



**STAND AGAINST
VETERAN SUICIDE**

Veteran Suicide in **Florida**

2026

ANNUAL REPORT



MORE INFO



Prepared in partnership with NLP Logix and the Florida Department of Health.





PROVISIONAL DATA

Data in this report represent the most recent Veteran suicide data provided by the Florida Department of Health. This is the first year The Fire Watch has incorporated the use of **provisional data** into its Florida reporting. This shift is in response to a need for a faster response. When Veteran suicide trends are reviewed after final records are released, communities are forced to respond to risk long after warning signs first appear. That delay weakens prevention and limits the ability to direct resources where they are needed most.

Our analysis of Florida DOH data indicates that provisional reporting is an accurate proxy to support meaningful directional analysis. This visibility gives The Fire Watch a timely and credible view of emerging changes in Veteran suicide trends and allows response to prevention opportunities in a timelier manner. Earlier identification of rising stress allows The Fire Watch to concentrate Watch Stander training in the communities facing the greatest risk, deploy training and outreach strategically, and help stressed communities proactively.

With continued investment in provisional data, stronger stress indicators, and predictive analytics, The Fire Watch can identify areas of rising concern sooner and direct support where it can have the greatest impact. By incorporating signals such as barriers to care, community isolation, economic strain, housing instability, and disaster-related disruption, we can create a predictive AI model which would allow prevention efforts to move earlier, become more precise, and respond before stress escalates into crisis in the Veteran community.

Veteran Suicide Count by Year in Florida



Veteran Deaths by Suicide Per 100K Veterans – Rate per Year

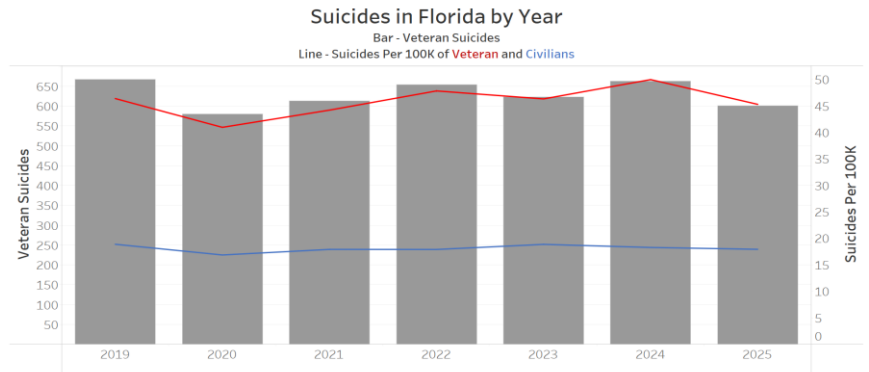


CHANGE IN NUMBER OF SUICIDES SINCE 2019

For the past 6 years, the Veteran suicide counts have been less than the 2019 baseline year. In 2025, **601** Florida Veterans died by suicide, which represents a rate of **45.3** suicides per 100,000 Veterans. This reflects a notable recovery from a sharp spike in 2024 where Veteran suicides were **663**, representing a rate of **50**. This means from 2023 to 2024, the Veteran suicide rate jumped 8% but decreased by 9% from 2024 to 2025.

To put this spike in 2024 and observed recovery in 2025 into perspective, Civilian suicide rates were relatively flat over the same period. This would indicate it is an issue disproportionately affecting Veterans.

10% fewer Veteran suicides from 2019 - 2025.





