Delaware Shootings 2018
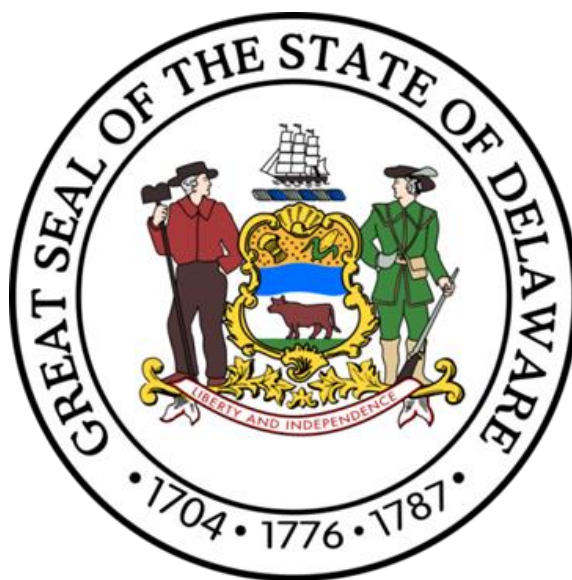## An Analysis of Incidents, Suspects, and Victims

November 2019

Delaware Shootings 2018
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Executive Summary

<u>Overview</u>

The following report is the eighth in a series examining criminal, non-accidental shooting incidents in Delaware that resulted in the injury or death of another person. This report focuses on multiple characteristics of shooting incidents that occurred in 2018, victims injured as a result, and suspects involved.

The shooting incident-related data included in this report were obtained from Delaware's Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS). Complaint records filed by law enforcement agencies were downloaded from CJIS for 2018 then filtered, reviewed, and triangulated against a database of information from media and law enforcement agency websites to identify incidents where a criminal, non-accidental discharge of a firearm resulted in the death or injury of one or more victims. Once all incidents had been identified, suspect and victim demographic information and arrest histories were downloaded and matched with incident information. Analyses were then conducted to examine characteristics of shooting incidents, victims, and suspects.

<u>Key Findings</u>

Incidents, Victims, and Suspects

In 2018, there were 144 criminal, non-accidental shooting incidents in Delaware that resulted in the injury or death of 162 individuals. This was the lowest number of incidents since the Delaware Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) initiated its statewide report in 2011. Forty-one victims died as a result of their wounds in 34 incidents and 121 victims had non-fatal injuries. Nine victims died during six incidents related to an intimate relationship. The overall proportion of incidents related to intimate relationships ranged from almost three to more than 20 times higher compared to the previous four years.

More than 210 individuals were suspected of involvement in the shooting incidents, with 97 suspects identified by name. As of the summer of 2019, arrests or exceptional clearances had been made in 38.2% of all shooting incidents and 55.9% of homicide incidents.

Most incidents (69.4%) occurred in New Castle County. The City of Wilmington was the location for 75 incidents (52.1% of the state total, 75% of the county total). Kent County accounted for 31 incidents (21.5%), and Sussex County experienced 13 (9.0%) incidents. Maps of shooting incidents for these geographic areas are located in *Shooting Incidents in Delaware: Mapping Supplement for the 2017 and 2018 Statewide Reports*, located on the SAC's website (https://sac.delaware.gov/crime/).

Demographic Characteristics

Most shooting victims (87%) were male. Blacks comprised the largest racial group of victims (88.3% overall and 90.8% of male victims). For the 61 incidents where demographic information was available for both victims and named suspects, 96.7% involved victims and suspects who were all or predominantly of the same race. The gender and race patterns are consistent with the findings of all seven previous statewide shooting reports.

Prior Criminal Involvement of Suspects and Victims

Most victims and those suspects who had been identified by name had criminal histories in Delaware (86.4% and 90%, respectively). Of those with a Delaware criminal history, most victims and suspects had at least one felony arrest (81.4% and 75.6%, respectively). Most victims and identified suspects were juveniles at the time of their first Delaware arrest (87.1% and 86.6%, respectively). These patterns in criminal history and age at first arrest are consistent with the findings of all seven previous statewide shooting reports.

Victim and Witness Cooperation with Shooting Investigations

An examination of the cooperation of witnesses and victims in shooting investigations indicates that, in 64% of incidents overall (78.7% where witnesses were known), witnesses could be described as being fully cooperative. Victims had a similar level of cooperation in 27.3% of incidents overall (36% where a victim was able to cooperate).

An Analysis of Delaware Shootings in 2018

The following report is the eighth in a series examining criminal, non-accidental shooting incidents in Delaware that resulted in the injury or death of another person. The first three reports covered 2011, 2012, and 2013 and focused on multiple characteristics of shooting incidents, victims injured as a result, and suspects involved. The 2013 report also included an analysis of the legal status and outcomes of incidents from 2011 and 2012. The 2014 and 2015 reports built on those prior reports and included an examination of victim and witness cooperation with subsequent shooting investigations. To reflect an apparent increase in gang-related activity, a brief section on apparent gang involvement was added to the 2016 report, while the legal status and outcomes section was temporarily eliminated due the complex impact of gang-related arrest and prosecution activity during 2016 and 2017 on relevant data.

The 2017 report continued the approach taken for 2016, except that the gang-involvement section was eliminated due to insufficient data. The current report continues the 2017 approach as gang-involvement data remained insufficient.

Maps of shooting incidents for the state, each county, and the cities of Wilmington and Dover were also created. Please see *Shooting Incidents in Delaware: Mapping Supplement for the 2017 and 2018 Statewide Reports*, located on the SAC's website (https://sac.delaware.gov/crime/), for further detail and the methodology used to create them.

Shooting Analysis Methodology

The data presented in this report were obtained from Delaware's Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS). First, complaint records filed by law enforcement agencies were downloaded from CJIS for 2018. After the initial download, these records went through multiple stages of filtering to identify incidents where a criminal, non-accidental discharge of a firearm resulted in the death or injury of one or more victims (whether the person struck was an intended target or a bystander). Detailed records were then reviewed individually to verify that every incident included at least one victim who was injured or killed by a firearm through criminal, non-accidental actions. Once all incidents had been identified, information about suspect and victim demographics and arrest histories was downloaded from CJIS and matched with incident information. Analyses were then conducted to examine characteristics of shooting incidents, victims, and suspects.

To inform the process of identifying, locating, and confirming incidents within CJIS, active monitoring of media and law enforcement agency websites was conducted throughout the year to flag shooting incidents as they were publicly announced.

Considerations and Limitations

Criminal investigation of shooting incidents, as is typical for many violent crimes, can be complex. In some situations, an investigation may be quickly and definitively closed through the clear identification and speedy arrest of a suspect. In many incidents however, much time and effort is required to interview witnesses and victims, sort through and follow up on investigative leads, interview persons of interest and possible suspects, and finally build a criminal case that leads to the issuance of a warrant and eventually to an arrest. Much information can be generated during the course of the investigation and old information can change, particularly as the investigation moves through its early stages. In other cases, an investigation may reveal little information—there may be no witnesses to the incident, the victim may not be able to provide information helpful to the investigation, or, in some situations, the victim may refuse to cooperate with the investigation.

