

July 2026 in Review

Domestic violence news, law enforcement response, and policy — United States

Reporting period: July 1 – July 31, 2026

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Executive Summary

July 2026 was defined less by new events than by unresolved carryovers. The Broncos LB Jonathon Cooper trial was scheduled to begin July 22 in Douglas County (following his June 4 DV arrest and June 11 second arrest); the Packers RB Josh Jacobs Brown County DA investigation remained open two full months after his May 26 arrest; and the LA Rams OT Alaric Jackson case remained pending. All three cases entered NFL training camp season (opened last week of July) without resolution — a pattern that is itself the story.

OIDV continued its 2026 pattern with two additional July arrests. LVMPD Officer Jerry Wheeler (July 4) — the second Las Vegas Metro PD OIDV arrest in ~2 weeks — charges later amended to include child abuse. Florence AL PD Officer Asa Belew (July 13) charged with two counts of DV Third Degree after ex-girlfriend's petition detailed two prior assaults. Cumulative running total across May, June, July: **9 OIDV arrests.**

State policy activity slowed as most legislative sessions closed, but Hawaii formally enacted its two DV/human trafficking bills. Gov. Green signed HB 1959 (Act 192) and HB 1960 (Act 191) on July 7 — the formal signing companion to the May enrollment we tracked in prior briefs.

Three fresh DV homicides / near-homicides surfaced late in the month across Elko NV, Grand Junction CO, and Lewisville TX. Each showed classic lethality risk indicators (strangulation, prior escalation, weapon access). The Grand Junction case is notable as the second serious DV strangulation arrest by Mesa County / GJPD in ~60 days.

⚠ TRIAL WATCH — THE COOPER CASE

Broncos LB Jonathon Cooper jury trial scheduled July 22 — days before Broncos training camp opens

Cooper's attorney Harvey Steinberg requested the earliest possible trial date to avoid training camp conflict; Judge Kelly Waidler set July 22 in Douglas County Court. Cooper faces misdemeanor DV and criminal mischief charges from his June 4 arrest with his girlfriend, plus additional DV counts, harassment, and violating a protective order from his June 11 second arrest. NFL personal conduct policy discipline follows the criminal case — league will not act until trial concludes. Broncos training camp opened roughly July 25. Any conviction outcome will be a bellwether for how state courts prosecute cases with rapid escalation (arrest → protective order → second arrest) inside a single month, and for how NFL leagues respond mid-training-camp.

Monthly Themes

1. Unresolved NFL DV cases are becoming the story

Three high-profile NFL DV cases entered training camp season in July without resolution: Josh Jacobs (Packers, May 26 arrest — DA investigation still open as of July 23, Jacobs practicing at training camp July 29), Jonathon Cooper (Broncos, June 4 + June 11 arrests — trial July 22), Alaric Jackson (Rams, June 9 arrest — case pending). The pattern of prolonged DA review, teams continuing to make players available "pending legal process," and NFL deferring discipline until criminal case conclusion has become a system-level story — not simply three individual cases. Per the Yahoo Sports analysis, the NFL can penalize independently of criminal outcomes (as with Ezekiel Elliott 2017), but has consistently chosen not to. Training camp attendance during pending charges is now the norm rather than the exception.

2. OIDV pattern held steady with two more July arrests

LVMPD Officer Jerry Wheeler (July 4) is the second LVMPD OIDV arrest within 15 days (Officer Jeremiah Jordan was arrested June 19). Wheeler was booked on battery constituting DV; charges amended July 6 to add child abuse, neglect or endangerment. Florence AL PD Officer Asa Belew (July 13) was charged with two counts of DV Third Degree after Lauderdale County SO investigation; ex-girlfriend's Petition for Protection from Abuse detailed two alleged assaults (June 1 and March 4). Cumulative running total across May, June, July 2026: **nine OIDV arrests** across Wichita PD, Gwinnett Co PD, Cleveland PD, Fresno PD, Boulder PD, LVMPD (2x), Modesto PD, Florence AL PD. Per Stinson & Liederbach (BGSU): 33% of OIDV cases result in resignation or termination; the LVMPD "twin cases" within 15 days is atypical.