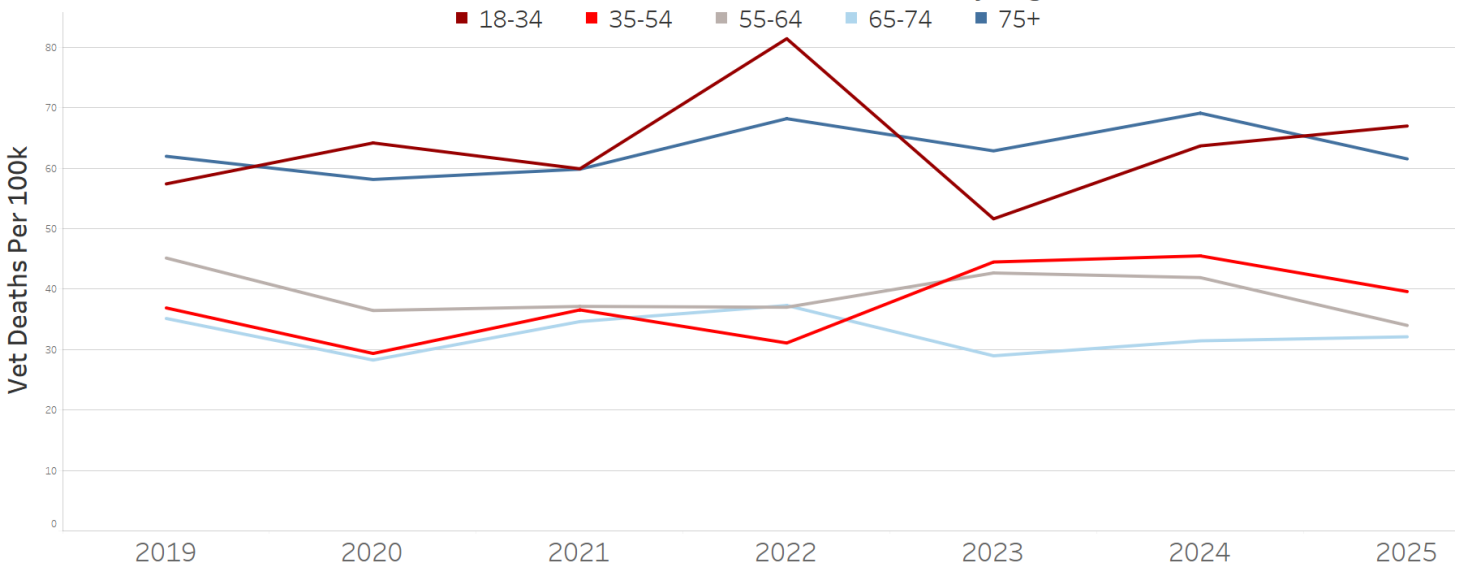
VETERAN SUICIDES BY AGE

Age is a significant factor when investigating suicide rates among Veterans. The main age groups driving the spike in 2024 were the younger (18-34) and older Veterans (75+). However, in 2025 the observed recovery is largely due to fewer suicides seen from older Veterans.

