



Assault and Murder Trends – Quarterly Update for Q4 2025

Criminal Justice Research Center
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This quarterly report series examines trends in simple assault, aggravated assault, and murder for Virginia. Sections I and II of the present issue update the series through Q4 2025 (October-December 2025). Sections III and IV present annual trends for comparison. Note that assaults and murders are measured according to the number of victims (or victimizations), and rates are measured as victims per 100,000 persons.

The report finds that quarterly rates decreased statewide in Q4 2025. This is typical of the fourth quarter. The 4 percent decrease in simple assault was moderate compared to other fourth quarters from previous years, whereas aggravated assault and murder experienced relatively large decreases of 17 percent and 26 percent, respectively.

These fourth-quarter drops contributed to a decline in annual rates for CY 2025. Simple assault and aggravated assault declined for the second year in a row, dropping 4 percent each in CY 2025. Murder fell for the third year in a row with a drop of 15 percent in CY 2025.

The following pages provide additional details about these statewide changes. Data breakouts are also provided for different areas within Virginia, crimes involving firearms, and victim-offender relationships (e.g., assaults and murders by intimate partners).

Section I. Quarterly (Q4 2025) Rates Statewide

Table 1 displays rates of simple assault, aggravated assault, and murder for Virginia in Q4 2025. The table compares these to rates from the previous quarter, Q3 2025. Rates for all three offenses decreased between Q3 and Q4.

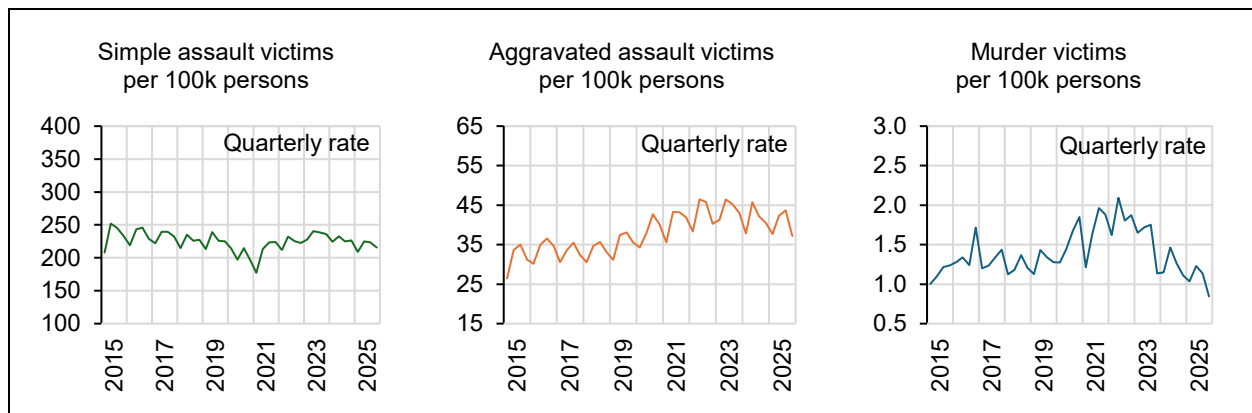
Table 1. Change in Assault and Murder Rates: Virginia, Q3-Q4 2025

Quarter	Simple assault	Aggravated assault	Murder
Q3 2025 (victims per 100,000 persons)	223.7	41.5	1.1
Q4 2025 (victims per 100,000 persons)	215.5	34.4	0.8
Change, Q3-Q4 2025	-3.7%	-17.2%	-25.7%

Source: Virginia Crime Repository (crime counts) and Weldon Cooper Center (population estimates)

Figure 1 charts quarterly rates of simple assault, aggravated assault, and murder back to Q1 2015. It shows considerable fluctuation quarter-to-quarter (as opposed to smooth trends with sustained periods of increase or decrease) for all three offenses. Careful examination reveals a strong seasonal pattern for simple assault and aggravated assault, where rates tend to be lower in Q1, higher in Q2 and Q3, and lower again in Q4. Murder also exhibits this pattern, but not as consistently as the other offenses.

