

Department of Defense (DoD) Quarterly Suicide Report (QSR) 1st Quarter, CY 2023

**Dr. Liz Clark, Director,
Defense Suicide Prevention Office
(DSPO)**

The estimated cost of this report or study for the Department of Defense is approximately \$6,770 for the 2023 Fiscal Year. This includes \$3,940 in expenses and \$2,830 in DoD labor.



**DEFENSE SUICIDE
PREVENTION OFFICE**

Introduction

The Department of Defense (DoD) is fully committed to preventing suicides in our military community – every death by suicide is a tragedy.

The number of suicide deaths in the current report are preliminary and subject to change, as previously unknown cases are reported and some known cases are further investigated. The DoD continues to investigate individual cases to make informed determinations, and conduct the necessary statistical analyses to understand trends over time. At this time, it is too early to determine whether suicide rates will increase or decrease for Calendar Year 2023.

To help determine the impact of suicide on the Total Force, the Defense Suicide Prevention Office (DSPO) routinely collects and reports surveillance data on suicide mortality across the Department. The most up-to-date counts of suicide deaths are reported in the Quarterly Suicide Report (QSR).¹ The QSR complies with Objective 11.1 of the DoD Defense Strategy for Suicide Prevention (DSSP) by providing timely and accurate suicide data to guide suicide prevention efforts across the Department.

DSPO collects suicide data via collaborative effort with the Office of the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System (AFMES) and the Suicide Prevention Program Offices of the Military Services (i.e., Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Space Force). AFMES is the official DoD entity responsible for verifying and reporting deaths by suicide for the Active Component and, to the extent available, the Reserve Component, to DSPO.^{2,3} These numbers are reconciled with the Military Services to ensure the most accurate information is reported.

Quarters are based upon the Calendar Year (CY) and defined as:

- Quarter 1 (Q1): January 1st – March 31st
- Quarter 2 (Q2): April 1st – June 30th
- Quarter 3 (Q3): July 1st – September 30th
- Quarter 4 (Q4): October 1st – December 31st

The current report presents data from Q1 of CY 2023. Data includes all known or suspected suicides (both confirmed and pending) as of March 31, 2023, for both the Active and Reserve Components. Hence, the numbers presented in this report are preliminary and subject to change as previously unknown suicide cases are reported and some known cases are further investigated.⁴

Caution should be used when making comparisons across groups and/or interpreting changes in suicide counts across time because counts do not account for changes in population size. Rates account for differences in population sizes; and, as such, provide a more standardized way to

¹ Absolute counts do not account for changes in population size. Consequently, caution should be used when making comparisons across groups and/or interpreting changes in suicide counts across time.

² Active Component: Full-time members of the U.S. Armed Forces and Cadets/Midshipmen at the designated military academies.

³ Reserve Component: Limited to members of the Selected Reserves (SELRES). SELRES are drilling and training members of the National Guard and Reserve, Individual Mobilization Augmentees, and full-time support Active Guard and Reservists. This excludes members of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) and Inactive National Guard (ING).

⁴ Official annual suicide counts and unadjusted rates are published in the DoD Annual Report on Suicide in the Military. The most recent report is for CY 2021. Available at: <https://www.dspo.mil/Annual-Reports/>.

make comparisons over time or across groups.⁵ For the most recent DoD annual suicide rates and trends/changes over time, please see the CY 2021 DoD Annual Report on Suicide in the Military (<https://www.dspo.mil/Annual-Reports/>). The official annual suicide counts and rates for CY 2022 and 2023 will be published in forthcoming DoD Annual Reports on Suicide in the Military.

QSR Data

Attachment A details the number of suicide deaths by Service and Component. For Q1 of CY 2023, the Military Services reported the following deaths suspected or confirmed to be suicides:

- 94 in the **Active Component**
- 18 in the **Reserve**
- 23 in the **National Guard**

Comparisons of suicide counts between Q1 CY 2022 and Q1 CY 2023 are provided below.⁶ These comparisons are for descriptive purposes and do not reflect statistical increases or decreases nor account for population size.

