



CENTER FOR  
COMMUNITY CRIMINOLOGY  
AND RESEARCH



**OSC Working Paper 4**  
**Domestic Violence**  
**Trends**  
**City of Memphis**  
**January-June, 2006-2009**

July 2009



---

**OSC Working Paper 4**  
**Domestic Violence**  
**Trends**  
**City of Memphis**  
**January-June, 2006-2009**

July 2009

---

Prepared by:

Richard Janikowski, Director  
Lindsay Reed, Research Associate

**Research &  
Evaluation  
Group**



Research and Evaluation Group  
Center for Community Criminology and Research  
University of Memphis  
600 Jefferson Ave., Suite 400  
Memphis, TN 38105

Phone: (901) 678-8157  
Fax: (901) 678-1483  
<http://cjip.memphis.edu>

---

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION ..... 3

THE CENTER FOR COMMUNITY CRIMINOLOGY AND RESEARCH ..... 3

OPERATION SAFE COMMUNITY..... 3

OFFENSE DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS REPORT ..... 3

**Definitions for Domestic Violence Offense Categories** ..... 4

**Definitions for General Offense Categories** ..... 5

CAUTION AGAINST COMPARING CRIME DATA ACROSS JURISDICTIONS ..... 6

CAUTION IN INTERPRETING PERCENT CHANGE..... 6

TABLES AND FIGURES ..... 7

**I. Trends In The Number Of Domestic Violence Offenses** ..... 7

**II. Annual Percentage Change In The Number Of Domestic Violence Offenses** ..... 10

**III. Percent Change Domestic Violence Offenses**..... 13

**IV. Domestic Violence Offenses As Percentage Of All Relevant Offenses**..... 16

TABLES

Table 1- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSES ..... 7

Table 2- ANNUAL PERCENTAGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSES ..... 10

Table 3- PERCENT CHANGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSES ..... 13

Table 4- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSES AS PERCENTAGE OF APPLICABLE  
OFFENSE CATEGORIES ..... 16

FIGURES

Figure 1- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED MURDER ..... 7

Figure 2-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGGRAVATED ASSAULT..... 8

Figure 3- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BURGLARY ..... 8

Figure 4-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SIMPLE ASSAULT ..... 9

Figure 5-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED OFFENSES..... 9

Figure 6-ANNUAL PERCENTAGE-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED MURDER 10

Figure 7-ANNUAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT..... 11

Figure 8-ANNUAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BURGLARY  
..... 11

Figure 9- ANNUAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SIMPLE  
ASSAULT..... 12

Figure 10- ANNUAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED  
OFFENSES ..... 12

Figure 11- PERCENT CHNAGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED MURDER 13



Figure 12- PERCENT CHANGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGGRAVATED ASSAULT..... 14

Figure 13- PERCENT CHANGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BURGLARY..... 14

Figure 14- PERCENT CHANGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SIMPLE ASSAULT ... 15

Figure 15- PERCENT CHANGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED OFFENSES ..... 15

Figure 16- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED MURDER AS PERCENTAGE OF ALL MURDER..... 17

Figure 17- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGGRAVATED ASSAULT AS PERCENTAGE OF ALL AGGRAVATED ASSAULT..... 17

Figure 18- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BURGLARY AS PERECNTAGE OF ALL BURGLARY..... 18

Figure 19- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SIMPLE ASSAULT AS PERCENTAGE OF ALL SIMPLE ASSAULT ..... 18



## **OSC Working Paper 3: Domestic Violence Trends City of Memphis January-June, 2006-2009**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The University of Memphis' Center for Community Criminology and Research has developed a series of semi-annual reports examining domestic violence trends using data from the Memphis Police Department's Visions Records Management System. These reports examine domestic violence in four categories: (1) the trend over time in the number of reported domestic violence offenses, (2) the annual percentage change (allowing examination of annual variations within the city) in the number of reported domestic violence offenses, and (3) the percent change from 2006 (the baseline year used for Operation Safe Community analysis) in the number of reported domestic violence offenses, and (4) the percentage of all applicable offenses (murder, aggravated assault, residential burglary, and simple assault) offenses that involve domestic violence. This report examines reported domestic violence trends for the offenses of murder, aggravated assault, burglary, and simple assault in City of Memphis reported to the Memphis Police Department for January 1-June 30, 2006-2009.

### **THE CENTER FOR COMMUNITY CRIMINOLOGY AND RESEARCH**

Established in 2000, the University of Memphis' Center for Community Criminology and Research provides research, technical support, information, and training on the formation, implementation, and evaluation of criminal justice policy. Center staff is involved in a variety of projects involving comprehensive research support to governmental agencies and community organizations throughout the Mid-South region.

### **OPERATION SAFE COMMUNITY**

Operation Safe Community (OSC) is a historic and ambitious crime abatement initiative developed by the top government and law enforcement leaders from across Shelby County in partnership with the private sector and community-based leaders. Responding to the surge in crime plaguing the community, law enforcement leaders announced the Strategic Plan in 2006 at a Crime Summit attended by over 400 of Shelby County's governmental, business and community leaders. Its ambitious, but achievable goal, "*quite simply, is to make Memphis-Shelby County one of the safest communities of its size in the nation by 2011.*" The Strategic Plan is "both a roadmap and a call to action for achieving that goal." Consisting of 15 research-backed strategies, the Strategic Plan provides the "roadmap" for addressing crime in Shelby County. The University of Memphis' Center for Community Criminology and Research provides research and evaluation support for OSC and facilitates integration and collaboration among governmental agencies and community organizations implementing strategies.

### **OFFENSE DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS REPORT**

It is important to understand that this data only represents crimes known to law enforcement. The domestic violence offenses examined in this report are Murders related to domestic violence, Aggravated Assault-DV, Burglary-DV, and Simple Assault-DV.



These offenses are defined below. For purposes of exploring the extent to which domestic violence comprises a substantial percentage of the more general applicable offense categories (murder, aggravated assault, residential burglary, and simple assault) definitions for the general crime categories are also provided. The definitions are drawn from the Memphis Police Department's *CompStat/TIBRS Report Manual* (2007.)

### ***Definitions for Domestic Violence Offense Categories***

**Domestic Violence Related Murder** — The willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another. (An attempted Murder should be reported as an Aggravated Assault.) Suicides, accidental deaths, assaults to murder, traffic fatalities, and attempted murders are not classified as Murder and Non-negligent Man-slaughter. Assaults to murder and attempted murders are classified as Aggravated Assaults.

As a general rule, any death due to injuries received in a fight, argument, quarrel, assault, or commission of a crime is classified in this category. Although offenders may be charged with lesser offenses, e.g., manslaughter, if the killing was “willful” or intentional it must be reported as Murder and Non-negligent Manslaughter. The findings of a court, medical examiner’s inquest, etc., do not affect the reporting of offenses in this category; these are law enforcement statistics.

A domestic violence related murder is one in which the person(s) are involved in any of the following relationships: adult household members, spouse or former spouse, parents or guardian, parents of child in common, co-habitated within the last year or engaged in sexual relationship within the last six months.

**Aggravated Assault-DV**—An unlawful attack by one person upon another wherein the offender uses a weapon or displays it in a threatening manner, or the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury involving apparent broken bones, loss of teeth, possible internal injury, severe laceration, or loss of consciousness and the person(s) are involved in any of the following relationships: adult household members, spouse or former spouse, parents or guardian, parents of child in common, co-habitated within the last year or engaged in sexual relationship within the last six months.

Aggravated Assault includes: assaults or attempts to kill or murder; poisoning; assault with a dangerous or deadly weapon; maiming, mayhem, assault with explosives; and assault with disease (as in cases when the offender is aware that he/she is infected with a deadly disease and deliberately attempts to inflict the disease by biting, spitting, etc.). All assaults by one person upon another with the intent to kill, maim, or inflict severe bodily injury with the use of any dangerous weapon are classified as Aggravated Assault. It is not necessary that injury result from an aggravated assault when a gun, knife, or other weapon is used which could cause serious personal injury. By definition, there can be no attempted assaults.