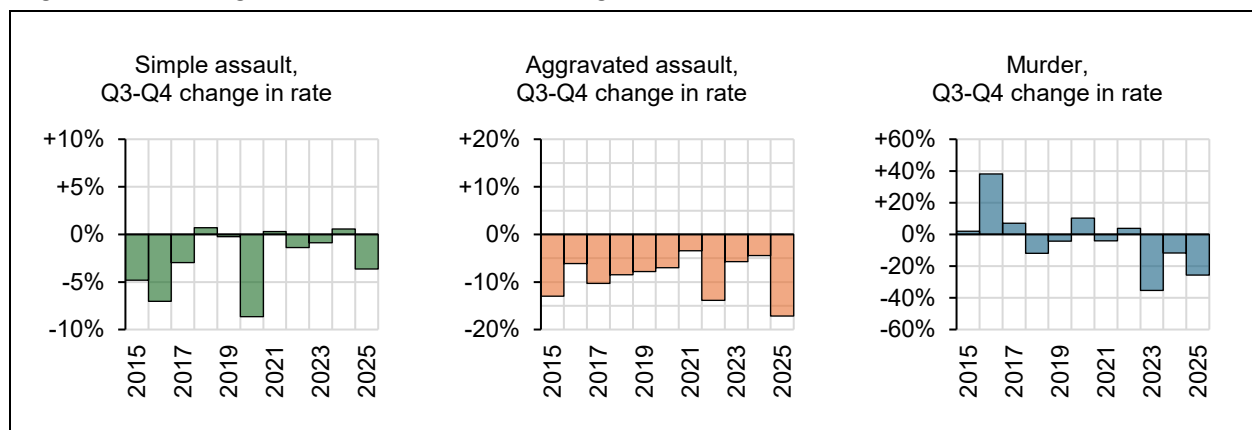
Figure 1. Assault and Murder Rates by Quarter: Virginia, Q1 2015-Q4 2025



Source: Virginia Crime Repository (crime counts) and Weldon Cooper Center (population estimates)

Figure 2 charts third- to fourth-quarter changes in the rates of simple assault, aggravated assault, and murder back to Q4 2015. This provides further context for the quarter-over-quarter changes displayed in Table 1. Figure 2 confirms that rates for all three offenses tend to fall between Q3 and Q4, and this pattern is strongest for simple assault and aggravated assault. The figure shows that the 4 percent decrease in the simple assault rate in Q4 2025 was moderate in size when compared to other quarter-over-quarter changes for Q4 over the last sixteen years. Meanwhile, decreases of 17 percent for aggravated assault and 26 percent for murder in Q4 2025 were relatively large.

Figure 2. Q3-Q4 Changes in Assault and Murder Rates: Virginia, 2015-2025



Source: Virginia Crime Repository (crime counts) and Weldon Cooper Center (population estimates)

Table 2 displays statewide rates of aggravated assault by firearm and murder by firearm in Q4 2025. (By definition, simple assaults do not involve firearms.) The table compares these to rates from the previous quarter, Q3 2025. Both rates decreased, and the decreases were greater than those experienced by aggravated assaults and murders overall (compare to Table 1).

Table 2: Change in Rates of Firearm-Involved Assaults and Murders: Virginia, Q3-Q4 2025

Year	Aggravated assault	Murder
Q3 2025 (firearm victims per 100,000 persons)	15.0	0.9
Q4 2025 (firearm victims per 100,000 persons)	11.8	0.7
Change, Q3-Q4 2025	-21.0%	-26.6%

Source: Virginia Crime Repository (crime counts) and Weldon Cooper Center (population estimates)

Section II. Quarterly (Q4 2025) Rates by Geographic Division

The Virginia State Police (VSP) geographically divide Virginia into seven divisions, which provides a useful regionalization for this report. Figure 3 maps the seven divisions.

