



# Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report

*National Crime Victimization Survey*

December 2001, NCJ 190076

# Violence in the Workplace, 1993-99

Detis T. Duhart, Ph.D.  
*BJS Statistician*

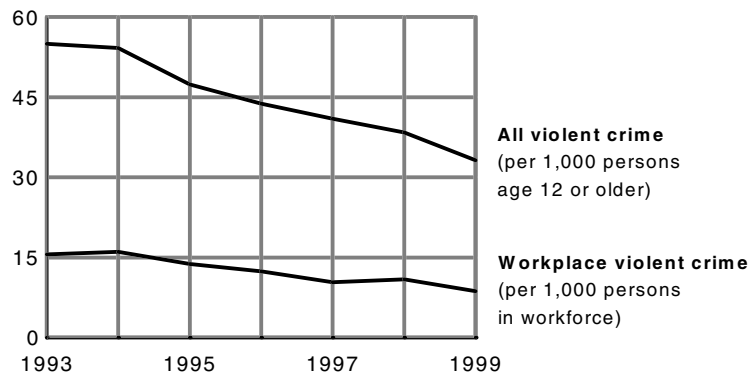
Between 1993 and 1999 in the United States, an average of 1.7 million violent victimizations per year were committed against persons age 12 or older who were at work or on duty, according to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). In addition to the nonfatal violence measured by the NCVS, about 900 work-related homicides occurred annually. Workplace violence accounted for 18% of all violent crime during the 7-year period.

Of the occupations examined, police officers experienced workplace violent crime at rates higher than all other occupations (261 per 1,000 police officers). College or university teachers were victimized the least among occupations examined (2 per 1,000 college teachers).

This report focuses on nonfatal violence in the workplace — rape and sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault — as measured by the NCVS. In addition, data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics are included to describe the nature of workplace homicide. All tables describe nonfatal victimizations occurring while at work or on duty, unless otherwise noted as including homicide.

## Highlights

**1993-99, violent crime in the workplace declined 44%, compared to a 40%-decrease in the overall rate of violent crime**



- Of the occupations examined, police officers experienced workplace violent crime at rates higher than all other occupations (261 per 1,000 persons).
- The workplace violent crime rate for whites (13 per 1,000 in the workforce) was 25% higher than the black rate (10 per 1,000) and 59% higher than the rate for other races (8 per 1,000). This contrasts with overall violent crime (including both workplace and non-workplace violence) for which blacks have the highest rates.
- Most workplace victimizations were intraracial. About 6 in 10 white and black victims of workplace crime perceived their assailant to be of the same race.
- Private sector and Federal Government employees were victimized at similar rates.
- Elementary school teachers experienced workplace violence at a rate lower than junior high and high school teachers (17 versus 54 and 38 per 1,000 in the workforce, respectively).
- Almost 4 of every 10 robberies occurring while the victim was at work or on duty were committed against persons in retail sales or transportation.
- More than 80% of all workplace homicides were committed with a firearm. From 1993 to 1999 the number of workplace homicides declined 39%.

## Violence in the workplace

Rape and sexual assault, robbery, and homicide accounted for a small percentage (6%) of all workplace violent crime occurring between 1993 and 1999 (table 1). The majority of workplace violent incidents, almost 19 of every 20, were aggravated or simple assaults. (See *Glossary* for definitions.) Violent crime was experienced by persons at work or on duty at a rate of 13 per 1,000 persons in the workforce. The simple assault rate (9 per 1,000 persons in the workforce) was more than 4 times the rate of all other categories of violent workplace crime. Homicides were less than 1% of all workplace violent crimes.

### Trends in workplace violence

The percent decreases in the rates of workplace violence and of violent crime overall were similar between 1993 and 1999 (*Highlights* figure). There were 16 workplace violent victimizations (per 1,000 persons in the workforce) in 1993 compared to 9 in 1999 — a 44% decrease. During the same period, overall violent crime victimization rates fell significantly (40%) from 55 to 33 per 1,000 persons. Each category of

#### The National Crime Victimization Survey

The NCVS is the Nation's primary source of information on the frequency, characteristics, and consequences of criminal victimization. One of the largest continuous household surveys conducted by the Federal Government, the NCVS collects information about crimes, both reported and not reported to police. The survey provides the largest national forum for victims to describe the impact of crime and the characteristics of violent offenders.

This report updates *Workplace Violence, 1992-96*, a BJS Special Report, July 1998, NCJ 168634. Findings from the NCVS are also on the BJS website:

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/).

**Table 1. Average annual number, rate, and percent of workplace victimization by type of crime, 1993-99**

Crime category	Average annual workplace victimization	Rate per 1,000 persons in the workforce	Percent of workplace victimization
All violent crime	1,744,300	12.5	100%
Homicide	900	0.01	0.1
Rape/Sexual assault	36,500	0.3	2.1
Robbery	70,100	0.5	4.0
Aggravated assault	325,000	2.3	18.6
Simple assault	1,311,700	9.4	75.2

Sources: Homicide data are obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. Rape and sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault data are from the NCVS.

