



TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
CJIS Division, Statistical Analysis Center

LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED DEATHS 2019



Introduction

Annually, the TBI's Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division collects crime data through the Tennessee Incident Based Reporting system (TIBRS). However, Law Enforcement- Related Deaths fall outside the scope of TIBRS and are therefore collected in the Crimelnsight portal using the appropriate web entry utility.

According to T.C.A. § 38-10-102, Law enforcement-Related Deaths is defined as “the death of an individual in custody, whether in prison, in a jail or otherwise in the custody of law enforcement pursuant to an arrest or a transfer between institutions of any kind or; the death of an individual potentially resulting from an interaction with law enforcement, while the law enforcement officer is on duty or while the law enforcement officer is off duty but performing activities that are within the scope of the officer’s law enforcement duties.”

An Arrest Related Non-Forcible Death (ARNFD) is any death that is attributed to suicide, alcohol, drug intoxication, or medical conditions (i.e. cardiac arrest) that occurs during the process of arrest by or in the custody of state or local law enforcement personnel. Though ARNFDs are not common, they do fall within the scope of the “Law Enforcement Related Deaths” definition. However, these particular incidents are not reported in Crimelnsight, but are instead reported using a form found on the TBI website.

Scope of Study

For the purpose of this study, the TBI'S CJIS Division divided Law Enforcement Related Death data into three sections: Deadly Use of Force, Arrest-Related Non-forcible Deaths, and Deaths in Custody – all of which meet the T.C.A. § 38-10-102 definition.

Data presented in this study only represents numbers for calendar year 2019.

This report only contains information pertaining to deaths that occurred in the presence of law enforcement or deaths that occurred while in custody, such as in a local jail or prison.

Data in this study does not include occurrences where an officer fired his/her weapon in a situation which did not result in a death or when a subject sustained a serious bodily injury directly related to use of force by a law enforcement officer.

Additionally, this study does not contain deaths that occur in non-residential community-based programs run by jails, such as house arrest, work programs, community service, day reporting, or electronic monitoring.

Methodology

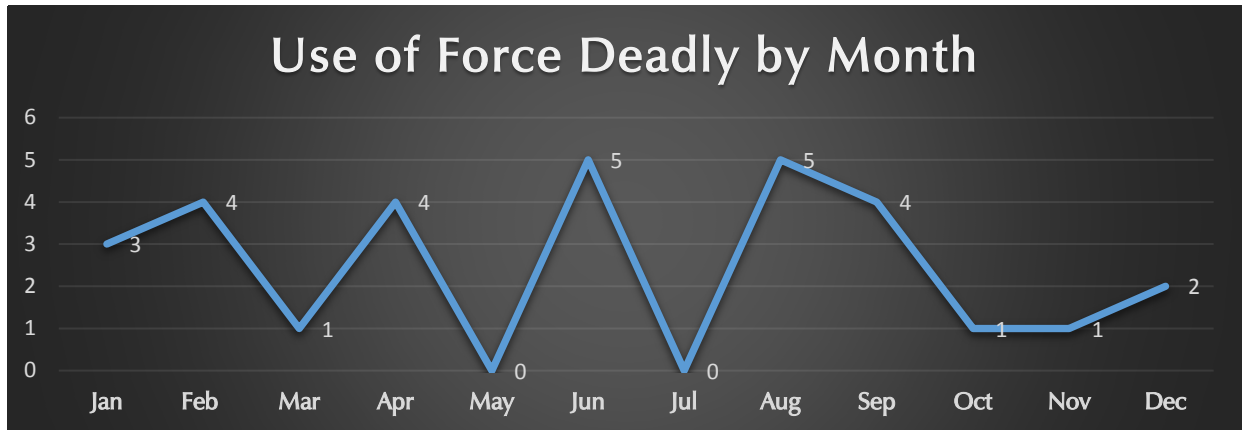
Each employing agency is responsible for submitting a report for its own officers connected to incidents that meet the criteria of the data collection. Jails and Prisons are responsible for submitting a CJ-9 form to the TBI for deaths that occurred in their facility.