3. State-level DV legislation was quieter in July as sessions closed — Hawaii's formal signings the exception

Most state legislative sessions closed by late June. Hawaii Gov. Green formally signed HB 1959 (Act 192) and HB 1960 (Act 191) on July 7 at the State Capitol. HB 1959 extends key DV provisions from Act 19 (2020) and Act 238 (2021) for five additional years, including the petty misdemeanor offense for abuse of family or household members. HB 1960 addresses human trafficking. Companion measures to the Women's Legislative Caucus 2026 package. This is a formal enactment following the May enrollment we tracked previously. Legislative momentum from H1 2026 (7+ state DV laws) is likely to translate into H2 policy implementation planning rather than fresh statutory activity.

4. Lethality risk indicators appeared again in every serious July DV case

Elko NV (July 27, Santos Cortez-Molina murder charge) — woman found with severe facial injuries, not breathing; airlifted to Utah where she died. Grand Junction CO (July 26, Gary Kiefer arrest) — assault and strangulation of a woman in the presence of a juvenile; the second strangulation-related arrest in Mesa County in ~60 days (following the May 20–21 Randy Abbott case). Portland OR (July 12) — stabbing of a female family member requiring hospitalization. Each case featured indicators (strangulation, prior escalation, weapon access, presence of children) that lethality assessment instruments are validated to detect. The Grand Junction pattern within Mesa County provides a case study for the value of standardized LAP protocols in high-volume DV jurisdictions.

5. Federal DV funding pipeline continues its uneven progress

OVW continued to post FY26 NOFOs through July, building on June's momentum (STOP Formula Grant Program ~\$173.3M, Financial Assistance for Victims Initiative, Transitional Housing). The FY25 \$150M+ backlog referenced

in The 19th's May 28 investigative report remains structurally unresolved — and the House Bipartisan Working Group on DV letter to DOJ (March 6) remains publicly unanswered. Trump FY27 budget proposal continues to include ~\$208M OVW cut. October 1, 2026 remains the FY25 statutory distribution deadline. Two months out.

6. National media attention on family killings is intensifying

PBS's Amanpour and Company aired "Inside the Disturbing Rise in Family Killings" on July 13, featuring psychologist Doreen Dodgen-Magee (whose sister-in-law and nieces were murdered in a DV incident). Central framing: US homicide rates are at historic lows nationally, but DV homicides have "stayed persistently high." This continues the pattern established by CBS News' ongoing series, the FBI's February 2026 special report, and The 19th's May 28 investigation — that DV is emerging as a distinct public safety story separate from the broader (declining) homicide trend. For Forseti, this is favorable macro-narrative context for state coalition, DVSP, and LE stakeholder conversations.

Top Stories of July 2026

1 Broncos LB Jonathon Cooper jury trial scheduled July 22 in Douglas County Court

ESPN / NFL.com / Denver Post / 9News · Trial date July 22, 2026 · Douglas County, CO

Motions hearing July 6, jury trial July 22. Cooper pleaded not guilty in June to misdemeanor DV and criminal mischief following his June 4 arrest with his girlfriend, then was arrested a second time June 11 with additional DV, harassment, and protective-order-violation charges. Broncos training camp opened roughly July 25. Attorney Harvey Steinberg confirmed no motion to dismiss will be filed. NFL personal conduct policy discipline follows the criminal case conclusion. Cooper is under contract with Denver through 2028 on a \$60M extension signed 2024.

2 Packers RB Josh Jacobs practices at training camp; Brown County DA investigation still open

The Athletic / NewsOn6 / NBC Sports / WTMJ · Training camp opens July 29; DA update July 23

Brown County DA David Lasee confirmed via email July 23 that the investigation into Jacobs' May 26 arrest is "still open" and that "there will be an update provided once a resolution is reached." Packers GM Brian Gutekunst confirmed Jacobs will participate fully in training camp. Jacobs has consistently denied allegations through his attorney. No formal charges filed to date. NFL not expected to take disciplinary action until legal process concludes. Roughly two months elapsed between arrest and training camp opening without formal charging decision.