**Burglary-Residential-DV (breaking or entering)**— Burglary /DV (Domestic Violence) (TIBRS Code 220) —The unlawful entry into a structure, which is designed for permanent dwelling, with the intent to commit a felony or a theft and the person(s) are involved in any of the following relationships: adult household members, spouse or former spouse, parents or guardian, parents of child in common, co-habituated within the last year or engaged in sexual relationship within the last six months.

**Simple Assault-DV-** An unlawful physical attack by one person upon another where neither the offender displays a weapon, nor the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury involving apparent broken bones, loss of teeth, possible internal injury, severe laceration, or loss of consciousness and the person(s) are involved in any of the following relationships: adult household members, spouse or former spouse, parents or guardian, parents of child in common, co-habituated within the last year or engaged in sexual relationship within the last six months.

### *Definitions for General Offense Categories*

**Murder** — The willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another. (An attempted Murder should be reported as an Aggravated Assault.) Suicides, accidental deaths, assaults to murder, traffic fatalities, and attempted murders are not classified as Murder and Non-negligent Man-slaughter. Assaults to murder and attempted murders are classified as Aggravated Assaults.

As a general rule, any death due to injuries received in a fight, argument, quarrel, assault, or commission of a crime is classified in this category. Although offenders may be charged with lesser offenses, e.g., manslaughter, if the killing was “willful” or intentional it must be reported as Murder and Non-negligent Manslaughter. The findings of a court, medical examiner’s inquest, etc., do not affect the reporting of offenses in this category; these are law enforcement statistics.

**Aggravated Assault** — An unlawful attack by one person upon another wherein the offender uses a weapon or displays it in a threatening manner, or the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury involving apparent broken bones, loss of teeth, possible internal injury, severe laceration, or loss of consciousness.

Aggravated Assault includes: assaults or attempts to kill or murder; poisoning; assault with a dangerous or deadly weapon; maiming, mayhem, assault with explosives; and assault with disease (as in cases when the offender is aware that he/she is infected with a deadly disease and deliberately attempts to inflict the disease by biting, spitting, etc.). All assaults by one person upon another with the intent to kill, maim, or inflict severe bodily injury with the use of any dangerous weapon are classified as Aggravated Assault. It is not necessary that injury result from an aggravated assault when a gun, knife, or



other weapon is used which could cause serious personal injury. By definition, there can be no attempted assaults.

**Simple Assault** — An unlawful physical attack by one person upon another where neither the offender displays a weapon, nor the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury involving apparent broken bones, loss of teeth, possible internal injury, severe laceration, or loss of consciousness.

#### **CAUTION AGAINST COMPARING CRIME DATA ACROSS JURISDICTIONS**

We recommend that readers of this report examine the UCR's caution against ranking cities when considering any comparative data analysis (please see, [http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2007/about/variables\\_affecting\\_crime.html](http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2007/about/variables_affecting_crime.html)). Many of the caveats contained in that discussion about the problems inherent in ranking cities are also applicable to any comparative analysis of crime rates and crime rate percent change (in particular, analysis involving change from year to year.)

#### **CAUTION IN INTERPRETING PERCENT CHANGE**

We also caution readers that in instances when the actual reported numbers in a crime category or offense category are small, percent change may be misleading. For example, if the total number of cases is 100, then each instance is equal to one percentage point; if the total number of cases is ten, the significance of each case is amplified by a factor of ten. It is suggested that percentages be viewed with caution when the sample size is less than thirty cases. ( See, Jack D. Fitzgerald and Steven M. Cox, *Research Methods and Statistics in Criminal Justice* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Group, 2002, p, 151.)



**TABLES AND FIGURES**

**I. Trends In The Number Of Domestic Violence Offenses**

**Table 1- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSES**

<b>Table 1: City of Memphis: Domestic Violence Offenses</b>				
<b>January 1-June 30, 2006-2009</b>				
Offense	Year			
	2006	2007	2008	2009
Murder-DV	17	10	17	9
Aggravated Assault-DV	922	993	982	1082
Burglary -DV	246	347	247	238
Simple Assault-DV	6008	5596	5959	6408
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7193</b>	<b>6946</b>	<b>7205</b>	<b>7737</b>