**Table 2. Workplace violence victimization rate per 1,000 persons in the workforce, by crime category, 1993-99**

	Rate of violent victimization in the workplace per 1,000 persons in the workforce				
	Total	Rape/sexual assault	Robbery	Aggravated assault	Simple assault
1993	15.6	0.5	0.7	3.2	11.3
1994	16.1	0.1*	0.7	3.1	12.2
1995	13.8	0.3	0.7	2.3	10.5
1996	12.5	0.4	0.5	2.5	9.2
1997	10.4	0.2	0.4	2.2	7.6
1998	11.0	0.2	0.3	1.9	8.6
1999	8.7	0.2*	0.3	1.4	6.8

\*Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases. See *Methodology* on page 11.

violent workplace crime was lower in 1999 than it had been in 1993 (table 2).

For example, persons working or on duty experienced 7 simple assaults per 1,000 persons in the workforce during 1999 versus 11 in 1993.

**Table 3. Average annual rate of workplace victimization, by demographic characteristics of the victims, 1993-99**

Characteristic of victim	Rate per 1,000 in the workforce
<b>All</b>	12.5
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	15.0
Female	9.6
<b>Race</b>	
White	13.0
Black	10.4
Other	8.2
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Hispanic	9.7
Non-Hispanic	12.7
Unknown	19.9
<b>Age</b>	
12-19	11.5
20-34	16.0
35-49	12.3
50-64	7.8
65 or older	3.9
<b>Marital status</b>	
Never married	14.1
Married	11.3
Widowed	4.7
Divorced or separated	15.8

### Characteristics of victims of workplace violence

Males were victimized more than females for both workplace violent crime and violent crime overall during 1993-99. The violent crime victimization rate for working or on duty males was 56% higher than the female rate (15 versus 10 per 1,000 in the workplace) (table 3). Overall, 18% of violent crimes were workplace victimizations; 22% of all male and 15% of all female violent crimes were committed while the victim was working or on duty.

Gender	Percent of violent victimizations		
	All	Workplace	Non-workplace
All victims	100%	18%	82%
Male	100	22	78
Female	100	15	85

**Table 4. Average annual rate and percentage of workplace crime, by gender, race, and crime category, 1993-99**

Characteristic of victim	Violent victimizations in the workplace							
	Rape and sexual assault		Robbery		Aggravated assault		Simple assault	
	Rate	Percent	Rate	Percent	Rate	Percent	Rate	Percent
<b>Gender</b>		100%		100%		100%		100%
Male	0.1	20.0	0.7	70.2	3.1	71.4	11.2	64.1
Female	0.5	80.0	0.3	29.8	1.5	28.6	7.3	35.9
<b>Race</b>		100%		100%		100%		100%
White	0.3	88.4	0.5	80.7	2.4	85.6	9.9	89.0
Black	0.2*	9.0*	0.7	16.0	2.1	10.4	7.4	8.9
Other	0.2*	2.6*	0.4*	3.3*	2.5	4.0	5.1	2.0

Note: Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding. Percentages are of total workplace victimization; rates are per 1,000 persons in the workforce. \*Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases. See *Methodology* on page 11.

Although NCVS data have consistently shown that blacks experience violent crime at rates higher than whites and persons of other races, violent workplace crime rates were highest among whites. While working or on duty, whites experienced 13 workplace victimizations per 1,000 in the workforce, a rate 25% higher than the black rate (10 per 1,000 in the workforce) and 59% higher than the rate among persons of "other" races.<sup>1</sup> The black workplace victimization rate was similar to that of Hispanics (10 per 1,000 in the workforce) and slightly higher than the rate for persons of "other" races.

Persons age 20-34 experienced workplace violence at a rate higher than any other age group considered. Workers age 12-19 and 35-49 experienced workplace crime at similar rates (12 per 1,000 in the workforce).

<sup>1</sup>In this report, "other races" and "others" are defined as Asians, Native Hawaiians, other Pacific Islanders, Alaska Natives, and American Indians considered together.

Workplace victimization rates for never married and divorced or separated persons were similar, and both were higher than the rates for married or widowed persons.

**Type of crime and gender**

Except for rape and sexual assault, males experienced all categories of workplace violent crime at higher rates and percentages than did females (table 4). About two-thirds of all robberies, aggravated assaults, and simple assaults in the workplace were committed against males. The rates of victimization (per 1,000 in the workforce) for these crimes were at least 54% higher for males when compared to those for females.

**Type of crime and race**

Whites experienced more than four-fifths of all rapes and sexual assaults (88%), robberies (81%), aggravated assaults (86%), and simple assaults (89%) occurring in the workplace.

Per capita rates of aggravated assault in the workplace were similar for all racial categories. The rate of workplace simple assault for whites was higher than that for blacks and persons of other races. Blacks and whites were robbed while working or on duty at similar rates (1 per 1,000 in the workforce).

**Average annual rate of victimization in the workplace, by occupation, 1993-99**

Occupation was measured by categorizing the victim's reported job at the time of the victimization into broad occupational fields. (See *Methodology* on page 11 for definitions.) Between 1993 and 1999 the rates of workplace violence for all occupational categories fell, and all the declines were statistically significant except for mental health (table 5). The percentage decline in the workplace victimization rate for the law enforcement field (55%) was somewhat greater than the decline in percentage among mental health employees (28%).

