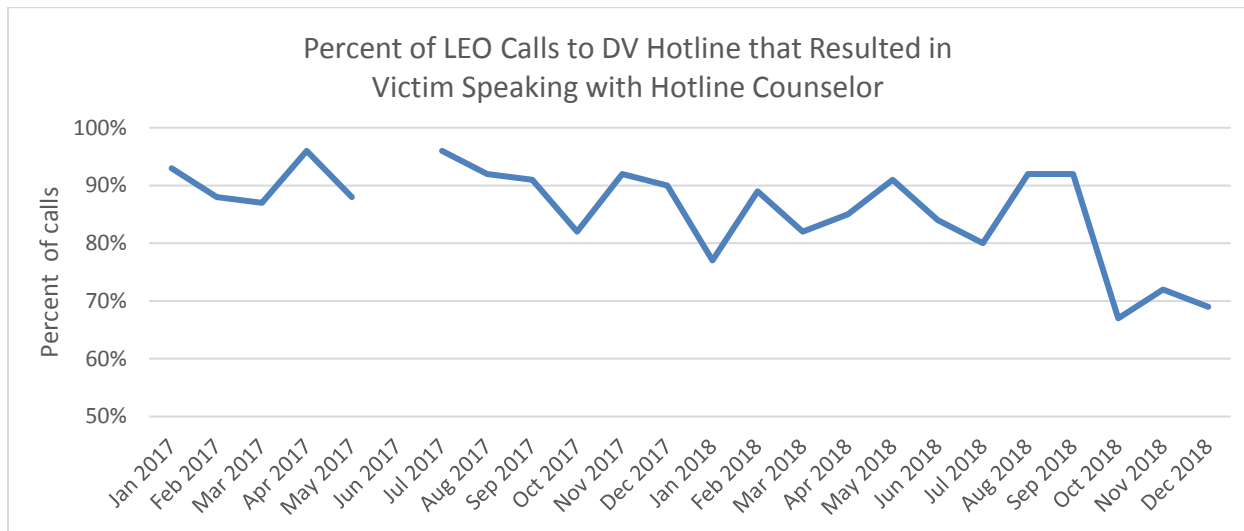
2018												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	95	100	113	151	187	177	160	178	166	138	132	165
N LEAs	20	21	21	22	22	22	31	31	31	32	32	32
Average	4.8	4.8	5.4	6.9	8.5	8.0	5.2	5.7	5.4	4.3	4.1	5.2



A closer examination of calls to the domestic violence hotline

As stated above, when a law enforcement officer (LEO) conducts the lethality assessment protocol and the victim screens in high danger, the protocol states the officer should call the partnering domestic violence hotline. The victim is not under any obligation to talk to the hotline counselor, but is given the opportunity to do so.

The data in the following chart show the percent of calls made by an officer that result in the victim speaking with a hotline counselor. Over the two-year period, the average was 85%.



(Data from June 2017 is missing due to a reporting error)

