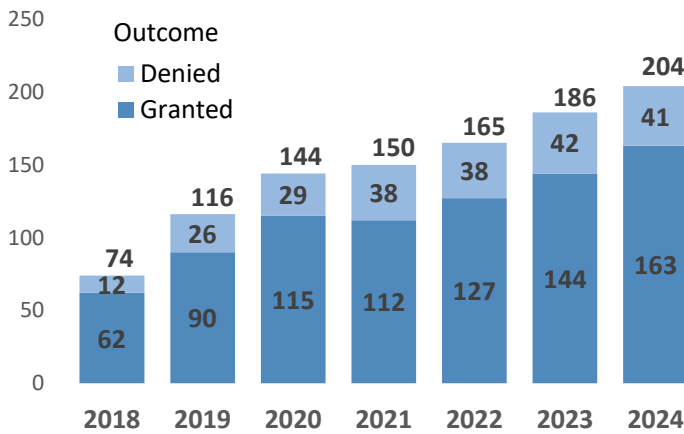


RESEARCH BRIEF

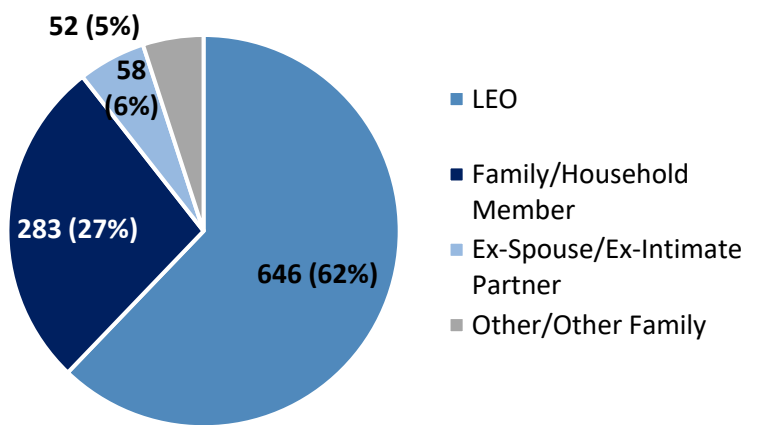
Oregon’s Extreme Risk Protection Order law is being used to try to prevent self-harm, assault, and mass violence by firearm, but improvements in the law’s implementation are needed to increase effectiveness.

**What’s in this Research Brief?** Oregon’s Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) law allows family/household members or law enforcement officers (LEOs) to petition a civil court for an order to temporarily restrict a person’s access to firearms when at imminent risk of harming themselves or others. This brief presents the results of our analysis of Oregon’s ERPO court records (accessed through contract with the Oregon Judicial Department) from January 1, 2018, when the law took effect, through December 31, 2024. The data show that Oregon’s ERPO law is being used to address a variety of threats, including self-harm, assault, domestic violence, and mass violence, but there are gaps in the law’s implementation.

1,039 ERPO petitions were filed from 2018-2024



Majority of petitions were filed by LEOs (62%)



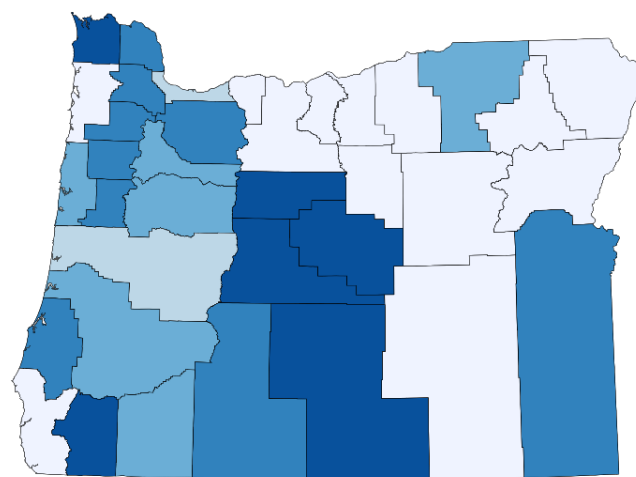
- The number filed increased annually, but the proportions approved remained similar.
- 78% of all petitions were initially granted.

- Petitions filed by LEOs were the most likely to be approved (96% approval rate).

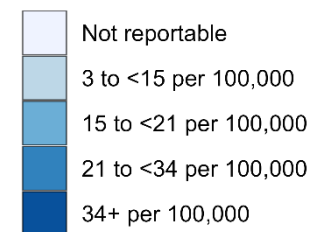
Rates of Petitions Filed by County, 2018-2024\*

At a Glance:

- Of Oregon’s 36 counties, 32 (89%) had at least 1 ERPO petition filed.
- The number of petitions filed per county ranged from 0 to 174 (median rate among counties with at least 1 ERPO filed = 21.4/100,000 residents).