3 Hawaii Gov. Green signs HB 1959 and HB 1960 into law at State Capitol

Hawaii Office of the Governor / Hawaii News Now / Maui Now · Signed July 7, 2026 · Honolulu, HI

Gov. Josh Green signed two Women's Legislative Caucus 2026 package bills into law. HB 1959 (Act 192 SLH) extends Act 19 (2020) and Act 238 (2021) DV provisions for an additional 5 years, including the petty misdemeanor offense for abuse of family/household members. HB 1960 (Act 191 SLH) addresses human trafficking awareness. "Protecting survivors and safeguarding the people of Hawai'i must remain at the heart of our work," said Gov. Green.

4 Elko, NV: Man charged with murder of wife after severe DV assault; she died from injuries

KOLO 8 News · Incident July 27; murder charge July 30, 2026 · Elko, NV

Elko PD responded to Opal Drive on July 27 for a DV incident. Officers found a woman with severe facial injuries who was not breathing. She was taken to Northeastern Nevada Regional Hospital, then airlifted to Utah, where she died.

Santos Cortez-Molina was initially arrested and charged with DV with substantial bodily harm; charge elevated to murder July 30 following her death.

5 Grand Junction, CO: Man arrested for strangling woman in front of juvenile; 2nd serious Mesa Co. DV strangulation in ~60 days

City of Grand Junction / Grand Junction PD · Incident July 26, 2026 · Grand Junction, CO

At approximately 12:30 a.m. July 26, GJPD dispatched to an assault in progress on Platte River Drive. Officers determined the male suspect (Gary Kiefer, 47) assaulted and strangled a female known to him in the presence of a juvenile. Warrant issued and executed; Kiefer booked into Mesa County Detention Facility on Felony 4 second-degree assault by strangulation. Second serious DV strangulation arrest by Mesa County / GJPD within ~60 days (Randy Abbott May 20–21). Provides a strong case for jurisdictional LAP protocols.

6 LVMPD Officer Jerry Wheeler arrested for DV; charges amended to add child abuse (second LVMPD OIDV in 15 days)

FOX5 Vegas / KOLD · Arrested July 4; charges amended July 6, 2026 · Las Vegas, NV

Officer Jerry Wheeler (LVMPD since 2019, assigned to Convention Center Area Command's Tourist Safety Division) booked into Clark County Detention Center on battery constituting DV. Clark County DA amended the case July 6 to include one count each of child abuse/neglect/endangerment, battery, and battery constituting DV, first offense. Suspended police powers without pay. This is the second Las Vegas Metro PD OIDV arrest in 15 days (following Officer Jeremiah Jordan, June 19, 2 named victims, \$200K bail with electronic monitoring).

7 Florence AL PD Officer Asa Belew charged with 2 counts DV Third Degree

WAFF / Lauderdale County SO / Florence PD · Charged July 13, 2026 · Florence, AL

Florence PD notified June 19 by Lauderdale County SO of an active DV investigation involving Officer Asa Belew. Belew placed on administrative leave immediately. July 13: Lauderdale County SO charged Belew with two counts of DV Third Degree; he turned himself in at the Lauderdale County Detention Center. Ex-girlfriend's June 22 Petition for Protection from Abuse alleges Belew slapped her on June 1, 2026 and slapped her arm while she was driving on March 4, 2026. Petition cites concern about Belew's access to weapons as an officer.

8 Portland OR: Multi-family DV stabbing incident ends with peaceful arrest

Portland.gov / Portland Police Bureau · July 12, 2026 · Portland, OR

Officers assigned to PPB's North Precinct responded to the 16000 block of Northeast Sandy Boulevard on July 12 for a report of a woman stabbed by a family member. Officers safely extracted the female victim and additional family members from the residence. Victim transported with serious but non-life-threatening injuries; second family member sustained non-life-threatening injuries. Officers surrounded the residence and used loudspeaker announcements; suspect voluntarily exited and was taken into custody. Jonathan A. arrested. Model example of de-escalation in an active DV incident with weapon use.