Figure 3. VSP State Divisions for Crime Statistics

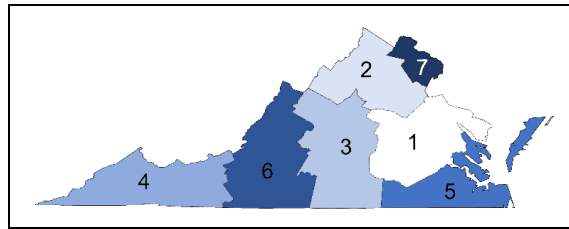
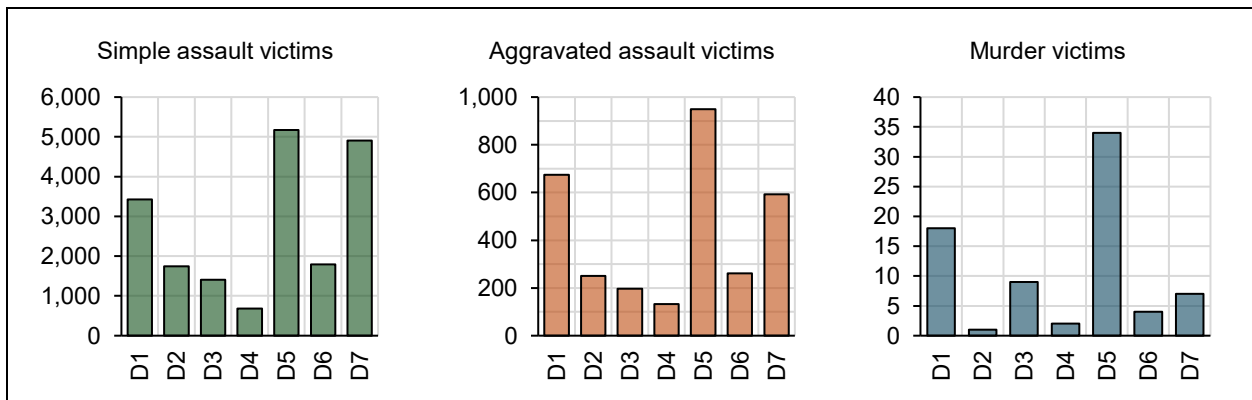


Figure 4 charts raw numbers of simple assaults, aggravated assaults, and murders for each VSP division in Q4 2025. The figure shows substantial differences between divisions for each count. This demonstrates that divisions do not contribute equally to statewide changes in counts and rates of simple assault, aggravated assault, and murder. Divisions 1, 5, and 7 tend to have the greatest influence on statewide trends for simple assault and aggravated assault because they are the divisions with the highest raw number of victims for these crimes (due, in part, to their relatively large populations). The same is true for Divisions 1 and 5 with respect to murders.