Rate of petitions filed per 100,000 residents

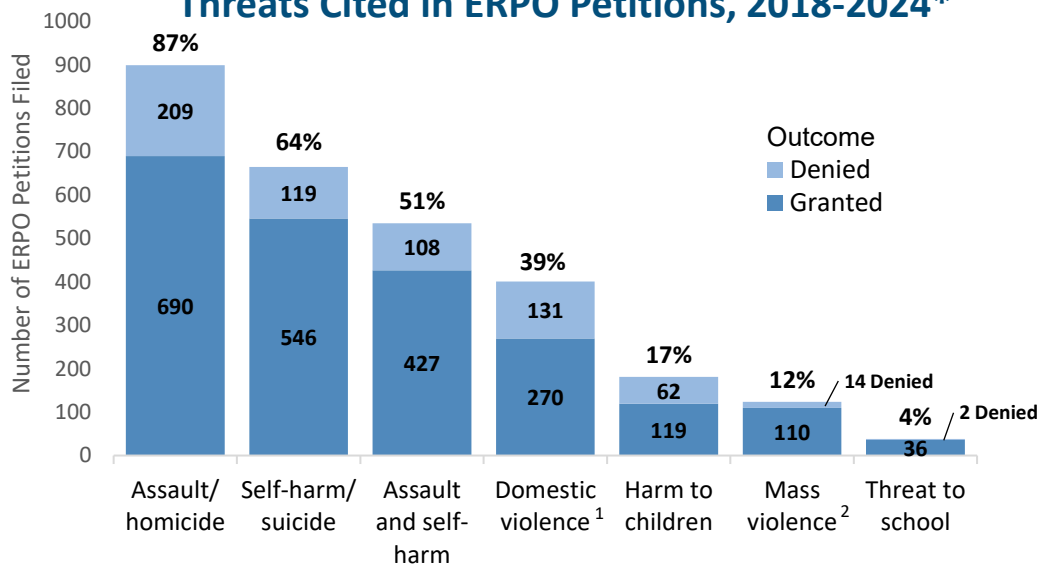


\*Some county rates are labeled “not reportable” because the counts of ERPOs filed in those counties were too small (<5 ERPOs) to be used in meaningful county-level rate calculations.

## Threats Cited in ERPO Petitions, 2018-2024\*

### At a Glance:

- The most frequent type of threat cited in the petitions was assault or homicide (87%), followed by threat of self-harm or suicide (64%).
- 51% of petitions cited threats of *both* assault/homicide and self-harm/suicide.
- 124 (12%) petitions cited threats of mass violence and 38 (4%) petitions cited threats to schools, including college campuses.



\*A petition might fall into more than one threat category.

1. Domestic violence was defined as threats or violence (including physical violence, sexual violence, forced sexual contact, harm, or stalking) against a spouse, intimate partner, family member, or other household member.

2. ERPO petition cites concern that the respondent intends to harm four or more people other than themselves.

## There are opportunities to increase the effectiveness of the ERPO law.

**Documentation of Race/Ethnicity.** Race data were unavailable for 32% of respondents and ethnicity data were rarely documented. Among petitions with documentation of respondent race, 92% were White, 2% were Black/African American, 2% were Asian, and 1% were Native American, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander. **The lack of documented data on race and ethnicity creates challenges in evaluating and prioritizing equity in the implementation of the ERPO law.**

**Petitioner Eligibility.** Under Oregon law, immediate family members (i.e., spouses, parents, children, or siblings) have standing to file ERPO petitions regardless of whether they live with the respondent; however, more distant family members and ex-spouses/ex-intimate partners do not have standing unless they are also household members. Ex-spouses/ex-intimate partners frequently filed petitions citing threats of domestic violence against themselves and/or against children shared with the respondent. Other state ERPO laws include persons with children shared with the respondent and former spouses and/or dating partners among qualified petitioners ([Extreme Risk Protection Order: | Bloomberg American Health Initiative](#)). **Expanding eligibility to file ERPO petitions may increase opportunities for violence prevention.**

**ERPOs as a Bridge to Services.** ERPOs provide a potential opportunity to connect respondents to services that can help to address underlying causes of the threatening behaviors. Many petitions mention domestic violence (39%), threats of self-harm or suicide (64%), or alcohol use or abuse (25%), but in most cases, we found no evidence in the records that respondents were connected to services such as mental health or substance use treatment or domestic violence intervention services during the ERPO process. Similarly, no information was available on whether the service of the ERPOs was trauma-informed.

**Understanding whether and how ERPOs are currently being used as a bridge to services can help to create and implement more effective procedures that prioritize safety and wellbeing, even beyond the time of the ERPO.**

**Weapons Surrender Process.** As the Oregon Secretary of State's Advisory Report ([Increased Awareness and Training Could Enhance the Effectiveness of Oregon's Extreme Risk Protection Order Law – August 2023](#)) notes, unlike other protective orders, Oregon's ERPO statute does not include a requirement that respondents provide proof of firearm surrender to the court. Documentation of weapons surrender or declarations that the respondent did not possess any weapons were only available for 30% of the granted ERPOs, meaning that we are unable to determine whether the firearms were removed or to whom they were surrendered in 70% of cases. **Statutory reporting requirements and court processes like compliance hearings may be used to strengthen implementation and ensure weapons surrender.**