

Extreme Risk Protection Orders:

A civil-legal tool to help prevent
firearm tragedies



VA Forensic Mental Health Symposium

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Agenda

Extreme Risk Protection Orders

- What, when, who, and how
- Data
- Research
- Clinician Considerations
- Case examples

Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO)

[RCW 7.105](#)

What is an ERPO?

- Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPO) are a civil court order issued when there is reasonable cause to believe someone poses a significant risk of harming themselves or others if they have access to firearms.
- The order temporarily restricts the person from purchasing, possessing, or accessing firearms and concealed pistol licenses.
- ERPOs can apply to adults and minors.

When are ERPOs Used?

THREAT TO SELF	THREAT TO OTHERS	THREAT TO SELF & OTHERS	CRISIS BEHAVIORS
• Suicidal ideation / behaviors	• Targeted Violence • Mass violence • School threats • Workplace threats • Grievance-related • Interpersonal violence • Road rage	• Suicide + Homicide	• Unsafe conduct with a firearm when experiencing cognitive decline, psychosis, paranoia, or other behavioral health emergency that endangers self or others

What Does an ERPO *Do*?



A judicial officer reviews the petition for **legal standard** of an ERPO.



If granted, requires **removal & prohibition** of firearms & CPLs.



Person must **immediately** turn over firearms & CPLs to law enforcement.



One year prohibition of possession, purchase, or access to firearms & CPL.



The court may order a **behavioral health evaluation**.



The petitioner can request a **renewal** if risks remain; the respondent may attend the renewal hearing.

An ERPO does **Not**...



Stop the person from contacting you or coming to your home, or other personal restraints.



Initiate a criminal charge.*

** The behaviors and precipitating events prompting the ERPO may initiate a criminal investigation.*

Who Can File For An ERPO?

Intimate Partners, Family, or Household Members

- Persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption
- Current or former dating partners
- Child in common
- Current or former roommates
- Biological or legal parent-child relationship (stepparents, grandparents, grandchildren)
- Legal Guardians

Law Enforcement

Any Law Enforcement Officer and Agency in Washington State

Family, Household Members, & Intimate Partners

Unique insight:

- Mental and emotional wellbeing
- Social, economic, and health needs
- Firearm access
- Signs of crisis or escalating risk of harm to self or others
- What's been effective—or ineffective—during behavioral concerns

If not eligible to petition, or prefer not to:

- May still inform law enforcement and request an officer file an ERPO

Where to File an ERPO



Follow your local court's filing procedures

- Court clerks can provide the forms
- Statewide ERPO forms:

<https://www.courts.wa.gov/forms/>

- E-filing at King County Superior Court:

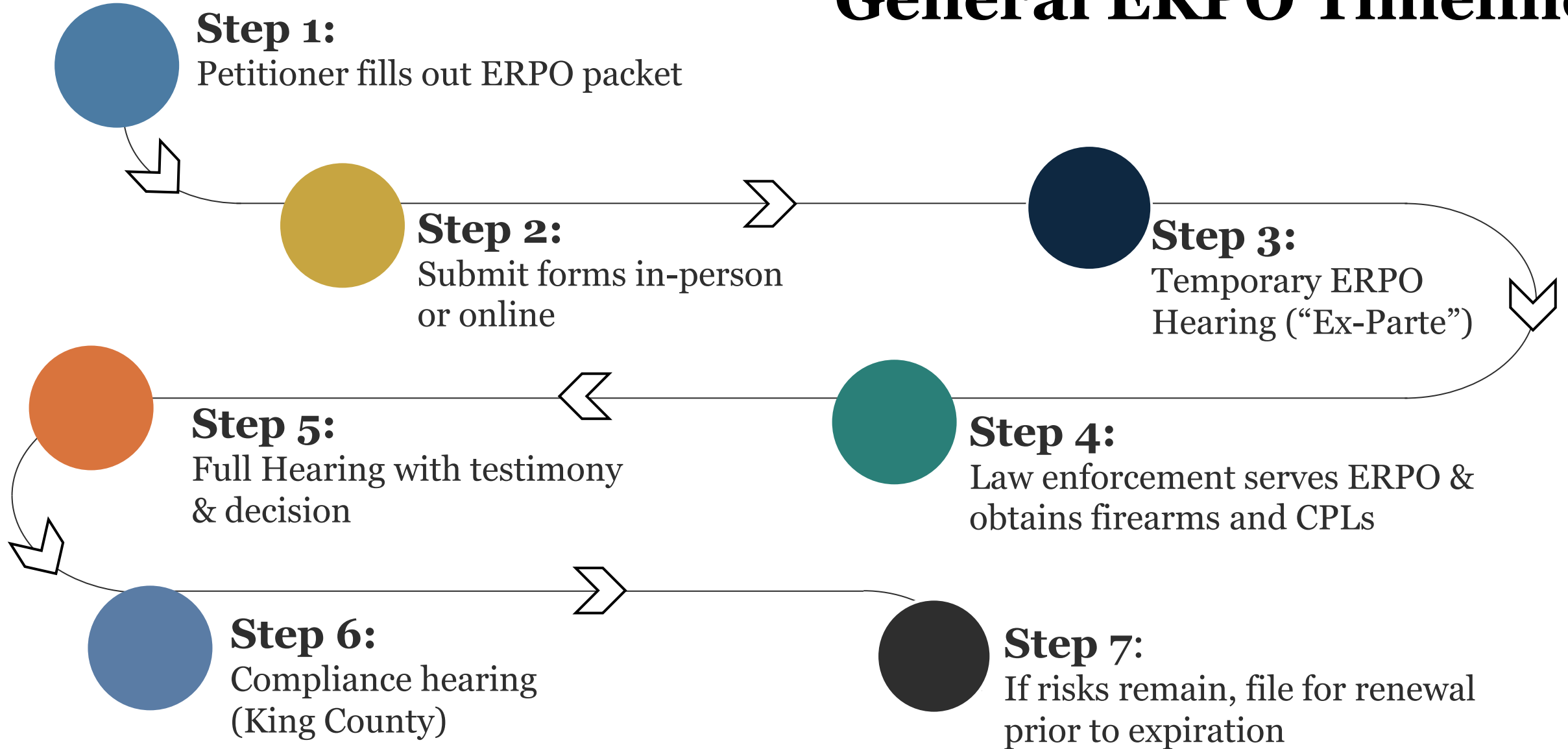
[KC Script Portal](#)

ERPO Court Forms

Petitioners must file *five* court forms:

- Petition for an Extreme Risk Protection Order
- Temporary Extreme Risk Protection Order – Without Notice
- Law Enforcement and Confidential Information
- Proof of Service – Extreme Risk
- Case Information Cover Sheet

