

Understanding Domestic Violence Patterns:

A Problem Analysis Conducted for the Tulsa, Oklahoma Police Department

This analysis was conducted by the IACP/University of Cincinnati Center for Police Research and Policy (the IACP/UC Research Center) with the Tulsa Police Department (TPD), focusing on patterns of domestic violence. Domestic violence incidents in TPD's jurisdiction constitute their third most common type of call for service. The analysis focused on domestic violence data reported to the TPD from 2013 – 2017, in conjunction with the Tulsa Family Service Center's victimization data. Three overarching categories were studied: city- wide domestic violence trends, domestic violence suspects, and domestic violence victims.

Key findings of this analysis are as follows:

- While the calls for service and incident reports indicated a stable amount of domestic violence reports over the five- year period (approximately 22,000 calls for service per year), TPD-generated responses, such as field interview reports and arrests, decreased over the same period. Domestic violence arrests declined by **40.9%** from 2013-2017, and field interviews declined by **46.8%** during that same time.
- **84.5%** of identified suspects were suspected of only committing one domestic violence offense; **15.5%** were suspected of committing two or more. When suspects did re-offend, the average time between arrests was **more than 500** days.
- **83.8%** of victims were victimized only once; **16.2%** were victimized two or more times.
- Compared to victims of other races, black individuals represented **19.3%** of victims seeking services, while they comprised **31.6%** of single-incident victims and **40.6%** of repeated-incident victims. This indicates that black victims of domestic violence may be less likely to seek services, compared to victims of other races.



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The results of this analysis are somewhat complex; patterns related to domestic violence offending in this study did not match what has been seen in previous research. Findings from this analysis show relatively low rates of repeat offenders (15%) and long re-arrest periods (with an average of more than 500 days) indicating that many of the well-known offender-based strategies used to reduce domestic violence may not necessarily fit the domestic violence problem found specifically in Tulsa. However, this is an important reality in policing—what works in one area may not work in another, and caution should be given before generalizing any research results to inform social policy outside of the studied setting. Because of this, the IACP/UC Research Center researchers recommend that agencies conduct their own similar problem analyses in order to better understand the domestic violence patterns in their own jurisdictions.

For more information, see Isaza, G., Engel, R., Corsaro, N., & Ozer, M. M. (2019). Understanding Domestic Violence Patterns: A Problem Analysis Conducted for the Tulsa, Oklahoma Police Department. Available at <https://www.theiacp.org/research>.