Figure 4. Counts of Assault and Murder Victims: VSP Divisions, Q4 2025

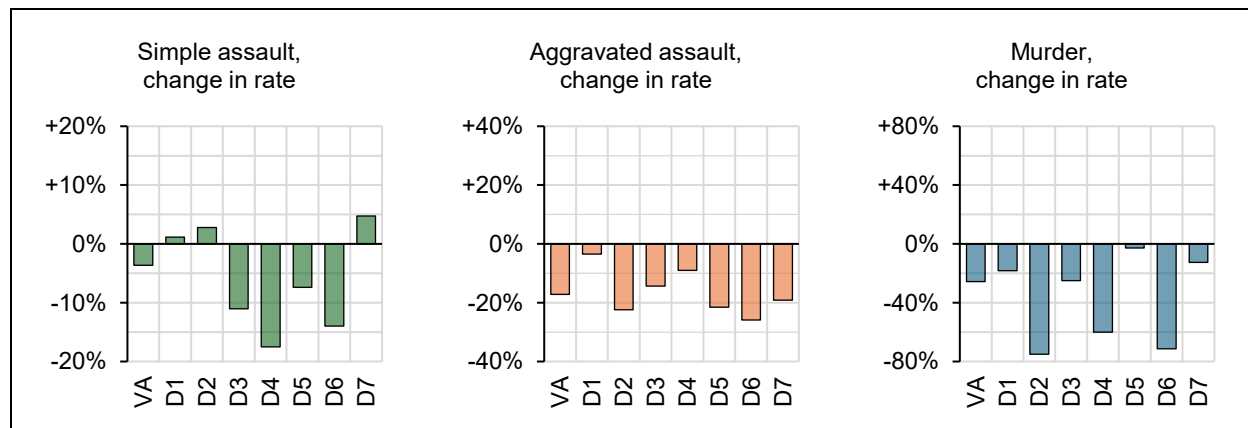


Source: Virginia Crime Repository

Figure 5 charts changes in quarterly rates of simple assault, aggravated assault, and murder between Q3 and Q4 2025 for each VSP division. These changes can be summarized as follows:

- *Simple assault.* Rates experienced large declines in Divisions 3, 4, 5, and 6, but these were offset by moderate increases in Divisions 1, 2, and 7.
- *Aggravated assault.* Most divisions experienced substantial declines in their quarterly rates. Division 1, which experienced only a minor decrease, was the exception.
- *Murder.* Large declines in Divisions 2, 4, and 6 were moderated by smaller declines in the other divisions.

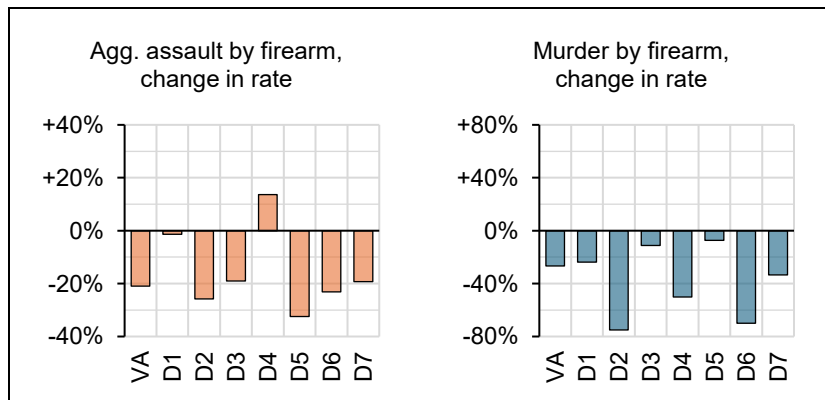
Figure 5. Change in Assault and Murder Rates: Virginia and Divisions, Q3-Q4 2025



Source: Virginia Crime Repository (crime counts) and Weldon Cooper Center (population estimates)

Figure 6 charts Q3-to-Q4 changes in quarterly rates of aggravated assault by firearm and murder by firearm for each division. Most divisions experienced a decrease in aggravated assault by firearm. Division 4, where the rate increased 14 percent, was the notable exception. The rate of murder by firearm declined for all divisions, but decreases in Division 3 and Division 5 were much smaller than in other divisions.

Figure 6. Change in Quarterly Rates of Firearm-Involved Assaults and Murders: Virginia and Divisions, Q3-Q4 2025



Source: Virginia Crime Repository (crime counts) and Weldon Cooper Center (population estimates)

Section III. Annual (CY 2025) Rates Statewide

Table 3 displays annual rates of simple assault, aggravated assault, and murder for Virginia in CY 2025. The table compares these to rates from the previous year, CY 2024. Annual rates for all three offenses decreased in CY 2025.