General ERPO Timeline



Compliance Review Hearings

Purpose

- Ensure respondent has fully complied with the ERPO
- Confirm all firearms and CPLs have been given to law enforcement

Court Responsibilities

- Review documentation / proof of surrender (or lack thereof)
- Determine next steps if non-compliant

Accountability

- Promotes safety and prevents firearm access while order is in place
- Ensures enforceability of firearm surrender orders



REGIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FIREARMS ENFORCEMENT UNIT



King County Prosecutor's Office ☐ King County Sheriff's Office ☐ Seattle City Attorney's Office ☐ Seattle Police Department ☐

Case Number	Case Name	Information as of:

I. **How do the parties know each other?**

- ☐ current/former intimate partner
☐ family/household member
☐ other: _____

II. **Allegations of Firearm in Petition?** ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

(Summary of any firearm allegations, with citations to ECR sub number and page number. If box in petition is checked as "unknown" and there are no other firearm allegations, we will similarly check unknown in this section.)

III. **WA Gun Purchase History? *** ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

(We will provide whether a respondent has known gun purchase history, and the year of the purchase. Serial numbers and other identifying information may be provided orally in court.)

IV. **WA Concealed Pistol License?** ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

(Provide in the notes section whether active, inactive, suspended, etc.)

V. **WA Gun Pawn History? *** ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

(Pawn history only run when there is an allegation of firearms or purchase history, as resources allow.)

VI. **Related criminal charges?** ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

(This section refers to filed criminal charges only, related to incidents contained within the Petition. This does not include pending criminal investigations or other unrelated criminal charges.)

☐ Yes _____
☐ No _____

Order for Protection and Order to Surrender and Prohibit Weapons after a hearing.

☐ Yes _____
☐ No _____

IX. **Additional Information**

(We will provide gun surrender or recovery information, confirmation of confiscated weapons, etc. if and when possible).

*¹ Please be advised: Washington State gun purchase history is an incomplete record of any individual's firearm ownership and possession information. Washington State Department of Licensing does not have "real time" firearm purchase data and experiences backlogs in entering purchase information, sometimes for several months at a time. When up to date, Washington State Department of Licensing history only contains records for handgun purchases, and as of July 2019 forward, semi-automatic rifles, purchased at Washington State Federal Firearm Licensed (FFL) dealers. Long guns, rifles and shotguns are not included in the DOL records nor would any private sales, internet purchases, out of state sales, transfers or gifts be included in these records.

*² Pawn history is incomplete.

REGIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FIREARMS ENFORCEMENT UNIT ☐ KING COUNTY COURTHOUSE ☐

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The Role of ERPO Advocate



Filing Assistance

Respond to ERPO inquiries and provide guidance on paperwork and filing



Data Tracking

Track respondent demographics, civil/criminal history, and harm type to assess risk and inform outreach



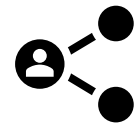
Outreach

Connect with WA groups to raise ERPO awareness & support families/HH members considering petitions for loved ones in crisis



Investigation

Investigate firearm access through purchase history, communication with law enforcement and family, previous court orders, etc.



Share Info

Communicate with prosecutors, law enforcement, and courts to promote safe and lawful recovery of firearms and ERPO compliance

Sealing Records From Public View

Who: (1) Respondents who are < 18 years old

(2) Adults whose ERPO is solely for threat to self

When: Issuance of full order, during life of order, or after expiration

Conditions: No active protection orders or violations, and compliance with firearm relinquishment

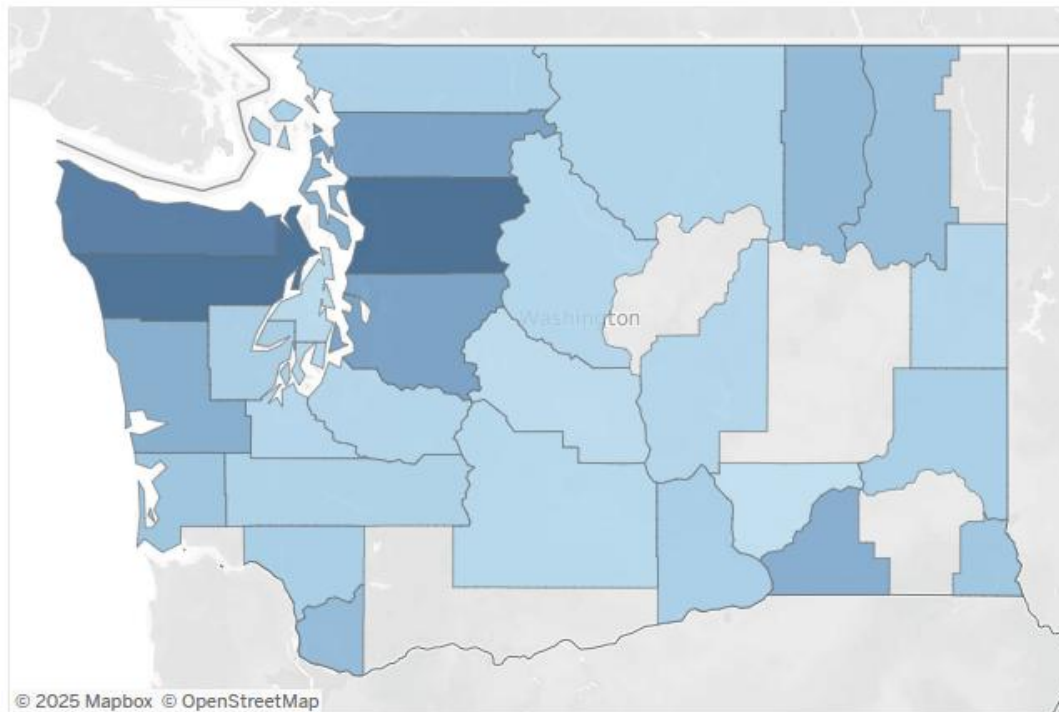


ERPO Data Statewide & King County

Full ERPOs Granted by County (2017-2023)