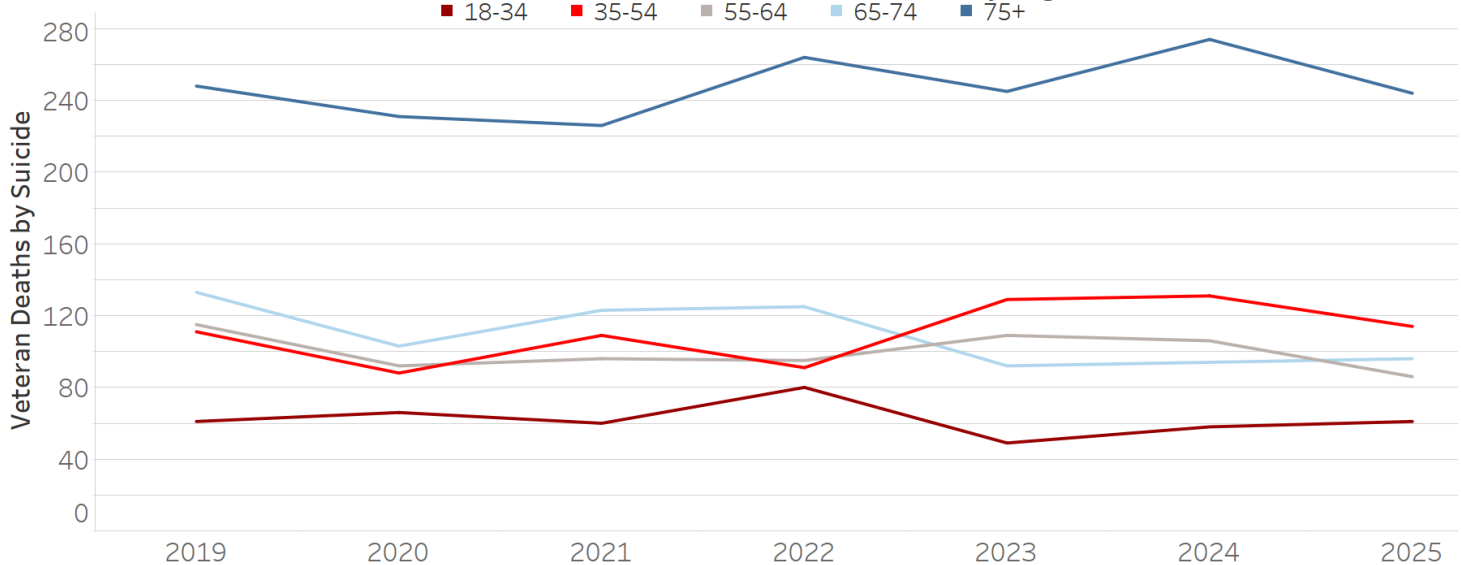
The suicide rates among younger and older Veterans is nearly twice that of the other age groups. Older Veterans tend to have the greatest count of suicides while younger Veterans have the greatest degree of variability of risk and causing spikes. This is seen from a 12% increase in the younger Veteran suicide rate in 2024 with expected increase in 2025.

Despite the rate increases, the number of Veterans suicides overall in 2025 is down 10% when compared to The Fire Watch’s 2019 baseline number.