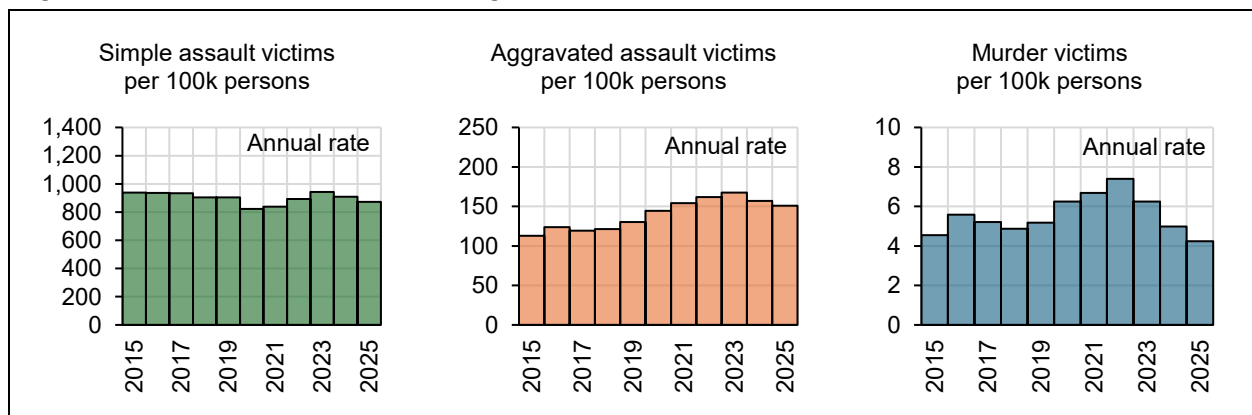
Table 3: Change in Annual Assault and Murder Rates: Virginia, CY 2024-2025

Year	Simple assault	Aggravated assault	Murder
CY 2024 (victims per 100,000 persons)	908.5	156.8	5.0
CY 2025 (victims per 100,000 persons)	873.0	151.0	4.2
Change, CY 2024-2025	-3.9%	-3.7%	-14.8%

Source: Virginia Crime Repository (crime counts) and Weldon Cooper Center (population estimates)

Figure 7 charts annual rates of simple assault, aggravated assault, and murder back to 2015. The figure shows that the decrease in annual rates between CY 2024 and CY 2025 was a continuation of a downward trend in the most recent years. CY 2025 was the second consecutive year that rates of simple assault and aggravated assault decreased, and it was the third consecutive year that the murder rate decreased.

Figure 7. Annual Assault and Murder Rates: Virginia, CY 2015-2025



Source: Virginia Crime Repository (crime counts) and Weldon Cooper Center (population estimates)

Table 4 displays statewide rates of aggravated assault by firearm and murder by firearm in CY 2025. (By definition, simple assaults do not involve firearms.) The table compares these to rates from the previous year, CY 2024. Both rates decreased, and the decreases were greater than those for aggravated assaults and murders overall (compare to Table 3).

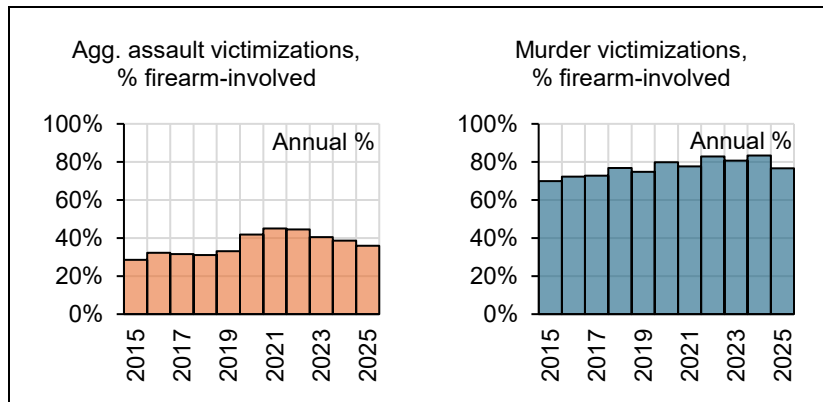
Table 4: Change in Annual Rates of Firearm-Involved Assaults and Murders: Virginia, CY 2024-2025

Year	Aggravated assault	Murder
CY 2024 (firearm victims per 100,000 persons)	60.7	4.2
CY 2025 (firearm victims per 100,000 persons)	54.3	3.3
Change, CY 2024-2025	-10.5%	-21.7%

Source: Virginia Crime Repository (crime counts) and Weldon Cooper Center (population estimates)

Figure 8 charts the percentage of aggravated assaults and murders that involved a firearm for each year back to CY 2015. The figure shows this percentage declining over the last four years for aggravated assault, whereas the percentage fluctuates for murder.

