

The rate of violent victimization against persons with disabilities (29.5 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older) was 2.5 times higher than the rate for persons without disabilities (11.8 per 1,000) in 2015. Each year from 2009 to 2015, the rate of violent victimization against persons with disabilities was at least twice the age-adjusted rate for persons without disabilities. One in 5 disabled violent crime victims believed they were targeted because of their disability.

Defining disabilities

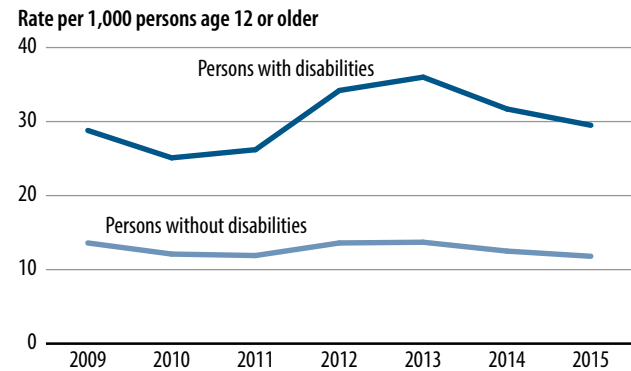
The Bureau of Justice Statistics' National Crime Victimization Survey defines a disability as the product of interactions among an individual's body—including their physical, emotional, and mental health—and the physical and social environment in which they live, work, or play. A disability exists when this interaction results in limitations of activities and with restrictions to full participation at school, work, home, or in the community. Disabilities are classified according to six limitations:

- hearing (deafness or serious difficulty hearing)
- vision (blindness or serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses)
- cognitive (serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition)
- ambulatory (difficulty walking or climbing stairs)
- self-care (a condition that causes difficulty dressing or bathing)
- independent living (physical, mental, or emotional condition that impedes doing errands alone, such as visiting a doctor or shopping).

About the crimes

The rate of serious violent crime (rape or sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault) for persons with disabilities (12.7 per 1,000) was more than three times the rate for persons without disabilities (4.0 per 1,000). Additionally, the rate of simple assault against persons with disabilities (19.6 per 1,000) was more than twice the rate for persons without disabilities (8.7 per 1,000).

Violent victimization, by disability status, 2009-2015



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2008–2015; and U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008–2015

Overall, a higher percentage of violence against persons with disabilities (40%) was committed by persons the victims knew well or who were casual acquaintances than against persons without disabilities (32%). While there was no statistically significant difference in the percentages of violent crime reported to police for victims with (49%) and without (46%) disabilities during 2011-15, a greater percentage of victims with disabilities (12%) received assistance from a nonpolice victim service agency than victims without disabilities (8%).

About the victims

During 2011-15, persons with cognitive disabilities had the highest victimization rate among the disability types measured for total violent crime (57.9 per 1,000 persons age 12 or older with disabilities), serious violent crime (22.3 per 1,000), and simple assault (35.6 per 1,000). Persons with hearing disabilities (15.7 per 1,000) had the lowest rate of total violent victimization among the disability types examined during this period.

The rate of serious violent crime against persons with a single disability type (11.4 per 1,000) was less than the rate for persons with multiple disability types (14.1 per 1,000). Similarly, the rate of rape or sexual assault against persons with a single disability type (1.4 per 1,000) was lower than the rate for those with multiple disability types (2.8 per 1,000).

The full report (*Crime Against Persons with Disabilities, 2009-2015 - Statistical Tables*, NCJ 250632), related documents, and additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics can be found at www.bjs.gov.