In investigations that generate much information, law enforcement agencies must update complaint records often, introducing numerous opportunities for errors and missing data and creating a large amount of data for crime analysis review. In incidents where an investigation generates little information, only limited data is available for analysis.

Occasional data issues in the complaint records submitted and maintained by law enforcement agencies (e.g., incorrectly labeled records, missing or inaccurate information in victim, suspect, and brief text fields, records updated after the SAC's filtering process begins, etc.) require the use of triangulated data sources to increase the confidence that the final data set is as complete as possible. These data issues require extensive checking and rechecking of the data to arrive at the final counts presented in this report. Despite these quality control measures, it remains a possibility that shooting incidents are undercounted in this report, although likely to only a very minor degree.

Note that this report does not address accidental shooting incidents (of one's self or another, excluding incidents in which a bystander was struck), intentional self-inflicted shooting incidents, or shooting incidents determined by law enforcement investigation to be justified (e.g., self-defense).

Shooting Incidents, Victims, and Suspects

This study identified 144 shooting incidents reported to Delaware's police agencies in 2018, setting a record low after 2017 broke the record high with 258 incidents. These incidents resulted in the injury or death of 162 victims. Fourteen incidents were related to an intimate partner relationship, leading to the death of nine victims during six of those incidents. The proportion of incidents related to intimate relationships ranged from almost three times to more than 20 times higher compared to the previous four years. The total numbers of incidents, victims, and suspects for 2018 are shown in Table 1. These totals reflect only criminal, non-accidental shootings of another person.

Wilmington accounted for 52.1% of all 2018 shooting incidents and just over half of all victims (82 victims or 50.6%). Suburban New Castle County accounted for 25 (17.4%) incidents and 19.8% of victims. Overall, 100 incidents (69.4%) reported in Delaware in 2018 occurred in New Castle County, resulting in 114 (70.4%) victims. Kent County accounted for 31 incidents (21.5%), with 35 (21.6%) victims. Sussex County experienced 13 incidents (9.0%) with 13 (8.0%) victims. Figures 1 and 2 on page 9 provide more information about the locations of the 2018 shooting incidents (with 2014 through 2017 location data provided for comparison).

A review of police complaint records shows that at least 212 suspects were thought to be involved in the 144 incidents shown in Table 1. As of the summer of 2019, 97 (45.8%) of the 212 suspects had been identified by name. More than one-third of incidents (55 or 38.2%) had an arrest or were considered closed through an exceptional clearance, resulting in 73 individual arrests. In four of these incidents, the individual who would have otherwise been arrested for committing the shooting died at the scene. These four individuals are included in subsequent tables, with the incidents classified as exceptional clearances.

Note to the Reader About Suspect Counts

The *actual* number of suspects involved in the shooting incidents cannot be determined as of the report date. A number of factors affect the suspect numbers derived from CJIS, including:

- The number of suspects in an incident may not be known or revealed to police.
- Substantial differences in victim and witness accounts of suspect information.
- In incidents where multiple suspects are identified by name or arrested, determination of who discharged a weapon or otherwise materially participated in the incident (e.g., aided in an attempt to rob a victim) may not be resolved for some time.
- In many incidents, general information about suspects (such as their general descriptions, number, age range) is clear, but their identities remain unknown even after extensive investigation.
- Victim criminal behavior during the incident that may preclude full disclosure of facts.

Each of these factors requires a different response when recording information in the complaint record and these factors can lead to an over- or undercount of suspects involved in the incident. SAC staff reviewed individual complaint records to make appropriate adjustments to the suspects count. However, it is likely that the number of suspects reported in this study undercounts the actual number of offenders who participated in the incidents.

Table 1: Incidents, Victims, and Suspects by County

County	Agency	Incidents	Victims	Suspects		
				All Suspects	Identified by Name	Incidents with an Arrest (Individual Arrests)*
New Castle	Wilmington Police Dept.	75	82	104	33	21 (23)
	Suburban New Castle County	25	32	39	20	12 (19)
	New Castle County PD	20	23	32	14	8 (14)
	Middletown Police Dept.	2	3	3	3	2 (3)
	Delaware State Police Trp. 2	1	1	2	1	0
	DSP Troop 6	1	4	1	1	1 (1)
	Newark Police Dept.	1	1	1	1	1 (1)
	New Castle County Total	**100**	**114**	**143**	**53**	**33 (42)**
Kent	Dover Police Dept.	15	16	23	16	9 (13)
	DSP Troop 3	11	12	20	13	4 (4)
	Milford Police Dept.	3	4	3	2	1 (1)
	Smyrna Police Dept.	2	3	6	6	2 (6)
	Kent County Total	**31**	**35**	**52**	**37**	**16 (24)**
Sussex	DSP Troop 5	5	5	8	5	4 (5)
	DSP Troop 7	5	5	6	1	1 (1)
	Laurel Police Dept.	1	1	1	0	0
	Milford Police Dept.	1	1	1	0	0
	Seaford Police Dept.	1	1	1	1	1
	Sussex County Total	**13**	**13**	**17**	**7**	**6 (7)**
	Statewide Total	**144**	**162**	**212**	**97**	**55 (73)**

The table title "Shootings in 2018 by Reporting Agency" spans the top of the table.

*Arrest counts include four deceased suspects, all who died by suicide at the shooting scene. All would otherwise have been arrested for their respective shootings, with each incident classified as an exceptional clearance.

Shooting incidents in 2018 that resulted in the death of a victim are shown in Table 2. Forty-one (25.3%) of the 162 victims succumbed to their injuries as a result of 34 separate incidents. Overall, 73.5% of the 34 fatal shooting incidents occurred in New Castle County, with five (14.7%) in Kent County and four (11.8%) in Sussex County. Wilmington accounted for 18 (52.9%) of all fatal shooting incidents in Delaware in 2018.

As of the summer of 2019, 27 (60%) of the at least 45 homicide suspects had been positively identified. More than half (55.9%) of all fatal incidents had an arrest or were closed through an exceptional clearance, with 25 individuals (55.6% of all suspects) in the arrest column below. However, in those incidents where at least one suspect has been named, 90.5% resulted in an arrest.

Six of the fatal incidents were related to intimate relationships, with a total of nine victims killed. In four incidents, suspects shot a current or former girlfriend or spouse. An additional incident involved a suspect shooting his spouse and three children. The remaining incident was related to a romantic rivalry. Four suspects committed suicide at the scene of the incident and are included as exceptional clearances in the arrest data.

Table 2: Fatal Shootings by Reporting Agency

Fatal Shootings in 2018 by Reporting Agency						
				Suspects		
County	Agency	Incidents	Victims	All Suspects	Identified By Name	Incidents with an Arrest (Individual Arrests)*
New Castle	Wilmington Police Dept.	18	20	22	6	3 (4)
	Suburban New Castle County	7	12	10	10	7 (10)
	New Castle County PD	5	7	8	8	5 (8)
	DSP Troop 6	1	4	1	1	1 (1)
	Middletown Police Dept.	1	1	1	1	1 (1)
	New Castle County Total	**25**	**32**	**32**	**16**	**10 (14)**
Kent	Dover Police Dept.	4	4	5	5	4 (5)
	DSP Troop 3	1	1	1	1	1 (1)
	Kent County Total	**5**	**5**	**6**	**6**	**5 (6)**
Sussex	DSP Troop 5	4	4	7	5	4 (5)
	Sussex County Total	**4**	**4**	**7**	**5**	**4 (5)**
	Statewide Total	**34**	**41**	**45**	**27**	**19 (25)**

*The arrest counts include four deceased suspects who would otherwise have been arrested for committing the shooting, with each incident classified as an exceptional clearance.

