

County of Buncombe
Proclamation
Gun Violence Prevention and Awareness Month
June 2025

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were nearly 47,000 firearm-related deaths in the United States in 2023; and

WHEREAS, 58% of these gun-related deaths were suicides, while 38 percent were murders; and

WHEREAS, data indicates about 125 people die from a firearm-related injury each day in the United States; and

WHEREAS, about eight-in-ten (79%) of U.S. murders in 2023 involved a firearm; and

WHEREAS, Americans are 26 times more likely to die by gun homicide than people in other high-income countries; and

WHEREAS, firearms have been the leading cause of death for American children and teens since 2020, with no other peer nation having firearm deaths among the top causes of child mortality; and

WHEREAS, in 2024, the Buncombe County Register of Deeds recorded 44 death certificates that showed someone died by a gun; and

WHEREAS, 35 of those incidents occurred inside Buncombe County with the youngest decedent only 16 years old, while the oldest was 94 years old; and

WHEREAS communities across the nation, including Buncombe County, are working to end deaths by guns, including suicides, accidents, and gun violence, with evidence-based solutions; and

WHEREAS, support for the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding residents goes hand-in-hand with promoting gun ownership safety and keeping guns away from people with dangerous histories; and

WHEREAS, all gun owners in North Carolina have a responsibility to safely store their firearms, which helps prevent accidents as well as theft; and

WHEREAS, since 2021, Buncombe County's Justice Services Department has partnered with community-based organizations to pilot community safety initiatives directed toward healing, support, practical resources, and a reduction in violence for our communities with the highest rates of gun violence; and

WHEREAS, the Justice Services Department continues to partner with community-based organizations to implement a Community-Based Public Health Response to Violence, offering training and support for Community Health Worker-Violence Prevention Professionals, youth leadership development, and building a multi-sectoral coalition to prevent and respond to community violence; and

WHEREAS, Buncombe County's Health and Human Services Department seeks to strengthen our community by advancing health, safety, and opportunity, including preventing injury and death by promoting the health and well-being of populations through the use of data, research, and effective policies and partnerships; and

WHEREAS, we recognize survivors of gun violence, honor the lives lost to gun violence in Buncombe County, commit to reducing gun violence, and pledge to do all we can to keep firearms out of the wrong hands and encourage gun owners to commit to safely storing their guns using approved measures.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners recognizes June 1–7 as NC S.A.F.E. Week of Action and June 2025 to be Gun Violence Prevention and Awareness Month.