UW Firearm Injury Prevention and Policy Research Center

Total = 957



Granted Full ERPOs per 100,000 population
0.2 5.3

Filter by year

(All) ▼

Filter by county

(Multiple values) ▼

Filter by petitioner type

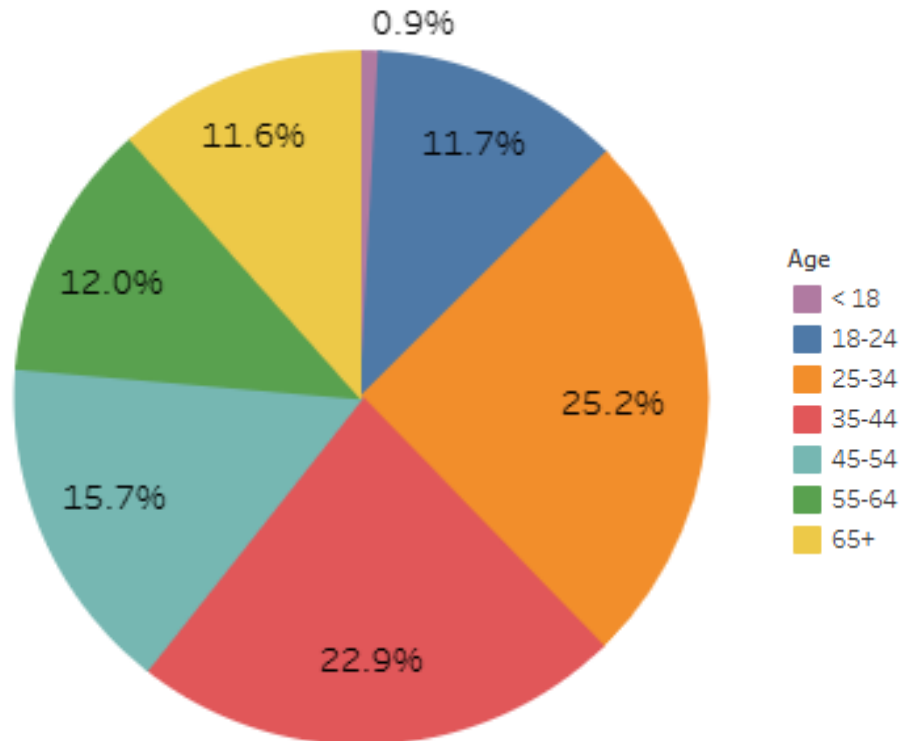
(Multiple values) ▼

ERPO Respondent Demographics (Statewide 2017-2023)

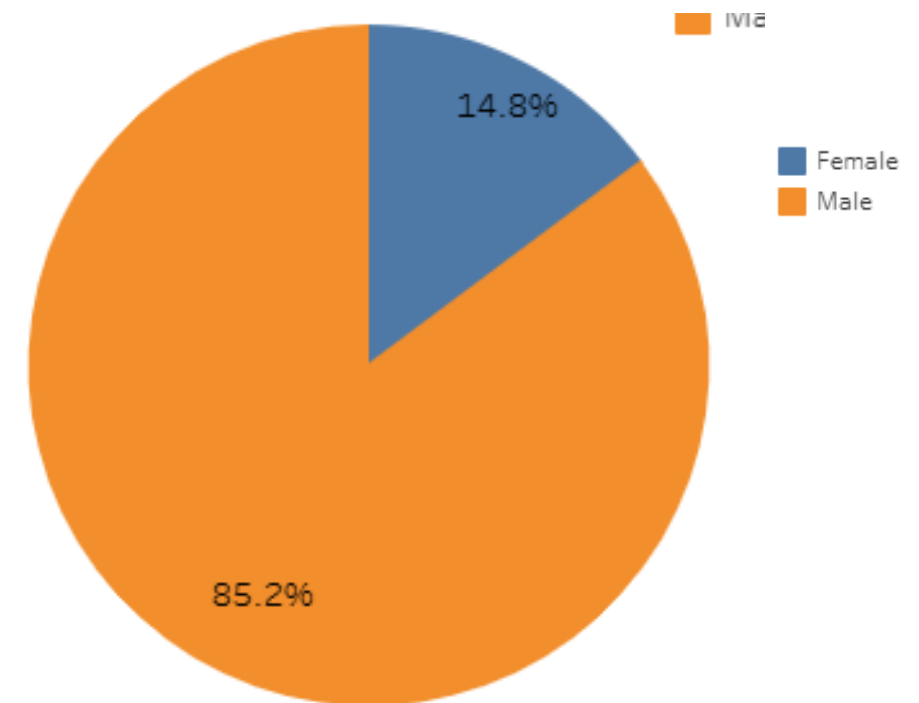
UW Firearm Injury Prevention and Policy Research Center

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RESPONDENT AGE



RESPONDENT SEX

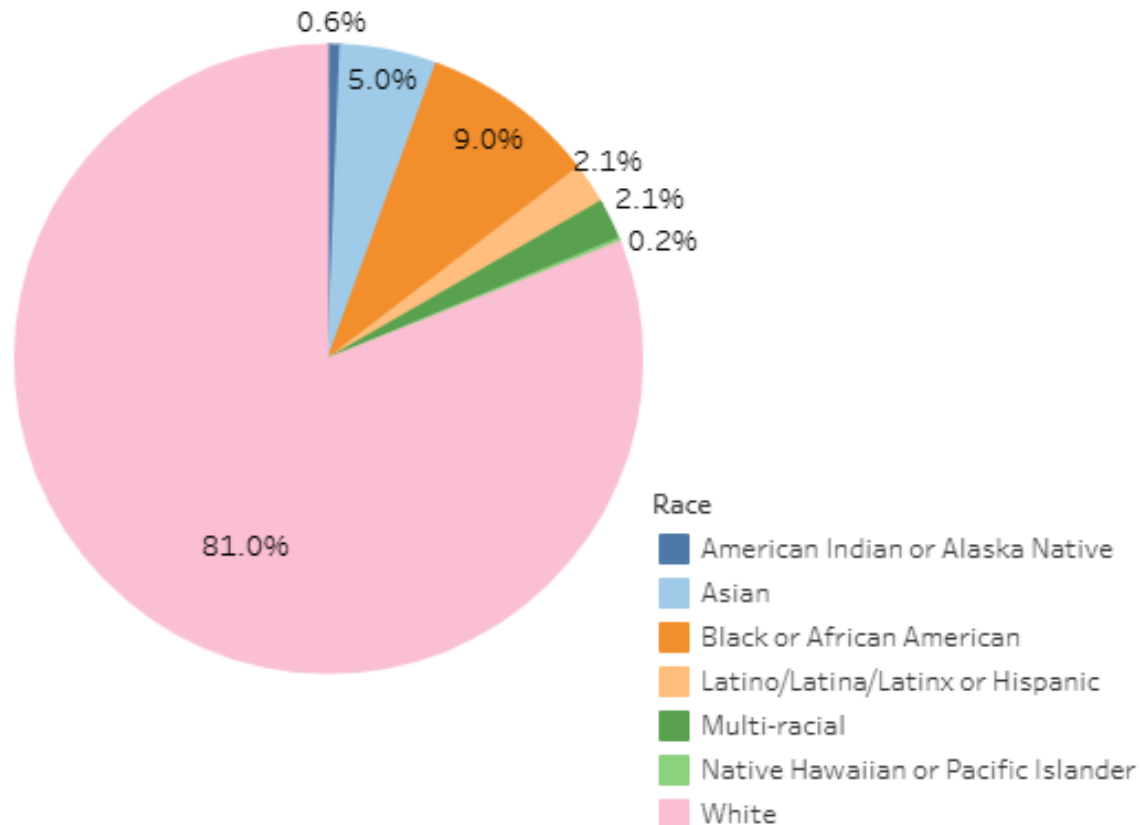


ERPO Respondent Demographics (Statewide 2017-2023)