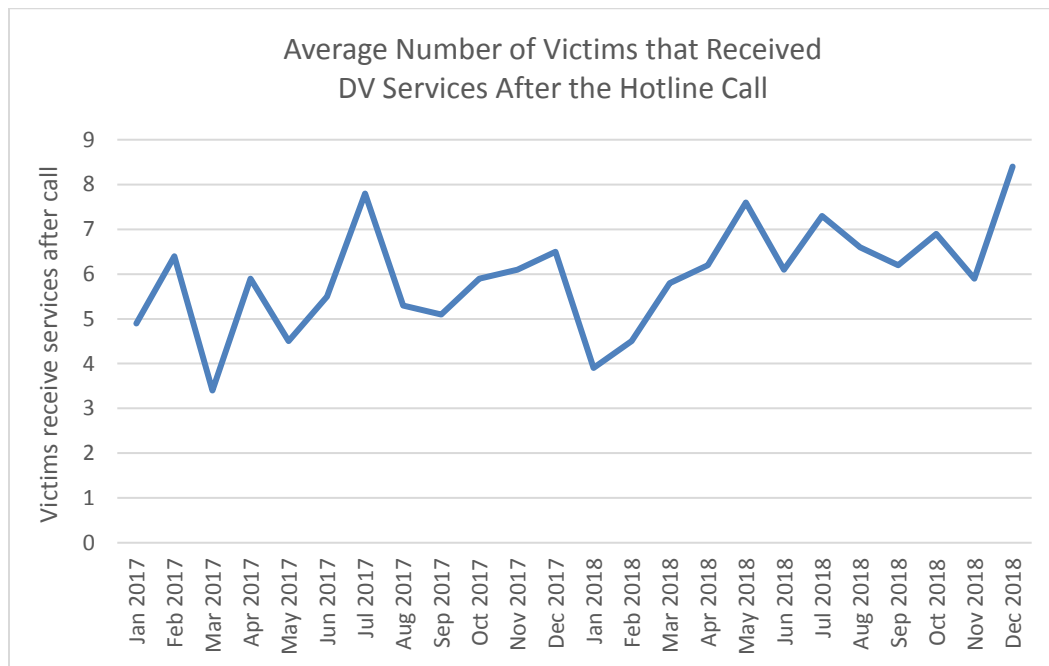
The victims that agreed to speak with a DV hotline counselor were informed of services available for victims of IPDV. Some victims decide to receive services; some do not. DV services increase victims' safety and decreases their risk of being killed by their abuser.

How many victims received DV services after the hotline call?

Number of victims that agreed to receive services from the partnering domestic violence agency after the hotline call during each month of this reporting period.

	2017											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	34	45	24	47	36	44	86	58	56	71	73	78
N LEAs	7	7	7	8	8	8	11	11	11	12	12	12
Average	4.9	6.4	3.4	5.9	4.5	5.5	7.8	5.3	5.1	5.9	6.1	6.5

	2018											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	51	59	75	87	106	85	109	99	93	111	95	134
N LEAs	13	13	13	14	14	14	15	15	15	16	16	16
Average	3.9	4.5	5.8	6.2	7.6	6.1	7.3	6.6	6.2	6.9	5.9	8.4



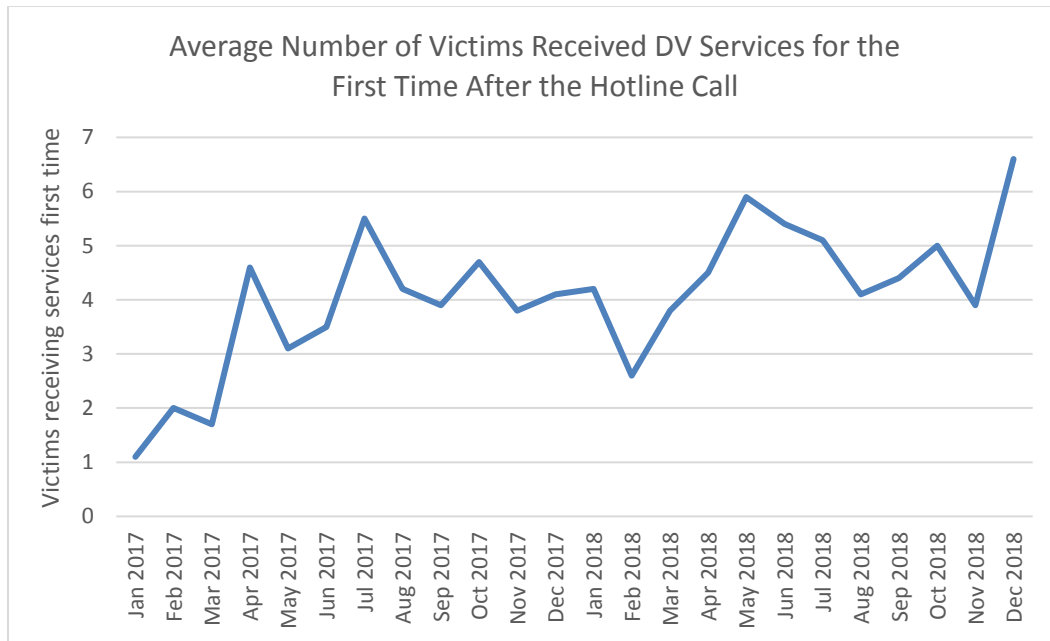
For some victims, this was the first time they received services from a DV agency.

