

TCFV Supports Prevention of Firearm-Related Family Violence Homicides

Issue

The majority (75%) of Texans killed by their intimate partners in 2021 were shot to death. Recent data shows a 90% increase in firearms involved in domestic violence calls to law enforcement over the past two years. Responding to family violence continues to be the leading way in which law enforcement officers are murdered, almost always by a perpetrator with a firearm. Among children, family and bystanders killed, or injured, in family violence related murders, the vast majority were also shot. Abusers with access to firearms pose the most danger to their partners and to the public.

Background

The Texas Legislature enacted firearm prohibitions for family violence offenders in 2001. Two decades later, most communities in Texas lack sufficient transfer protocols to ensure these dangerous individuals do not possess a firearm when the lethality risk is highest. Current Texas laws prohibit firearm possession for a duration of time for those convicted of Class A Misdemeanors involving family violence, felons, and protective order respondents, **but no standard process exists to promote follow-through for these transfers.** The lack of consistent processes across jurisdictions for those deemed too dangerous by state courts to possess firearms perpetuates grave safety risks for survivors and communities.

Solution

LEADERSHIP BY THE LEGISLATURE ON FIREARM TRANSFERS IS NECESSARY TO REDUCE THESE PREVENTABLE DEATHS

Measures needed to support safety for survivors and their families include:

- » **Prompting courts** to take steps for safe and just firearm transfer process for prohibited possessors, consistent with the state law.
- » **Require Abusers** who are prohibited possessors to sign an affidavit to declare where, and how, they will transfer their firearms at the time they become temporarily prohibited from possessing.
- » **Developing protocols** supported by best practices that address admonishment, transfer, storage, documentation, and return.

Prioritizing the workable, effective transfer protocols for those prohibited under existing Texas law from possessing these all too often deadly weapons will bolster community safety.



Of the 169 Texas women killed by their intimate partners in 2021, 127 were shot to death.



The presence of a gun in a domestic violence situation increases the risk of homicide by as much as 500%.

“He is looking for me. He is a person who threatened me with death with a gun to my head. I fear for my life, that’s the reason that I’m here.” – TEXAS SURVIVOR