Figure 8. Percentage of Assault and Murder Victimization Involving a Firearm: Virginia, CY 2015-2025



Source: Virginia Crime Repository (crime counts) and Weldon Cooper Center (population estimates)

Table 5 summarizes the relationship between victims and offenders for simple assaults, aggravated assaults, and murders in CY 2025. Intimate partners were the most commonly reported offenders for simple assaults, whereas acquaintances were most common for aggravated assaults and murders. Note, however, there was a substantial percentage of victims for whom this information was not recorded (i.e., is missing). Quarterly data on victim-offender relationship are not presented in this report due to reporting lags inherent to the nature of the data.

Table 5. Assault and Murder Victims by Victim-Offender Relationship: Virginia, CY 2025

Victim-Offender Relationship	Simple assault	Aggravated assault	Murder
Intimate partner (% of victimizations) ¹	31%	23%	16%
Family (% of victimizations) ²	21%	15%	10%
Acquaintance (% of victimizations)	29%	26%	38%
Stranger (% of victimizations)	12%	17%	12%
Victim was offender (% of victimizations)	14%	3%	0%
Unknown (% of victimizations)	5%	8%	14%
Missing (% of victimizations)	5%	14%	14%
Total victims	77,522	13,407	377

Source: Virginia Crime Repository (crime counts) and Weldon Cooper Center (population estimates)

Note: Columns do not total 100% due to attacks by multiple offenders with different relationships to the victim.

¹ Intimate partners include spouses, common-law spouses, ex-spouses, boyfriend/girlfriend, etc.

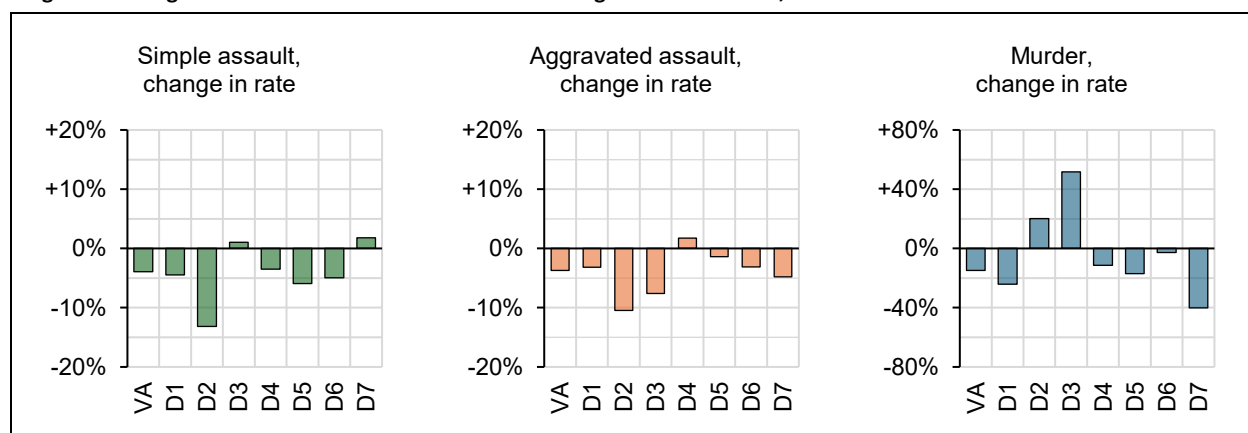
² Family members other than intimate partners.

Section IV. Annual (CY 2025) Rates by Geographic Division

Figure 9 charts changes in annual rates of simple assault, aggravated assault, and murder between CY 2024 and CY 2025 for each VSP division. (See Figure 3 for a division map.) These changes can be summarized as follows:

- *Simple assault.* Most divisions experienced a decrease in their simple assault rate. This was particularly large for Division 2. Decreases were moderated by increases in Divisions 3 and 7.
- *Aggravated assault.* Rates decreased in all divisions except for Division 4. Decreases were largest in Divisions 2 and 3.
- *Murder.* Most divisions experienced a decrease in their murder rate with a notably large decrease taking place in Division 7. These decreases were partly offset by substantial increases in Divisions 2 and 3.