How many victims received DV services for the first time after the hotline call?

Number of victims that agreed to receive services for the first time from the partnering domestic violence agency after the hotline call during each month of this reporting period.

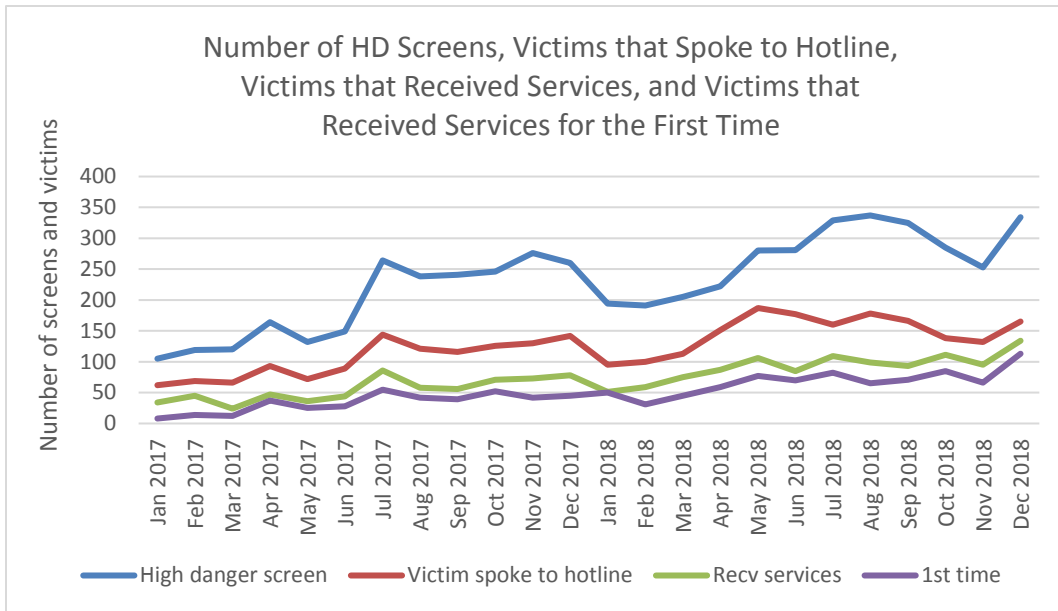
	2017											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	8	14	12	37	25	28	55	42	39	52	42	45
N LEAs	7	7	7	8	8	8	10	10	10	11	11	11
Average	1.1	2.0	1.7	4.6	3.1	3.5	5.5	4.2	3.9	4.7	3.8	4.1

	2018											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	50	31	45	59	77	70	82	65	71	85	66	113
N LEAs	12	12	12	13	13	13	16	16	16	17	17	17
Average	4.2	2.6	3.8	4.5	5.9	5.4	5.1	4.1	4.4	5.0	3.9	6.6