Note: Additional information about Delaware domestic violence homicides is available in the Delaware Domestic Violence Coordinating Council's *Fatal Incident Review Team Reports (* https://dvcc.delaware.gov/reports/).

Figure 1: Distribution of 2014-2018 Shooting Incidents (All Incidents)

Distribution of Delaware Shooting Incidents, 2014-2018
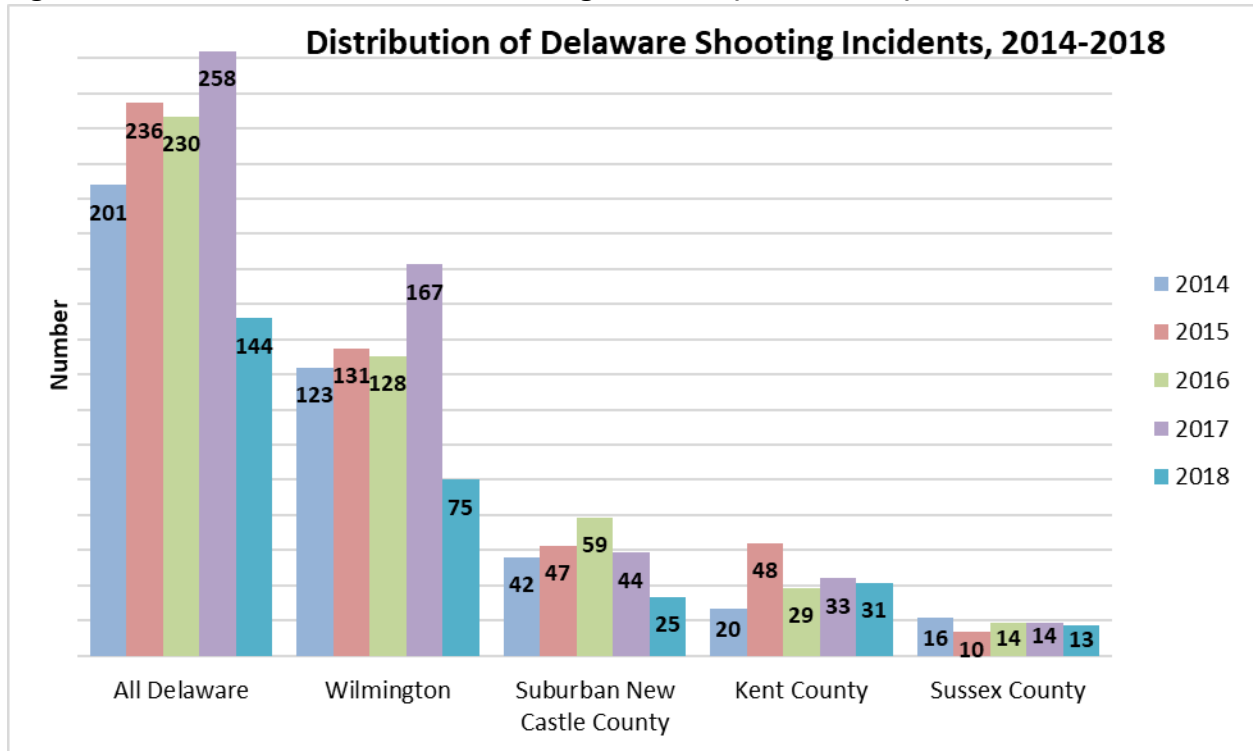
Figure 2: Distribution of 2014-2018 Shooting Incidents Involving Homicide

Distribution of Homicide Shooting Incidents, 2014-2018
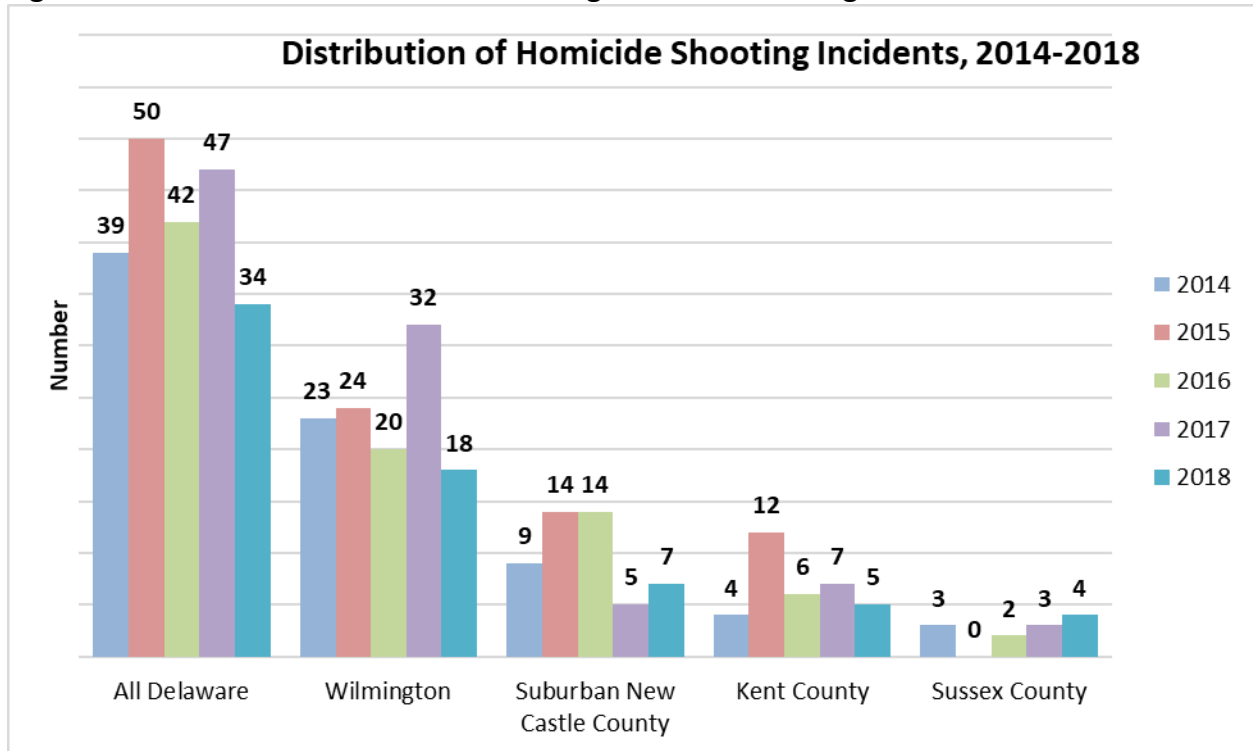
Note: Further geographic information regarding fatal and non-fatal shooting incidents in this report may be found in *Shooting Incidents in Delaware: Mapping Supplement for the 2017 and 2018 Statewide Reports*, located on the SAC's website (https://sac.delaware.gov/crime/). This supplement contains maps for the entire state (pages 3-4), each county (pages 5-10), and the cities of Wilmington (pages 11-12) and Dover (pages 13-14).