**Figure 1- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED MURDER**

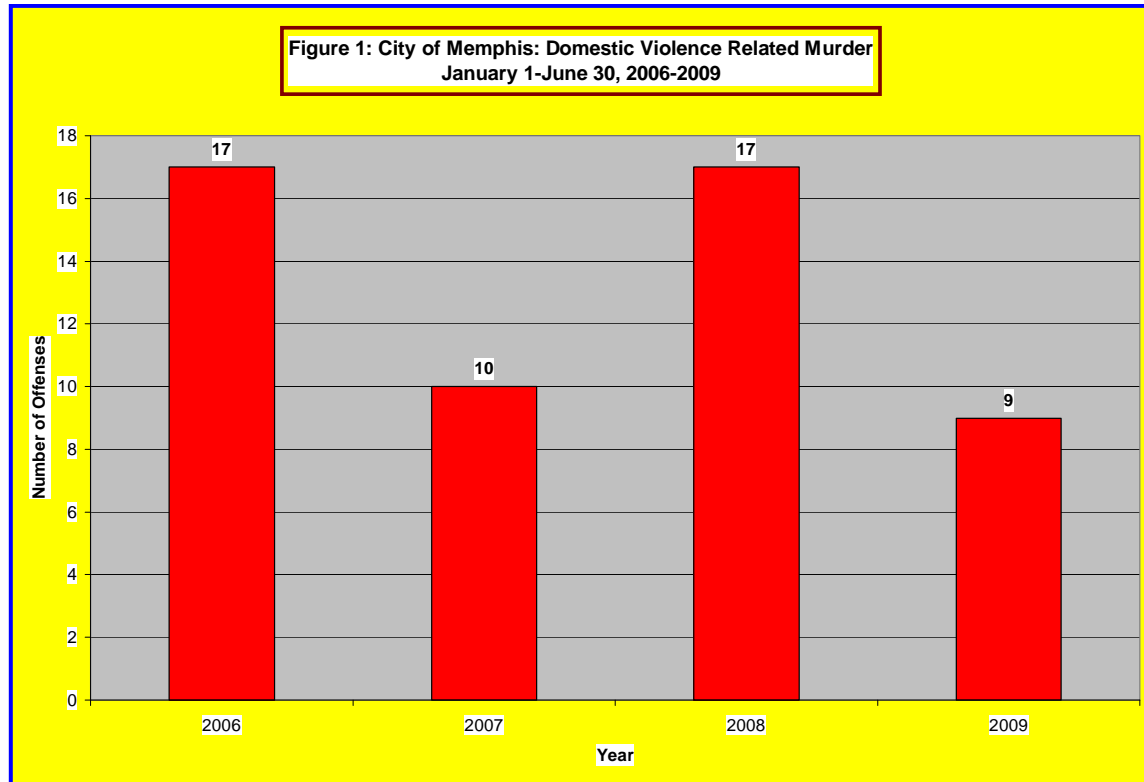


Figure 2-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

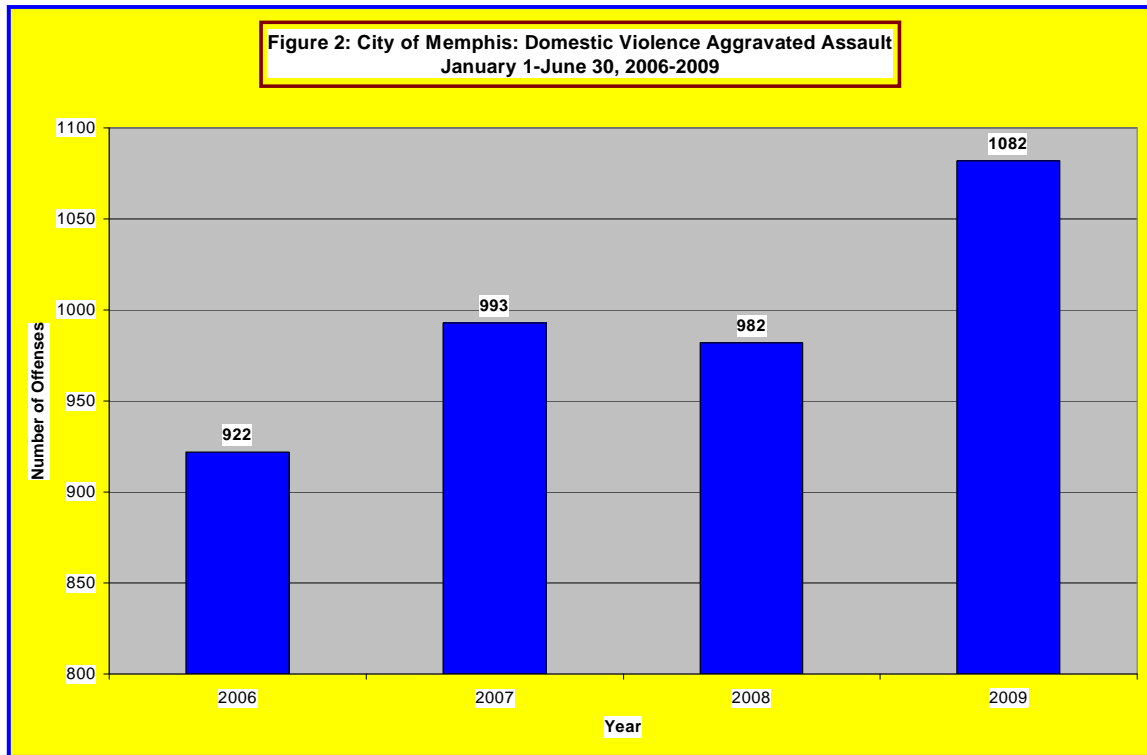


Figure 3- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BURGALRY

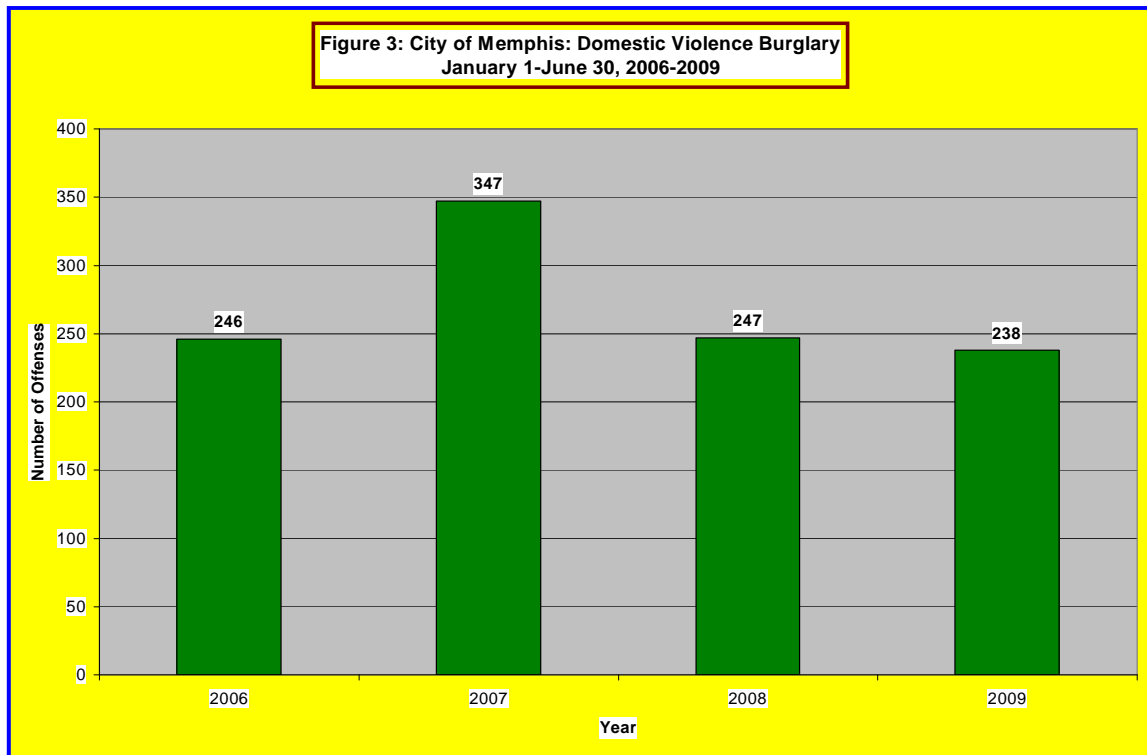


Figure 4-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SIMPLE ASSAULT

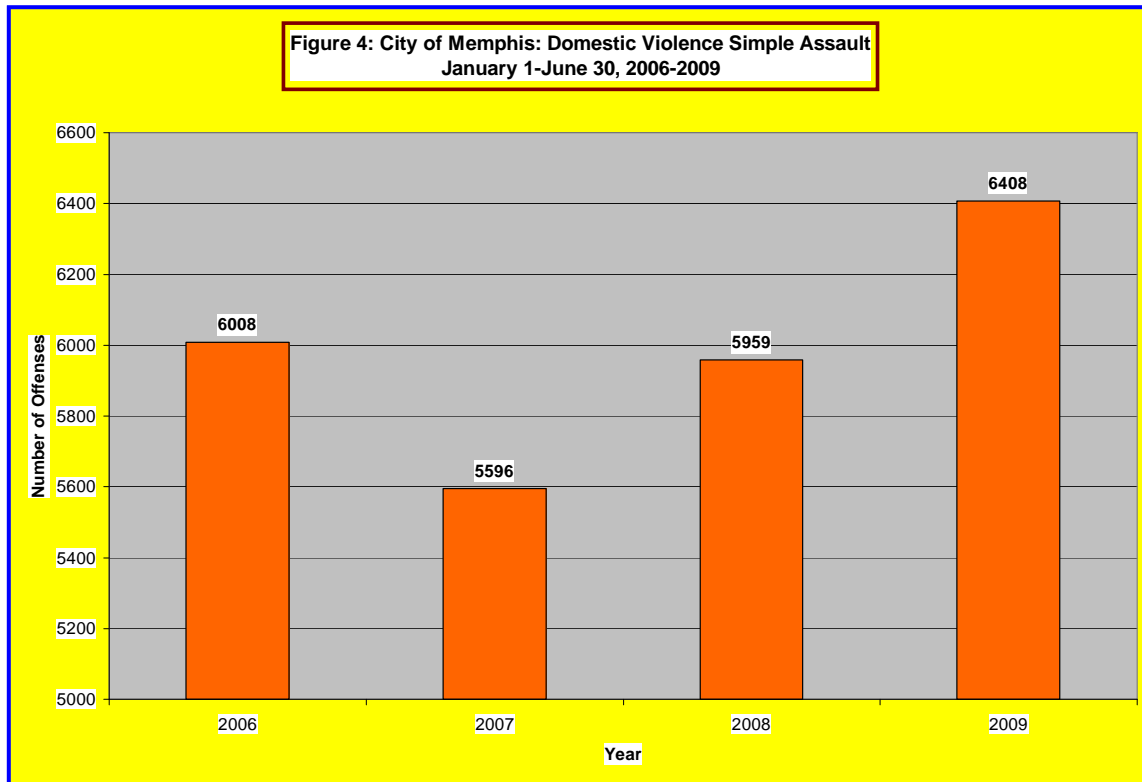
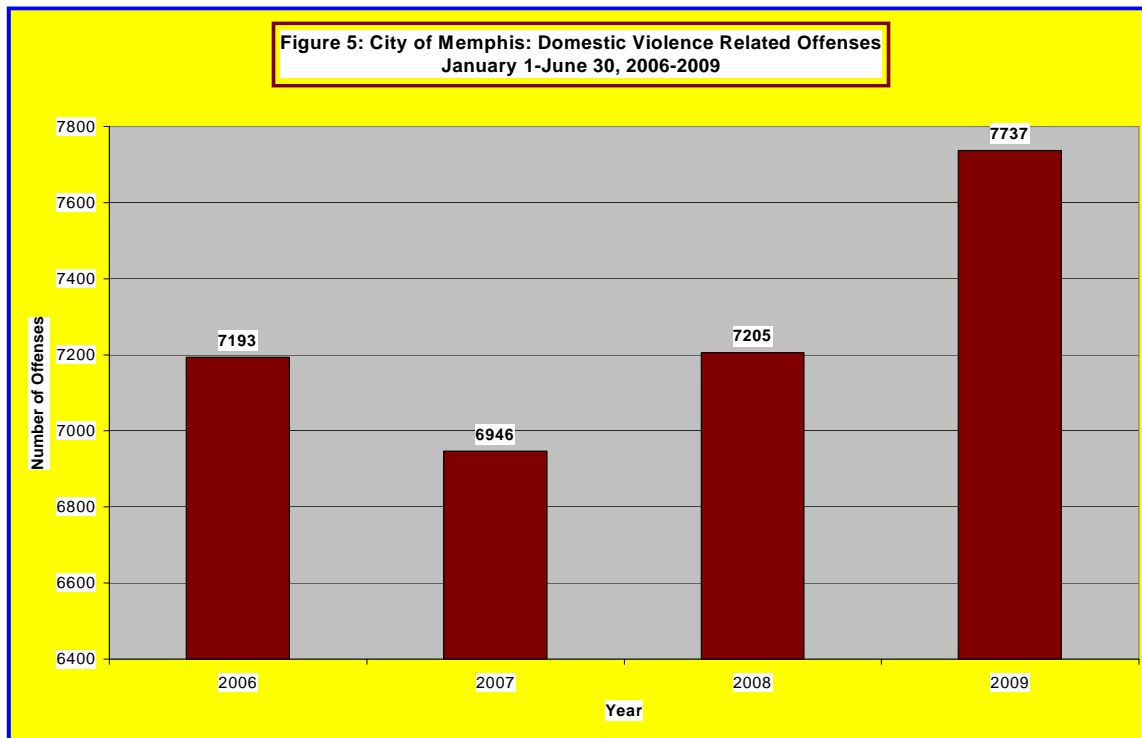