Deadly Use of Force Summary

In 2019, a total of 96 Law Enforcement Related Deaths were reported by 22 different law enforcement agencies and 26 facilities in Tennessee. 30 incidents (32.7%) met the reporting criteria of Deadly Use of Force by a law enforcement officer. Most incidents in 2019 occurred between July and December.

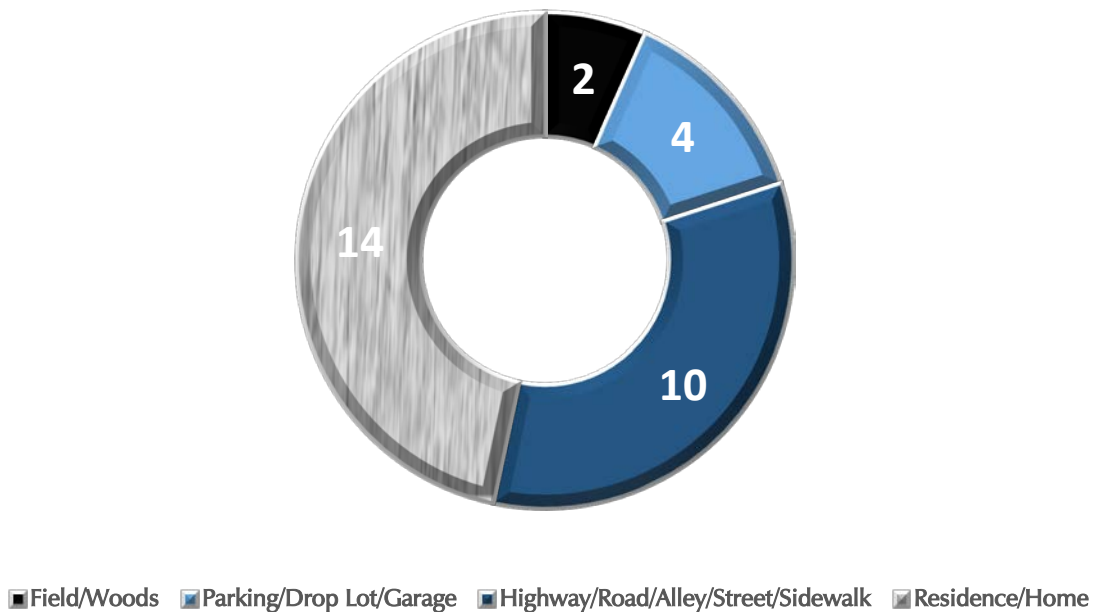
Reporting Agency by Type:

1 U.S. Marshal
9 Sheriffs' Offices
11 Police Departments
26 Jails/Prisons
1 State Agency
0 Law Enforcement College
0 Drug Task Force



Data revealed that Deadly Use of Force incidents occurred predominately during the months of June and August accounting for a combined total of 33.3% followed by February, April, and September at a combined total of 39.9%. For the months of May and July there were zero incidents. The majority of incidents occurred between April and September (18).