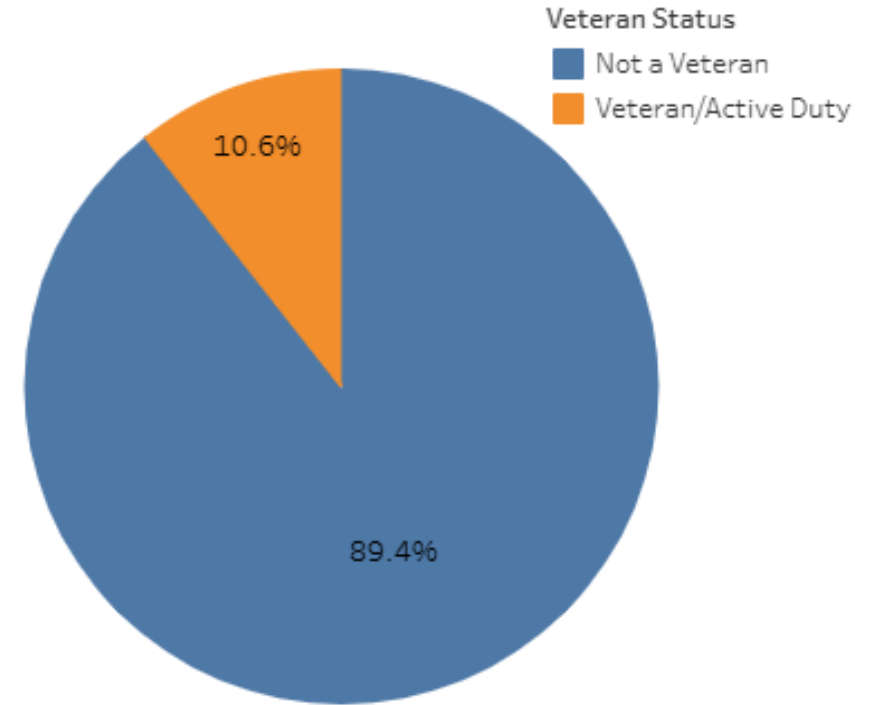
UW Firearm Injury Prevention and Policy Research Center