**Table 5. Rate of violent victimization in the workplace, by occupational field, 1993-99**

	Rate per 1,000 persons in each occupation						
	Medical	Mental health	Teaching	Law enforcement	Retail sales	Transportation	Other occupation
1993	20.3	64.4	25.8	163.1	21.9	20.6	8.1
1994	16.7	63.7	19.3	156.4	22.8	24.1	9.6
1995	16.0	56.7	15.4	157.2	22.2	13.8	7.4
1996	11.8	63.9	16.6	125.9	20.4	12.6	7.3
1997	8.4	39.7	14.9	122.0	20.5	15.4	5.1
1998	9.2	49.3	18.9	88.5	16.2	18.3	6.6
1999	10.0	46.1	12.4	74.1	14.1	8.4	5.3
1993-99 Percent change	-51%	-28%	-52%	-55%	-36%	-59%	-35%

**Average annual rate of violent victimization in the workplace, by occupation, 1993-99**

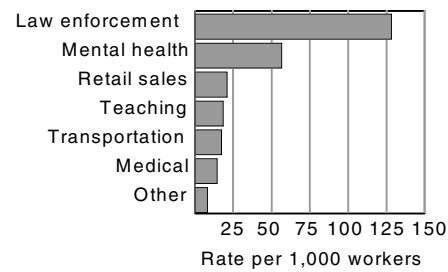


Figure 1

Persons employed in law enforcement were victimized while at work or on duty at the highest rate of all occupations examined — followed by persons working in the mental health field (figure 1). Retail sales workers were victimized in the workplace at a somewhat higher rate (20 per 1,000 in the workforce) than those employed in the teaching, transportation, or medical field.

Among the occupational groups examined, police officers accounted for 11% of all workplace victimizations and were victimized while at work or on duty at a rate higher than all other occupations examined (261 per 1,000), while college or university teachers were victimized the least (2 per 1,000) (table 6).

The workplace violent crime victimization rate for nurses was not significantly different from that for physicians; however, nurses experienced workplace crime at a rate 72% higher than medical technicians and at more than twice the rate of other medical field workers (22 versus 13 and 9, respectively). Professional (social worker/psychiatrist) and custodial care providers in the mental health care field were victimized while working or on duty at similar rates (68 and 69 per 1,000, respectively) — but at rates more than 3 times those in the medical field.

**Table 6. Average annual rate of violent victimization in the workplace, by occupation of the victim, 1993-99**

Occupational field of victim	Violent victimizations in the workplace		
	Number	Rate per 1,000 workers	Percent of total
<b>Total</b>	12,328,000	12.6	100%
<b>Medical</b>			
Physician	71,300	16.2	0.6%
Nurse	429,100	21.9	3.5
Technician	97,600	12.7	0.8
Other	315,000	8.5	2.6
<b>Mental health</b>			
Professional	290,900	68.2	2.4%
Custodial	60,400	69.0	0.5
Other	186,700	40.7	1.5
<b>Teaching</b>			
Preschool	32,900	7.1	0.3%
Elementary	262,700	16.8	2.1
Junior high	321,300	54.2	2.6
High school	314,500	38.1	2.6
College/university	41,600	1.6	0.3
Technical/industrial	7,400	12.2*	0.1*
Special education	102,000	68.4	0.8
Other	169,800	16.7	1.4
<b>Law enforcement</b>			
Police	1,380,400	260.8	11.2%
Corrections	277,100	155.7	2.3
Private security	369,300	86.6	3.0
Other	359,800	48.3	2.9
<b>Retail sales</b>			
Convenience store	336,800	53.9	2.7%
Gas station	86,900	68.3	0.7
Bartender	170,600	81.6	1.4
Other	1,383,100	15.3	11.2
<b>Transportation</b>			
Bus driver	105,800	38.2	0.9%
Taxi cab driver	84,400	128.3	0.7
Other	350,500	11.7	2.8
<b>Other</b>	4,720,100	7.0	38.3%

Note: Rates are calculated using population estimates from the NCVS for occupations, 1993-99. The total number of victimizations in this table and all other tables with detail for occupation differs from the total in tables without occupational detail because of the way teacher victimization was computed. See *Methodology*, page 11. Details may not add to total because of rounding.

\*Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases. See *Methodology*, page 11.

Except for junior high school teachers, the workplace victimization rate for persons employed in special education facilities was highest among teachers. Elementary school teachers experienced workplace violence at a rate lower than that for junior high and high school teachers (17 versus 54 and 38 per 1,000 in the workforce, respectively). Junior high school teachers' workplace violent crime rate was somewhat higher than that of high school teachers.

Private security workers' workplace violent crime rate was the lowest of all law enforcement workers (87 per 1,000 private security workers). Within the retail sales field, bartenders were victimized while working at a rate similar to that of gas station attendants and somewhat higher than that of convenience store workers. Within the transportation field, taxi cab drivers were victimized while working or on duty at the highest rate.

**Table 7. Average annual rates of aggravated and simple assault in the workplace, by occupation, 1993-99**

Occupational field	Violent victimizations in the workplace				Ratio of simple to aggravated assault	
	Total assault	Aggravated assault		Simple assault		
		Number	Rate per 1,000	Number		Rate per 1,000
<b>All assault</b>	11,579,400	2,286,900	2.3	9,292,500	9.5	4:1
Medical	878,700	96,200	1.4	782,500	11.4	8:1
Mental health	495,700	75,100	7.7	420,600	43.2	6:1
Teaching	1,211,200	121,300	1.7	1,089,900	14.9	9:1
Law enforcement	2,348,500	548,400	29.2	1,800,100	95.8	3:1
Retail sales	1,833,700	420,600	4.2	1,413,100	14.1	3:1
Transportation	455,800	115,100	3.5	340,700	10.2	3:1
Other	4,355,900	910,300	1.4	3,445,600	5.1	4:1

Note: Rates are per 1,000 persons in the workforce.