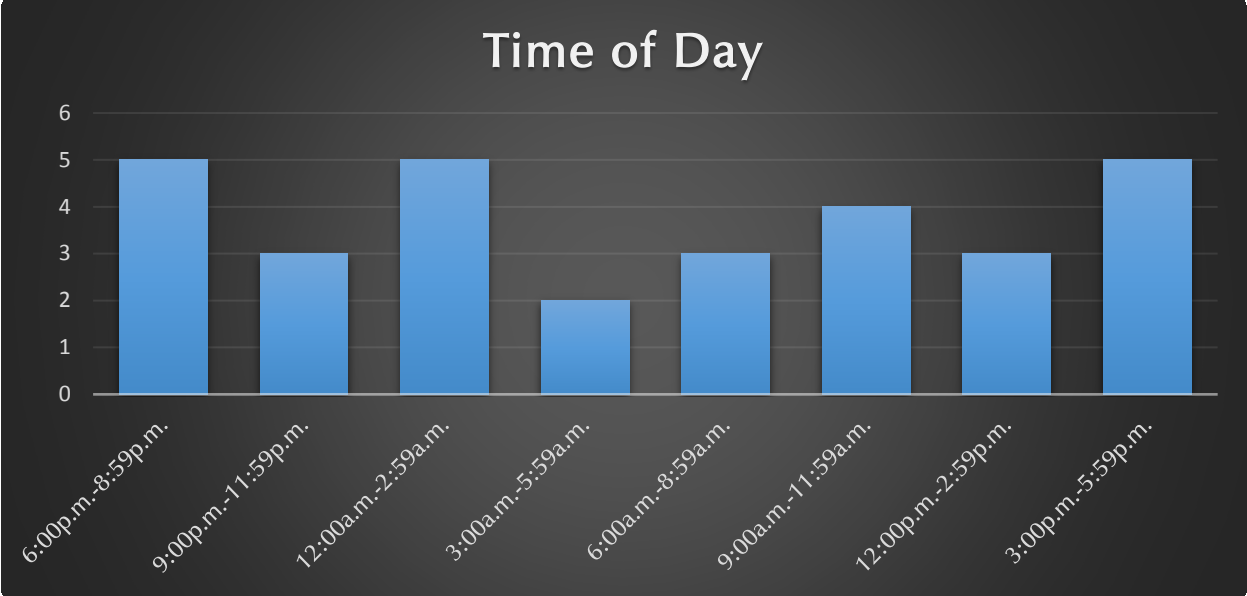
Location of Death



Further analysis revealed that 46.7% of Deadly Use of Force incidents occurred in Residence/Home locations followed by the location of Highway/Road/Alley/Sidewalk at 33.3% in 2019. When analyzing incident location, the area of initial contact between the officer and subject must be considered.



“Response to unlawful or suspicious activity” was the most reported contact type in 2019 accounting for 50%. There were four instances where officers responded to Medical, mental health, or welfare assistance in 2019. Despite the number of deaths reported on Highways/Roads/Alleys/Sidewalks, contacts occurring during a traffic stop was one of the least reported Initial Contact types (1).