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RACE & ETHNICITY

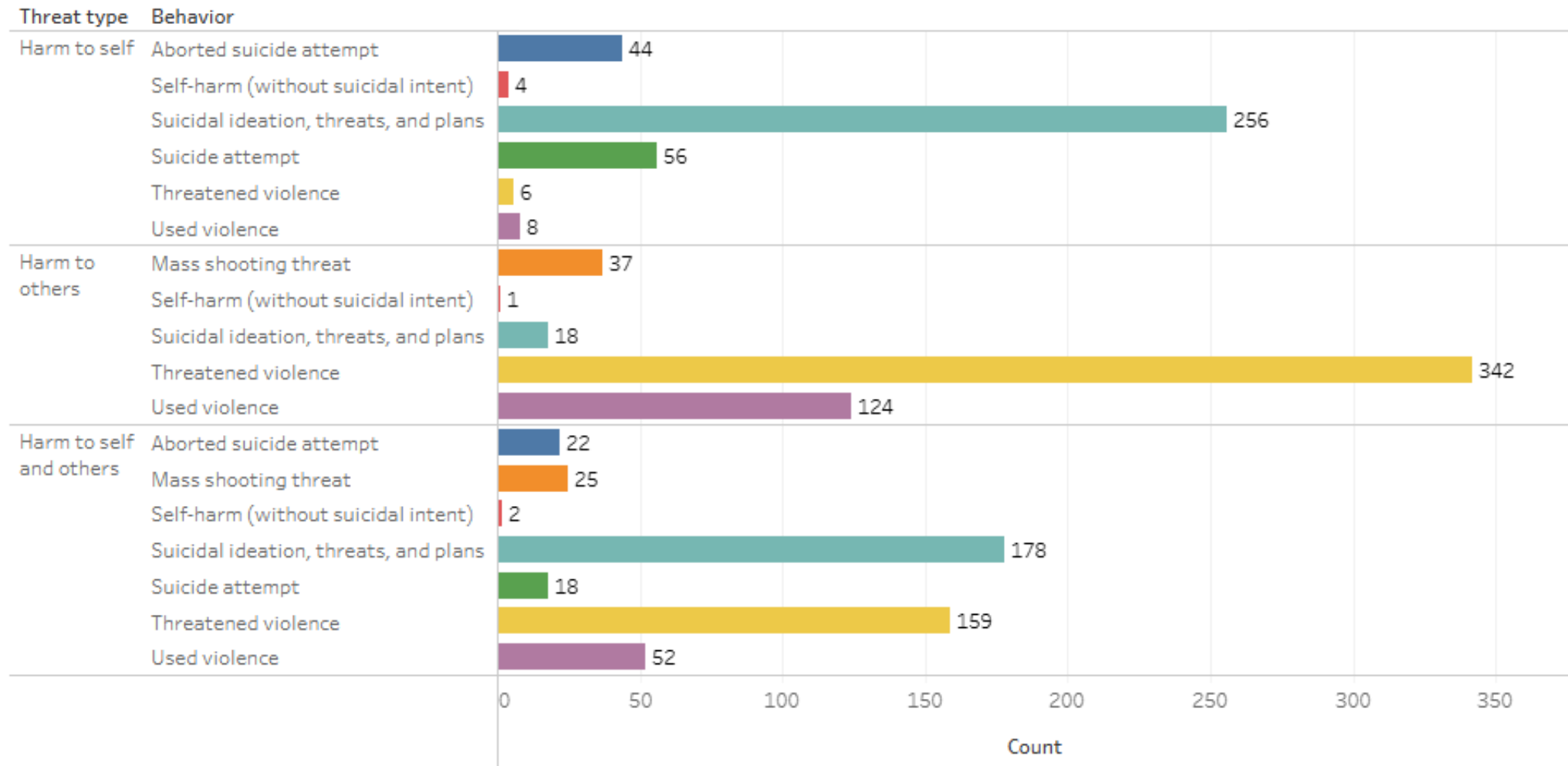


VETERAN STATUS



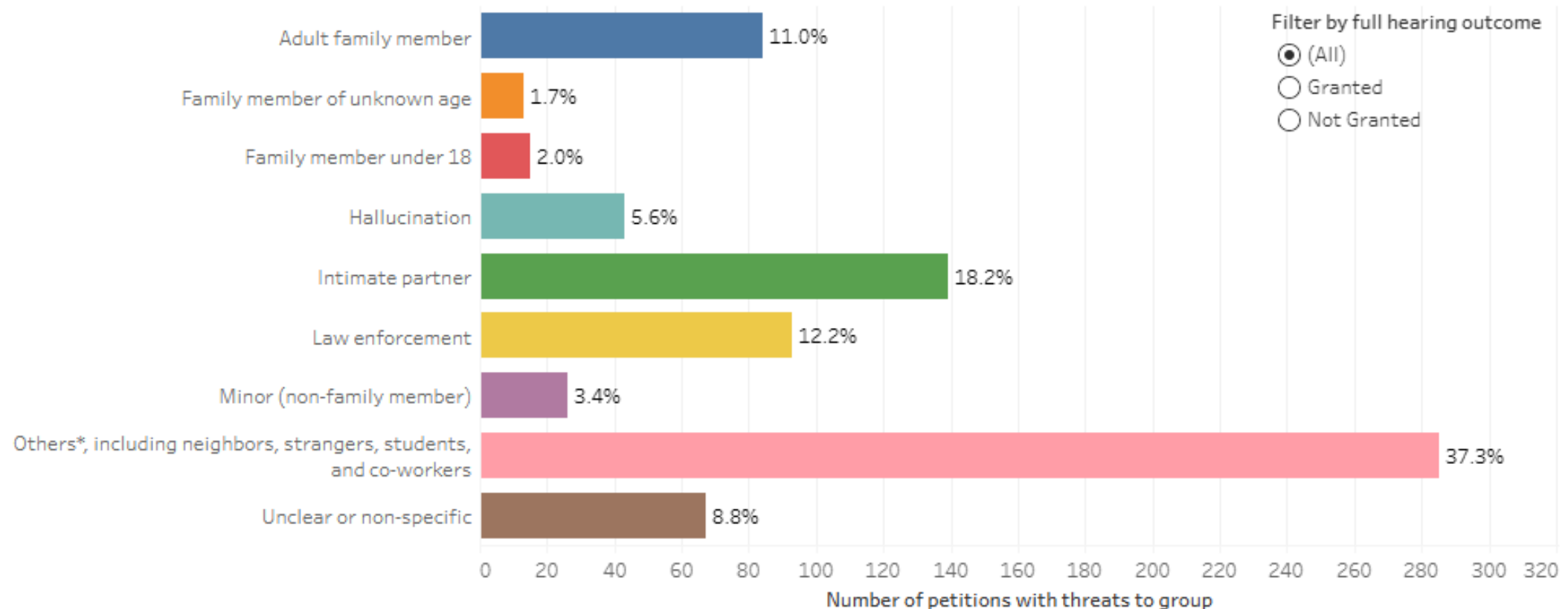
Threats and Behaviors as Described in the Petition (Statewide 2017-2023)

UW Firearm Injury Prevention and Policy Research Center



Persons at Risk of Harm from ERPO Respondent (Statewide 2017-2023)

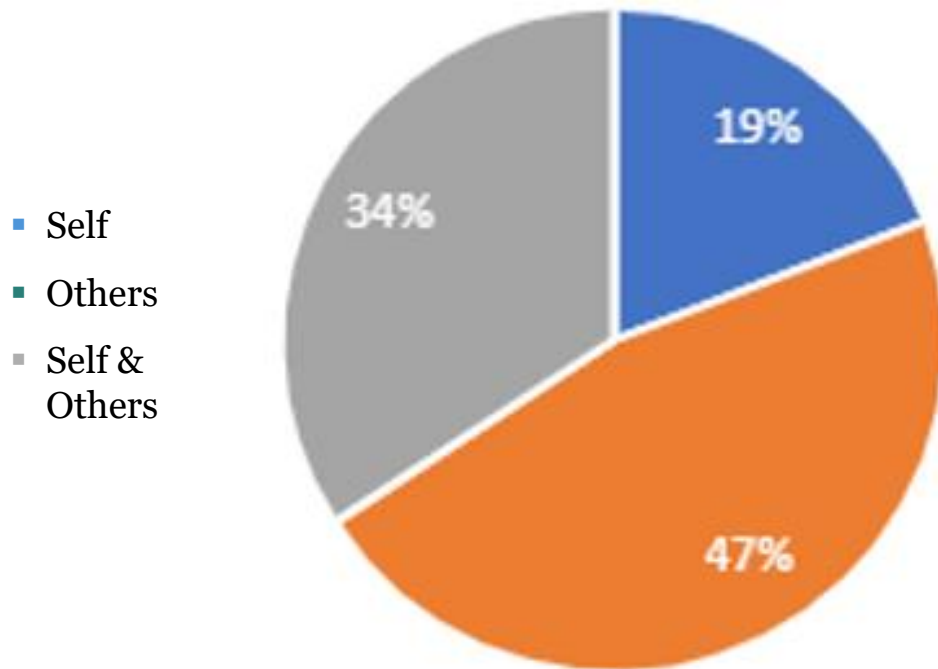
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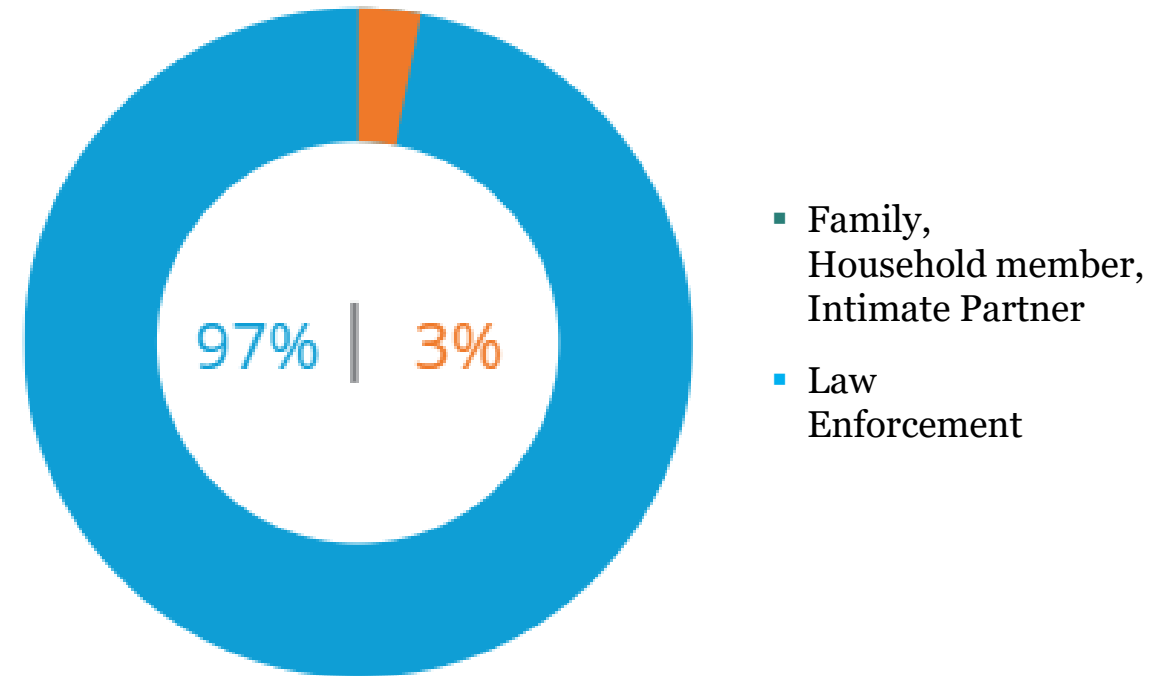
Temporary and Full ERPOs in King County (2024)