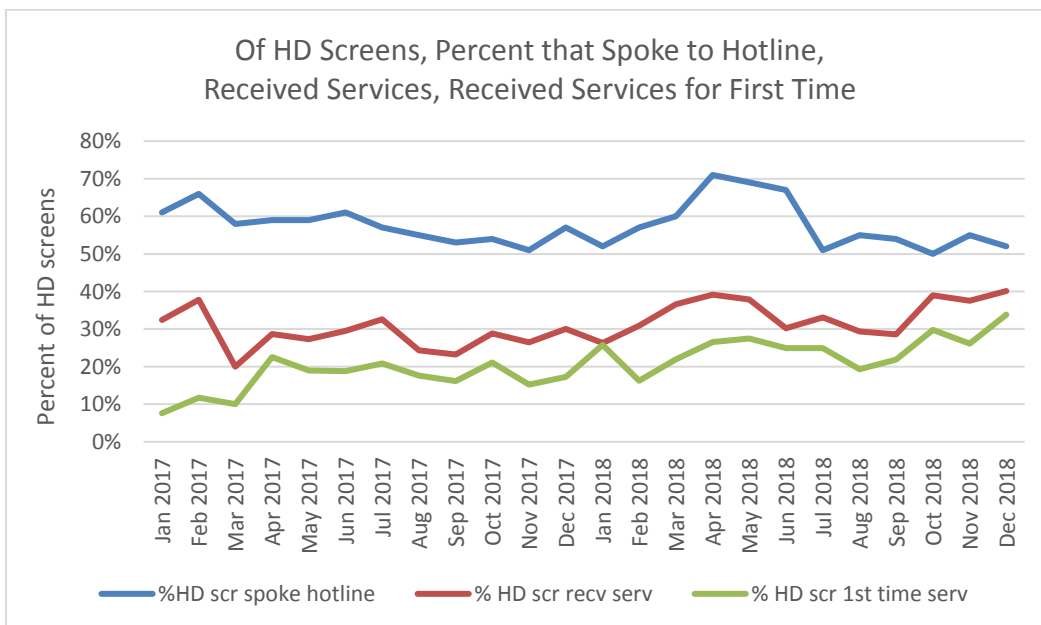
A closer examination of how victims enter services

The following chart shows the number of high-danger screens (LAP screens and officer belief) each month, the number of HD screens where the victim spoke to a hotline worker, the number of victims that agreed to receive DV services, and the number of victims that agreed to receive DV services for the first time. Generally, these trend along a similar path.

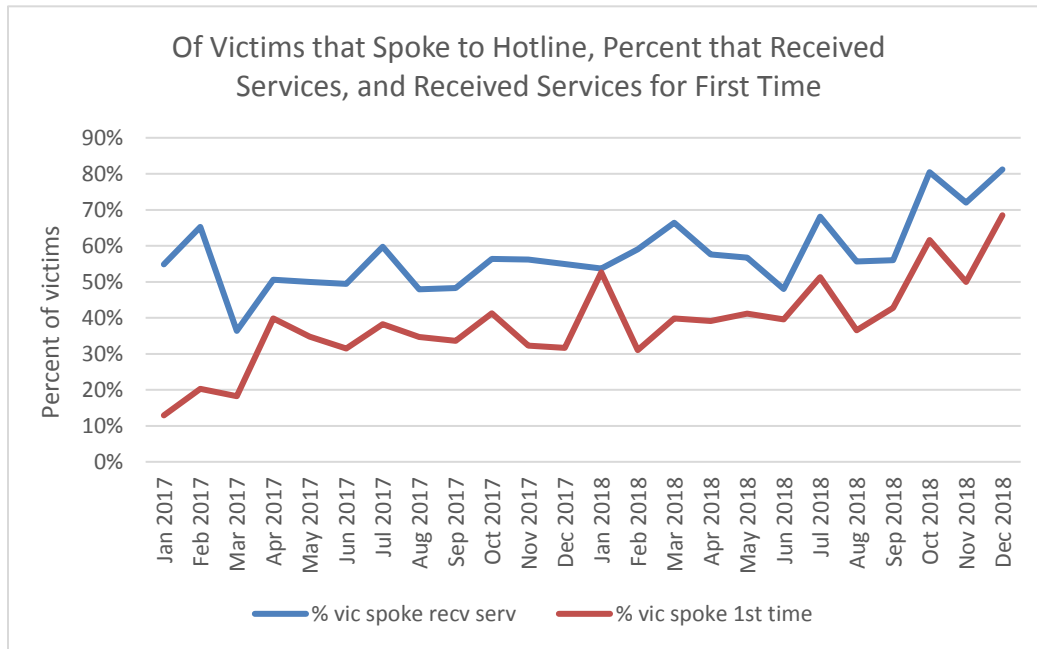


Of the high-danger LAP screens, an average of 58% spoke to the hotline worker, 31% agreed to receive DV services, and for 21%, this was the first time they had agreed to receive DV services.