Florida Veteran Suicide Rates by Age



Florida Veteran Suicide Counts by Age





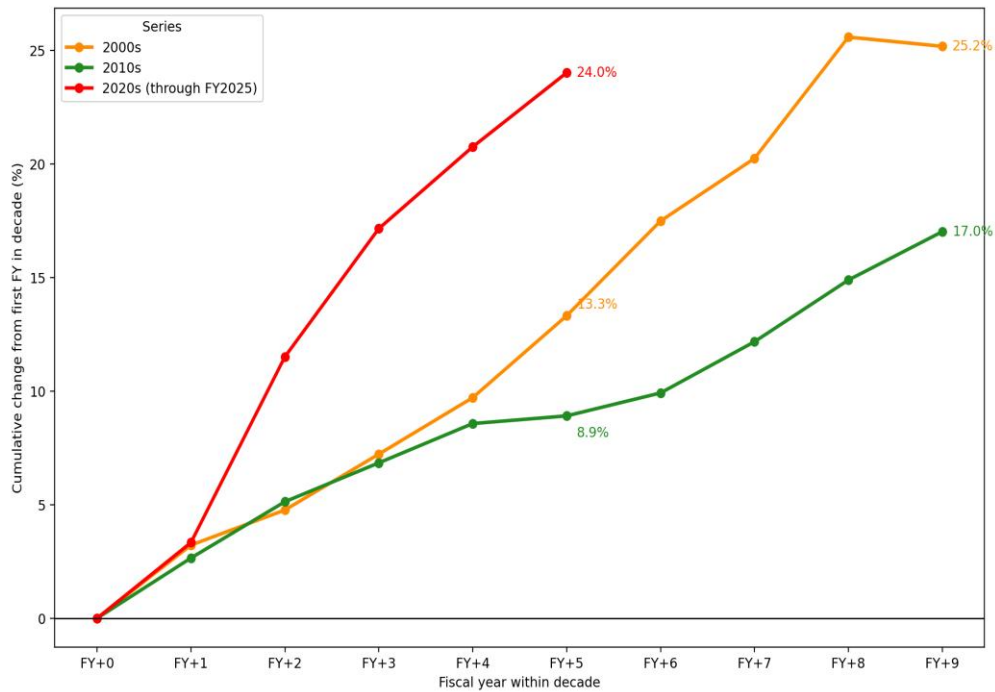
VETERAN STRUGGLES

One theory that was analyzed for the spike in 2024 among younger and older Veterans could be the cumulative effects of rising prices over the preceding 3 years. Consumer price index for 2020 to 2025 has risen significantly; increasing almost twice as fast as the 2000s and almost three times as fast as the 2010s.¹ These rise in prices has also disproportionately affected Florida Veterans with Veterans being 7.4% more likely to be food-insecure than Civilians.²

Job availability is another potential factor affecting Veterans. Job levels have been facing a 10-year low and only recently have returned to Pre-Covid levels in 2025.³ Veterans already struggle to adapt to civilian workplace culture, so a dry job market makes it an even harder transition for Veterans looking to get their first non-military job.

FIGURE 1

Predictive Index Trends
(2000 – 2025)



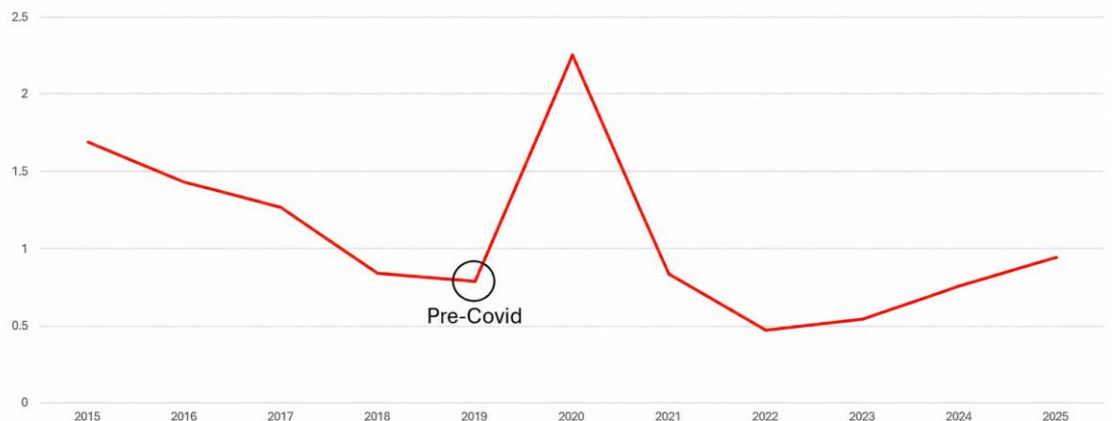
¹U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (n.d.) *Consumer Price Index US City Average* https://www.bls.gov/regions/northeast/data/consumerpriceindex_us_table.htm

²U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Office of Health Equity. (2021, January). *Food Insecurity Among Working-Age Veterans* https://www.va.gov/HEALTH/EQUITY/Ensuring_Food_Security_In_Veterans.asp

FIGURE 2

Jobs per Unemployed Person
in Florida (2015-2025)

Jobs per Unemployed Person in Florida



³U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (n.d.) *Number of unemployed persons per job opening by state, seasonally adjusted* <https://www.bls.gov/charts/state-job-openings-and-labor-turnover/unemployed-persons-per-job-opening-by-state.htm>



GEOGRAPHICAL DIFFERENCES

We can look at geographical differences to determine specific areas where Veterans are struggling. Figure 3 shows Veteran suicide counts in Florida by county. Figure 4 represents where The Fire Watch has built its Watch Stander network. Note that the Watch Stander network is largest in Duval, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Clay and Brevard. Figure 5 shows the change in Veteran suicides from 2019 to 2025. Some of the best improvements over the period are seen in counties where the most Watch Standers are located, including Northeast Florida, the Tampa Bay area, Southeast Florida and the Space Coast. The Fire Watch needs to pay close attention to certain areas where Veteran suicides are increasing, including the western Panhandle (which has a relatively younger Veteran demographic) and parts of north central Florida (which skews to an older Veteran demographic).

