

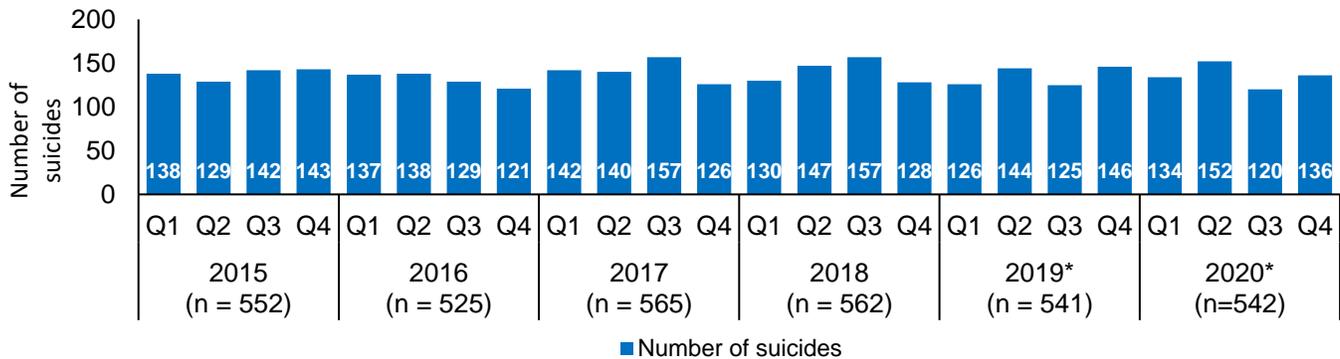
Suicides by Quarter in New York City, 2015-2020

September 2021

Based on provisional data, suicide deaths in New York City remain stable

542 suicides confirmed for 2020 as of July 14, 2021

Deaths in 2019 and 2020 are still pending final determinations and counts may change; recent quarters are subject to larger increases

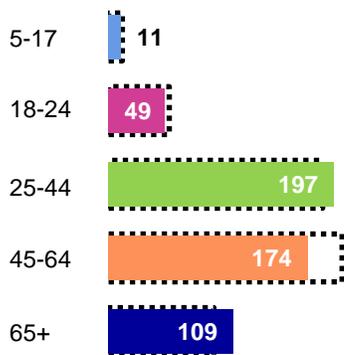


*2019-2020 data are provisional and subject to change.
Source: NYC DOHMH Bureau of Vital Statistics, data extracted July 14, 2021.

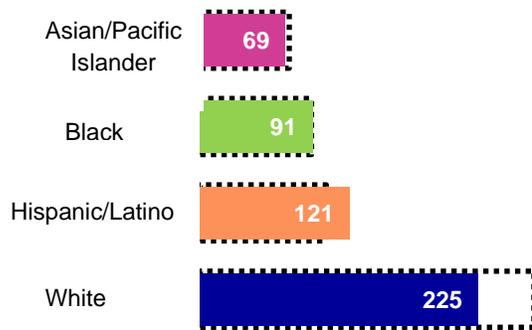
Key Points

- Every 16 hours, someone dies from suicide in New York City (NYC).
- Overall, suicide was the 6th leading cause of premature mortality (age < 65 years) in NYC in 2018.
- In 2018, the most recent year for which final data are available, suicide was the 3rd leading cause of premature death among Asian and Pacific Islanders; 4th for non-Hispanic/Latino whites, and 8th leading cause of premature mortality among non-Puerto-Rican Hispanic individuals. It is not ranked as a leading cause of premature death among Puerto Ricans or non-Hispanic/Latino blacks.¹
- Based on Community Health Survey data, 2.4% of NYC adults ages 18 and older seriously thought about killing themselves at some point in the past 12 months. Among those with suicidal ideation, 14.1% attempted suicide in the past 12 months.²
- The overall trend of suicides for 2020 will become clearer as complete data become available.