Total = 118

Threat Type



Petitioner





Evidenced Based Research

SAMHSA: Implementing ERPOs to Prevent Gun Violence and Suicide (2025)¹



ERPOs in the US: A systematic review of the research²

Systematic Review of 36 Studies (2016-2023)



Law development: driven by mass shootings, suicide prevention, and firearm policy reform



Legal Context: variation in who can file and firearm removal procedures



Implementation: Barriers include lack of training, coordination, and public awareness



Impact: Preliminary evidence suggests ERPOs prevent suicides and mass shootings

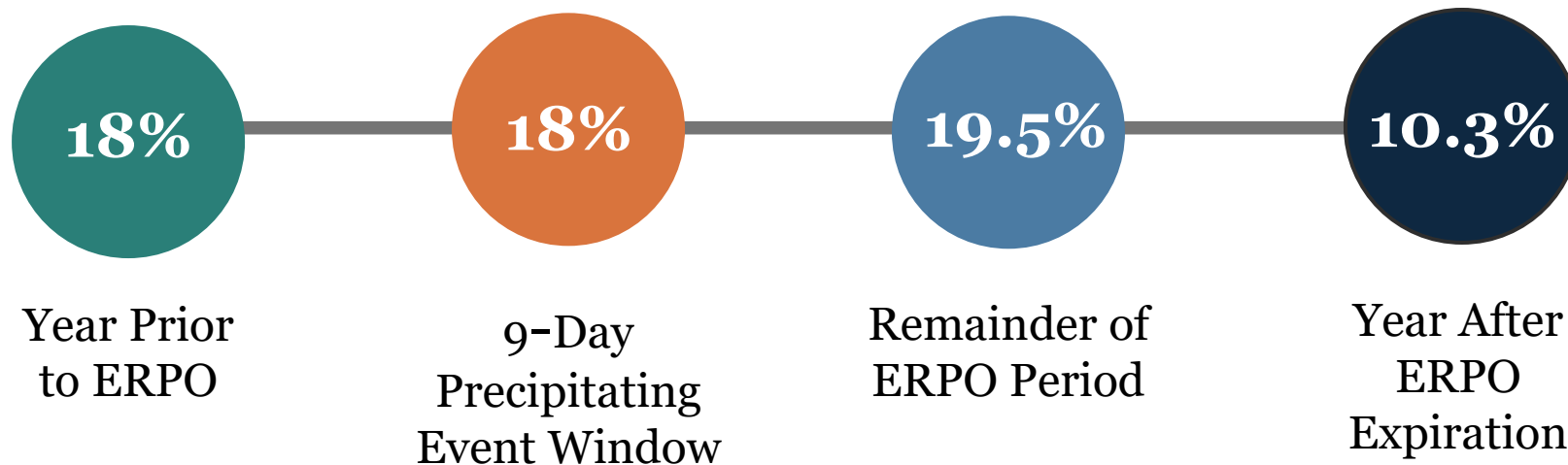


Research Gaps: Data sharing, equity, and long-term outcomes

Arrests Among Extreme Risk Protection Order Respondents in Washington State ³

Retro Cohort: 488 WA respondents (2016–2020)