The trends suggest that while the percent of victims that speak to the hotline has recently decreased, the percent that agreed to receive services (veterans and first-timers) has generally increased during 2018.



Of the victims that spoke with a DV hotline counselor, an average of 58% agreed to receive DV services and for 38%, they agreed to receive services for the first time.



The range in the percentage for each:

Percent of HD screens that:

Spoke to hotline worker	50%	to	71%
Received DV services	20%	to	40%
Received DV service for the first time	8%	to	34%

Percent of victims that spoke to hotline that:

Received DV services	36%	to	81%
Received DV service for the first time	13%	to	68%

Lethality Assessment Questions

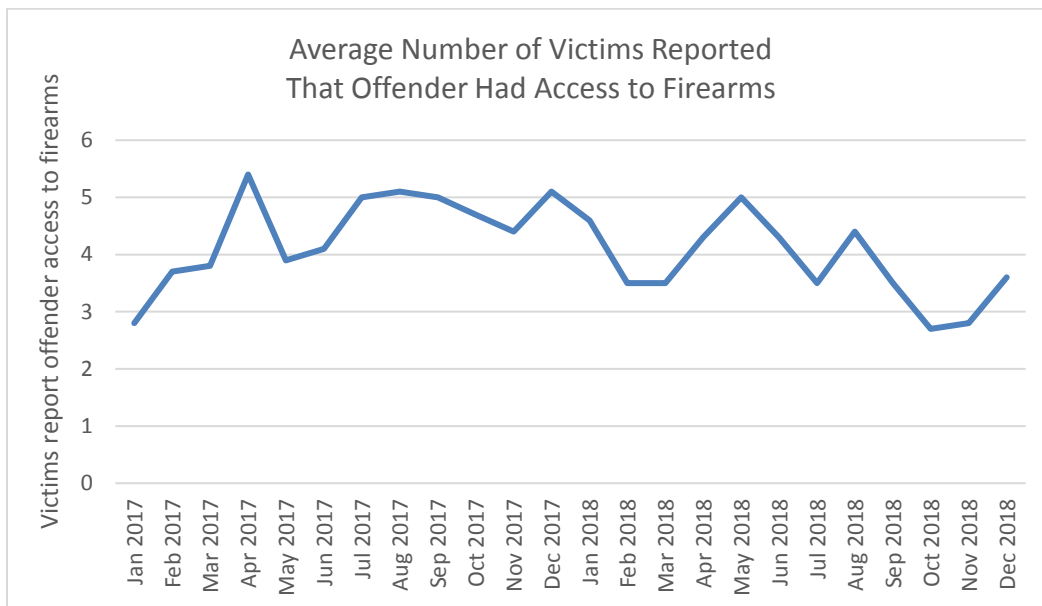
Among the LAP screening questions asked of victims, we collect data on three that ask about the offender’s abuse history and access to firearms.

How many victims, who screened high danger, reported that the offender had access to firearms?

Based on the victim’s response to LAP question, “Does s/he have a gun or can s/he get one easily?”

