Department of Defense (DoD) Quarterly Suicide Report (QSR) 1st Quarter, CY 2022

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The estimated cost of this report or study for the Department of Defense is approximately $6,770 for the 2022 Fiscal Year. This includes $3,940 in expenses and $2,830 in DoD labor.
Introduction

The Department of Defense (DoD) is fully committed to preventing suicides in our military community – every death by suicide is a tragedy. The DoD recognizes the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the well-being of our Service members and families. We are closely monitoring, and taking proactive steps to mitigate potential impacts. During this time, we remain dedicated in our efforts to educate and support the force, and emphasize social connectedness.

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 2022.

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 2022. Data includes all known or suspected suicides (both confirmed and pending) as of March 31, 2022, for both the Active and Reserve Components. Hence, the numbers presented in this report are preliminary and subject to

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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).
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 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 2020 DoD Annual Suicide Report (available at: https://www.dspo.mil/ASR/). The official annual suicide counts and rates for CY 2022 will be published in the DoD Annual Suicide Report – Calendar Year 2022.

**QSR Data**

Attachment A details the number of suicide deaths by Service\(^6\) and Component. For Q1 of CY 2022, the Military Services reported the following:

- 70 in the **Active Component**
- 18 in the **Reserve**
- 20 in the **National Guard**

Comparisons of suicide counts between Q1 CY 2021 and Q1 CY 2022 are provided below.\(^7\) These comparisons are for descriptive purposes and do not reflect statistical increases or decreases nor account for population size.

- For Q1 CY 2022, the number of **Active Component** suicide deaths decreased by 6 compared to Q1 CY 2021 (76 versus 70 suicide deaths)
  - Army Active Component suicide deaths decreased by 8
  - Marine Corps Active Component suicide deaths decreased by 5
  - Navy Active Component suicide deaths decreased by 1
  - Air Force Active Component suicide deaths increased by 8

- For Q1 CY 2022, the number of **Reserve** suicide deaths increased by 3 compared to Q1 CY 2021 (15 versus 18 suicide deaths)
  - Army Reserve suicide deaths stayed the same
  - Marine Corps Reserve suicide deaths stayed the same
  - Navy Reserve suicide deaths decreased by 1
  - Air Force Reserve suicide deaths increased by 4

- For Q1 CY 2022, the number of **National Guard** suicide deaths decreased by 8 compared to Q1 CY 2021 (28 versus 20 suicide deaths)
  - Army National Guard suicide deaths decreased by 7
  - Air National Guard suicide deaths decreased by 1

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\(^4\) Official annual suicide counts and unadjusted rates are published in the DoD Annual Suicide Report. The most recent report is for CY 2020. Available at: https://www.dspo.mil/ASR/.

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

\(^6\) Currently, Air Force data includes Space Force data.

\(^7\) Research on the seasonal effects of suicide death has shown mixed results (e.g., Gutzwiller, 2011; McCleary, 1994; Postalache, 2012; Rossler, 2010).
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, 2022. Currently, Air Force data includes Space Force data.

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

Highlighted for comparison.