Arrest Rates: all crime, violent crime, firearm related crime



Takeaways

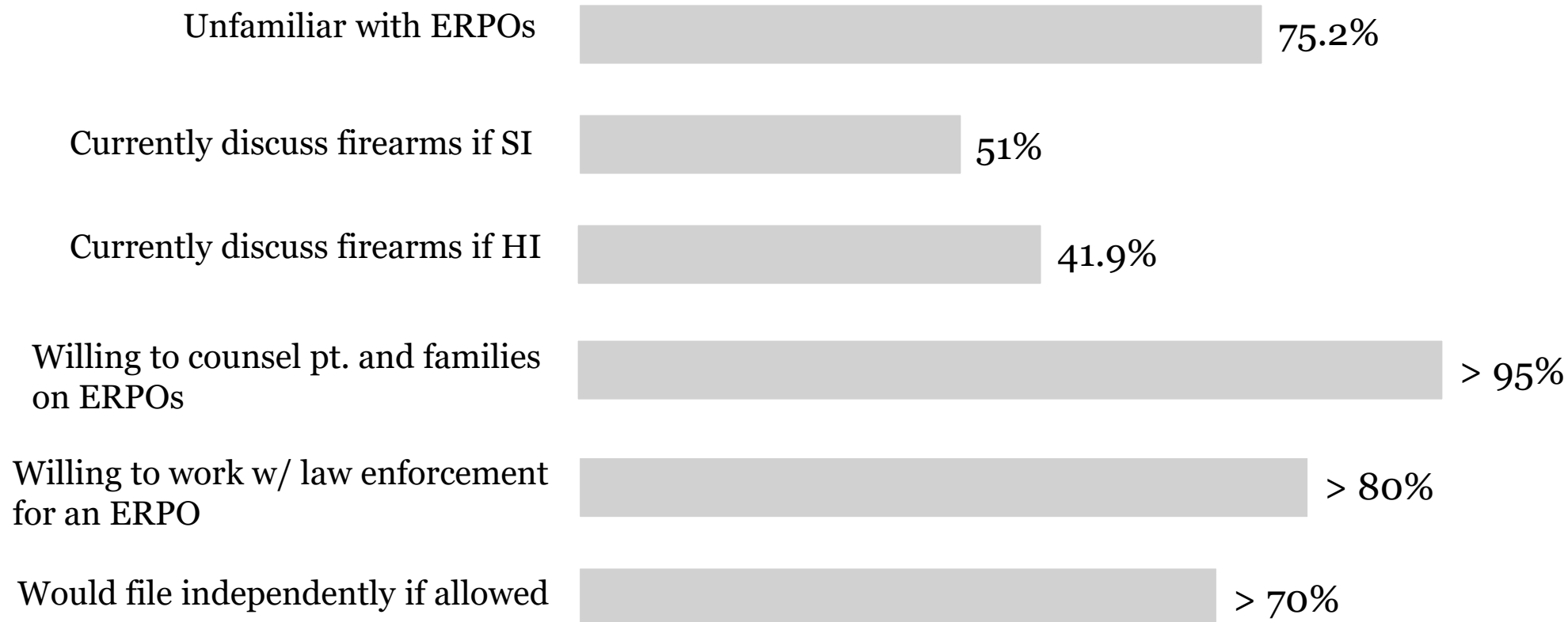
Arrests spike around ERPO filing

Elevated risk persists during ERPO and decreases after expiration

ERPOs are an opportunity for intervention beyond firearm removal

WA Clinician Willingness to Use & Preferences Related to Extreme Risk Protection Orders⁴

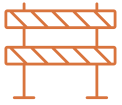
Cross-Sectional Survey of MDs and ARNPs (N = 3,021)



Integration of ERPO into the Clinical Workflow⁵

Qualitative study — 1,126 WA clinicians (MD, ARNP, LICSW)

Barriers



- Perceived outside professional scope / knowledge gaps
- Time and institutional constraints
- Safety and therapeutic alliance concerns

Facilitators



- Targeted training and resource toolkits
- Dedicated time or systems for follow-up
- Referral pathway to coordinated ERPO services and specialists

Implementation



- Integrate into routine risk assessment (not as ‘extra’ task)
- Build specialized response team or liaison support
- Clarify legal and HIPAA guidance



<https://fiprp.uw.edu/>

- [Suicide Prevention Effects of Extreme Risk Protection Order Laws in Four States](#)
- [Integration of extreme risk protection orders into the clinical workflow: Qualitative comparison of clinician perspectives](#)
- [Social Workers' Perspectives on Extreme Risk Protection Orders](#)
- [Civilian Petitioners and Extreme Risk Protection Orders in the State of Washington](#)
- [Extreme risk protection orders in response to threats of multiple victim/mass shooting in six U.S. states: A descriptive study](#)
- [Survey of Washington clinicians' willingness to use and preferences related to extreme risk protection orders](#)
- [Extreme risk protection orders: understanding the role of health professionals](#)
- [Understanding the Process, Context, and Characteristics of Extreme Risk Protection Orders: A Statewide Study](#)
- [Extreme Risk Protection Orders in Washington : A Statewide Descriptive Study](#)
- [Arrests Among Extreme Risk Protection Order Respondents in Washington State](#)
- [Community and System Advocate Perspectives on ERPO Implementation: Qualitative Lessons on Client Context, Professionalization, and Equity](#)

Firearm Data Links

[Washington State Office of Firearm Safety and Violence Prevention](#)

[King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office Crime Strategies Unit](#)

[Public Health Seattle & King County Firearm Injury Data](#)

[The Trace Gun Violence Data Hub](#)



Clinician Considerations

Reducing Access to Lethal Means



Locking Devices: [Lock it Up](#) to prevent [Unsafe Storage Legal Liability](#)



Out of Home: [Transfer to Immediate Family](#) (imminent threat to self only)



Voluntary: [Waiver of FA Rights](#) protected from [Public Disclosure](#)



ERPO: [Civil Process](#) with one year court-ordered firearm prohibition



ITA: [120h evaluation](#) has 6-month firearm prohibition & surrender

[14+ day commitment](#) has [permanent](#) prohibition & surrender (petition to restore)

Behavioral Health Evaluation



“During the hearing, the court shall consider whether a behavioral health evaluation is appropriate and may order such evaluation if appropriate.” [RCW 7.105.215](#)

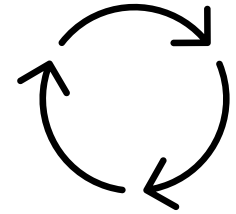


ERPO respondents have reported difficulty finding providers to do a Behavioral Health evaluation.



An incomplete behavioral health evaluation may support ERPO renewal if the petitioner requests it.

System Improvements



Using the Electronic Health Record

- Documentation of firearm access and concerns in the EHR
- AI and Machine Learning are data-driven tools to flag risk
- Example: Machine Learning at the VA “[REACH VET](#)” (suicide prediction algorithm)
- Ensure staff and high-risk response teams are incorporating ERPO resources
- Incorporate ERPOs in safety planning, counseling, teaching, and discharge instructions

Local, Regional, and State Initiatives

- Encourage inclusion of ERPOs when you see gaps (suicide and injury prevention reports, etc.)
- Bring your SME to ERPO research

Resources to Learn More

Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions

[National ERPO Resource Center](#) has [Clinician Resources](#)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

[HIPAA Privacy Rule and Disclosures of PHI for Extreme Risk Protection Orders](#)

Veterans Administration VHA Training

[Extreme Risk Protection Orders and Suicide Risk Management](#)

American Medical Association

[Extreme Risk Protection Orders and What Physicians Need to Know About ERPO Laws](#)

Safer Schools

[Behavioral and digital threat assessment, radicalization and extremism, online behavioral trends](#)

U.S. Secret Service

[National Threat Assessment Center, ideological violence, mass attacks in public spaces \(DV link\)](#)

ERPO Case Example

Threat to Self

Veterans Crisis Line ->
ERPO initiated by Law Enforcement

ERPO Fact Pattern

Threat to Self

Contacted VA crisis line

Suicidal ideation

Financial struggles

Owns Firearms

Planned to use
handgun

3 firearms found

ERPO Statute Criteria

RCW 7.105.215

**Recent act or threat of violence against self or others
with or without firearms**

**Any behaviors presenting imminent threat to self or
others**

Ownership, access to, or intent to possess firearms

Case Takeaways

- Intervention occurred, starting with the crisis line
- Firearms were removed at the time of the incident & LE kept them secured
- Respondent was taken to the hospital for involuntary mental health treatment
- This allows for the prohibition of firearms, but the timeframe varies
- The respondent did not contest the ERPO and expressed gratitude to LE