2017												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	34	44	45	76	54	58	100	102	105	113	105	123
N LEAs	12	12	12	14	14	14	20	20	21	24	24	24
Average	2.8	3.7	3.8	5.4	3.9	4.1	5.0	5.1	5.0	4.7	4.4	5.1

2018												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	92	73	74	95	109	95	107	136	108	86	89	116
N LEAs	20	21	21	22	22	22	31	31	31	32	32	32
Average	4.6	3.5	3.5	4.3	5.0	4.3	3.5	4.4	3.5	2.7	2.8	3.6

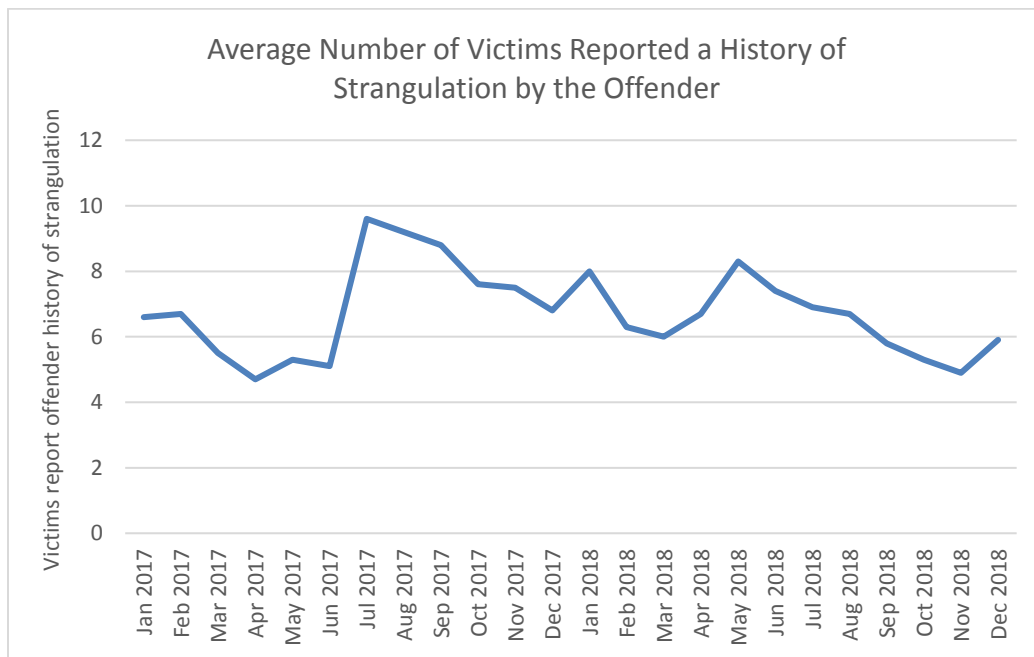


How many victims reported a history of strangulation by the offender?

Based on the victim's response to LAP question, "Has s/he ever tried to choke you?"

	2017											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	72	74	60	61	69	66	192	184	184	183	181	163
N LEAs	11	11	11	13	13	13	20	20	21	24	24	24
Average	6.6	6.7	5.5	4.7	5.3	5.1	9.6	9.2	8.8	7.6	7.5	6.8

	2018											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	159	132	126	148	182	162	207	207	181	168	156	189
N LEAs	20	21	21	22	22	22	30	31	31	32	32	32
Average	8.0	6.3	6.0	6.7	8.3	7.4	6.9	6.7	5.8	5.3	4.9	5.9