*Assault, by occupation*

Simple and aggravated assaults accounted for 94% of all workplace violent victimizations. There were 4 simple assaults for every aggravated assault occurring while the victim was at work or on duty (table 7). The rate at which persons in law enforcement experienced aggravated assault (29 per 1,000 in the workforce) was more than 3 times the rate for all other occupational fields. The workplace aggravated assault rate among mental health workers was somewhat higher than the rate among retail sales employees and significantly higher than the rate for the medical, teaching, transportation, or other fields.

Mental health workers experienced simple assault at rates higher than all other occupational fields except law enforcement; persons working in the law enforcement field experienced simple assault at a rate at least twice that of all other occupational fields.

*Robbery, by occupation*

Almost 4 of every 10 robberies occurring while the victim was at work or on duty were committed against persons in the retail sales or transportation field (table 8). Transportation workers were robbed at a higher rate than any other occupational field reported (3 per 1,000 in the workplace).

**Employers of workplace violence victims**

For every 1,000 State, city, or local government employees, there were 33 workplace violent crimes experienced between 1993 and 1999 (table 9). The victimization rate of these workers was highest when considering type of employer, while the self employed were victimized the least (7 per 1,000). Private company and Federal Government employees were victimized at similar rates. The rate of workplace

**Table 8. Average annual rate of robbery in the workplace, by occupation, 1993-99**

Occupational field	Robbery in the workplace		
	Number	Percent of total	Rate per
			1,000 workers
<b>All robbery</b>	490,900	100%	0.5
Medical	8,200	2*	0.1*
Mental health	9,300	2*	1.0*
Teaching	32,300	7*	0.4*
Law enforcement	15,600	3*	0.8*
Retail sales	100,700	21	1.0
Transportation	82,600	17	2.5
Other	242,300	49	0.4

Note: Details may not add to total because of rounding.

\*Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases. See *Methodology* on page 11.

victimization for government agency employees — Federal, State, city, and local combined — (29 per 1,000) was higher than the rate of victimization among private company employees and the self employed.

**Table 9. Employers of workplace violence victims, 1993-99**

Type of employer	Average annual workplace	Rate per 1,000 persons in the victimization workforce
Total	1,743,400	12.5
Private company	987,600	9.9
Government	612,800	28.6
Federal	53,800	12.1
State/city/local	559,000	33.0
Self-employed	112,900	7.4
Other	30,200	11.0

**Table 10. Time of violent victimization in the workplace, by occupation of victim, 1993-99**

Time of occurrence	Percent of violent victimizations in the workplace							
	All workplace crime	Medical	Mental health	Teaching	Law enforcement	Retail sales	Transportation	Other
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Day (6 a.m.-6 p.m.)	59.5	52.2	71.1	91.2	38.3	48.7	57.3	67.3
Night (6 p.m.-6 a.m.)	35.7	43.5	22.0	4.9	54.8	47.6	37.8	28.5
Do not know	4.8	4.3	7.0	3.9	6.9	3.7	4.9	4.2

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

**Characteristics of victimization**

*Time of victimization*

Overall, more workplace crimes occurred between noon and 6 p.m. than in any other 6-hour period of the day.

Time of occurrence of violent crime in the workplace	Percent of victimizations
<b>Day</b>	59.5%
6 am-noon	21.6
Noon-6 p.m.	37.9
<b>Night</b>	35.7%
6 p.m. to midnight	24.7
Midnight-6 a.m.	11.0
Did not know	4.8%

About 55% of all workplace crimes occurring against employees in the law enforcement field were committed at night. Law enforcement was the only field experiencing more workplace crime at night (between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.) than during the day (between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.) (table 10). Retail sales workers experienced workplace crime at similar percentages regardless of the time of their shift.

*Victim's reaction to attack*

More than three-quarters of all workplace violent crime victims did not physically resist (no resistance, unarmed confrontation, and nonconfrontational tactics during the attack).<sup>2</sup>

Victim's reaction to assailant	Violent victimizations in the workplace, 1993-99	
	Number	Percent
Total	12,328,000	100%
No physical resistance	9,535,400	77.3
Threatened or attacked offender	333,200	2.7
Unknown method	2,459,400	19.9

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

Three percent of workplace violence victims defended themselves by threatening or attacking their assailant with a firearm or other weapon.

Law enforcement officers victimized while working or on duty were more likely to threaten or attack their assailant with a weapon or firearm than any other victims of workplace violence (9% of all workplace crimes committed against them).

Occupational field	Victims of workplace violence who threatened or attacked the offender with a weapon	
	Number	Percent
Medical	0*	--
Mental health	0*	--
Teaching	4,600*	0.4%*
Law enforcement	218,700	9.2
Retail sales	31,200	1.6
Transportation	12,800*	2.4*
Other	65,900	1.4

\*Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases. See *Methodology* on page 11.

<sup>2</sup>Actions such as keeping still during the incident, yelling for help, attempting to appease or persuade the offender, and bargaining with the offender are all classified as "no physical resistance."

*Victim's injury*

Twelve percent of all workplace violence victims sustained injuries from the incident (table 11). Of those injuries sustained from workplace violence incidents, about 10 out of 11 were minor injuries.<sup>3</sup> Fifty-three percent of all injured victims were not treated or did not receive medical care for injuries sustained, while 26% received treatment from a medical office, clinic, or hospital.