9 Lewisville TX: DV murder-suicide at apartment complex

CBS News · Late July 2026 · Lewisville, TX

Incident classified as a DV murder-suicide at an apartment complex in Lewisville, TX. Referenced in CBS News' ongoing murder-suicide coverage tag. Details limited in national reporting as investigation continues. Adds to the sustained 2026 pattern of DV-anchored murder-suicides that Everytown research estimates occur ~187 times per six-month period nationally.

10 PBS Amanpour and Company: "Inside the Disturbing Rise in Family Killings"

PBS / Amanpour and Company · Aired July 13, 2026

Amanpour and Company aired dedicated coverage on family killings, featuring psychologist Doreen Dodgen-Magee (whose sister-in-law and nieces were murdered in a DV incident). Central framing: US homicide rates are at all-time low but DV deaths have stayed persistently high. Dodgen-Magee argues these crimes are "predictable and preventable." National-media validation of the DV-is-a-distinct-crisis narrative that has been building through the CBS News series, FBI special report, and The 19th investigation.

11 Federal: OVW continues FY26 NOFO postings through July; FY25 backlog structurally unresolved

DOJ / OVW / grants.gov · Ongoing through July 2026

Continued FY26 NOFO postings build on June momentum (STOP Formula Grant Program ~\$173.3M, Financial Assistance for Victims Initiative, Transitional Housing). FY25 \$150M+ backlog referenced in The 19th's May 28 investigative report remains structurally unresolved. House Bipartisan Working Group on DV letter to DOJ (March 6) remains publicly unanswered. Trump FY27 budget proposal continues to include ~\$208M OVW cut. October 1, 2026 statutory FY25 distribution deadline is 10 weeks out.

12 Colorado LAP implementation planning begins — AG training development underway

Colorado AG's Office / CO Coalition Against Domestic Violence · Ongoing July 2026

Following Gov. Polis' June 3 signing of HB26-1009 (Colorado Mandatory Lethality Assessment Act), the CO AG's office has begun mandatory training development in coordination with the state DV coalition. Effective date remains July 1, 2027; 12-month implementation runway. 44 CO counties already using LAP voluntarily since 2020 need to align with mandatory statewide standard by effective date. Priority Forseti outreach window for CO agency, CCADV-CO, and CO OAG conversations.

13 LA Rams OT Alaric Jackson — case remains pending through July

NFL.com / OutKick · Case pending following June 9 arrest

Jackson, arrested June 9 by LAPD for felony DV charge, was the Rams' starting LT for the past three seasons. Case remained in early proceedings through July. Rams held mandatory minicamp June 15–16 amid the fallout; training camp opens late July. The third active NFL DV case entering training camp without formal charging or resolution.

14 Arizona HB 2995 "Alec and Lydia Act" — first weeks of implementation

AZ Governor's Office / heyannette.com / Arizona family courts · Effective immediately since June 22, 2026

Effective immediately upon Gov. Hobbs' June 22 signature. AZ family court judges have been operating under new ARS 25-403.03 procedures since late June. First month of implementation ongoing; no material case-law developments to date. Continuing item for monitoring in Q3 briefs.

15 Bellevue WA cold-case DV murder arrest: arraignment proceedings continue

FOX 13 Seattle / King County Insider / Seattle Times · Follow-up from June 30, 2026 arrest

30-year-old husband arrested June 30 for the October 27, 2025 strangulation death of his wife (initially treated as a "suspicious death" and reclassified after King County ME strangulation ruling). \$5M bail; first-degree homicide charge. Arraignment proceedings continued through July with no case-terminating rulings. Continuing case; illustrates value of forensic follow-through in initially ambiguous DV cases.