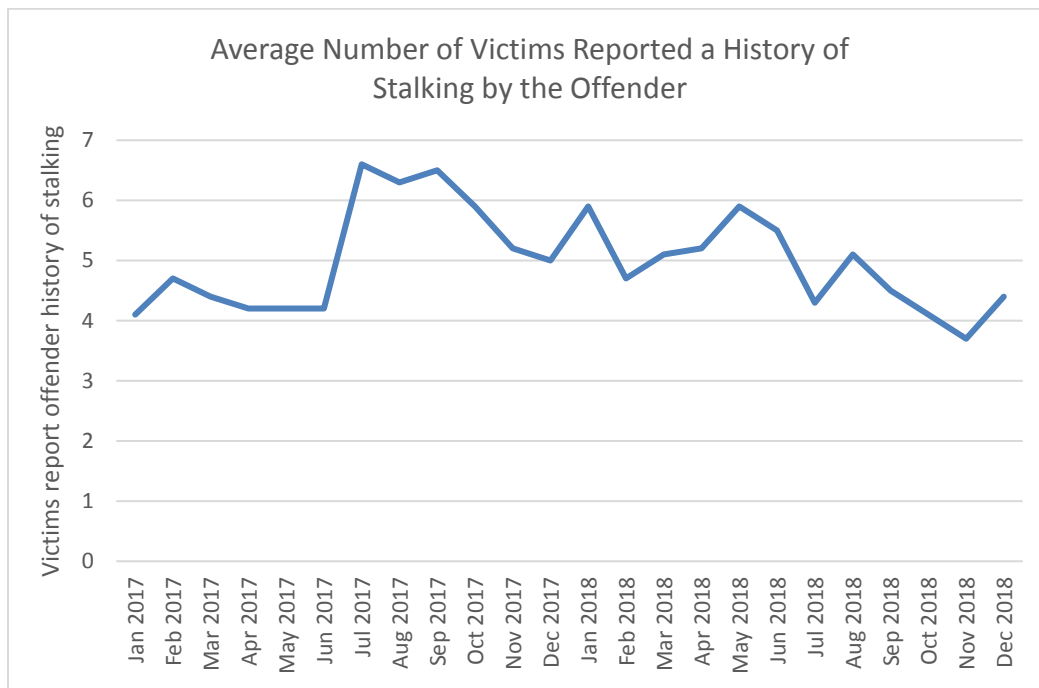


How many victims reported a history of stalking by the offender?

Based on the victim's response to LAP question, "Does s/he follow or spy on you or leave threatening messages?"

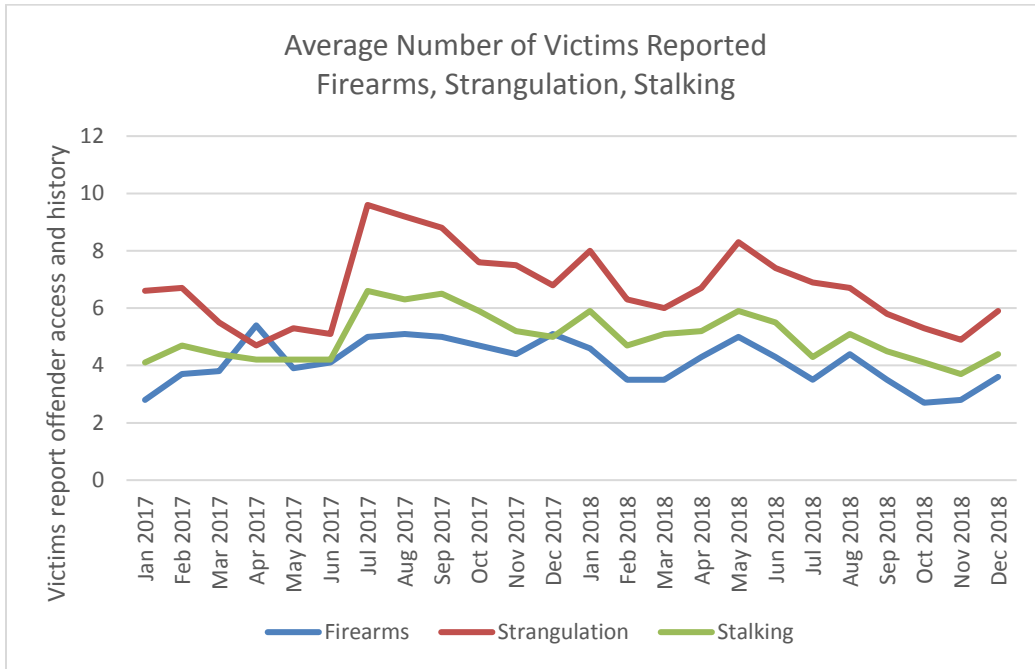
2017												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	45	52	48	55	54	54	131	125	136	142	125	120
N LEAs	11	11	11	13	13	13	20	20	21	24	24	24
Average	4.1	4.7	4.4	4.2	4.2	4.2	6.6	6.3	6.5	5.9	5.2	5.0

