

Louisiana Violence Experiences Survey (LaVEX) 2023



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Content Warning: *This work includes sensitive information on various types of violence, including, but not limited to physical, emotional, domestic, and sexual. If you need support for any of these concerns, please contact:*

- *Louisiana Mental Health, Suicide, and Crisis 24-hour Hotline: 988*
- *Louisiana Statewide 24-hour Hotline for Domestic Violence Survivors: 1.888.411.1333*
- *Louisiana Foundation Against Sexual Assault crisis phone line at 888.372.8995 (24/7) English/Spanish. Text at 225.351.7233 or Chat online at lafasa.org.*



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Louisiana Violence Experiences Survey (LaVEX) survey offers first-time insight into the existing reality of violence experienced by adults in the state. LaVEX is unique in its ability to provide population-level estimates on physical violence (inclusive of gun violence), a range of sexual violence experiences (inclusive of sexual harassment and assault), and intimate partner violence (IPV) experiences among adult residents of LA. It is the only survey providing these recent data at the state level. This report examines lifetime and past-year experiences of violence among Louisianans using LaVEX 2023 data from 1,081 adult (age 18+) state resident respondents surveyed from May to June 2023. (See *Definitions for Report* section for clarity on definitions for violence indicators.)

Physical Violence

- Half of all adults in LA (53%) have experienced physical violence in their lifetime
- One in 14 LA adults (7%) experienced physical violence in the past year
 - Men were more likely than women to report past-year physical violence (9% vs 5%)
 - Most past-year physical violence (84%) was committed by someone known to the victim
 - Women most often report a spouse/romantic partner was the perpetrator of past-year physical violence (61%), while men most frequently report that the perpetrator was a stranger (44%)
- One in five adults in LA (21%) have been threatened or harmed with a gun – with 15% of women and 29% of men report experiencing gun violence in their lifetime. One in 50 adults (2%) were threatened or harmed with a gun in the past year
- For those reporting past-year physical violence, most reported negative health or social consequences
 - The most common negative consequences reported were feelings of anxiety or depression (66% of women, 31% of men), suicidality (22% of women, 7% of men), and missing work or school (50% of women, 32% of men)
 - Most people who experienced physical violence did not report it (89% of women, 83% of men)

Sexual Violence (inclusive of five forms of sexual harassment and sexual assault)

- Two-fifths of adults in LA - 41% - have experienced sexual harassment or assault in their lifetime
- 39% have experienced sexual harassment, most often in the form of verbal sexual harassment
 - One in nine (11%) have experienced sexual assault
 - All forms of sexual harassment and assault were reported more frequently by women than by men, with the exception of trans- or homophobic sexual harassment
- One in 10 LA adults (10%) experienced sexual harassment or assault in the past year
 - Women and men were similarly likely to report past-year sexual harassment or assault (12% of women, 9% of men)
 - Verbal and cyber sexual harassment were most commonly reported (6% and 4%, respectively)
- For those reporting past-year sexual violence, most reported negative health or social consequences

- The most commonly reported negative consequences were feelings of anxiety or depression (42% of women, 37% of men), suicidality (10% of women, 8% of men), and changing a route or routine (18% of women, 38% of men)
- Most who experienced past-year sexual violence did not report it (84%)
- Physical and sexual violence victimization often are co-occurring. Those who experienced past-year physical violence were five times more likely to have experienced past-year sexual violence (43% vs. 8%)

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV): Inclusive of physical, sexual, economic, and emotionally controlling IPV, as well as threats of violence against self or a pet, from a current or former romantic or sexual partner.

- Half (51%) of respondents reported experiencing IPV ever, including 55% of women and 47% of men
- Over one-third (36%) of Louisianans report enduring physical and/or sexual IPV in their lifetime
 - Women are more likely than men to report a history of physical and/or sexual IPV (42% vs. 29%)
- One in 25 LA adults (4%) experienced physical and/or sexual IPV in the past year.

Discrimination and Violence: Nearly one-third of LA adults (29%) regularly experience discrimination.

- Discrimination based on race/ethnicity is the most common form of discrimination reported
- Those who report discrimination experiences are six times more likely to report past-year physical violence (17% vs 3%) and three times more likely to report past-year sexual harassment or assault (21% vs 7%)

Violence and Health

- Those reporting past year violence were 2x-3x more likely to report severe depression and/or anxiety symptoms (15% vs 9% for physical violence, 20% vs 8% for sexual harassment or assault), compared to those who did not experience violence in the past year
- Those reporting past year violence were 5x more likely to report serious consideration of suicide in the past year (37% vs 7% for physical violence, 33% vs 6% for sexual harassment or assault), compared to those who did not experience violence in the past year
- Those reporting past year violence were 2x more likely to report recent substance misuse (65% vs 30% for physical violence, 58% vs 30% for sexual harassment or assault), compared to those who did not experience violence in the past year

Socially and Economically Marginalized People Face More Violence: Past-year physical violence, sexual harassment or assault, and physical or sexual IPV were reported more frequently by lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other self-described sexual identity respondents, people with disabilities, people with a history of homelessness or incarceration, and those who faced prior year eviction or financial distress

- Those who reported past-year eviction, food insecurity, or housing insecurity were two to nine times more likely to have experienced physical or sexual violence in the past year

Reports of Violence Perpetration

- 3-4% of adults report past-year perpetration of physical or sexual assault or sexual harassment
- Men were twice as likely as women to report this perpetration
- Perpetration of violence was more likely among those who were also victims of violence

Findings from this state-wide survey confirm that Louisianans regularly experience physical and sexual violence and discrimination. Groups facing economic vulnerability and social discrimination bear a greater burden of violence, and multiple forms of violence typically intersect to compound this burden. Most victims never formally report the abuse, suggesting that criminal justice responses to perpetration may not be useful as a means of addressing violence. Health and social welfare services such as conflict-resolution training and support services for families and youth may be a better means of serving victims and preventing perpetration, given the vulnerabilities faced by victims and that most perpetrators are victims as well. Findings have important implications for state programs and policies.

Media Inquiries

Are you with the media and want one of our gender equity experts to comment on this project? Contact the Tulane Public Relations office at pr@tulane.edu or **504.865.5210**.

You can also contact the Institute's internal media contact, Lauren Gaines at lgaines1@tulane.edu.

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