DV in Professional Sports

July 2026 was the "waiting month" for NFL DV cases. Three pending cases (Jacobs/Packers, Cooper/Broncos, Jackson/Rams) entered training camp season without formal resolution. Historical baseline: NFL athletes have a DV arrest rate 55.4% higher than the general population; NBA athletes 38.2% higher (per academic research). July activity fits the sustained pattern.

- NFL
- **Jonathon Cooper (Denver Broncos, LB)** — Motions hearing July 6; jury trial scheduled July 22 in Douglas County Court. Broncos training camp opens ~July 25. Faces misdemeanor DV and criminal mischief charges (June 4 arrest) plus additional DV, harassment, and protective-order-violation charges (June 11 second arrest).
 - **Josh Jacobs (Green Bay Packers, RB)** — Brown County DA confirmed July 23 investigation "still open." Practiced at Packers training camp opening July 29. Packers GM confirmed full training camp participation. No charges filed 60+ days after May 26 arrest.
 - **Alaric Jackson (LA Rams, OT)** — June 9 arrest still pending through July. Case in early stages; Rams training camp opens late July.
 - **Tyreek Hill (Miami Dolphins, WR)** — May 2026 civil suit still active. No July developments.
 - **Rashee Rice (Kansas City Chiefs, WR)** — April 2026 \$1M civil suit still active. No July developments.
 - **Zachariah Branch (Atlanta Falcons, WR)** — Charges dropped in July per Pro Football Rumors reporting (context item).
 - **James Pearce Jr. (Atlanta Falcons, LB)** — Pretrial diversion period continues through six-month clean-record window.

- MLB · NBA · NHL · MLS · WNBA
- **MLB:** No new active-player DV arrests surfaced in July. eyeblack's May 8 investigative report on MLB's Clevinger investigation continues as ongoing scrutiny.
 - **NBA / NHL / MLS / WNBA:** No new July 2026 active-player DV arrests surfaced.

Cross-league observation: July's pattern — three simultaneous pending NFL cases entering training camp without resolution — is the story. Not any single new arrest. This pattern raises the same question the eyeblack Clevinger report raised for MLB: whether league policy enforcement matches league policy text. The Cooper trial (July 22) provides the first legal-outcome data point of the three; the Jacobs case timing (DA investigation approaching 3 months) will draw increasing media scrutiny in August.

Statistical Snapshot

2 OIDV arrests in July (LVMPD Wheeler, Florence AL Belew)	9 Cumulative OIDV arrests May–July 2026	3 NFL DV cases entering training camp unresolved	60+ Days since Jacobs arrest with no charging decision
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Other notable counts and figures:

- **2 LVMPD OIDV arrests in 15 days** — Jordan (June 19), Wheeler (July 4). Atypical concentration.
- **2 Mesa County / GJPD serious DV strangulation arrests in ~60 days** — Abbott (May 20–21), Kiefer (July 26).

- **~10 weeks** until October 1, 2026 statutory FY25 OVW distribution deadline.
- **7 state DV laws enacted or advanced YTD 2026** — WV, HI (May enrollment + July signing), FL, SC, CO, AZ. Above prior-year comparable pace.
- **4 mandatory-LAP states** confirmed: FL, CT, CO (effective July 2027), MD (origin state). Plus VA, OK, UT with active statewide implementation.
- **12 months** until Colorado HB26-1009 effective date (July 1, 2027). Implementation planning underway.
- **~5 major DV homicides or near-homicides** covered in national/regional press in July window (Elko, Grand Junction, Portland, Lewisville, Bellevue continuing).
- **NBA DV arrest rate 38.2% higher** and **NFL DV arrest rate 55.4% higher** than general population (unchanged academic baseline).

Looking Ahead — August 2026 Priorities

Track: Cooper trial outcome and NFL discipline

Douglas County Court trial began July 22. Verdict outcome will shape NFL personal conduct policy response for Cooper and set precedent for how leagues handle protective-order-violation charges within the same reporting window as underlying DV arrest.