<sup>3</sup>Minor injuries include bruises, black eyes, cuts, scratches, swelling, chipped teeth, and undetermined injuries requiring less than 2 days of hospitalization.

**Table 11. Injury from workplace violence and treatment received, 1993-99**

Injury type and treatment	Percent of violent victimizations in the workplace
<b>Uninjured</b>	88.2%
<b>Injured</b>	11.8
<b>Type of injury, as percent of all victims</b>	
Serious	1.2
Minor	10.2
Other	0.4
<b>Treatment, as percent of injured</b>	
Injured but not treated	53.0
Treated at scene/home	14.8
Treated at medical office, clinic, or hospital	26.2
Treated at other location	3.7
Hospitalized 1 night or more	2.1*
Did not know location	0.2*

Note: Minor injuries include bruises, black eyes, cuts, scratches, swelling, chipped teeth, and undetermined injuries requiring less than 2 days of hospitalization. Serious injuries include gunshot or knife wounds, broken bones, loss of teeth, internal injuries, loss of consciousness, and undetermined injuries requiring 2 or more days of hospitalization. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

\*Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases. See *Methodology* on page 11.

**Table 12. Weapon present during victimizations in the workplace, 1993-99**

	Percent of violent victimizations in the workplace
Weapon present	20.7%
Firearm	8.1
Knife	5.7
Other*	5.7
Unknown	1.2
No weapon present	72.6%
Presence not known	6.7%

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

\*Blunt objects such as rocks, clubs, and blackjacks.

**Weapon use**

Armed assailants committed a fifth of all workplace crimes (table 12). Armed assailants were more likely to use a firearm than a knife or other weapon such as rocks, clubs, bottles, or other objects (8% versus 6%, respectively). Transportation workers were victimized on the job by offenders with a weapon at a percentage somewhat higher (32%) than any other occupational field.

Victim's occupational field	Percent of workplace victims victimized by offender with a weapon
Transportation	31.7%
Retail sales	23.3
Law enforcement	23.2
Other	22.0
Mental health	14.9
Teaching	10.9
Medical	10.5

**Characteristics of offenders as reported by victims**

Although males made up 48% of the 1993-99 population, they were the offender in more than four-fifths of all workplace crime. Females were the offender less often than males (13% of all workplace crimes) and comprised 52% of the population during the period (table 13).

Males were more likely to be victimized by males than by females in workplace violence. Males committed about 9 out

of 10 male victimizations. In workplace violence against females, the offender was also more likely to be a male than a female. The percentage of males victimizing females (71%) was more than twice the percentage of females victimizing females (25%).

Percent of violent victimizations in the workplace:  
Gender of victim

Gender of offender	Male	Female
Male	88.5%	70.8%
Female	6.4	25.2
Unknown	5.1	4.0

Whites made up 84% of the 1993-99 population and were the offender in 55% of all workplace victimizations. Blacks comprised 12% of the 1993-99 population and were the assailant in 30% of all workplace crime. Most victimizations were intraracial for blacks and whites. In about 6 of every 10 workplace violence incidents involving a white or black victim and offender, the offender was perceived to be of the same race as the victim.

Percent of violent victimizations in the workplace: Race of victim

Race of offender	White	Black	Other
White	58.2%	25.5%	40.4%
Black	27.0	58.6	35.3
Other	9.0	8.7	21.0
Unknown*	5.9	7.2	3.2

\*Includes groups with offenders of more than one race.

In addition, the percentages of black and white victims who perceived their offender to be of a different race were similar. Persons of other races were victimized by blacks and whites at similar percentages while working or on duty.

Between 1993 and 1999 persons age 30 or older, when compared to younger persons, were perceived to have committed the highest percentage (43%) of crimes occurring at work or on duty (table 13). About a fifth of workplace offenders were perceived to be younger than age 20. A lone offender committed more than 8 of every 10 workplace crimes.

**Table 13. Demographic characteristics of offender(s) committing workplace violence, as reported by victims, 1993-99**

Characteristic of the offender	Percent of violent victimizations in the workplace
<b>Gender</b>	100%
Male	82.3
Female	13.0
Male and female	2.0
Unknown	2.7
<b>Race</b>	100%
White	54.7
Black	30.2
Other	9.2
More than one race	1.8
Unknown	4.0
<b>Age</b>	100%
Under 17	13.5
18 to 20	7.0
21 to 29	26.1
30 or older	43.0
Mixed ages	5.0
Age unknown	5.3
<b>Number of offenders</b>	100%
One	85.7
Two	5.9
Three	2.5
Four or more	3.3
Number unknown	2.6

Note: Details may not add to totals because of rounding.

About a third of victims of workplace violence believed the offender was drinking or on drugs at the time of the incident. About 36% of workplace victims did not know if the offender had been drinking or if the offender was on drugs at the time of the incident. Victims perceived that more than a quarter of all workplace violence offenders had not been drinking or were not on drugs.