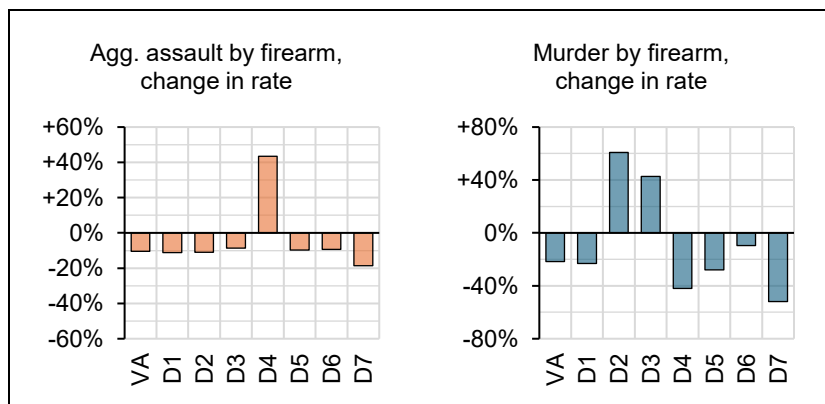
Figure 9. Change in Annual Assault and Murder Rates: Virginia and Divisions, CY 2024-2025



Source: Virginia Crime Repository (crime counts) and Weldon Cooper Center (population estimates)

Figure 10 charts changes in CY 2024 to CY 2025 annual rates of aggravated assault by firearm and murder by firearm for each division. Most divisions saw a moderate decrease in aggravated assault by firearm. Division 4, where the rate jumped 43 percent, was the notable exception. The rate of murder by firearm declined for most divisions but experienced notable increases in Divisions 2 and 3.

Figure 10. Change in Annual Rates of Firearm-Involved Assaults and Murders: Virginia and Divisions, CY 2024-2025



Source: Virginia Crime Repository (crime counts) and Weldon Cooper Center (population estimates)

Data sources and technical notes

Statistics in this report are based on crime counts obtained from the Virginia Crime Repository, an online data portal maintained by the Data Analysis and Reporting Team of the Virginia State Police at <https://va.beyond2020.com/>. Crime counts were obtained on May 28, 2026. Readers are advised that the repository receives daily updates, which can impact records for criminal incidents that occurred months or even years prior. Therefore, crime counts obtained from the repository at a later date may differ slightly from those used in the preparation of this report.

The Virginia Crime Repository uses the definitions below to enumerate simple assaults, aggravated assaults, and murders. Note that these crimes against persons are enumerated according to the number of victims (as opposed to the number of incidents), which is standard procedure for crime statistics in the United States.

- *Simple assault*. An unlawful physical attack by one person upon another that does not involve a weapon and does result in severe bodily injury.
- *Aggravated assault*. An unlawful attack by one person upon another that involves a weapon and/or results in severe bodily injury (e.g., broken bones, lost teeth, internal injury, severe laceration, loss of consciousness).
- *Murder*. The unlawful and intentional killing of one person by another. The repository's official category is "murder and nonnegligent manslaughter." This is abbreviated as simply "murder" throughout this report for the purpose of concision.

Crime rates found in this report incorporate population estimates in addition to the crime counts discussed above. Population estimates were obtained from the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, which is the Commonwealth's official source of population estimates. Estimates are available at <https://coopercenter.org/demographics/>.

Questions?

The Criminal Justice Research Center conducts studies, produces reports, and provides research and statistical assistance on a wide range of criminal justice issues. The Research Center strives to continually improve understanding of criminal justice concerns and underlying factors and deliver the best possible information to service providers and policy makers. Email questions or comments about this report to research analyst Bryan Moorefield at bryan.moorefield@dcjs.virginia.gov.