

# 16 people killed in mass shootings in the US during Memorial Day weekend

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The epidemic of mass shootings in the US reached a new crescendo over the Memorial Day weekend with at least 20 such incidents taking place between Friday and Monday that left 16 people dead and more than 80 injured.

The shootings took place in Arizona, Virginia, Mississippi, New Mexico, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Arkansas, South Carolina, Ohio and Florida, among others.

In Arizona, a 20-year-old suspect was taken into custody after killing four people and injuring a fifth in a series of shooting incidents in the Phoenix area. The Mesa Police Department said Iren Byers has been booked into jail on four counts of first-degree murder and one count of attempted first-degree murder for shootings in Mesa, Arizona, and one in Phoenix on Friday and Saturday.

A report in the *USA Today* on Monday said at around 3:40 p.m. on Friday Byers shot and killed a man next to a canal in Phoenix who was later identified as 41-year-old Nicholas Arnstad. Later, just before 10:30 p.m., officers were dispatched to investigate a person found dead in a park. Officers discovered the body of Julian Cox, 41.

While at the park, officers searched the area after hearing shots fired nearby. At 12:15 a.m. Saturday, they found 36-year-old Angela Fonseca with serious gunshot injuries. She was transported to the hospital and is in stable condition.

Just before 1 a.m. on Saturday a dead man was reported near a Mesa bus station. When officers arrived, they found the body of 41-year-old Stephen Young. Police continued to search the area for other victims, and just after 2 a.m., found John Swain, 40, also dead from gunshots.

No motive has been reported for these killings while

police have said that Byers has been cooperative with authorities and took responsibility for all five shootings during questioning. He was said to have told officers where to find the clothing he wore and the weapon he used during the shooting spree, a 9mm handgun, which officers recovered at Byers' residence.

Nine people were shot and injured in a mass shooting near the Hollywood Beach Boardwalk in Hollywood, Florida, on Monday. A 1-year-old is among the victims, which authorities believe began as an altercation between two groups in a busy area of the beach Monday. Six people remain in the hospital, while others were treated and released. Four are minors between the ages of 1 and 17, and five are adults between the ages of 25 and 65, according to a police update.

In Albuquerque, New Mexico, three men were killed at Red River Memorial Motorcycle Rally on Saturday in a confrontation between two gangs, the Bandidos and the Waterdogs, according to police. The victims were identified as Anthony Silva, 26, of Los Lunas, Damian Breaux, 46, of Socorro and Randy Sanchez, 46, of Albuquerque.

In a tweet on Monday afternoon, The Gun Violence Archive posted that there have been, "70 American mass shootings in the 29 days of May, bringing 2023's total to 259. ... There were 217 mass shootings by this date last year."

The Gun Violence Archive was established in 2013 and characterizes a mass shooting as four or more shot or killed in an incident, not including the shooter.

Mass shootings in the US have become so commonplace that they are barely reported by the corporate media or discussed by the political establishment. This is because any investigation of the root cause of the daily tragic shootings in America

would reveal the extent of the social decay connected to the staggering levels of economic inequality produced by the capitalist system in the world's wealthiest country.

Decades of imperialist war, cuts to social programs and education funding, police violence and murder, glorification of gun culture and the encouragement of all forms of backwardness and brutality in popular culture have had a devastating impact on the conditions of life for broad masses of the population.

It is a fact that holiday weekends have tended to be more deadly than other weekends and this trend has intensified in recent years. Last year during the Memorial Day weekend, 77 people were injured and 13 were killed in mass shootings. In 2021, 52 were injured and nine were killed between May 28 and May 31. In 2020, in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, 56 people were injured and 10 killed in the same weekend that George Floyd was murdered in broad daylight on a street in Minneapolis by Derek Chauvin and three other former city police officers, sparking nationwide protests.

Other mass shootings over the past weekend include:

- **Columbus, Ohio:** Seven people were injured on Monday morning while doing donuts in their cars in a parking lot. All of the victims are expected to survive.

- **Baltimore, Maryland:** An argument between two men led to a shooting on Friday afternoon injuring five people. Police are still searching for the suspect.

- **Chester, Pennsylvania:** Eight people were injured, including one critically, at 11:30 p.m. on Sunday in a stadium parking lot where about 100 young people gathered to celebrate the approaching summer recess.

- **Columbus, Mississippi:** One person was killed and four more injured inside a sports bar late Friday night.

- **Marianna, Arkansas:** A block party ended in tragedy in the small town after one person was killed and four others were injured after 11 p.m. in the parking lot of an auto parts store.

- **Hollywood, South Carolina:** One person was killed and five were wounded after a shooting near a nightclub on Monday night.



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