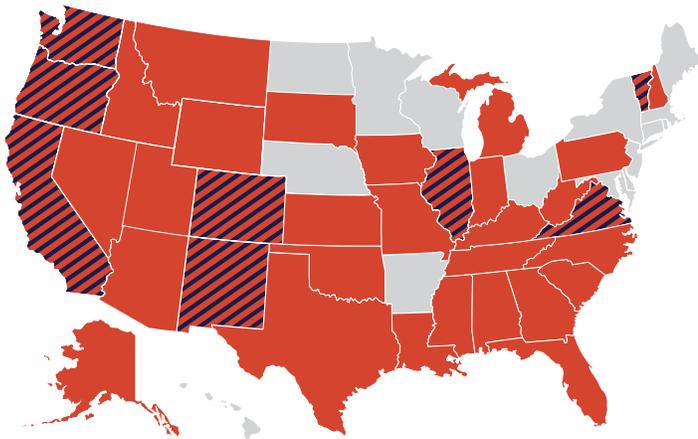


STAND YOUR GROUND

Since 2005, a majority of states have enacted laws that make it easier to get away with murder. These laws distort the usual standard for self-defense by allowing people to use lethal force even if they could have avoided violence by stepping away from a confrontation. Research has shown that these laws lead to more killing and exacerbate systemic racism. Stand Your Ground laws have no place in a just and equitable society.

27 STATES HAVE ENACTED STAND YOUR GROUND LAWS

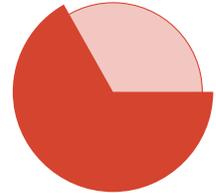


While 27 states have adopted Stand Your Ground laws, an additional eight remove the duty to retreat through court decisions.

- States with Stand Your Ground Laws
- ▨ States with Stand Your Ground standards due to court decisions

A DEADLY INCREASE

After Stand Your Ground was implemented in Florida in 2005, the state's monthly homicide rate increased by 25%. A 2013 investigation found that nearly 70% of those who invoked a Stand Your Ground defense in the state went free.



FLORIDA'S STAND YOUR GROUND CASES

- Fatal shootings that resulted in conviction
- Fatal shootings in which killer got immunity or was acquitted

3x

The number of homicides classified as "justifiable" tripled in the five years after Florida enacted its law.

600

Across the country, Stand Your Ground laws are associated with up to 600 additional homicides per year.

350%

The killing of a Black person by a white civilian is 350% more likely to be found to be justified than if the victim were white.

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Stand Your Ground Laws Distort Traditional Self-Defense Law

The centuries-old legal principle of self-defense affirms the right to use proportionate force to defend oneself and others against imminent violence. Stand Your Ground laws represent an extreme departure from this principle and have been called a “low-cost license to kill” by the American Bar Association because they encourage more preventable violence and armed vigilantism in public.

In states across the country, the gun lobby has promoted these dangerously broad and vague new laws while also pushing for significantly weaker rules around carrying guns in public spaces, encouraging people to carry and use weapons to settle confrontations.

Research has shown that Stand Your Ground laws lead to higher homicide rates and exacerbate racial and gender disparities in the legal system. **White men are much more likely to get away with murder in Stand Your Ground states than women or people of color.** The number of homicides of Black people deemed justifiable more than doubled in Stand Your Ground states between 2005 and 2011, while remaining unchanged in the rest of the country.

Stand Your Ground Laws Are Racist and Dangerous

Stand Your Ground laws first gained national attention in 2013, after a jury failed to convict George Zimmerman for stalking and killing Trayvon Martin. Law enforcement and prosecutors have at least initially cited Stand Your Ground laws in numerous other decisions not to arrest or prosecute the killers of Black men, including Ahmaud Arbery, who was murdered in Georgia in February 2020 by white vigilantes who chased, cornered, and fatally shot him when he was out for a jog.

While all Stand Your Ground laws remove the duty to retreat when it is safe to do so, the laws of some states go even further:

- **Oklahoma** limits law enforcement from stopping or arresting someone who claims they “stood their ground” after killing another person.
- **Florida** permits the use of deadly force in some cases to stop someone from breaking into an unoccupied motor vehicle.
- **Texas** allows people in some cases to chase down and kill another person fleeing after committing theft in order to regain property of any value.

To protect their residents from vigilante murders, states should repeal existing Stand Your Ground laws and resist attempts to expand them.

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For more details and underlying research, visit lawcenter.giffords.org/stand-your-ground

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350+

lifesaving gun safety laws have been enacted in 45 states and DC since the tragedy at Sandy Hook.

136,000

Americans are shot each year—over one million in the past decade.

25x

Americans are 25 times more likely to be killed in a gun homicide than people in other developed nations.

WE'RE ON A MISSION TO SAVE LIVES

For over 25 years, the legal experts at Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence have been fighting for a safer America by researching, drafting, and defending the laws, policies, and programs proven to save lives from gun violence. Founded in the wake of a 1993 mass shooting in San Francisco, in 2016 the Law Center joined with former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords to form a courageous new force for gun safety that stretches coast to coast.

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