ERPO Case Example

Threat to Self

Family called 911 ->
ERPO initiated by Law Enforcement

ERPO Fact Pattern

Threat to Self

Loved one expressing
Suicidal Ideation w/ Plan

Overwhelming grief; MH referral;
not yet engaged

Family Member called 911

Owns Firearms

Owns two firearms

Attempted to retrieve firearms
from family's home

Expressed plan for out-of-state gun
purchase for suicide

ERPO Statute Criteria

RCW 7.105.215

Recent act or threat of violence against self or others with or without a firearm

Pattern of acts/threats of violence against self or others in last 12 months

Behaviors presenting imminent threat to self or others

Ownership, access to, or intent to possess firearms

Case Takeaways

- 2 firearms held by law enforcement for duration of order
- Person in crisis cannot purchase or possess a firearm for one year – even out of state
- Created a safer environment while in a time of crisis
- Behavioral health evaluation ordered by the court
- Time and distance from lethal means while engaging in care
- If risks persist, law enforcement may consider renewal prior to order expiration

ERPO Case Example

Threat to Others

ERPO initiated by Family Member

ERPO Fact Pattern

Threats to others

Made verbal threats of violence against family

Believed God gave them permission to kill

Crisis-related behaviors

Paranoid delusions of break-ins, assaults, and possible cognitive decline

Several failed attempts at contact by crisis responders

Alcohol use disorder and previous treatment attempts

Firearm Access

Applied for a CPL

Formed plans on when and where to obtain a firearm

ERPO Statute Criteria
RCW 7.105.215

Recent act or threat of violence against self or others

**Pattern of acts or threats of violence to self or others in
last 12 months**

Any behaviors presenting imminent threat to self or others

Ownership, access to, or intent to possess firearms

**Corroborated evidence of the abuse of controlled substances
or alcohol**

Case Takeaways

- Petitioned for by family members
- Prevented the purchase of firearms through a licensed dealer
- Allowed time for DCRs to intervene with reduced risk of harm in the meantime
- Allowed time of family to consider care options
- Did not restrict contact between the individual and their family

ERPO Case Example

Threat to Others

ERPO initiated by Law Enforcement
(Juvenile)

ERPO Fact Pattern

Threat to Others

FBI flagged Instagram account of a youth < 18 years old

Racially and ethnically motivated violent extremism; Expressed “getting ready”

Praised mass shooters, including Virginia Tech, Sandy Hook & Buffalo, NY

Owns Firearms

Posted pictures of people holding firearms on social media

Expressed intent to use semi-automatic ammunition against targeted groups

Shared pictures of attempt to build a homemade bomb

ERPO Statute Criteria

RCW 7.105.215

Recently committed or threatened violence against self or others, whether or not Respondent has a firearm.

Shown, within the past 12 months, a pattern of acts or threats of violence, which can include violent acts against self or others.

Behavior presents an imminent threat of harm to others.

Expressed violent ideology towards racial and ethnic minority groups and admiration with school shooters.

Case Takeaways

- FBI shared reports with local law enforcement
- ERPO petition filed by local LE and granted by the court
- School resource officer established emergency suspension
- Search warrant executed: 1 legally owned firearm secured by law enforcement for duration of order; no explosives found.
- Family offered guardian ad litem to support minor in court
- Behavioral health evaluation ordered
- Ongoing monitoring of social media and firearm compliance

ERPO Case Example

**Threat to Self and
Others**

ERPO initiated by Law Enforcement

ERPO Fact Pattern

Threats to others

Unlawful
discharge 3
months prior

Threatened lawn
crew with firearm

Threat to Self

Veteran with
PTSD

History of Suicide
Attempt

Owns Firearms

Firearm in
Purchase History

Ghost Gun

ERPO Statute Criteria
RCW 7.105.215

Recent act or threat of violence against self or others

Pattern of acts or threats of violence to self or others in last 12 months

Any behaviors presenting imminent threat to self or others

Ownership, access to, or intent to possess firearms

Unlawful reckless use, display, or brandishing of a firearm

Case Takeaways

- Firearms were immediately removed
- Law enforcement recovered the ghost gun
- The event initiated mental health treatment
- Respondent expressed gratitude
- Safer situation for neighbors and family
- Law enforcement will consider renewal when ERPO expires

**Contact the King County
ERPO Team**

King County ERPO Advocate

Contact the Advocate for:

- Learning more about ERPOs
- Filling out paperwork to file for an ERPO
- Support during the court process
- Safety planning
- Referrals to community organizations



206-263-9696



ERPO@kingcounty.gov



www.courts.wa.gov/forms

Your Feedback is Valuable

Presentation Feedback Form

- Optional & anonymous
- Satisfaction
- Suggestions for improvement
- Advanced training ideas
- Networking



Thank You!

PLEASE REACH OUT FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REQUEST A TRAINING:

ERPO@KINGCOUNTY.GOV



References

1. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2025, January). *Implementing Extreme Risk Protection Orders to Prevent Gun Violence and Suicide* (Publication No. PEP24-01-030). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
2. Zeoli, A. M., Frattaroli, S., Aassar, M., Cooper, C. E., & Omaki, E. (2025). Extreme risk protection orders in the United States: A systematic review of the research. *Annual Review of Criminology*, 8(1), 485–504. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-criminol-111523-122602>
3. Schleimer, J. P., Asa, N., Zeoli, A., Frattaroli, S., & Rowhani-Rahbar, A. (2025). Arrests Among Extreme Risk Protection Order Respondents in Washington State: A Statewide Retrospective Cohort Study. *Inquiry : a journal of medical care organization, provision and financing*, 62, 469580251349717. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00469580251349717>
4. Gause, E. L., Conrick, K., Moore, M., Rowhani-Rahbar, A., & Rivara, F. P. (2022). Survey of Washington clinicians' willingness to use and preferences related to extreme risk protection orders. *Preventive medicine reports*, 28, 101883. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmedr.2022.101883>
5. Conrick, K. M., Porter, S. F., Gause, E., Prater, L., Rowhani-Rahbar, A., Rivara, F. P., & Moore, M. (2023). Integration of extreme risk protection orders into the clinical workflow: Qualitative comparison of clinician perspectives. *PloS one*, 18(12), eo288880. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0288880>