

# 2024 New Orleans Domestic Violence Incidents: Strangulation



## Introduction

Nonfatal strangulation is a clear and critical indicator of lethality in intimate partner relationships characterized by domestic violence (DV) and a key predictor for future fatalities. Despite tireless work by the New Orleans Health Department's (NOHD) DV/SA Program and other stakeholders dedicated to preventing and addressing strangulation, NOHD's annual review of data related to strangulation crimes reveals a steep increase in case refusal rates and a persistent pattern of low convictions rates since 2022.

In 2024, 347 warrants were issued for strangulation-related crimes. Only 34 individuals (9.8%), however, were ultimately convicted of one or more strangulation-related crime within our review timeframe. In addition to low conviction rates, data shows a majority of these convictions resulted in sentences of two years or less, with defendants receiving partially (11.8%) or fully (55.9%) suspended sentences.

Failure to arrest, prosecute, and convict individuals committing strangulation-related crimes erodes victim trust, emboldens offenders, overtaxes criminal legal systems, and ultimately contributes to DV fatalities. This impact demonstrates the importance of prioritizing arrest and prosecution of first-time and repeat offenders of strangulation-related crimes to ensure systems effectively hold offenders accountable while working to keep victims safe.

This report compares arrest, prosecution, and sentencing outcomes for 2024 to NOHD's earlier 2023 and 2022 reports, and provides recommendations for improved agency and system responses.

## Background

Women who experience nonfatal strangulation by their partner are seven and a half times more likely to be murdered by that same partner. Those who are strangled may experience significant, long-term consequences including traumatic brain injury, psychological injury, and delayed death.<sup>1</sup>

These consequences and the lethality of strangulation are reflected in Orleans Parish's domestic violence-related homicides. NOHD's review of 2022 fatalities demonstrated that 36% of intimate partner violence suspects had previously strangled one or more partner, and that 80% of those suspects would later kill the same victims they had previously strangled. All prior strangulation charges against these individuals were either refused or dismissed before the fatal incident occurred. A history of strangulation is a key indicator for future domestic violence related homicides, and this pattern is clear in Orleans Parish.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention. 2019. "Media Guide: Understanding the Realities of Strangulation."

<sup>2</sup> New Orleans Health Department. 2025. New Orleans Domestic Abuse Fatality Review 2022 Report.

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## Methods and Limitations

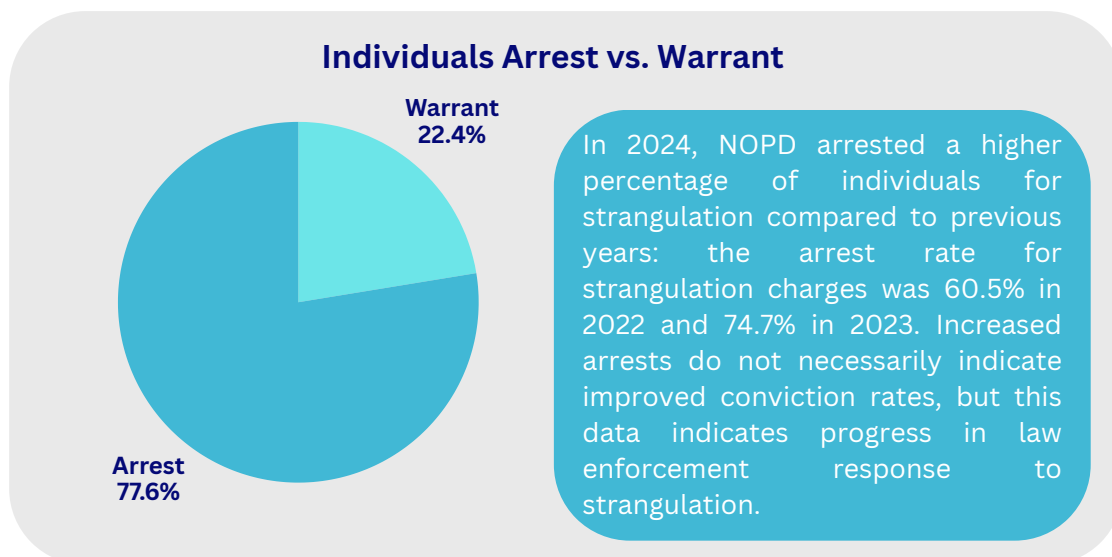
To conduct this review, NOHD identified all 2024 cases with strangulation-related charges from the New Orleans Police Department's (NOPD) 2024 Domestic Violence Incident Data. The charges reviewed included Domestic Abuse Battery involving Strangulation (L.S. 14.35.3(L)) and Battery of a Dating Partner involving Strangulation (14.34.9(B)5). NOHD then compared this information to the Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office "Docket Master" to determine the status and outcome of each case.