Demographic Profile of Shooting Suspects and Victims

Race, sex, and age information for the unique 2018 shooting suspects who had been identified by name, and unique individuals who appear likely to have been involved in a shooting incident in a direct or accessory role but for whom the threshold for being classified as an identified suspect was not reached is shown in Table 3. The decision to include this latter group was made to provide a richer sense of the social milieu surrounding shooting incidents. As of the summer of 2019, 100 such individuals had been identified by name. This expanded group of unique identified suspects was predominantly male (96%) and 77% were 30 years old or younger with an average age of 26.2 years. Black males comprised 83% of this expanded suspect group. One suspect in this table was also of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity.

Table 3: Demographic Profile of 2018 Identified Shooting Suspects (Expanded Group)

	Demographic Profile of 2018 Expanded Shooting Suspect Group*						
	Race, Ethnicity, and Sex						Total***
	Race and Sex				Ethnicity and Sex**		
Age Range	Black Male	White Male	Black Female	White Female	Hispanic Male	Hispanic Female	
Under 14	2	0	0	0	0	0	**2**
14 to 17	13	1	0	0	0	0	**14**
18 to 21	25	5	1	1	1	0	**32**
22 to 25	15	2	0	0	0	0	**17**
26 to 30	11	0	0	1	0	0	**12**
31 to 35	4	0	0	0	0	0	**4**
36 to 40	8	0	1	0	0	0	**9**
41 to 45	3	1	0	0	0	0	**4**
46 to 50	1	0	0	0	0	0	**1**
Over 50	1	4	0	0	0	0	**5**
Average Age	**24.5**	**36.8**	**28.0**	**24.0**	**NA**	**NA**	**26.2**
Totals	**83**	**13**	**2**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**100**

*All suspects in the table have been identified by name.

**Race and Ethnicity are considered separate concepts for demographic purposes. In the 'Race and Sex' columns of this table, each category includes both Hispanic and non-Hispanic suspects. In the 'Ethnicity and Sex' columns, all races are included. Therefore, if a person is Hispanic, he/she would be counted twice in this table – once each in the respective columns for race and ethnicity.

***The figures in this column are based on the race and sex columns, since suspects would otherwise be counted twice if they were Hispanic.

While 54% of shooting incidents remain without an identified primary suspect, the larger patterns observed in the incident, victim, and suspect characteristics data since 2011 suggest that unidentified suspects in the remaining 2018 incidents would likely be very similar in demographic characteristics to those included in Table 3.

Demographic information for the 2018 shooting victims is shown in Table 4. Most victims (87%) were male. Overall, 66.1% of victims were between 18 and 35 years old with an average age of 27.7 years. Black males accounted for 79% of all shooting victims in 2018. Just over 3% of all victims were also of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity.

Table 4: Demographic Profile of 2018 Shooting Victims

	Demographic Profile of 2018 Shooting Victims						
	Race, Ethnicity, and Sex						Total**
	Race and Sex				Ethnicity and Sex*		
Age Range	Black Male	White Male	Black Female	White Female	Hispanic Male	Hispanic Female	
Under 14	0	2	1	1	0	0	**4**
14 to 17	10	1	1	0	1	0	**12**
18 to 21	34	4	7	1	1	1	**46**
22 to 25	24	0	0	1	0	0	**25**
26 to 30	19	1	2	0	1	0	**22**
31 to 35	11	2	1	0	0	0	**14**
36 to 40	12	1	1	0	0	0	**14**
41 to 45	13	0	1	1	1	0	**15**
46 to 50	2	0	1	0	0	0	**3**
Over 50	3	2	0	2	0	0	**7**
Average Age	**27.7**	**26.5**	**24.9**	**37.7**	**27.3**	**NA**	**27.7**
Totals	**128**	**13**	**15**	**6**	**4**	**1**	**162**

*Race and Ethnicity are considered separate concepts for demographic purposes. In the 'Race and Sex' columns of this table, each category includes both Hispanic and non-Hispanic victims. In the 'Ethnicity and Sex' columns, all races are included. Therefore, if a person is Hispanic, he/she would be counted twice in this table – once each in the respective columns for race and ethnicity.
**The figures in this column are based on the race and sex columns, since victims would otherwise be counted twice if they were Hispanic.

Demographic Profile of Shooting Incidents

Since a number of shootings involved multiple suspects and/or multiple victims, comparing the total set of victims with the total set of suspects to understand the demographics of 2018 shooting incidents can be misleading. Instead, race and age data for the victims and suspects (using the 97 suspects identified by name in Table 1) involved in each incident were examined and then consolidated so that each incident could be assigned single categories for victim age, victim race, suspect age, and suspect race. Each victim-suspect category pair could then be compared and the incident categorized on the extent to which suspects and victims were similar to or different from each other based on each pairing.

Table 5 explores the relationship between suspect and victim race based on the categories assigned for each incident. Of the 64 incidents in 2018 where race information was available for both named suspects and victims, three involved multiple victims equally split between racial categories, and therefore excluded from further analysis. For the remaining 61 incidents, (96.7%) involved suspects and victims who were all or mostly of the same race. This percentage was higher for incidents that involved Black victims (100% of 52 incidents) and somewhat lower for incidents involving White victims (77.8% of 9 incidents).

Table 5: Correlation Between Victim and Suspect Race by Incident Level

Correlation between Victim and Suspect Race – Incident Level							
	Victim Race Category Assigned to Incident						
	Black			White			**Overall**
	Number	% of Row Total	% of Column Total	Number	% of Row Total	% of Column Total	**Number**
ALL Suspects and ALL Victims of Same Race	49	87.5%	94.2%	7	12.5%	77.8%	**56**
MAJORITY of Victims and of Suspects BOTH of Same Race	3	100%	5.8%	0	NA	NA	**3**
Victims Shot by Suspects of DIFFERENT Race	0	NA	NA	2	100%	22.2%	**2**
Total	**52**			**9**			**61**

Table 6 explores the relationship between suspect and victim age based on the categories assigned for each incident. In 66 incidents, age information was available for both suspects and victims. One of five broad age categories was then assigned to victims in an incident if at least a majority belonged to the same age group. This same process was repeated for the named suspects in each incident. For 13 incidents there was no majority age group. In 53 incidents, each victim and suspect group could be assigned an age category and were then compared. In the incidents where victim and suspect age categories could be compared, overall, 56.6% of shooting incidents involved suspects and victims who were within the same age range (indicated by the shaded boxes in the table). Except for the age 18 to 30 and Over 50 categories, the remaining groups saw only a minority of victims shot by suspects in the same age range, with proportions ranging from 20% to 25%. Overall, 32 of the 53 incidents examined (60.4%) involved suspects in the 18 to 30 age group.