Watch: Josh Jacobs DA charging decision (still pending)

Investigation 60+ days old at July 31. Will approach 100-day threshold in August. Continued delay is itself becoming a story. Wisconsin case — relevant to Forseti's WI/MNADV deployment context.

Federal: FY25 OVW backlog resolution or continued deadlock

October 1, 2026 deadline is 60 days out at end of August. Continued deadlock will trigger escalating advocacy pressure and likely additional investigative journalism. Watch for Congressional oversight movement.

Watch: State-level effective dates for enacted 2026 laws

FL HB 277 effective July 1 (Sixth Judicial Circuit e-monitoring pilot underway). HI HB 1959 effective June 29 already. WV Joanna Phillips Act active. Watch for early implementation reporting from FL DCF / FL Partnership to End DV.

Monitor: Colorado LAP implementation planning

12 months to CO HB26-1009 effective date. AG training development ongoing; state coalition coordination active. Priority Forseti outreach opportunity for CO agencies, CCADV-CO, and CO OAG.

Upcoming August event: NDAA 2026 DV Conference

Aug 25–27 in Nashville. Stalking, Strangulation, and Cyber Harassment focus. Prosecutors, LE, victim advocates, CBOs. CLE-eligible. One of the largest DV-specific professional gatherings of the year.

Watch: Continued OIDV pattern

Nine OIDV arrests across May, June, July is a sustained pattern. Watch for further LVMPD activity given the June/July twin-arrest cluster. Departmental policy changes or public commitments from agencies with multiple OIDV incidents would be a leading indicator.

Track: Bellevue WA cold-case proceedings

First-degree homicide case with \$5M bail; expected to continue through August. Precedent-setting for prosecutions of DV homicides initially treated as ambiguous deaths.

Sources Scanned

General news: CBS News, NBC News, PBS (Amanpour and Company), KOLO 8 News, KOLD, WAFF, Portland.gov / Portland PB, FOX 13 Seattle, King County Insider, Seattle Times, News3LV, FOX5 Vegas, Las Vegas Sun, City of Grand Junction, WTMJ, NewsOn6, The Westerly Sun · **LE trade press:** Police1, Police Chief Magazine (IACP), Officer.com, PERF, NFL.com · **Sports coverage:** ESPN, CBS Sports, The Athletic, NBC Sports, Yahoo Sports, OutKick, Fox News Sports, Pro Football Rumors, Denver Sports, ClutchPoints, Yardbarker, SportDA, eyeball · **Policy & legislation:** congress.gov, LegiScan (multi-state), Colorado General Assembly, Colorado AG's Office, AZ Governor's Office, Hawaii Office of the Governor, FL Senate, state AG press release pages · **Courts:** Douglas County Court CO, Lauderdale County SO, Clark County Detention Center, Mesa County Detention Facility, Elko PD, Brown County DA WI, FVAP, CourtListener · **Federal:** FBI UCR, OVW, NIJ, BJS, DOJ, grants.gov, fundsforNGOs · **Coalitions / advocacy:** NCADV, NCCADV, TCFV, SCADAVSA, MNADV, NNEDV, VAWnet, FPEDV, WSCADV, OPDV, CCADV (CT), CCADV (CO), UDVC, PCADV, Domestic Violence Homicide Help, Everytown Research · **Investigative journalism:** The Marshall Project, The 19th, CT Mirror, Ms. Magazine, The Trace · **Research databases:** Henry A. Wallace Police Crime Database (BGSU), Oxford Academic, PubMed · **Tech & innovation:** GovTech, StateScoop · **Professional events:** NDAA, IACP, PERF.

This brief is internal to Forseti LLC. Stories are summarized for situational awareness; full reporting is at the linked sources. Scope is national in nature, not limited to states with active Forseti deployments. Story selection prioritizes US incidents and developments dated within the July 1–31, 2026 reporting period. Per Forseti style, "survivor" is used in place of "victim" except in established titles (e.g., victim services unit) and direct quotes/citations. Monthly briefs synthesize weekly reporting into thematic and analytical layering; for granular incident-by-incident detail, refer to weekly briefs.