- For Q1 CY 2023, the number of **Active Component** suicide deaths increased by 19 compared to Q1 CY 2022 (94 versus 75 suicide deaths)
 - Army Active Component suicide deaths increased by 12
 - Marine Corps Active Component suicide deaths increased by 6
 - Navy Active Component suicide deaths stayed the same
 - Air Force Active Component suicide deaths increased by 1
 - Space Force Active Component has no suicide deaths to date
- For Q1 CY 2023, the number of **Reserve** suicide deaths stayed the same when compared to Q1 CY 2022 (18 versus 18 suicide deaths)
 - Army Reserve suicide deaths decreased by 2
 - Marine Corps Reserve suicide deaths increased by 2
 - Navy Reserve suicide deaths increased by 2
 - Air Force Reserve suicide deaths decreased by 2
- For Q1 CY 2023, the number of **National Guard** suicide deaths stayed the same when compared to Q1 CY 2022 (23 versus 23 suicide deaths)
 - Army National Guard suicide deaths decreased by 4
 - Air National Guard suicide deaths increased by 4

⁵ Rates are defined as the total number of suicides divided by the population for a given time period.

⁶ Research on the seasonal effects of suicide death has shown mixed results (e.g., Gutzwiller, 2011; McCleary, 1994; Postalache, 2012; Rossler, 2010).

Attachment A

DoD Component and Service	CY 2016	CY 2017				CY 2018					CY 2019					
	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Active Component	280	74	58	71	83	286	81	78	78	89	326	92	71	84	101	348
Army	130	32	24	27	33	116	36	31	40	34	141	31	37	34	43	145
Marine Corps	37	7	9	15	12	43	13	13	15	16	57	14	6	11	16	47
Navy	52	16	13	15	21	65	23	15	11	19	68	22	13	19	19	73
Air Force	61	19	12	14	17	62	9	19	12	20	60	25	15	20	23	83
Space Force	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Reserve Component	200	52	68	64	40	224	49	42	62	62	215	45	43	42	26	156
Reserve	80	20	29	27	16	92	22	14	19	24	79	21	16	17	12	66
Army Reserve	41	12	20	17	14	63	15	9	13	9	46	10	8	11	8	37
Marine Corps Reserve	19	5	3	2	0	10	4	1	4	10	19	5	1	1	2	9
Navy Reserve	10	1	2	3	2	8	3	3	2	3	11	2	2	3	0	7
Air Force Reserve	10	2	4	5	0	11	0	1	0	2	3	4	5	2	2	13
National Guard	120	32	39	37	24	132	27	28	43	38	136	24	27	25	14	90
Army National Guard	108	30	35	35	21	121	24	26	36	33	119	19	24	22	11	76
Air National Guard	12	2	4	2	3	11	3	2	7	5	17	5	3	3	3	14

DoD Component and Service	CY 2020					CY 2021					CY 2022					CY 2023	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Total
Active Component	89	80	113	101	383	76	97	70	84	327	75	87	89	81	332	94	94
Army	37	41	52	44	174	44	57	31	43	175	37	33	37	28	135	49	49
Marine Corps	14	10	20	19	63	13	8	13	9	43	8	17	24	13	62	14	14
Navy	19	11	20	15	65	12	18	14	15	59	14	22	14	22	72	14	14
Air Force	19	18	21	23	81	7	14	12	17	50	16	15	14	18	63	17	17
Space Force	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reserve Component	45	49	44	60	198	43	42	59	48	192	41	41	34	44	160	41	41
Reserve	20	25	13	19	77	15	14	22	24	75	18	18	15	12	63	18	18
Army Reserve	9	16	7	10	42	10	9	13	14	46	10	12	9	6	37	8	8
Marine Corps Reserve	2	2	2	4	10	2	4	4	4	14	2	1	1	2	6	4	4
Navy Reserve	5	3	2	3	13	3	1	1	5	10	2	3	1	1	7	4	4
Air Force Reserve	4	4	2	2	12	0	0	4	1	5	4	2	4	3	13	2	2
National Guard	25	24	31	41	121	28	28	37	24	117	23	23	19	32	97	23	23
Army National Guard	22	18	29	36	105	26	23	34	19	102	22	18	16	27	83	18	18
Air National Guard	3	6	2	5	16	2	5	3	5	15	1	5	3	5	14	5	5

Note: All figures above may be subject to change in future publications as updated information becomes available. Suicide counts (both confirmed and pending) are **current as of March 31, 2023**.

Indicates a change from the previous QSR based on updated information.

Highlighted for descriptive purposes. Does not reflect statistical increases or decreases nor account for population size)