Table 6: Victim-Suspect Age Correlation by Incident level

Victim-Suspect Age Correlation - Incident level							
		Victim Age Category Assigned to Incident					Suspect Category Totals
		Under 18	18-30	31-40	41-50	Over 50	
Suspect Age Category Assigned to Incident	Under 18	1	3	0	1	0	5
	18-30	1	23	6	1	1	32
	31-40	1	3	2	1	1	8
	41-50	1	1	0	1	0	3
	Over 50	0	0	1	1	3	5
Victim Category Totals		**4**	**30**	**9**	**5**	**5**	**53**

Criminal Histories of Shooting Suspects and Victims

Table 7 summarizes the Delaware criminal arrest histories for unique victims, unique shooting suspects, and unique individuals who appear likely to have been involved in a shooting incident in a direct or accessory role but for whom the threshold for being classified as an identified suspect was not reached. The decision to include this latter group was made to provide a richer sense of the social milieu surrounding shooting incidents. Most of the 100 suspects in this expanded group (90%) and of the 162 shooting victims (86.4%) had an arrest history in Delaware. Of those with such arrest histories, 68 suspects (75.6%) and 114 victims (81.4%) had at least one felony arrest. Of those with a felony history, 77.2% of victims and 79.4% of suspects had three or more arrests on felony charges. Note that the number of unique shooting suspects represents less than half of the total minimum suspect count. Therefore, caution is urged when drawing conclusions about differences between suspect and victim arrest histories. The inclusion of additional known suspects could lead to smaller or larger differences in these patterns.

Table 7: Suspect and Victim Delaware Criminal Histories (Unique Individuals)

Delaware Criminal Histories for Shooting Victims and Expanded Suspect Group				
Criminal History	Unique Suspects		Unique Victims	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Known Suspects and Victims	100		162	
Have Arrest History in Delaware*	90	90.0%	140	86.4%
≥1 Arrest was for a Felony	68	75.6%	114	81.4%
Felony Drug Arrests	36	40.0%	72	51.4%
1 or 2 Arrests	22	61.1%	37	51.4%
3 Arrests of More	14	38.9%	35	48.6%
Felony Weapons Arrests	48	53.3%	76	54.3%
1 or 2 Arrests	34	70.8%	55	72.4%
3 Arrests of More	14	29.2%	21	27.6%
Other Felony Arrests	61	67.8%	106	75.7%
1 or 2 Arrests	26	42.6%	47	44.3%
3 Arrests of More	35	57.4%	59	55.7%
Violent Felony Arrests**	64	71.1%	103	73.6%
1 or 2 Arrests	20	31.3%	31	30.1%
3 Arrests of More	44	68.8%	72	69.9%

*Felony percentages are of those with an arrest history.
**Violent felonies included in this table are those defined in Title 11, § 4201(c) of the Delaware Code.

More than 50% of victims and 40% of suspects with an arrest history had at least one arrest for a felony drug offense. Most suspects and victims had at least one arrest for a violent felony (as defined in Title 11, § 4201(c) of the Delaware Code, which includes certain drug and weapons felonies) or a non-violent, non-drug-related felony (termed 'other felony'). More than half of suspects and 54% of victims had at least one arrest for a felony weapons offense.

Table 8 compares the age at first contact with the Delaware criminal justice system for the shooting suspects and victims from Table 7 who had criminal histories prior to the shooting incident. The table shows that 86.6% of the 90 suspects in 2018 with histories and 87.1% of 140 shooting victims with histories were younger than age 18 at the time of their first arrest in Delaware.

Table 8: Age at First Contact with Delaware's Criminal Justice System

Age of Suspects in Expanded Group and Victims with Delaware Arrest Histories at First Contact with Delaware's Criminal Justice System				
Age Range	Unique Suspects		Unique Victims	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 14	39	43.3%	64	45.7%
14 to 17	39	43.3%	58	41.4%
18 to 21	5	5.6%	12	8.6%
22 to 25	1	1.1%	1	0.7%
26 to 30	1	1.1%	2	1.4%
31 to 35	3	3.3%	1	0.7%
36 to 40	1	1.1%	0	0%
41 to 45	0	0%	1	0.7%
46 to 50	0	0%	0	0%
Over 50	1	1.1%	1	0.7%
Total with a Delaware History	**90**		**140**	

Day and Time Analysis of 2018 Shootings in Delaware

Table 9 and the two figures that follow show the distribution of 2018 shooting incidents by the day of the week and the month in which they occurred. Incidents most frequently occurred on a Thursday (29 incidents) and least often on Friday and Saturday (15 incidents each). More shooting incidents occurred in October (17 incidents) with the fewest occurring in March (7). For illustrative purposes, figures for Delaware and Wilmington showing the monthly progression of shootings for 2011 through 2018 are also included (see Figures 5 and 6).

Table 9: 2018 Shooting Incidents by Month and Day of Week

Incidents by Month and Day of Week								
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	**Month Total**
January	1	0	2	6	3	1	0	**13**
February	2	2	0	1	1	2	3	**11**
March	0	1	1	3	0	1	1	**7**
April	3	3	1	0	1	2	1	**11**
May	2	1	2	2	5	2	2	**16**
June	3	1	0	3	2	1	2	**12**
July	2	2	0	1	4	2	0	**11**
August	0	2	5	1	2	2	1	**13**
September	2	0	2	0	4	0	1	**9**
October	2	3	4	4	3	1	0	**17**
November	3	2	3	0	3	0	3	**14**
December	4	2	1	0	1	1	1	**10**
Day Total	**24**	**19**	**21**	**21**	**29**	**15**	**15**	**144**

Figure 3: Shooting Incidents by Day of the Week—Wilmington and Rest of Delaware

2018 Shootings by Day of the Week

Legend: Rest of Delaware, Wilmington

Values (Rest of Delaware / Wilmington):
- Sunday: 12 / 12
- Monday: 8 / 11
- Tuesday: 12 / 9
- Wednesday: 10 / 11
- Thursday: 12 / 17
- Friday: 6 / 9
- Saturday: 9 / 6
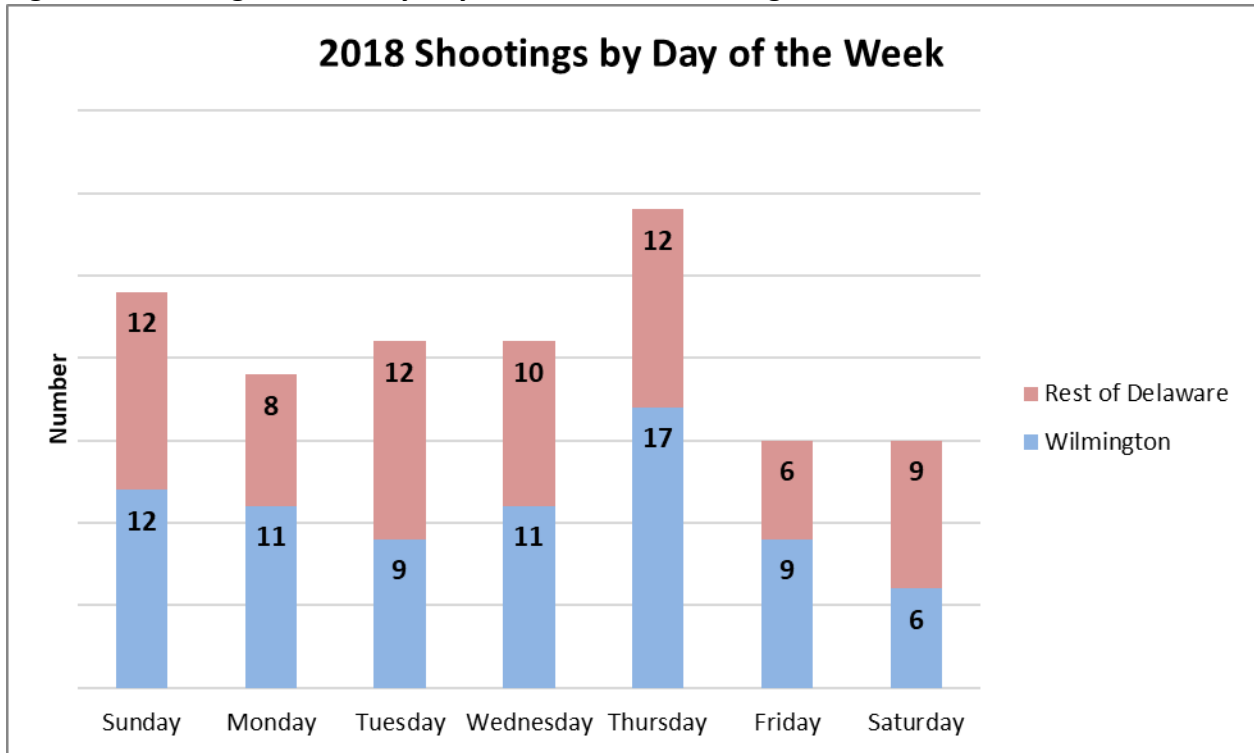
Figure 4: Shooting Incidents by Month—Wilmington and Rest of Delaware