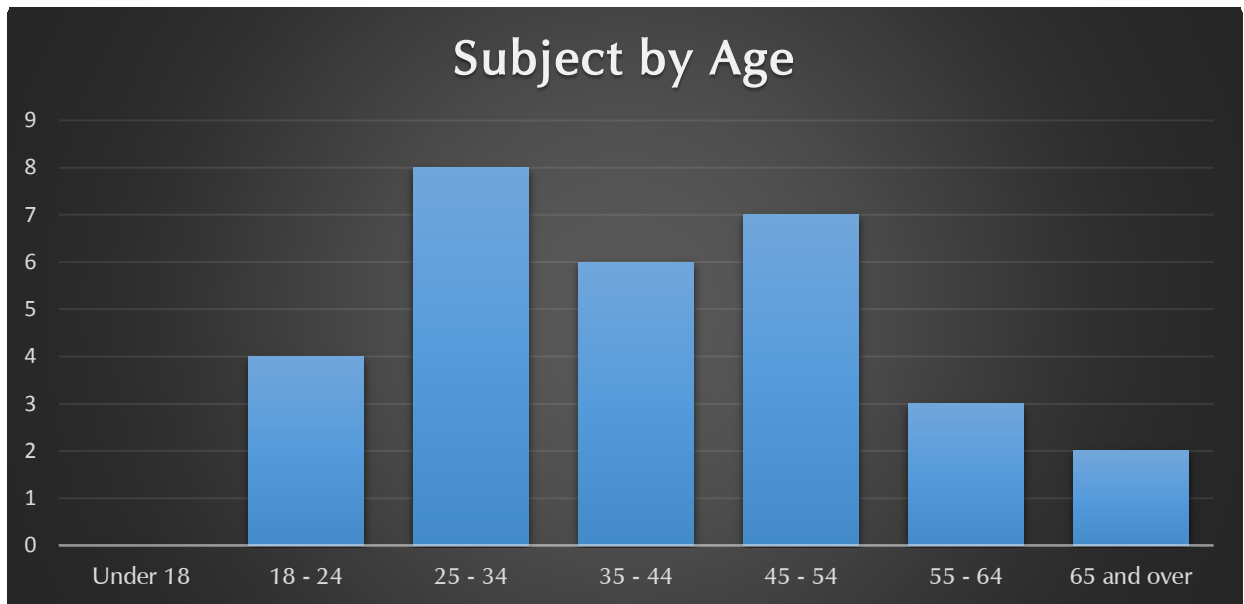


Incidents occurring between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 2:59 a.m. were consistent with a noted drop between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and midnight.

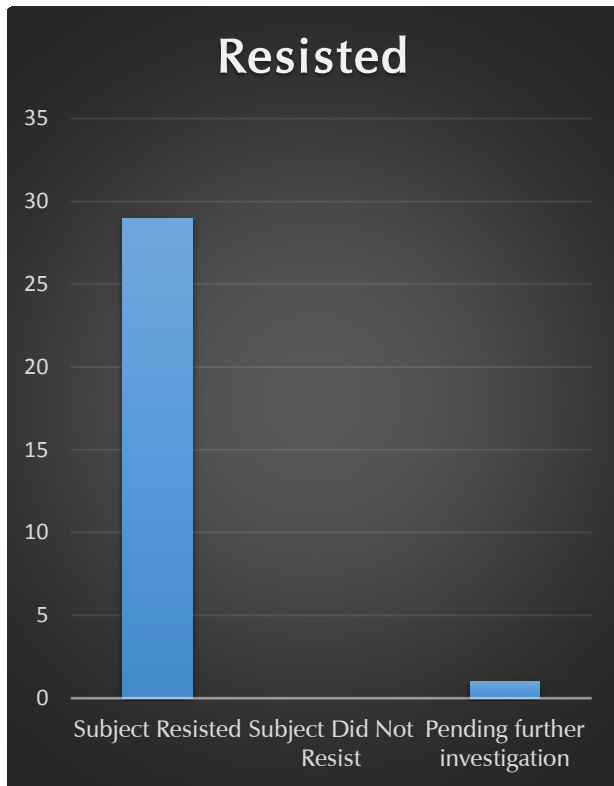
Subject data indicates Males accounted for 90% while Females accounted for 10%.



There were 30 deadly use of force incidents reported in 2019, compared to 28 the previous year. White subjects accounted for 71.4% compared to Black or African American subjects which accounted for 21.4%.



The age group of 25-34 made up the highest reported age group in 2019, accounting for 26.7% of all incidents. No incidents involving subjects under the age of 18 were reported.



The data element of “Resisted” is used to indicate whether the subject involved resisted against an officer during the initial contact. Some examples of resistance types include fleeing, barricaded subjects, verbal threats, resisting arrest, physical assault on officer or others, display/use of a weapon or noncompliance to verbal commands.

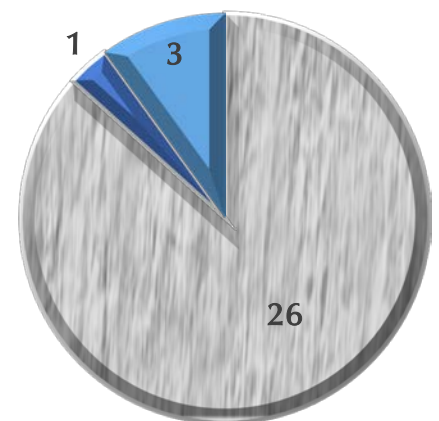


Data illustrated on the above chart indicates that 96.7% of decedents resisted arrest in some form against law enforcement officers.