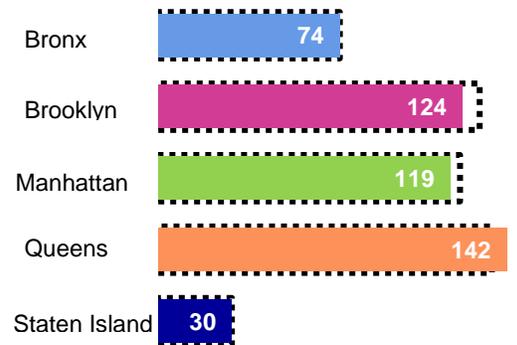
Number of confirmed suicides by age group*, January – December 2020, compared with 2015 - 2019 Average



Number of confirmed suicides by race/ethnicity, January – December 2020, compared with 2015 - 2019 Average**



Number of confirmed suicides by borough of residence*, January – December 2020, compared with 2015 - 2019 Average**



▭ 2015-2019 Average
▭ 2020



Suicide Prevention & Warning Signs

Recognize risk factors & warning signs for suicide

- Suicide is preventable and is not inevitable.
- Suicide deaths rarely have a single cause. Most suicide deaths have multiple contributing factors.
- Known risk factors for suicide include prior suicide attempt, depression or other mental illness, substance use disorder, knowing someone who died by suicide, and experiencing a recent loss, among others.
- Warning signs that someone may be considering suicide include:
 - Talking about death or suicide
 - Showing or talking about feelings of hopelessness
 - Saying they are a burden
 - Avoiding friends and family
 - Losing interest in activities
 - Displaying mood swings
 - Giving away possessions
 - Saying goodbye to family and friends
- A common misconception is that talking or asking about suicide will give someone the idea to harm themselves. This is not true. By asking, you are giving someone an opportunity to open up and allow you to help.

Consideration of COVID-19 pandemic and racism

- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health will continue to be significant over the long-term based on research from past disasters.
- Individuals experiencing additional stressors and traumas related to COVID-19 including long-standing racism are more likely to experience behavioral health problems.
- Behavioral health problems may include: exacerbation of preexisting mental health and substance use challenges; new behavioral health challenges such as anxiety, depression, complicated grief, substance misuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, and less commonly, thoughts or attempts of suicide.

Know where to go for support & treatment

- Suicide risk and the adverse impacts of stress and trauma on mental health can be reduced through supportive, trusting relationships and professional mental health support and treatment. For support, information, and referrals to care or if you are thinking about suicide, or know someone who is, NYC Well counselors are available to listen and support you 24/7 in over 200 languages. Call [888-NYC-WELL \(888-692-9355\)](tel:888-NYC-WELL), Text "WELL" to 65173, or Chat at nyc.gov/nycwell.
- If you or someone you know is at immediate risk of hurting themselves, or in immediate danger call 911.

Data notes and definitions

- This report includes only deaths where the medical examiner has determined the cause of death. Since it can take several weeks for the medical examiner to complete investigations of suspected suicide deaths, some cases for 2019 and 2020 are still pending final determinations. More recent quarters are subject to larger increases.
- Suicide is defined as death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with an intent to die.
- *Because 2019 and 2020 data are provisional some demographic data may be missing, hence counts for age group, race/ethnicity and borough may not sum to the total number of suicides in New York City.
- **For the purpose of this publication, Latino/a includes persons of Hispanic origin based on ancestry reported on the death certificate, regardless of reported race; Latino/a excludes reported ancestry from non-Spanish speaking Central/South American countries, and non-Spanish speaking Caribbean islands. Black, White, Asian Pacific Islander, and Other race categories do not include persons of Hispanic/Latino/a origin. Individuals from other racial/ethnic background were excluded from the race/ethnicity table.
- ***Borough-level data are presented by decedent's borough of residence. Because borough-level data exclude non-residents, numbers will not reflect the total number of suicides in New York City.
- ¹ NYC, VS report 2018; Li W, Onyebeke C, Huynh M, Castro A, Falci I, Gurung S, Kennedy J, Maduro G, Sun Y, and Van Wye G. Summary of Vital Statistics, 2018. New York, NY: New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Bureau of Vital Statistics, 2020.
- ² NYC Community Health Survey (CHS), 2020.

Suggested citation: Magas, I., Norman, C., Baxter, A., Harrison, M. *Suicides in New York City, 2020*. New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, September 2021.