Figure 5-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED OFFENSES

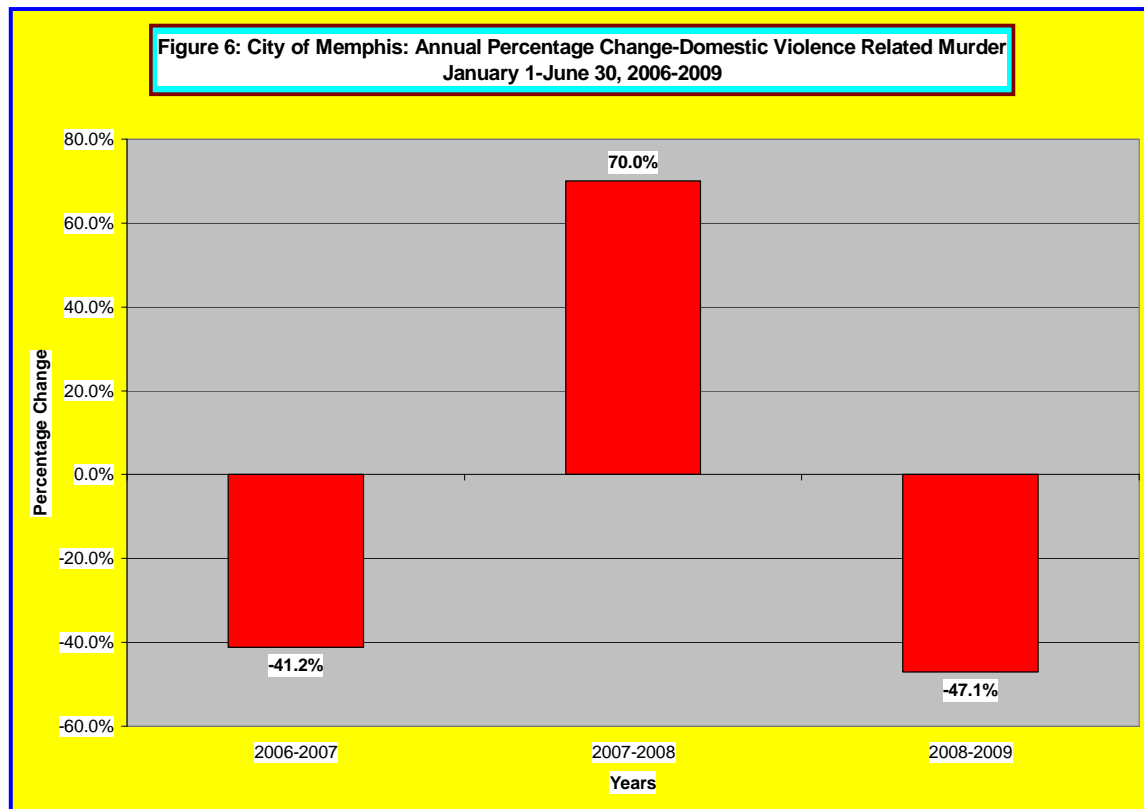


## II. Annual Percentage Change In The Number Of Domestic Violence Offenses

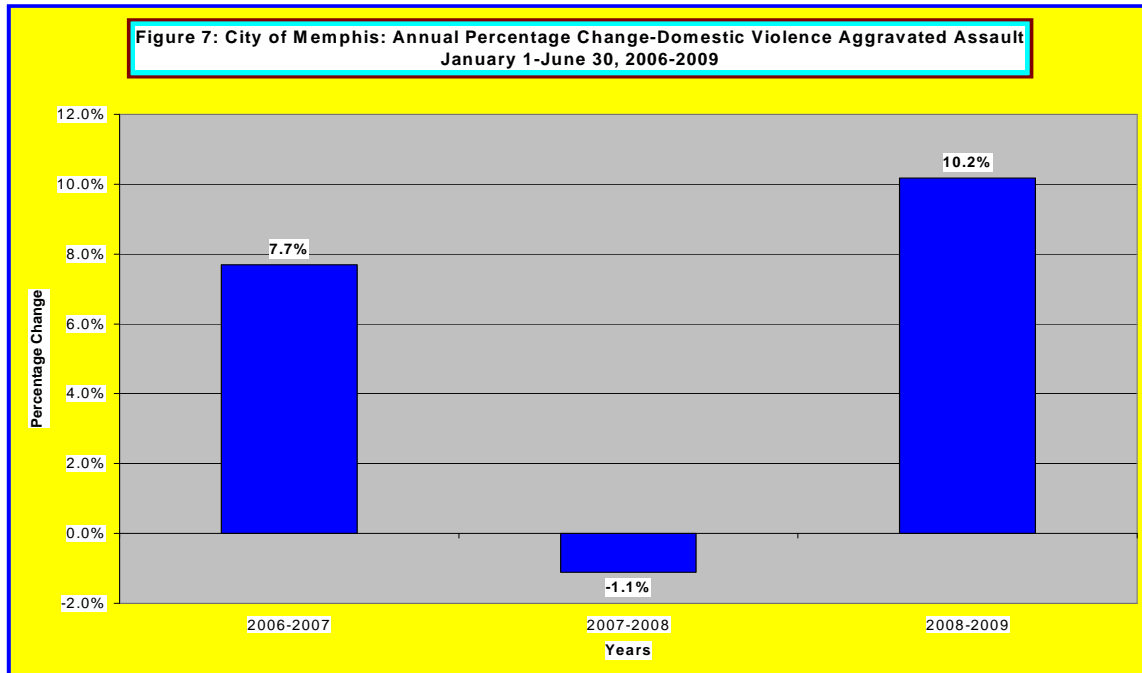
Table 2- ANNUAL PERCENTAGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSES

<b>Table 2: City of Memphis: Annual Percentage Change In Domestic Violence Offenses</b>			
<b>January 1-June 30, 2006-2009</b>			
Offense	Year		
	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Murder-DV	-41.2%	70.0%	-47.1%
Aggravated Assault-DV	7.7%	-1.1%	10.2%
Burglary -DV	41.1%	-28.8%	-3.6%
Simple Assault-DV	-6.9%	6.5%	7.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>-3.4%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>7.4%</b>

Figure 6-ANNUAL PERCENTAGE-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED MURDER