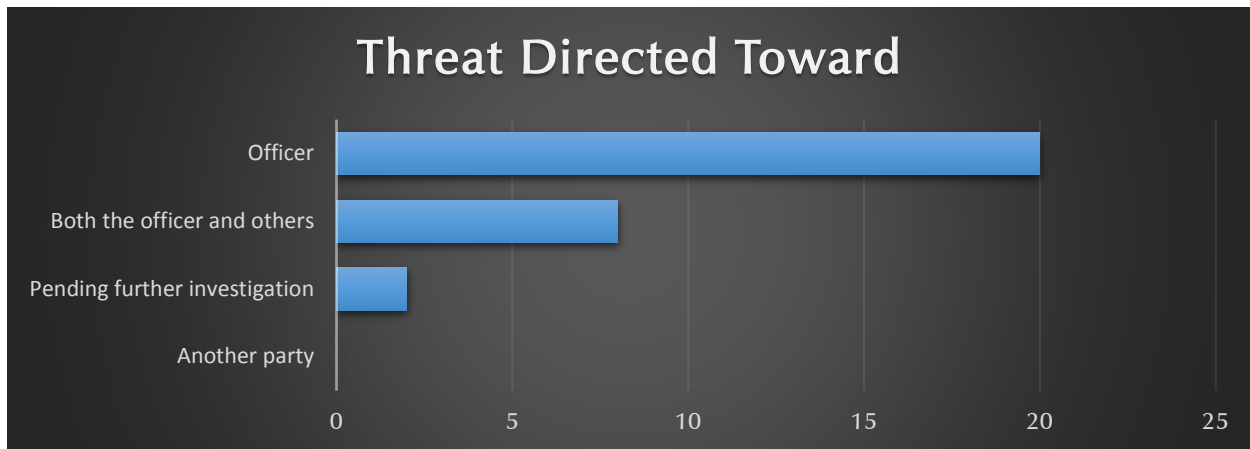
The data element of “Armed” is used to indicate whether the subject appeared to have a weapon during an incident. Of the 30 reported deadly use of force incidents in 2019, 86.7% of incidents were reported as Subject was Armed during the initial contact between the officer and the subject.

26 incidents indicated that subject displayed or used a weapon against an officer or others and while officers attempted to apprehend subjects. During these encounters, one officer was struck by a vehicle and one officer was stabbed in the arm with a knife.

Armed



- Subject was Armed
- Subject was not Armed
- Pending further investigation
- Unknown and is unlikely to ever be known



An officer was threatened in more than 2/3 (66.7%) of all incidents reported in 2019. 26.7% of incidents indicated that the subject threatened both officer(s) and others.

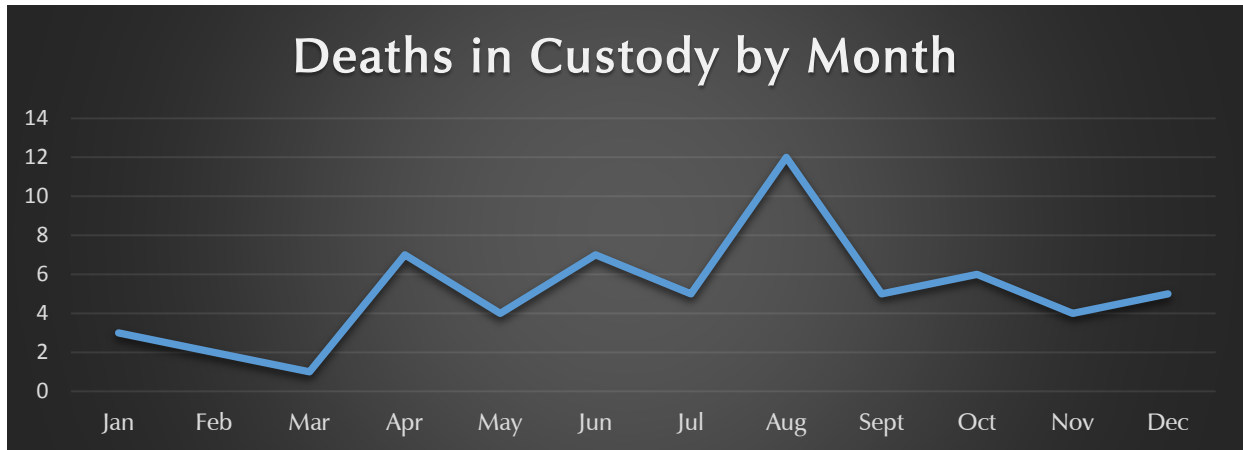
Arrest-Related Non-Forcible Deaths (ARNFD) Summary