2018 Shootings by Month

Legend: Rest of Delaware, Wilmington

Values (Rest of Delaware / Wilmington):
- Jan: 8 / 5
- Feb: 3 / 8
- Mar: 4 / 3
- Apr: 6 / 5
- May: 4 / 12
- Jun: 6 / 6
- Jul: 4 / 7
- Aug: 8 / 5
- Sep: 4 / 5
- Oct: 6 / 11
- Nov: 10 / 4
- Dec: 6 / 4
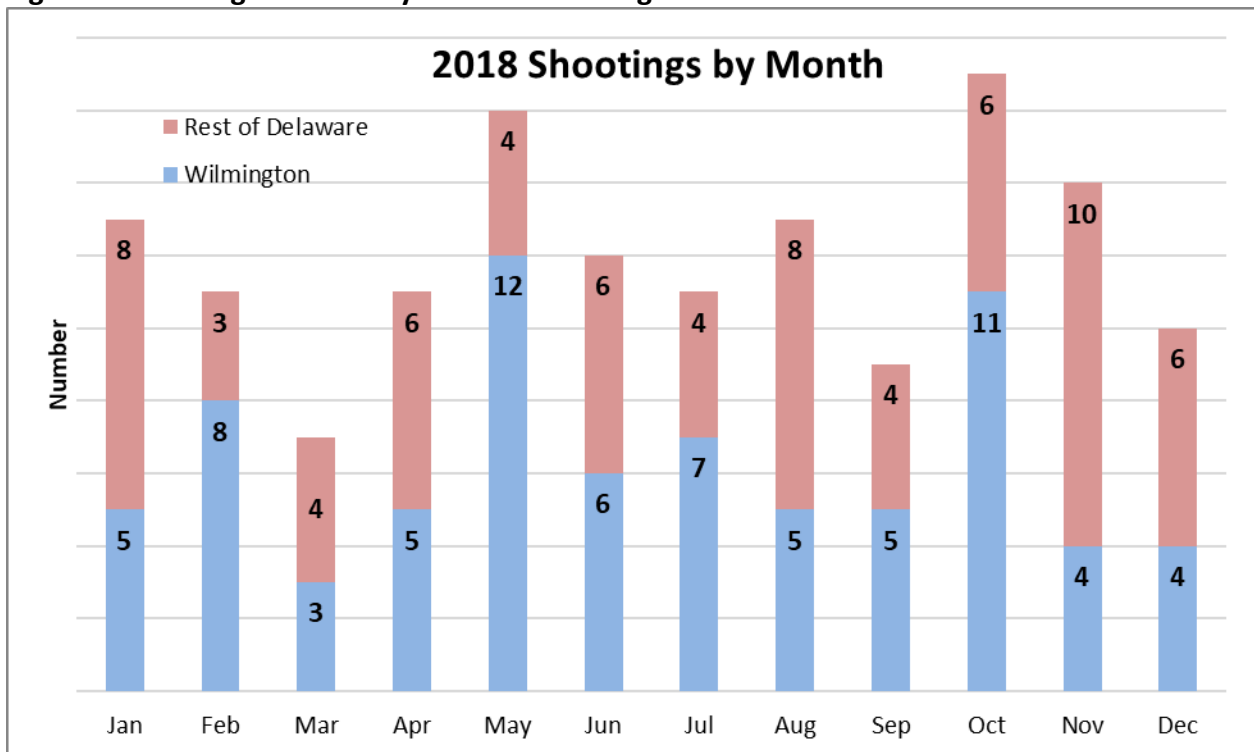
Figure 5: Monthly Progression of Delaware Shooting Incidents, 2011-2018

Delaware Shooting Incidents, 2011-2018:

Monthly Progression
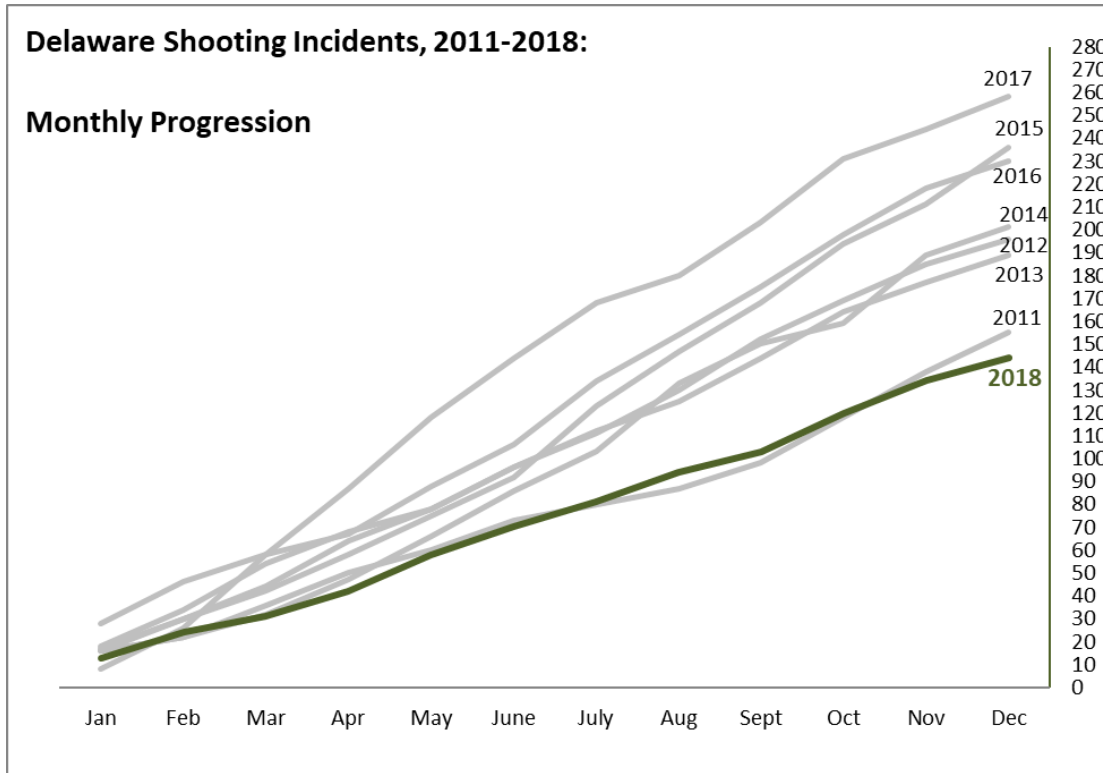
Figure 6: Monthly Progression of Wilmington Shooting Incidents, 2011-2018