**Figure 7-ANNUAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGGRAVATED ASSAULT**



**Figure 8-ANNUAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BURGLARY**

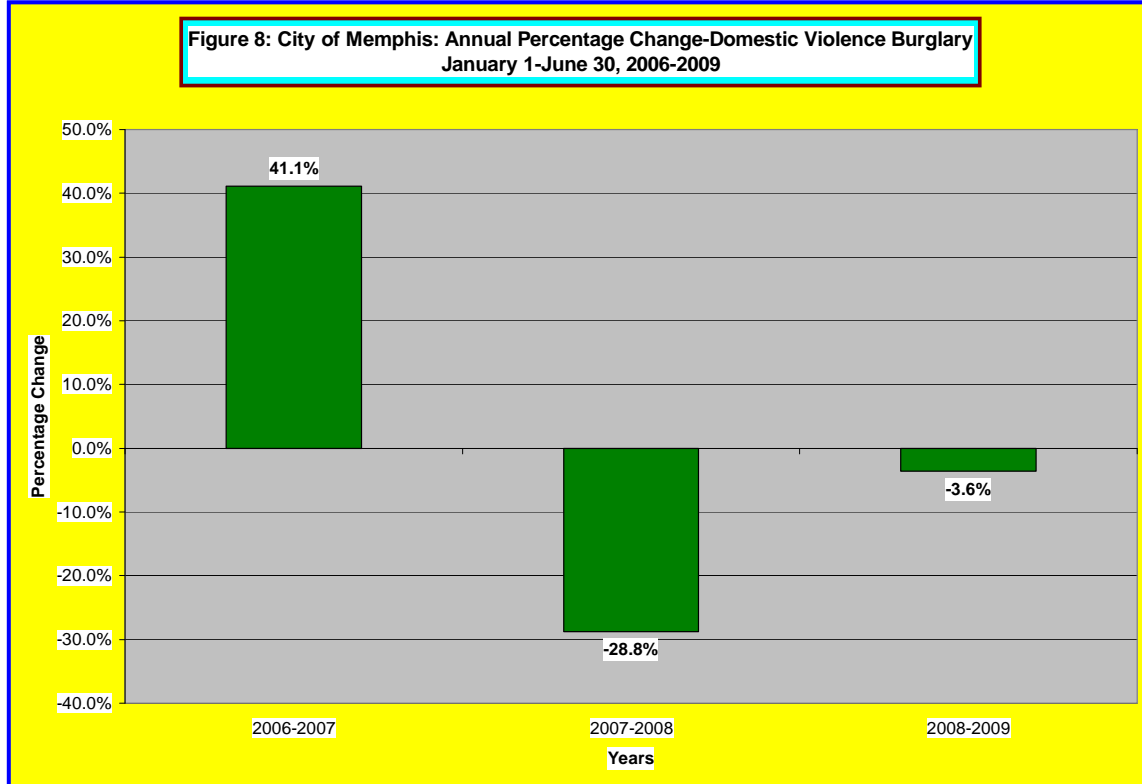


Figure 9- ANNUAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SIMPLE ASSAULT

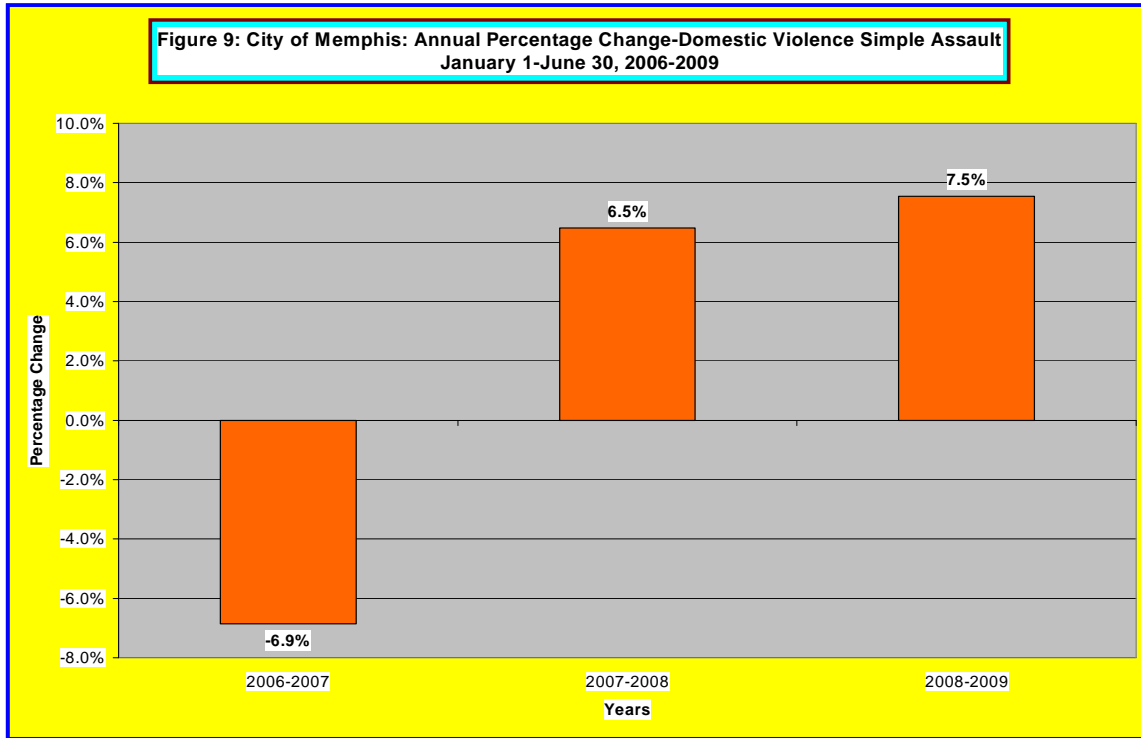
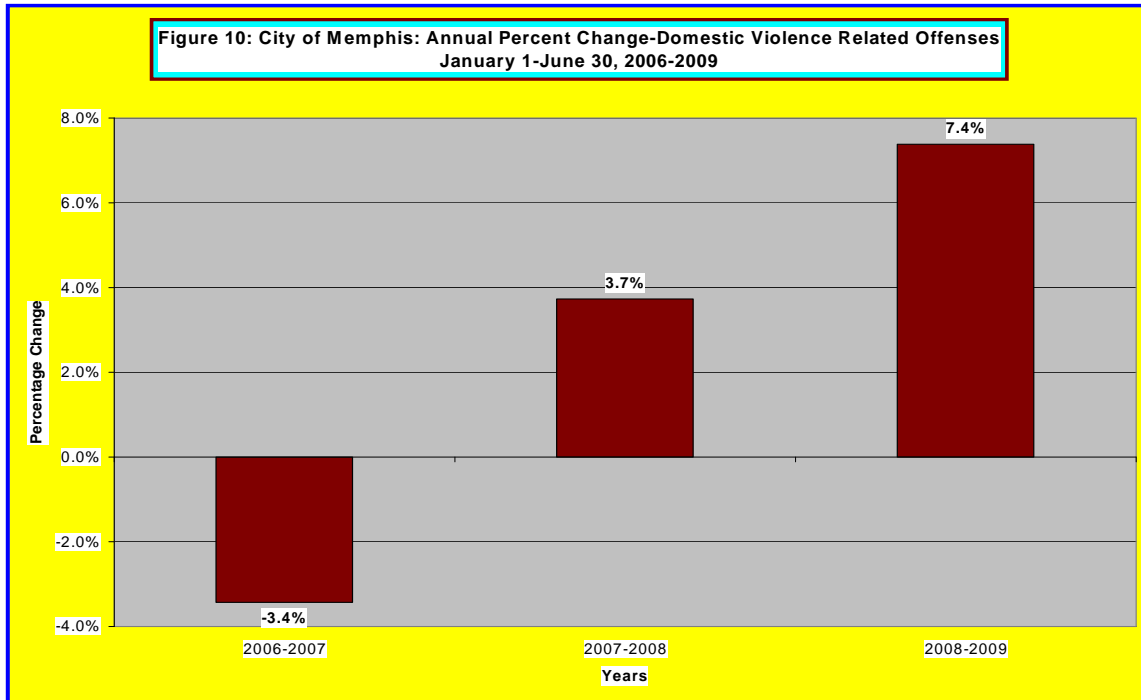