This section analyzes deaths that occurred in the presence of police but were not directly related to use of force by a law enforcement official. As mentioned in the introduction, an *Arrest-Related Non-Forcible Death* (ARNFD) is any death that is attributed to suicide, alcohol, drug intoxication, or medical conditions (i.e. cardiac arrest, etc.) that occurs during the process of an arrest by or in the custody of state or local law enforcement personnel. Out of the 96 Law Enforcement-Related Deaths reported in 2019, one death met the Arrest-Related Non-Forcible Death (ARNFD) reporting criteria.

- ◆ The agency's *Initial Contact* with the subject was reported as "Civilian Request for Response to Criminal or Suspicious Activity."
- ◆ *Demographics* revealed that subject was a white male, aged 38.
- ◆ The *Manner of Death* is another important data element when analyzing ARNFD incidents. In this case, the Manner of Death was initially reported as "Unavailable, investigation pending." Once the autopsy results became available, Manner of Death was determined to be Overdose (Methamphetamine toxicity).
- ◆ The subject's *Ethnicity* was "Not Hispanic or Latino."
- ◆ The subject was not armed, and did not threaten law enforcement or the public.

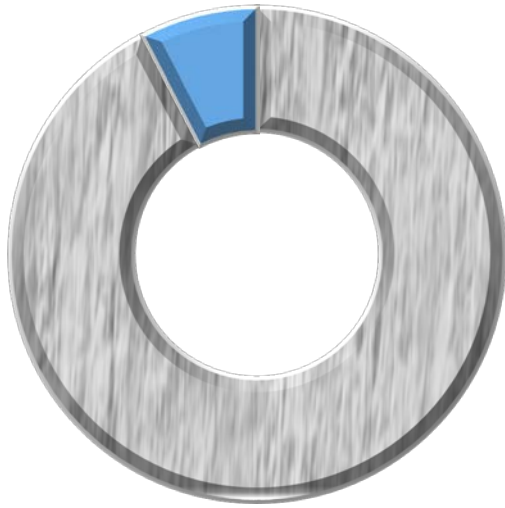
Deaths in Custody Reporting Act (DCRA) Summary

The Deaths in Custody Program collects data on deaths which occur in jails or state prisons. A total of 26 facilities in Tennessee reported such incidents in 2019.



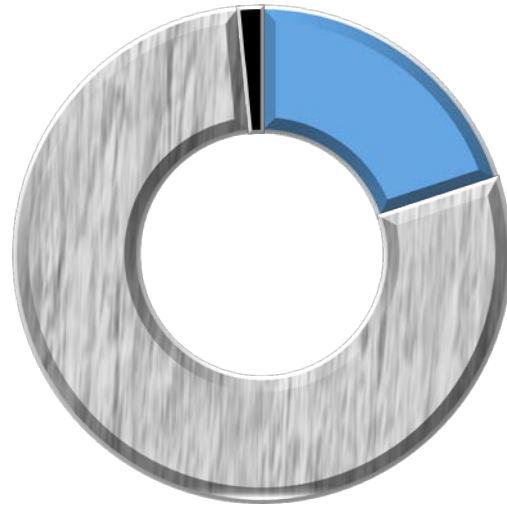
In 2019, 65 deaths in custody were reported across the state. August accounted for the highest reported month at 24.6%, followed by April and June at 10.8%. March represented the lowest reported month with only one death reported for the year. Most deaths in custody occurred between April and August of 2019.