Wilmington Shooting Incidents, 2011-2018:
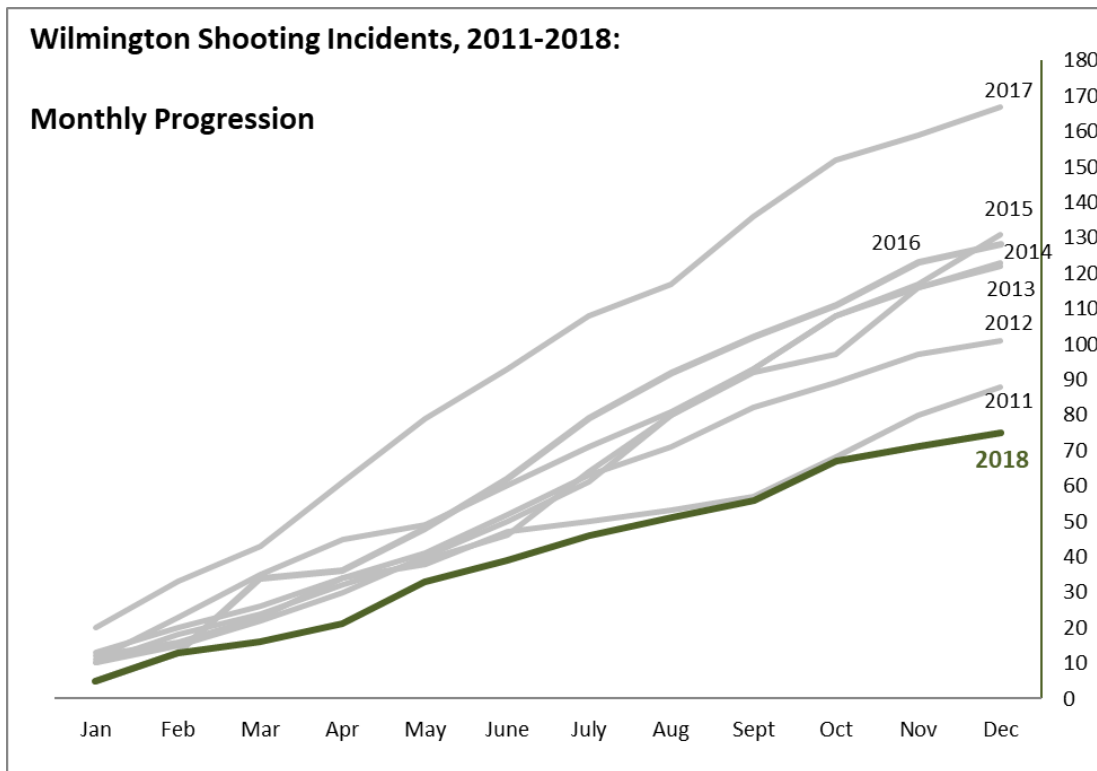
Monthly Progression

Figure 7 shows the distribution of 2018 shooting incidents by the time period of the day in which they occurred. More than half (54%) of all incidents statewide occurred between 5:00 pm and midnight, with eight incidents (5.6%) occurring between 6:00 am and noon and 19.4% during the afternoon hours. Wilmington accounted for 50% of incidents that occurred between midnight and 6:00 am, and 53% of incidents which occurred between 6:00 am and midnight. While there was not a single distinct peak period for the state as a whole, Wilmington saw its highest percentage of shootings occur from 5:00 pm to 8:59 pm. The peak for the remainder of Delaware was 9:00 pm to midnight.

Figure 7: Shooting Incidents by Time Period of Day—Delaware and Wilmington*
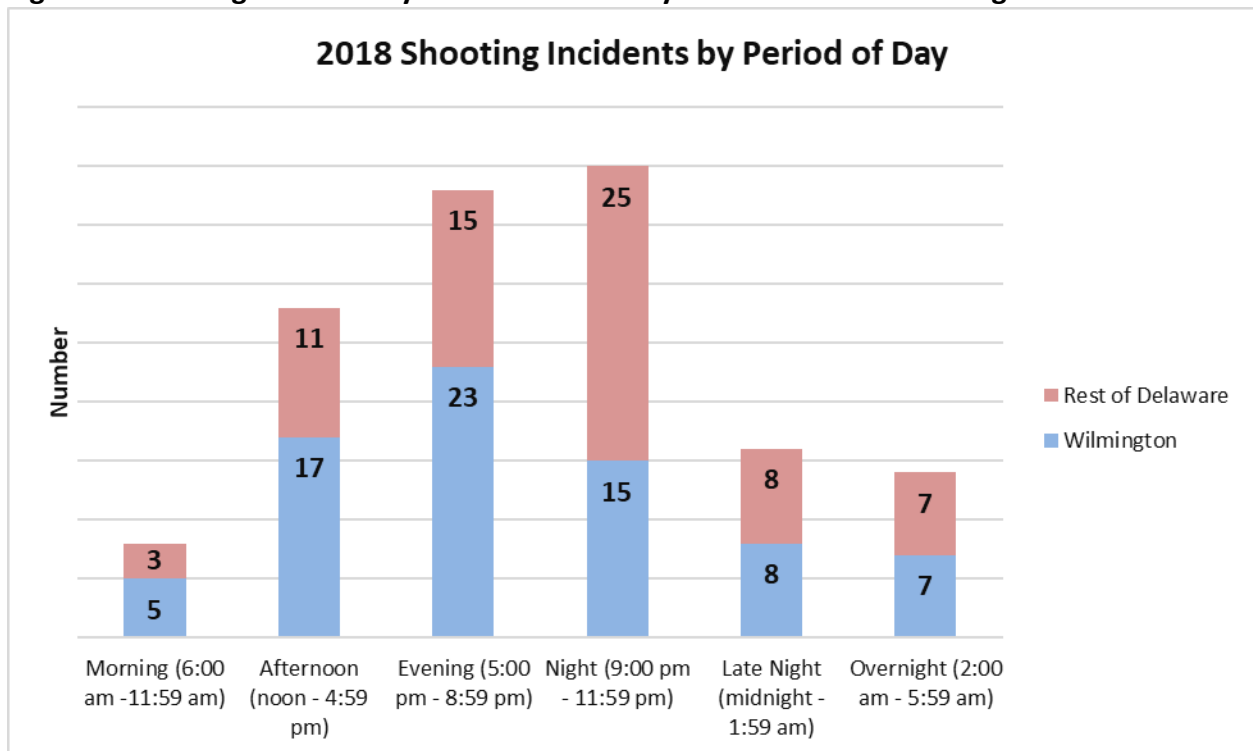
*Time categories were created based on expected variations in criminal behavior. As a result, there is variation in the size of the time span covered by each category.