Figure 10- ANNUAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED OFFENSES



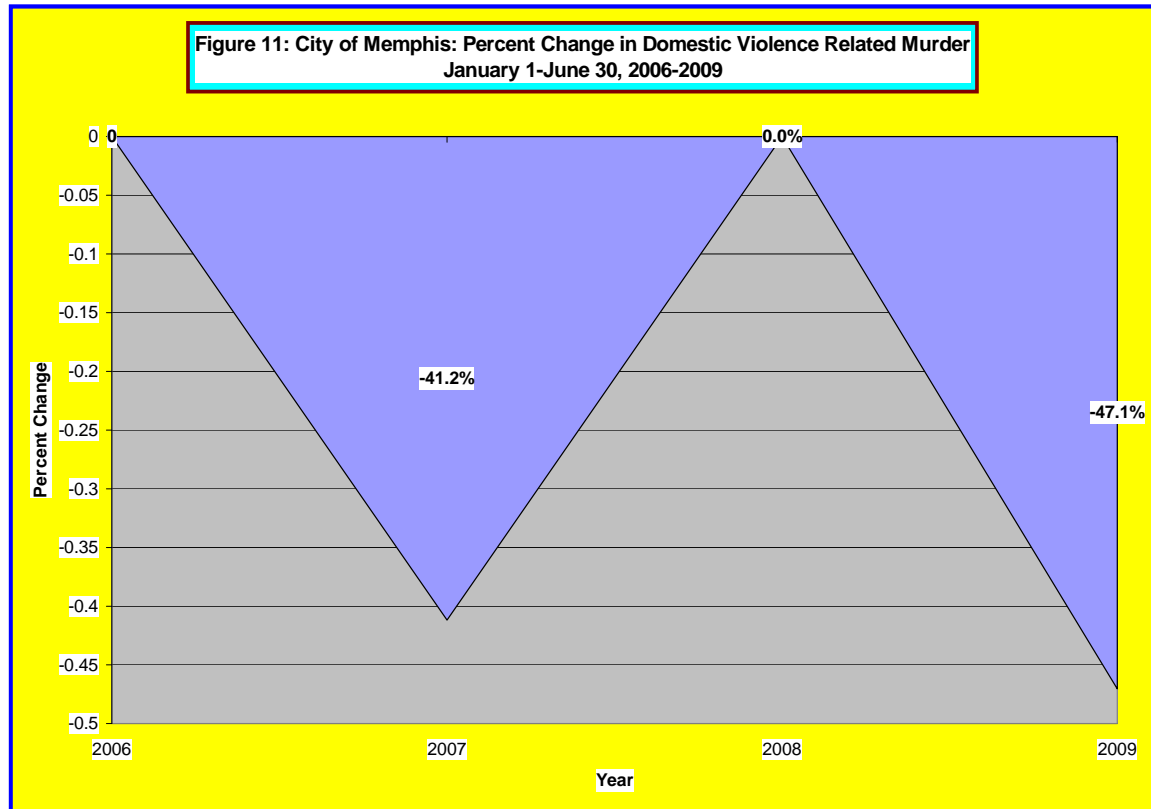
**III. Percent Change Domestic Violence Offenses**

**Table 3- PERCENT CHANGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSES**

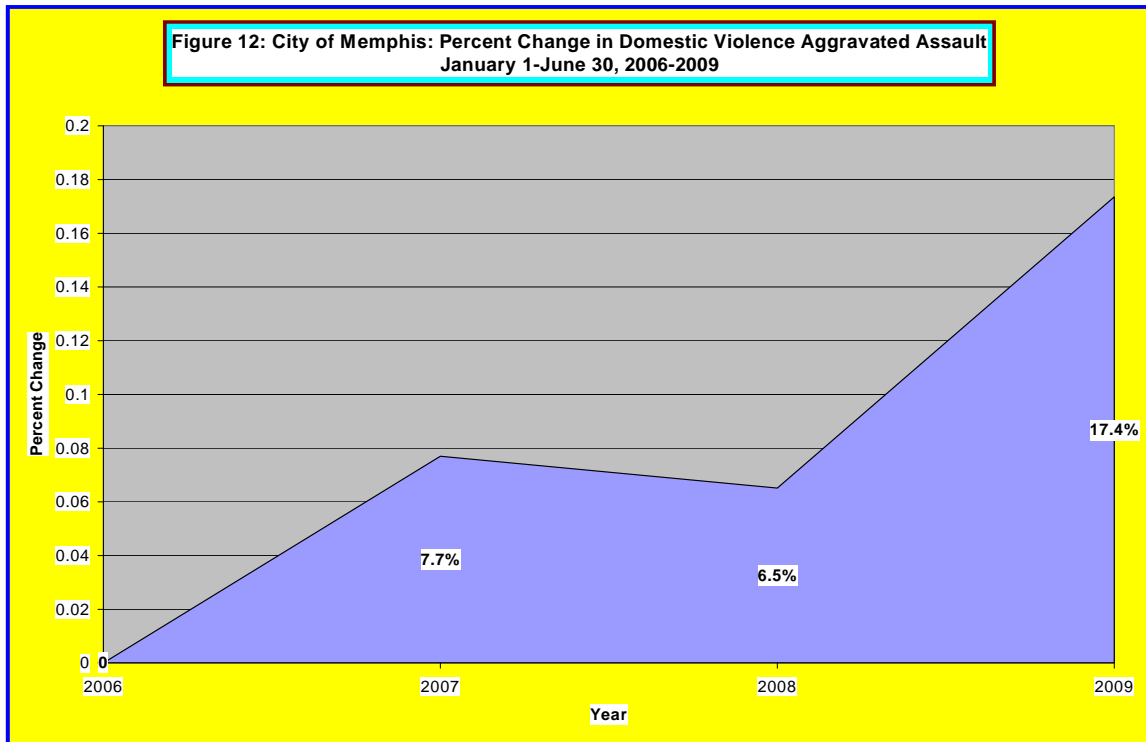
<b>Table 3: City of Memphis: Percent Change In Domestic Violence Offenses</b>				
<b>January-June, 2006-2009</b>				
Offense	Year			
	2006	2007	2008	2009
Murder-DV	Baseline	-41.2%	0.0%	-47.1%
Aggravated Assault-DV	Baseline	7.7%	6.5%	17.4%
Burglary -DV	Baseline	41.1%	0.4%	-3.3%
Simple Ass-DV	Baseline	-6.9%	-0.8%	6.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>-3.4%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>7.6%</b>

**Table 3-Percent Change in Domestic Violence Offenses**

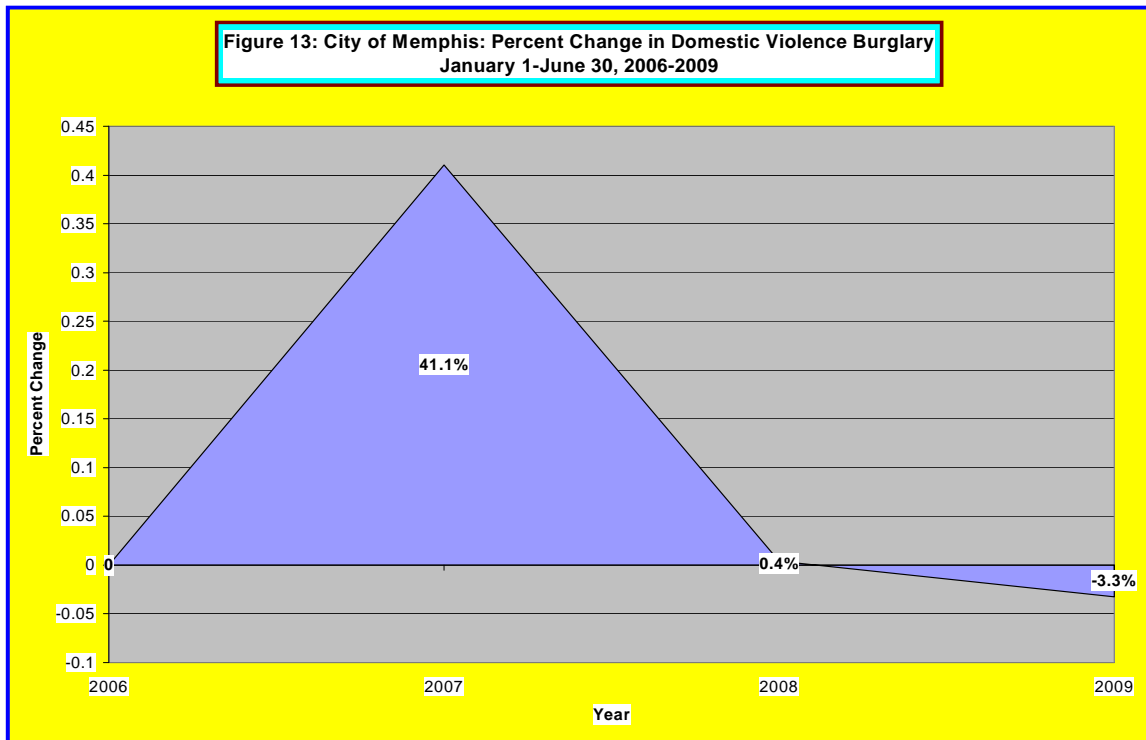
**Figure 11- PERCENT CHNAGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED MURDER**