NOHD coded all data using information gleaned during the October-November 2025 analysis period, meaning some subsequent case updates may not have been captured in this dataset. Moreover, cases with unknown personal information that could not be located in Docket Master may have since been updated. Finally, due to manual data entry, clerical errors could have occurred during the analysis.

The source of 2022 and 2023 data cited in this report are the 2022 and 2023 New Orleans Domestic Violence Incidents: Strangulation Reports,<sup>3,4</sup> published by NOHD in 2023 and 2024, respectively.

## Findings: Arrest Rate

In 2024, NOPD arrested 77.6% of individuals charged with one or more strangulation-related crimes. As of November 2025, the remaining 22.4% of individuals charged in 2024 were still wanted, indicating that one in five of these suspects may never face any form of accountability from the criminal legal system.



<sup>3</sup> New Orleans Health Department. 2023. 2022 New Orleans Domestic Violence Incidents: Strangulation.

<sup>4</sup> New Orleans Health Department. 2025. 2023 New Orleans Domestic Violence Incidents: Strangulation.

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## Findings: Prosecution Outcomes

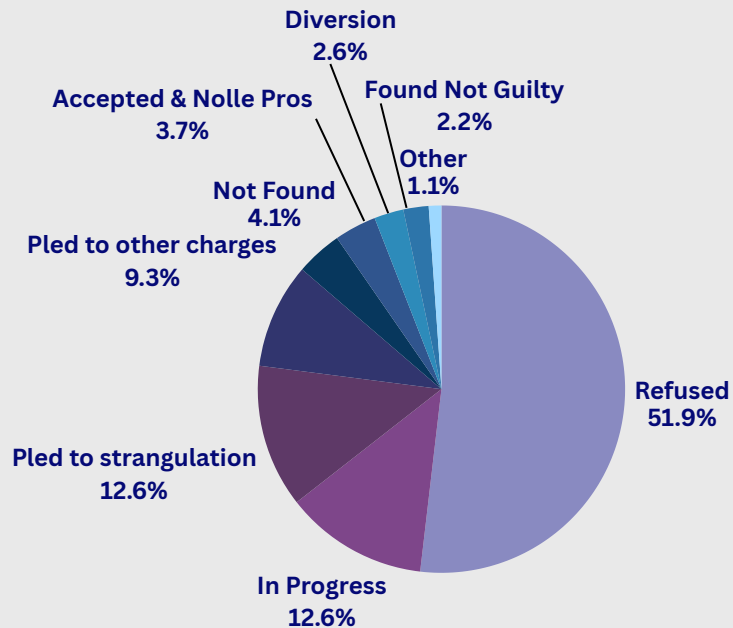
While recent data indicates positive trends in the handling of strangulation, the absolute rate of conviction remains low. In 2024, 13% of defendants who were arrested pled guilty to strangulation, compared to 10.4% in 2023 and 3.3% in 2022 who pled guilty to the same charge. After adjusting the data to account for strangulation charges that did *not* result in arrest, the overall conviction rate for strangulation charges in 2024 dropped from 13% to just 9.8%.

Additionally, the rate of refused or dismissed charges increased significantly from years past. In 2024, 56.7% of strangulation-related charges were refused or dismissed, which is a 42% increase from 2023. This data reveals that the majority of those arrested in Orleans Parish for strangulation-related crimes will not be prosecuted.

### 2024 Arrest Outcomes (n=270)

2024 prosecution outcomes indicate that cases are progressing through the legal system more quickly than in past years. This pattern, however, is likely the result of higher refusal rates rather than speedier trials.

22 individuals (8.1%) were arrested on multiple counts of strangulation.