The Fire Watch publishes this data on its website at www.thefirewatch.org/data.

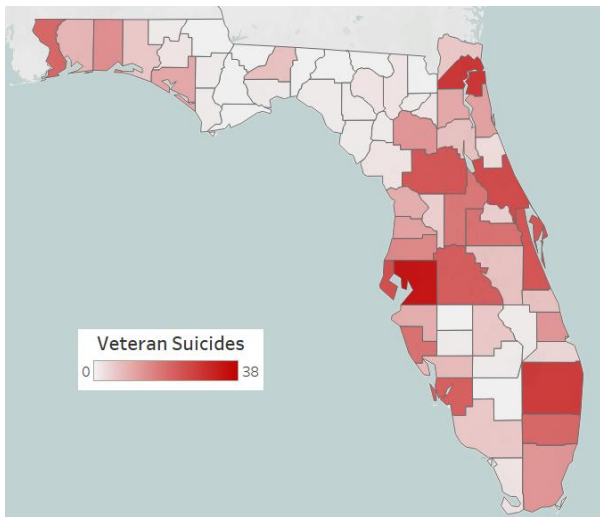


FIGURE 3
Florida Veteran Suicide Counts 2025 by County

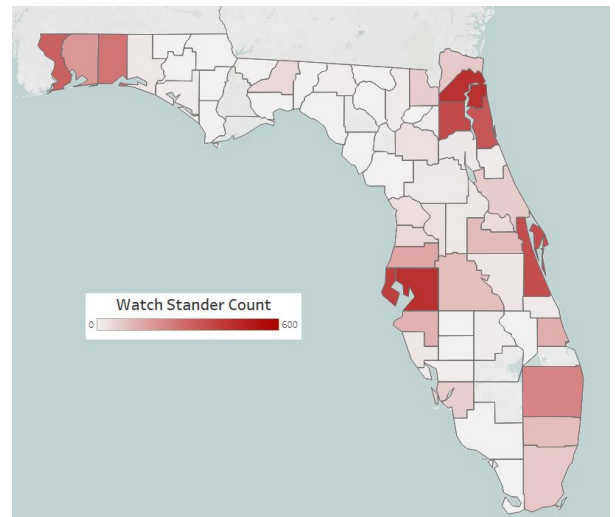


FIGURE 4
Florida Watch Stander Counts 2025 by County

THE FIRE WATCH: WATCH STANDERS

The Fire Watch has been working to expand its numbers to places with the largest risk of Veteran suicides and have tripled the amount of Watch Standers from 2023 to early 2026.

With the continued growth of the Watch Stander program, The Fire Watch is creating a solution to identify potential at risk Veterans early and provide support more proactively.

Watch Standers as of April 2026

11,820

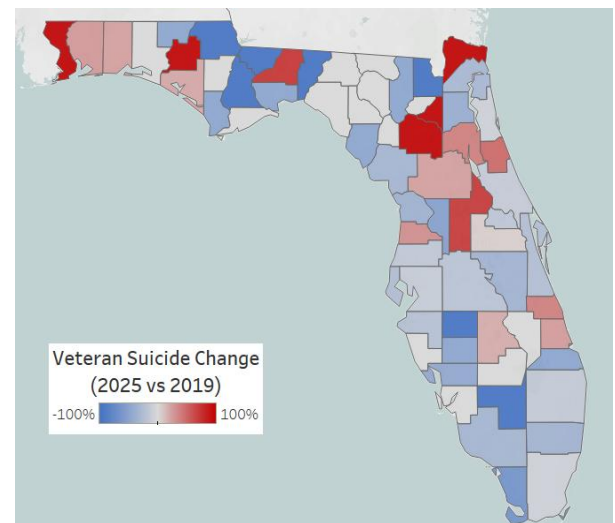


FIGURE 5
Florida Veteran Suicide Rate Change 2019 - 2025 by County