

Dating Violence Victims Need Access to Civil Orders of Protection

Since 2017, SLED has reported on the intimate partner relationships in the following four crimes: homicide, aggravated assault, simple assault and intimidation. In 2019, SLED also began tracking ex-boyfriend/girlfriend relationships. This data has consistently shown that approximately 40-50% of these crimes are committed by individuals in a current or former dating relationship.

In a 2022 report, SLED reported that 42% of the 54 intimate partner homicides in SC were committed by a current or former girlfriend or boyfriend.

The current definitions of “household member” relationships (current or former spouse, child in common, or cohabiting partner) excludes dating partners from eligibility for a civil order of protection in South Carolina even though these relationships can be just as dangerous as those currently eligible.

Crime by Intimate Partner	By Current or Ex-Boyfriend/Girlfriend
Homicide	42% of 54 cases
Aggravated Assault	51% of 5,176 cases
Simple Assault	50% of 23,146 cases
Intimidation	51% of 2,643 cases

Source: [2022 SLED SC Crime Data Report](#)

South Carolina is one of only four states that does not provide dating partners the opportunity to access the stronger and more immediate protections provided by the domestic violence protective order.

About the Bill

S.143 would:

- Extend life-saving protections to both teen and adult victims of dating violence.
- Provide clarification to the definition of cohabitating partners to bring the statute in line with the case law established in the SC Supreme Court’s 2017 decision in *Doe v. State* that determined that the exclusion of same-sex, cohabitating partners from the protections provided by the SC Protection from Domestic Abuse Act was unconstitutional.