2018												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	117	98	107	115	129	122	134	157	139	131	119	141
N LEAs	20	21	21	22	22	22	31	31	31	32	32	32
Average	5.9	4.7	5.1	5.2	5.9	5.5	4.3	5.1	4.5	4.1	3.7	4.4



A closer examination of offenders' access to firearms, history of strangulation, and history of stalking

Based on victims' responses to the three offender-related conditions, the number of offenders with a history of strangulation trends highest, followed by offenders with a history of stalking, and closely followed by offenders with access to firearms.



DV-Related Homicide/Law Enforcement Injury Data

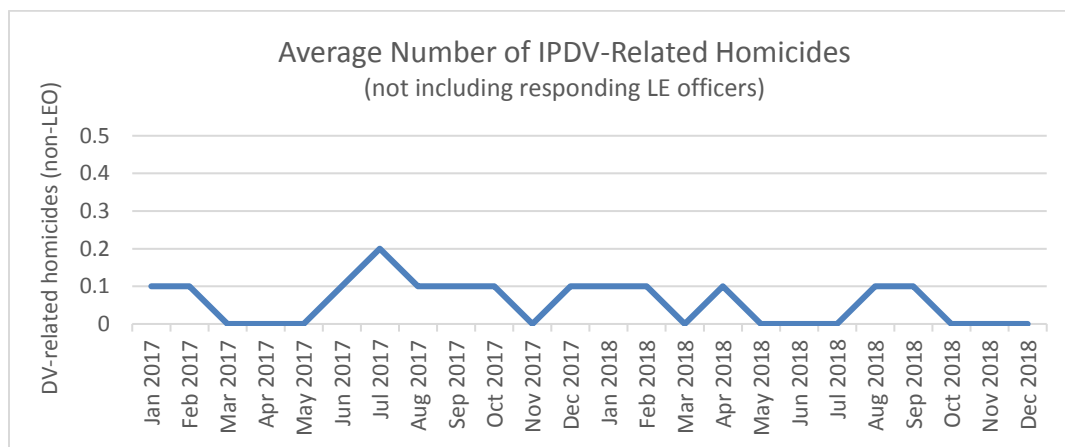
Data are collected on IPDV-related homicides and law enforcement DV-related injuries in the program's locality.

How many DV-related homicides occurred in your locality during the reporting period?

Number of DV-related homicides, *not including* responding law enforcement officers, during each month this reporting period.

	2017											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	1	1	0	0	0	1	4	2	1	2	0	2
N LEAs	10	10	10	11	11	11	20	20	20	23	23	23
Average	0.1	0.1	0	0	0	0.09	0.2	0.1	0.05	0.09	0	0.09

	2018											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	2	2	1	3	0	1	1	2	3	1	1	0
N LEAs	20	21	21	22	22	22	26	25	26	26	26	26
Average	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0



How many law enforcement officer deaths occurred in your locality in response to a DV incident during the reporting period?

Number of DV-related deaths of responding law enforcement officers, during each month of this reporting period.

2017												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N LEAs	11	11	11	11	11	11	15	15	15	16	16	16
Average	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

2018												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N LEAs	20	21	21	22	22	22	24	25	25	26	26	26
Average	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

No law enforcement deaths in response to a DV incident were reported in the program localities during the two-year reporting period.

How many law enforcement officers were injured in your locality in response to a DV incident during the reporting period?

Number of DV-related injuries of responding law enforcement officers, during each month of this reporting period.

2017												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	1	5
N LEAs	7	7	7	7	7	7	15	16	16	19	19	19
Average	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3

2018												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	3	1	0	2	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	0
N LEAs	17	18	18	19	19	19	20	20	20	21	21	21
Average	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0

