

# Advocates concerned about Massachusetts gun shop openings

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State House News Service

Groups that work with domestic violence survivors warned Friday that **a federal judge's order allowing gun retailers to reopen during the pandemic** "may further jeopardize the personal safety of victims of abuse."

In a joint statement, Jane Doe Inc. Executive Director Debra Robbin and Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance Liam Lowney pointed to research in the American Journal of Public Health indicating that women face a 500 percent higher risk of homicide when a gun is present in a domestic violence situation. During the pandemic, with residents urged to remain at home whenever possible and thus facing isolation and stress, risks of domestic violence are higher, they said.

"While these concerns are not new, the compounding stressors brought on by coronavirus add fuel to those fires," they said. "For people experiencing domestic violence or at risk for committing suicide, more guns in the home at a time of greater isolation and barriers to services can be especially dangerous." Robbin and Lowney urged the public to be attentive to others' mental health needs and to check in on friends, family and neighbors.