Percent of workplace victims perceiving whether the offender was drinking or using drugs

Total	100%
No	27.4
Yes	35.1
Did not know	35.8
Unknown	1.7

**Table 14. Perceived offender use of drugs or alcohol, by occupation of victims of violence in the workplace, 1993-99**

Victim occupation	Percent of offenders perceived to be using alcohol or drugs				
	Total	Yes	No	Did not know	Unknown
Medical	100%	35.0%	37.0%	26.5%	1.4%*
Mental health	100	14.4	67.9	15.0	2.7*
Teaching	100	7.6	54.7	37.0	0.7*
Law enforcement	100	46.8	28.1	23.5	1.6
Retail sales	100	30.8	20.5	47.6	1.1*
Transportation	100	11.5	31.3	56.2	0.9*
Other	100	23.1	35.8	38.9	2.2

Note: Details may not add to total because of rounding.

\*Estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases. See *Methodology* on page 11.

Law enforcement and retail sales were the only occupations for which the offender was perceived to have used alcohol or drugs more than they were perceived to have not used alcohol or drugs (table 14). A higher percentage of offenders of workers in the mental health field were perceived to have not been drinking or on drugs than the offenders of workers in any other occupational field.

Workplace violence victims were more likely to be victimized by a stranger than by someone they knew. In more than half of all workplace victimizations, a stranger was the perpetrator. About 1% of all workplace crime was committed by a current or former boyfriend, girlfriend, or spouse — an intimate — of the victim.

Victim-offender relationship	Percent of workplace violence
Total	100%
Intimate	1.1
Other relative	0.5
Casual acquaintance	39.4
Stranger	55.6
Do not know	3.5

Workers in the mental health field and teachers were the only occupations more likely to be victimized by someone they knew than by a stranger (table 15). Law enforcement employees were victimized by a stranger more than any other occupation; about three-quarters of all law enforcement victimizations were committed by a stranger.

### Who reports workplace victimizations to the police

Workplace victimizations against males were equally likely to be reported as not reported to the police (table 16). In contrast, workplace victimizations against women were less likely to be reported. Of the 4 million workplace crime incidents committed against females from 1993 through 1999, 40% were reported to the police.

Workplace violence was reported to the police in similar percentages, regardless of race or Hispanic origin. Less than half of all workplace violence against whites was reported to the police. When comparing the percentage of reported and not reported victimizations for blacks, other races, and Hispanics, the apparent differences for these groups were not statistically significant.

Workplace crime incidents in which the victim sustained an injury were reported to the police more than those workplace incidents occurring without injury to the victim (62% versus 44%, respectively). Workplace victimizations in which the victim was injured were more likely to be reported to the police than not reported.

**Table 15. Victim-offender relationship in violent victimizations in the workplace, by victim occupation, 1993-99**

Victim's occupational field	Percent of violent workplace victimizations in which offender was —				
	Total	Known	Stranger	Victim unsure	Unknown relationship
Medical	100%	36.4%	56.0%	0.8%	6.8%
Mental health	100	68.7	24.6	0.4	6.3
Teaching	100	68.6	19.5	1.8	10.2
Law enforcement	100	13.4	73.2	1.4	12.0
Retail sales	100	25.5	52.3	1.0	21.2
Transportation	100	28.2	50.8	0.8	20.2
Other	100	47.2	35.7	1.8	15.3

**Table 16. Workplace violence reported to the police, by victim characteristic, 1993-99**

Victim characteristic	Percent of violent victimizations in the workplace —			
	Total	Reported to the police	Not reported	Unknown whether reported
<b>All victims</b>	100%	46.3%	52.1%	1.6%
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	100%	49.6%	49.1%	1.3%
Female	100	40.2	57.7	2.1
<b>Race</b>				
White	100%	46.3%	52.2%	1.5%
Black	100	45.1	52.3	2.7
Other	100	50.1	49.9	0
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
Hispanic	100%	47.0%	51.8%	1.1%
Non-Hispanic	100	46.2	52.2	1.6
Other	100	48.9	48.8	2.3
<b>Victim injury</b>				
Not injured	100%	44.2%	54.2%	1.5%
Injured	100	61.6	36.4	2.1



## Crimes reported to the police

Rape and sexual assaults were reported to the police at the lowest percentage (24%) when compared to other violent crimes in the workplace. The percentage of robberies and aggravated assaults reported to the police were similar. These crimes were reported to the police at a higher percentage than were other workplace violent crimes. About 4 in 10 simple assaults sustained while working or on duty were reported to the police.

Category of violent victimization in the workplace	Percent reported to the police
Rape/sexual assault	23.6%
Robbery	71.4
Aggravated assault	64.3
Simple assault	41.1

More than 936,000 of the nearly 2 million workplace crimes committed yearly were not reported to the police. About 56% of all victimizations not reported to the police were reported to another official (table 17). About 5% of the workplace crimes not reported to the police were not reported because the victim believed the police could or would not help.

**Table 17. Reasons for not reporting workplace victimization to the police, 1993-99**

Reason for not reporting to police	Violent victimizations in the workplace	
	Average annual number	Percent
Total not reported	936,600	100%
Reported to another official	524,700	56.0
Not important enough	146,000	15.6
Police could/would not help	42,900	4.6
Other reason	191,900	20.5
Did not know	31,200	3.3
Reported to police	806,800	

When reporting is examined by occupational fields, victimizations against persons working in law enforcement (including the police) were most likely to be reported to the police, followed by victimizations of retail sales workers.

Occupational field	Crime reported to police
Medical	39.6%
Mental health	22.9
Teaching	28.1
Law enforcement	74.8
Retail sales	53.9
Transportation	37.0
Other	38.7

Except for victims working in the mental health field, victims in the teaching profession were more likely than any other workers to report the crimes to a non-law enforcement official (table 18). Victims reporting to officials other than law enforcement most often informed persons such as guards and apartment managers of the crime.