#### 2022 Outcomes

- 48% of charges refused or dismissed
- 1 in 3 cases were in progress at time of review
- Less than 15% of individuals pled guilty to any charge

#### 2023 Outcomes

- 40% of charges refused or dismissed
- 1 in 5 cases were in progress at time of review
- 25% of individuals pled guilty to any charge

#### 2024 Outcomes

- 57% of charges refused or dismissed
- 1 in 8 cases were in progress at time of review
- 22% of individuals pled guilty to any charge

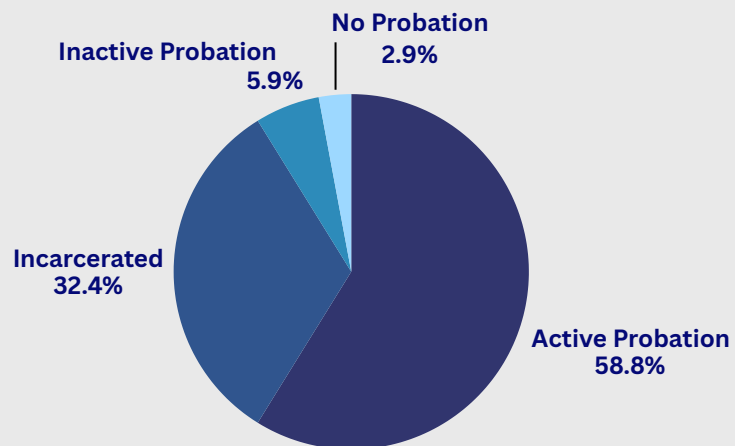
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## Findings: Sentencing Outcomes for Strangulation

34 individuals pled guilty to at least one count of a strangulation-related charge. The average length of sentence imposed was two years, with the longest sentence imposed being five years. The shortest sentences were three months. 67.6% of these sentences were suspended, 55.9% of which were fully suspended, limiting offenders' incarceration to time served.

### Pled Guilty to Strangulation (n=34)



The majority of individuals convicted of strangulation-related charges never served their full sentences. Probation was frequently imposed in the place of incarceration.

### Sentencing for Strangulation

Sentencing terms included:

- 29 individuals were issued a stay away order (85.3%).
- 12 individuals were prohibited from possessing or purchasing a firearm (35.3%).
- 12 individuals were ordered to complete DV classes (35.3%).

### Probation Violation & Re-offense

- Of the 22 individuals sentenced to probation, **27.2% (6) were wanted at the time of this review for noncompliance with the terms of their probation.**
- **15% of individuals convicted of strangulation were re-arrested within the same year for crimes including domestic abuse battery, violation of protective orders, and other crimes of violence.**

Effective monitoring of offenders and compliance with court orders is essential to ensure the safety of victims and other members of the community.

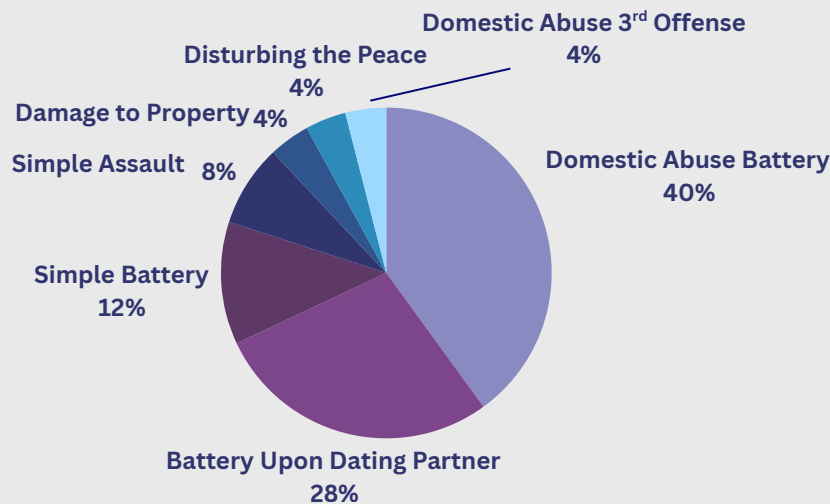
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## Findings: Sentencing Outcomes for Other Charges

25 individuals were arrested for a strangulation-related crimes, but pled guilty to one or more DV-related charge other than strangulation. The following highlights the charges that offenders pled to in place of strangulation. The average sentence associated with these charges was nine months. The longest sentence was three years, and the shortest was 90 days.

**Pled Guilty to Other Charges (n=25)**



24% of these individuals (6) were later re-arrested in 2024 for crimes of domestic violence. One individual was re-arrested for strangulation, a charge that was again refused.

### Sentencing for Other Charges

- 20 of these cases (80%) received suspended sentences.
  - 18 (72% of cases) were fully suspended.
  - 2 (8% of cases) were partially suspended.
- 4 individuals were put on active probation, 14 individuals were put on inactive probation, and 2 individuals received no probation at all.
- Only 7 individuals were ordered to complete DV classes.