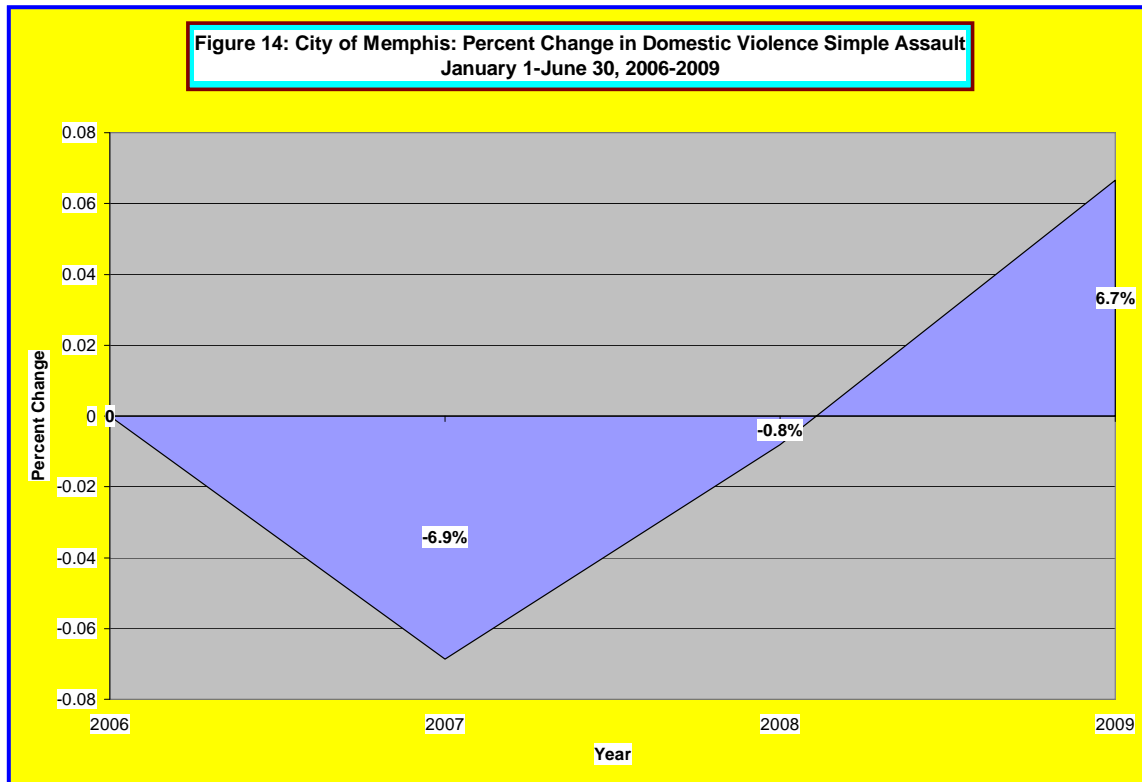
**Figure 12- PERCENT CHANGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGGRAVATED ASSAULT**



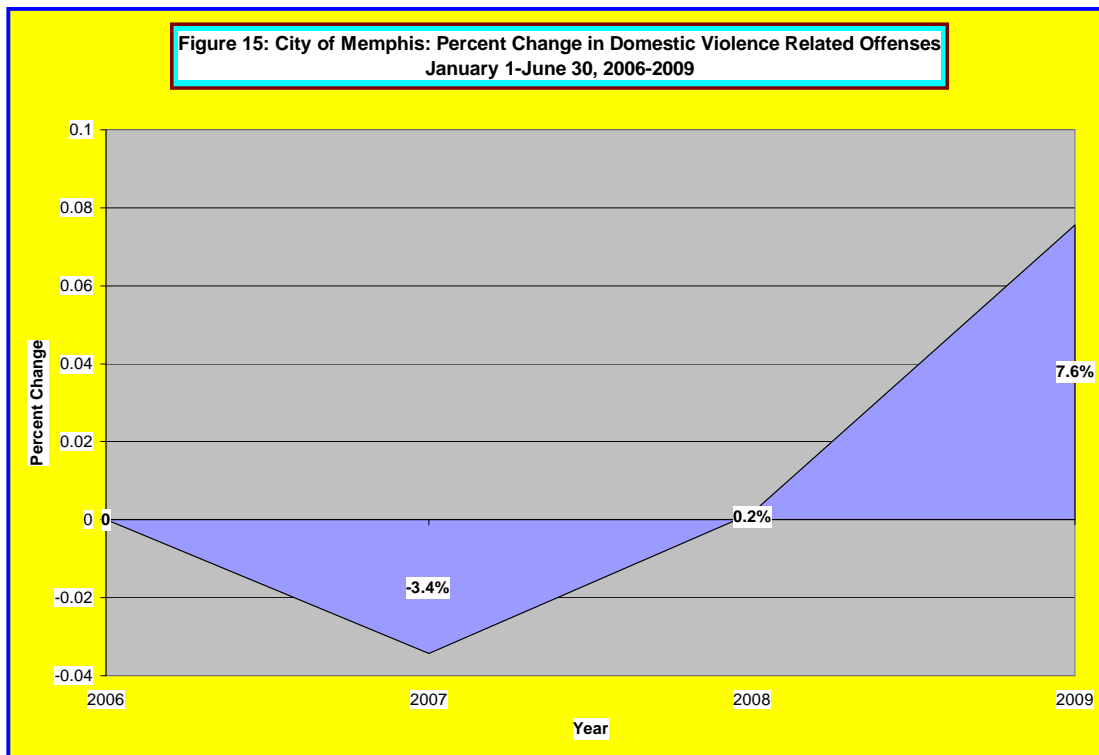
**Figure 13- PERCENT CHANGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BURGLARY**



**Figure 14- PERCENT CHANGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SIMPLE ASSAULT**



**Figure 15- PERCENT CHANGE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED OFFENSES**



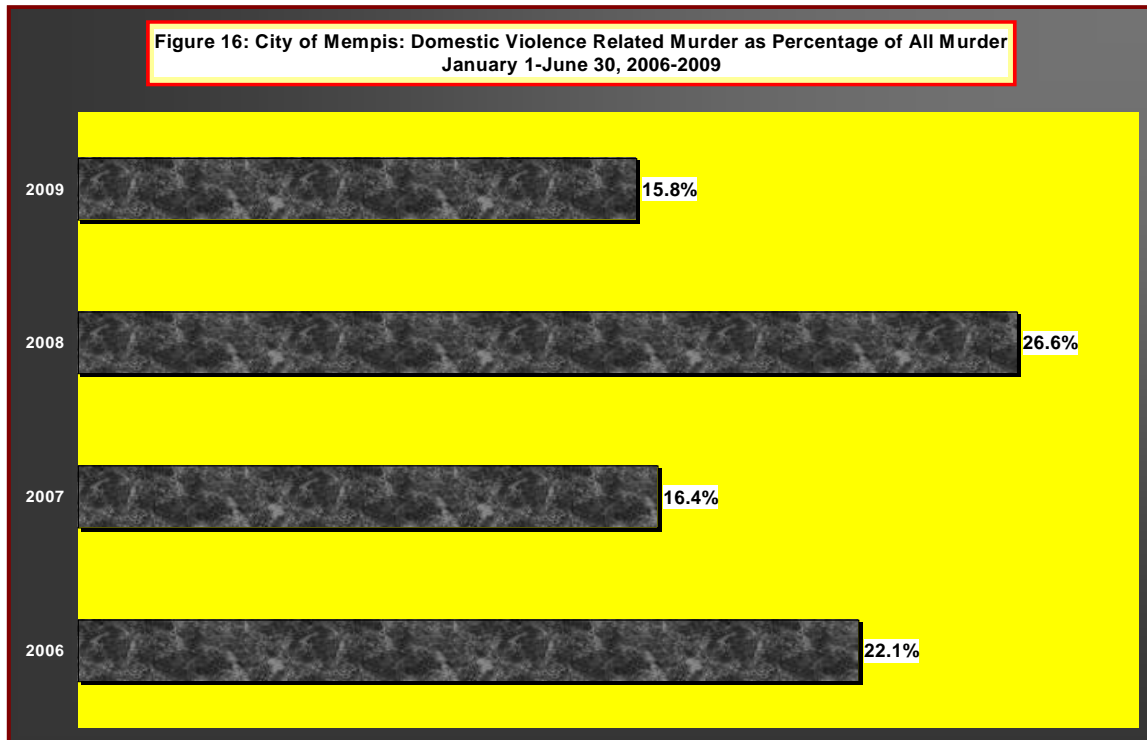
#### IV. Domestic Violence Offenses As Percentage Of All Relevant Offenses