**Table 18. Reporting violent crime in the workplace to the police, by job category and reasons for not reporting, 1993-99**

Victim's job category	Percent of violent victimizations in the workplace								
	Total	Not reported to the police					Crime reported to police	Do not know if crime reported	Un-known
		Dealt with in another way	Not important enough	Police could not help	Police would not help	Other reason			
Medical	100%	36.6%	6.3%	0*	1.0%*	15.1%	39.6%	1.4%*	0*
Mental health	100	45.6	8.0	0.4*	0.5*	21.7	22.9	0.8*	0*
Teaching	100	52.1	5.7	0.9*	0.5*	8.9	28.1	3.9	0*
Law enforcement	100	14.1	2.6	0.1*	0.3*	7.8	74.8	0.2*	0*
Retail sales	100	23.6	10.6	1.3*	2.6*	7.3	53.9	0.8*	0*
Transportation	100	26.7	15.3	2.3*	3.6*	13.4	37.0	1.6*	0*
Other	100	32.3	10.7	1.0	2.4	12.8	38.7	1.3	0.8*

\*Estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases. See *Methodology* on page 11.

**Table 19. Average annual workplace homicides, by victim characteristics, 1993-99**

Victim characteristic	Average annual	Percent of total
<b>Gender</b>		100%
Male	730	81
Female	176	19
<b>Age group</b>		100%
Under 18 years	8	1
18 to 19 years	18	2
20 to 24 years	70	8
25 to 34 years	228	25
35 to 44 years	236	26
45 to 54 years	181	20
55 to 64 years	105	12
65 years or over	56	6
<b>Race</b>		100%
White	500	55
Black	163	18
Hispanic	126	14
Other/not reported	115	13

Note: Data obtained from the U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. Totals for each subcategory may not be the same because categories with 5 or fewer work fatalities or less than 0.5% are not included in the total.

## Workplace homicides

### Trend in workplace homicide

Similar to the trend in nonfatal violent crime, the number of work-related homicides decreased between 1993

and 1999 (figure 2). There were 651 work-related homicides in 1999, a 39%-decrease from the 1,074 in 1993.

### Characteristics of victims of homicide in the workplace

Males accounted for four-fifths of all workplace homicide victims (table 19). Persons between ages 25 and 44 were the victims of more than half of all workplace homicides. Whites experienced more workplace homicides than blacks or persons of other races between 1993 and 1999.

### Homicide victim/offender association

During 1993-99, 84% of all workplace homicides were committed by offenders who were strangers to the victim, primarily during robberies or attempted robberies (table 20). Coworkers or former coworkers committed a higher percentage of homicides in the workplace when compared to customers or clients (7% versus 4% of all workplace homicides, respectively). The number of work-related homicides committed by a husband over the 7-year period was 40 times the number committed by a wife (122 versus 3, respectively).

**Number of homicides in the workplace, 1993-99**



Figure 2

Personal acquaintances such as boyfriends or other acquaintances committed similar percentages of work-related homicides (1%).

### Characteristics of incidents of workplace homicide

Most workplace homicides were committed with guns. Shooting accounted for more than 80% of all workplace homicides (table 21). Of all 4-hour periods in the day, the highest percentage of work-related homicides occurred between 8 p.m. and midnight, accounting for more than a fifth of all workplace homicides.

**Table 20. Average annual workplace homicide, by victim-offender association, 1993-99**

Association of offender to victim	Average annual number	Percent of total
<b>Work association</b>	899	100%
<b>Stranger</b>	753	84%
<b>Work associate</b>	103	11%
Coworker, former coworker	67	7
Customer, client	36	4
<b>Intimate</b>	28	3%
Husband	17	2
Wife	--	--
Boyfriend	10	1
<b>Other relative</b>	5	1%
<b>Other acquaintance</b>	9	1%

Note: Data obtained from the U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. Totals for each subcategory may not add to the overall total because categories with 5 or fewer work fatalities or less than 0.5% are not included. Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding or excluded cases. --Less than 0.5.

**Table 21. Average annual number of workplace homicides, by type of incident and time of victimization, 1993-99**

Incident characteristic	Average annual number	Percent of total
<b>Method of homicide</b>		100%
Hitting, kicking, beating	46	5
Shooting	733	82
Stabbing	71	8
Other event	48	5
<b>Time of incident</b>		100%
12 a.m. - 3:59 a.m.	129	15
4 a.m. - 7:59 a.m.	86	10
8 a.m. - 11:59 a.m.	150	18
12 p.m. - 3:59 p.m.	147	18
4 p.m. - 7:59 p.m.	134	16
8 p.m. - 11:59 p.m.	188	22

Note: Data were obtained from the U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. Totals for each subcategory may not be the same because categories with 5 or fewer work fatalities or less than 0.5% are not included in the total. Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding or excluded cases.

## Methodology

Data for nonfatal crimes in this report come from the Bureau of Justice Statistics National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). The NCVS measures personal and household offenses, including crimes not reported to the police.

Information is obtained from a continuous, nationally representative sample of around 86,000 households comprising nearly 156,000 persons age 12 or older in the United States. The sample for this report includes those respondents who reported that they were working or on duty during the week prior to the interview. Victimization measured are those violent crimes that occurred while working or on duty. Only for the occupational category of teaching, those crime victims who stated that they were on their way to or from work were also included in the analysis. This is done to make data for teachers comparable to estimates presented in *Indicators of School Crime and Safety*. Violent crimes against teachers in transit to or from work account for 10% of all workplace violent crime against teachers.