Victim Injuries, Suspect Motives, and Victim-Offender Relationships

Table 10 displays the areas of the body where shooting victims were hit by gunfire. Almost two-thirds of the 162 victims with available injury information had a single gunshot wound: 25% to the lower body (legs, feet, buttocks), 20% to the upper body (chest, back, abdomen), with the remaining victims struck in either the arm or hand, or the head, face or neck.

More than one-third of victims, however, were struck multiple times: 10% of all victims received injuries to same area of the body (e.g., struck once in each leg; multiple times in the chest), while 25% had injuries to more than one body area (e.g., head and chest; leg and abdomen).

Table 10: Shooting Victims by Area of Body Shot

Victims by Area of Body Shot		
Area of Victim's Body	Number of Victims	Percent of Victims
Single Injury to Single Area	*105*	*64.8%*
Legs/Feet/Buttocks	41	25.3%
Chest/Back/Abdomen	33	20.4%
Head/Face/Neck	17	10.5%
Arm/Hand	14	8.6%
Multiple Injuries to Single Area	*16*	*9.9%*
Injuries to Multiple Areas	*41*	*25.3%*
Total Victims	**162**	

The ultimate motives for committing a crime may not become apparent until well into a criminal investigation or sometimes not even until a case is being adjudicated. Table 11 displays information about apparent motives and/or relevant circumstances for 101 shooting incidents where specific information about any/all motives or circumstances surrounding an incident was available. The most common motive or circumstance was an Altercation (41.6%), followed by a Drug-Related issue (37.6%) and Retaliation or Robbery (20.8% each). The proportion of incidents where a bystander or otherwise unintended person was struck is one-third to one-half lower compared to the four prior years.

Table 11: Motives/Circumstances Related to Shooting Incidents—Incident-Level

Motives/Circumstances – Incident Level		
Motives/Circumstances	Incidents*	Percent of Incidents
Altercation/Dispute/Argument	42	41.6%
Drug-related	38	37.6%
Retaliation	21	20.8%
Robbery	21	20.8%
Intimate Partner Violence	14	13.9%
Bystander	7	6.9%
Other	13	12.9%
Unknown, but with secondary circumstances	33	27.2%
Total Where Motive/Circumstances Known	**101**	

*Many incidents have more than one motive/circumstance; therefore, counts and percentages reflect the inclusion of multiple motives/circumstances within an incident.

For the 58 incidents where at least one suspect had been identified by name (or where there was good evidence that the victim knew the suspect) and victim-offender relationship information was available, the relationships between all suspects and all victims involved in an incident were examined. The victim-offender relationship for the incident was then classified based on the closest relationship between any suspect and any victim. For example, if the incident involved three suspects and one victim and the three offender-victim relationships were friend, stranger, and someone known in the community, 'friend' would be the relationship level assigned to the incident. This approach provides an additional way of examining the circumstances that may have brought a shooting suspect and victim into the proximity required for the shooting to occur.

The relationships between shooting suspects and their victims at the incident level are shown in Table 12. The most frequent victim-to-offender relationship was Otherwise Known (60.3%), followed by Spouse/Boyfriend/Girlfriend (current/former) (17.2%). Note that in four of the incidents identified as being related to intimate partner violence, the nature of the circumstances warranted a victim-suspect relationship determination other than Spouse/Boyfriend/Girlfriend (current/former).

Table 12: Victim to Suspect Relationship—Incident-Level

Victim-Suspect Relationship-Incident Level		
Type of Relationship	Number	Percent
Otherwise Known	35	60.3%
Spouse/Boyfriend/Girlfriend (current/former)	10	17.2%
Family (e.g., sibling, parent, child, in-law)	5	8.6%
Acquaintance	4	6.9%
Friend	2	3.5%
Neighbor	1	1.7%
Stranger	1	1.7%
Total Where Relationship Is Known	**58**	

Important Issues and Considerations

Victim and Witness Cooperation

The data in this report indicate that, where specific suspects are identified by name, most are subsequently arrested (75.3% statewide). However, the cooperation of shooting victims and of witnesses to shooting incident investigations is often critical in securing the accurate identification of suspects, and the subsequent generation of arrests and successful criminal prosecutions.

In this shooting report, both victim and witness cooperation were explored for all incidents, with cooperation classified at the level of the incident. Based on a review of information available in the complaint reports, cooperation for each group was classified at one of three levels: full cooperation, limited cooperation, or no cooperation. Where possible, statements of police officers were used as the primary criteria in determining cooperation.

This review indicates that in 64.4% of incidents overall (78.7% where witnesses were known), witnesses could be classified as being fully cooperative with the investigation. In 27.3% of incidents overall (36% where a victim was able to cooperate), victims were similarly cooperative.

Table 16: Level of Witness Cooperation (Incident-Level)

	Number*	Percent
Full Cooperation	85	64.4%
Limited Cooperation	16	12.1%
Witnesses-Refused to Cooperate	7	5.3%
No Known Witnesses	24	18.2%
Total	**132**	

*Could not classify 12 incidents

Table 17: Level of Victim Cooperation (Incident-Level)

	Number*	Percent
Full Cooperation	36	27.3%
Limited Cooperation	38	28.8%
No Cooperation	26	19.7%
Victim Deceased/Unable to Cooperate	32	24.2%
Grand Total	**132**	

*Could not classify 12 incidents

Conclusion

In 2018, there were 144 criminal, non-accidental shooting incidents in Delaware that resulted in the injury or death of another person. The year-end total was the lowest since the Center began producing the statewide shooting report in 2011. Just over one-half of all incidents (52.1%) occurred in the City of Wilmington, with another 17.4% occurring in suburban New Castle County, 21.5% in Kent County, and 9.0% in Sussex County.

One-hundred-twenty-one individuals had non-fatal injuries as a result of these incidents, and 41 died of their wounds in 34 homicide incidents. Nine victims died during six incidents related to an intimate relationship. More than 210 individuals were suspected of involvement in the shooting incidents, with 97 suspects identified by name. As of the summer of 2018, arrests or exceptional clearances had been made in 38.2% of all shooting incidents and 55.9% of homicide incidents.

Most shooting victims (87%) were male, with Blacks comprising the largest racial group of victims (88.3% of all victims, 90.8% of male victims). For the 61 incidents where demographic information was available for both victims and suspects, 96.7% involved victims and suspects who were predominantly of the same race.

More than 85% of victims and 90% of identified suspects had criminal histories in Delaware. Of those with a Delaware arrest history, 81.4% of victims and 75.6% of identified suspects had at least one felony arrest. Most victims and identified suspects were juveniles at the time of their first Delaware arrest (87.1% and 86.6%, respectively).

It is worth noting that the findings for gender, race, arrest history, and age at first Delaware arrest have been highly consistent across all eight statewide shooting reports the Center has produced, reflecting an important set of dynamics relevant to decreasing the occurrence of shooting incidents.

An examination of the cooperation of witnesses and victims in shooting investigations indicates that, in 64% of incidents overall (78.7% where witnesses were known), witnesses could be described as being fully cooperative. Victims had a similar level of cooperation in 27.3% of incidents overall (36% where a victim was able to cooperate).