**Table 4- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSES AS PERCENTAGE OF APPLICABLE OFFENSE CATEGORIES**

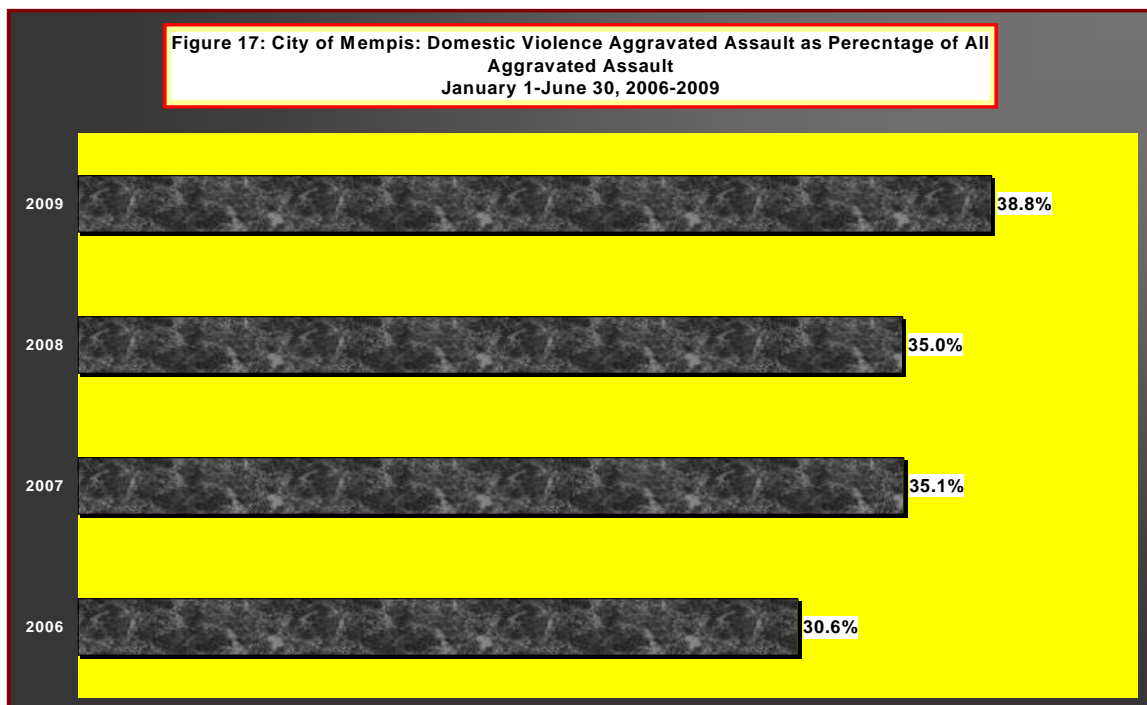
<b>CITY OF MEMPHIS: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSES AS PERCENTAGE OF APPLICABLE OFFENSE CATEGORIES</b>				
<b>January 1-June 30, 2006-2009</b>				
Offense	Year			
	2006	2007	2008	2009
Murder-DV	17	10	17	9
All Murder	77	61	64	57
Percentage of DV-Murder of All Murder	22.1%	16.4%	26.6%	15.8%
Aggravated Assault-DV	922	993	982	1082
All Aggravated Assault	3015	2831	2804	2787
Percentage of DV-Aggravated Assault of All Aggravated Assault	30.6%	35.1%	35.0%	38.8%
Burglary -DV	246	347	247	238
All Residential Burglary	5527	5462	5340	4770
Percentage of DV-Burglaries of All Residential Burglary	4.5%	6.4%	4.6%	5.0%
Simple Assault-DV	6008	5596	5959	6408
All Simple Assault	10392	10587	10657	10702
Percentage of DV-Simple Assault of All Simple Assault	57.8%	52.9%	55.9%	59.9%



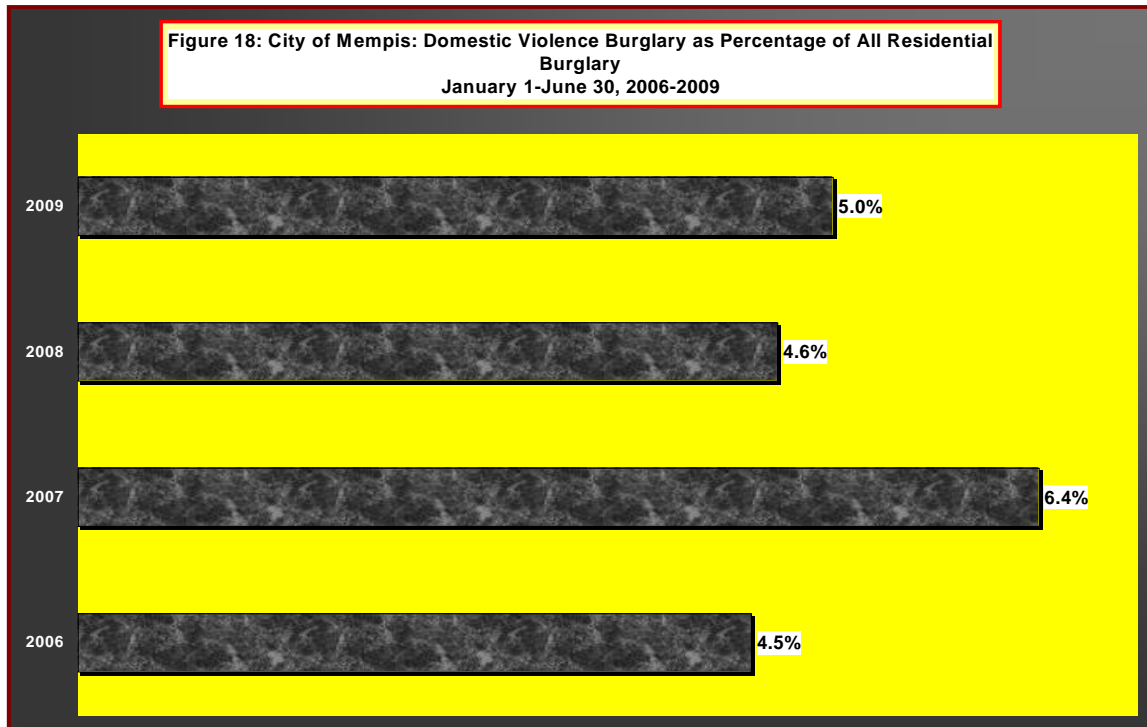
**Figure 16- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED MURDER AS PERCENTAGE OF ALL MURDER**



**Figure 17- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGGRAVATED ASSAULT AS PERCENTAGE OF ALL AGGRAVATED ASSAULT**



**Figure 18- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BURGLARY AS PERECNTAGE OF ALL BURGLARY**



**Figure 19- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SIMPLE ASSAULT AS PERCENTAGE OF ALL SIMPLE ASSAULT**