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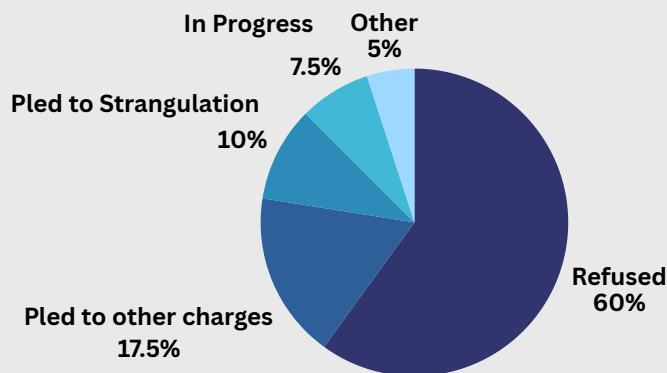


## Findings: Recidivism Rates

Of the 335 suspects identified, twelve suspects (3.6%) reoffended in 2024 with a new strangulation charge. 33 additional individuals (10%) were re-arrested for charges related to domestic violence and other crimes of violence within the same calendar year.

**60%** of reoffenders had their original charge(s) refused or dismissed. The **27.5%** of reoffenders who were found guilty in their original case received suspended sentences and therefore, were free to reoffend within months of their original sentencing date.

**Original Case Outcomes for Re-Arrested Suspects (n=40)**



- Re-arrest charges included 7 strangulation charges, 24 domestic violence-related charges, 5 charges of crimes of violence, and 8 charges of violation of protective orders.
- Most individuals were re-arrested on multiple charges.

## Conclusion

A review of 2024 data reveals that the overwhelming majority of people who commit strangulation in Orleans Parish go unpunished, as 90% of alleged strangulation-related crimes go unconvicted. Since 2022, arrest rates for strangulation-related crimes have drastically risen from 60.5% to 77.8%. Refusal rates, however, have also steeply increased from 40% in 2023 to 57% in 2024. Ultimately, the conviction rate for strangulation-related crimes remains low, never rising above 10% since NOHD began reviewing annual data in 2022.

Not only does this pattern of repeat arrests paired with refused charges embolden offenders and erode victims' trust, it also contributes to a cycle of repeat 911 calls, dangerous arrests, and court proceedings that continually overburden the criminal legal system. Poor initial management of cases contributes to elevated rates of recidivism, multiplying the cases legal systems must manage, and limiting their capacity to effectively respond to the volume of DV incidents taking place in Orleans Parish.

To ensure the safety of all New Orleanians and to reduce the burden of these cases on our systems, NOHD urges criminal legal agencies to regard strangulation as one of the most lethal forms of domestic violence encountered by victims and a primary indicator of potential future fatalities. NOHD's DV/SA Program is committed to working with our criminal legal and community-based partners to continue to monitor strangulation case outcomes and provide recommendations for improving victim safety and holding offenders accountable.

# 2023 New Orleans Domestic Violence Incidents: Strangulation



## Glossary

### **Refused**

Charges are refused when the District Attorney's Office declines to prosecute after an arrest is made. Cases were categorized as refused if the District Attorney's office refused the Strangulation charge (L.S. 14.35.3(L) or 14.34.9(B)5) in Magistrate or Criminal District Court.

### **In progress**

Cases were categorized as in progress if the criminal case is active and ongoing with no decision or sentence rendered by a judge or jury.

### **Dismissed**

Cases are dismissed when a legal case officially ends without reaching a verdict or imposing a judgment. Cases were categorized as dismissed if the strangulation charge (L.S. 14.35.3(L) or 14.34.9(B)5) was Nolle Prosequi by the District Attorney's Office.

### **Pled to other charges**

Cases were categorized as pled to other charges if the strangulation charge (L.S. 14.35.3(L) or 14.34.9(B)5) was accepted by the District Attorney in Magistrate Court but was either dropped or amended at sentencing in Criminal Court proceedings.

### **Pled to strangulation**

Cases were categorized as pled to strangulation if the strangulation charge (L.S. 14.35.3(L) or 14.34.9(B)5) was accepted by the District Attorney in Magistrate Court and the defendant pled or was found guilty of the charge in Criminal Court proceedings.

### **Found not guilty**

Cases were categorized as found not guilty if the strangulation charge (L.S. 14.35.3(L) or 14.34.9(B)5) or other amended charge were accepted and the suspect was found not guilty by jury or judge.

### **Not Found**

Cases were categorized as not found if there was insufficient information found by researchers to locate the records.