Because the NCVS does not measure murder, the homicide data included in this report were drawn from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI).

### *Standard error computations for NCVS estimates*

Comparisons of percentages and rates in this report were tested to determine if differences were statistically significant. Differences described in the text as higher, lower, or different and changes over time characterized as having increased or decreased passed a hypothesis test at the .05 level of statistical significance (95%-confidence level). That is, the tested difference in the estimates was greater than twice the standard error of that difference. For comparisons which were statistically significant at the 0.10 level of

statistical significance (90%-confidence level), the terms *somewhat different*, *marginally different*, or *slight difference* is used to note the nature of the difference.

Caution is required when comparing estimates not explicitly discussed in the text. What may appear to be large differences may not test as statistically significant at the 95%- or the 90%-confidence level. Significance testing calculations were conducted at the Bureau of Justice Statistics using statistical programs developed specifically for the NCVS by the U.S. Census Bureau. These programs take into consideration many aspects of the complex NCVS sample design when calculating generalized variance estimates.

Estimates based on 10 or fewer sample cases have high relative standard errors. Because calculated standard errors for such estimates may not be accurate, care should be taken when comparing estimates based on 10 or fewer cases to other estimates. It is not advisable to make comparisons between estimates when both are based on 10 or fewer sample cases.

### *Calculation of rates and annual levels*

The rates in this report are average annual rates for 1993-99. The numerator of a given number is the sum of violent crime that occurred while at work or on duty for each year from 1993 through 1999; the denominator is the sum of the annual workforce population of persons for these years (or the number falling within the particular demographic group being measured). The resulting proportions are multiplied by 1,000 to obtain the average annual rates. Average annual levels of workplace victimization are obtained by summing the number of workplace victimizations each year between 1993 and 1999 and dividing by seven.

Population totals used in this report are calculated from estimates derived from the victimization survey. Included in

the population are persons age 12 or older living in the households, including group quarters such as dormitories. Population estimates do not include children under 12, institutionalized persons, U.S. citizens living abroad, crew members of merchant vessels, and Armed Forces personnel living in military barracks. The percentages are calculated using the method similar to the one used for average annual rates.

### *Terminology*

**Workplace violence** - The terms *workplace violence*, *work-related violence*, and *violence occurring while working or on duty* are used interchangeably in this report.

**Occupation** - The terms *occupation*, *field*, *job category*, and *occupational field* are interchangeable.

### *Measurement of occupation by the NCVS*

Victims reported their job at the time of the victimization by answering the following question:

Which of the following best describes your job at the time of the incident?

Medical profession — as a —

01. Physician
02. Nurse
03. Technician
04. Other

Mental health services field — are your duties —

05. Professional (social worker/psychiatrist)
06. Custodial care
07. Other

Teaching profession — were you employed in a —

08. Preschool
09. Elementary
10. Junior high or middle school
11. High school
12. College or university
13. Technical or industrial school
14. Special education facility
15. Other

Law enforcement or security field — were you employed as a —

16. Law enforcement officer
17. Prison or jail guard
18. Security guard
19. Other

- Retail sales — were you employed as a —
20. Convenience or liquor store clerk
  21. Gas station attendant
  22. Bartender
  23. Other

- Transportation field — were you employed as a —
24. Bus driver
  25. Taxi cab driver
  26. Other
- OR
27. Something else
  98. Residue
  99. Out of universe

The Bureau of Justice Statistics is the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. Lawrence A. Greenfeld is acting director.

Detis T. Duhart, Ph.D., BJS Statistician, wrote the report under the supervision of Michael Rand. Craig Perkins provided statistical review. Tom Hester edited and produced the report. Jayne Robinson prepared the report for printing.

December 2001, NCJ 190076

### Glossary

Homicide — the willful unlawful killing of one human being by another.

Rape — forced sexual intercourse, including both psychological coercion and physical force. Forced sexual intercourse means vaginal, anal, or oral penetration by the offender(s). This category includes incidents where the penetration is from a foreign object such as a bottle. Also included are attempted rapes, male and female victims, and heterosexual and homosexual rape.

Sexual assault — A wide range of victimizations distinct from rape or attempted rape. These crimes include completed or attempted attacks generally involving unwanted sexual contact between the victim and offender. Sexual assault may not involve force and include such things as grabbing or fondling. Sexual assault also include verbal threats.

Robbery — completed or attempted theft directly from a person, of property or cash by force or threat of force, with or without a weapon, and with or without an injury.

Aggravated assault — a completed or attempted attack with a weapon, regardless of whether or not an injury occurred, and an attack without a weapon in which the victim is seriously injured.

Simple assault — an attack without a weapon resulting in either no injury, minor injury (such as bruises, black eyes, cuts, scratches, or swelling) or an undetermined injury requiring less than 2 days of hospitalization. Simple assaults also include attempted assaults without a weapon.

This report and others from the Bureau of Justice Statistics are available free of charge through the Internet —  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/>

### Further reading

*Workplace Violence, 1992-96*, BJS Special Report, July 1998, NCJ 168634

*Violence and Theft in the Workplace*, BJS Special Report, July 1994, NCJ 148199.