Decedent by Gender



Male Female

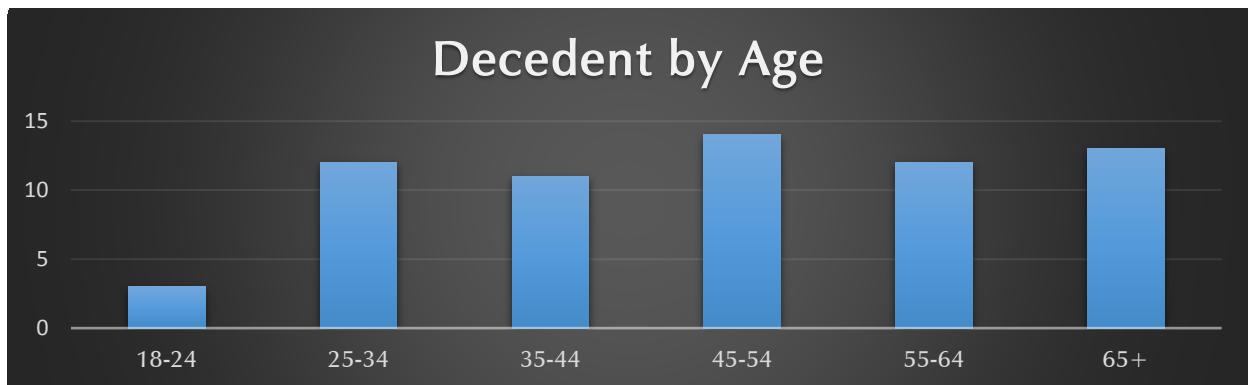
Decedent by Race



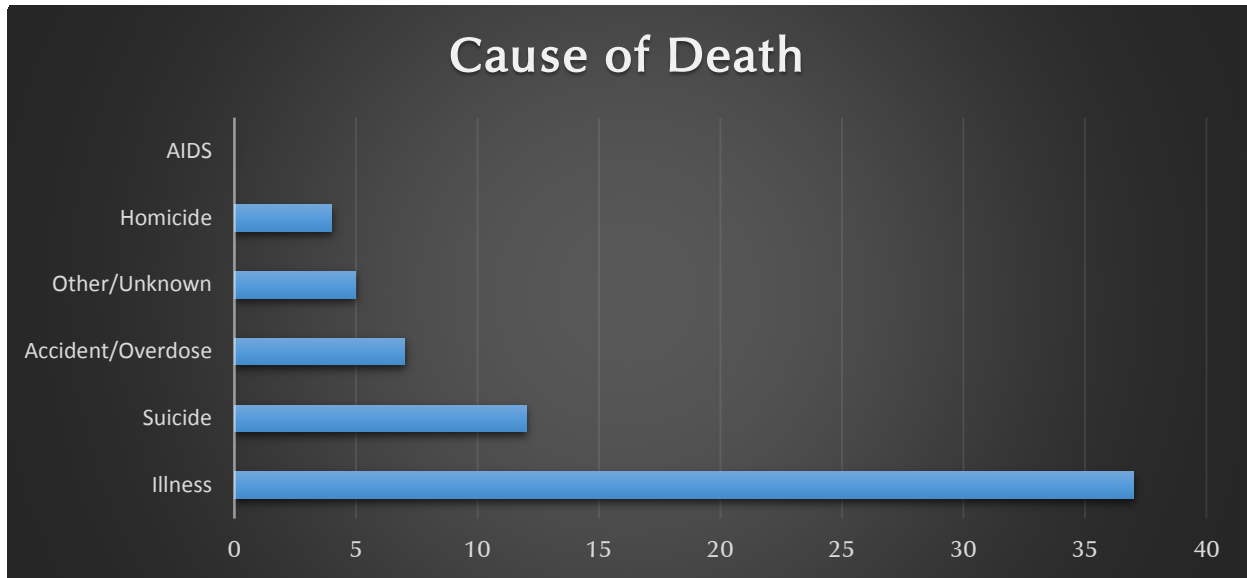
Black White Unknown

Males accounted for the highest reported gender type at 92% compared to Females at 8%. Inmates classified as White made up 78% of all reported deaths in custody, followed by Black or African American at 20%. Unknown race accounted for the remaining 2% of decedents.

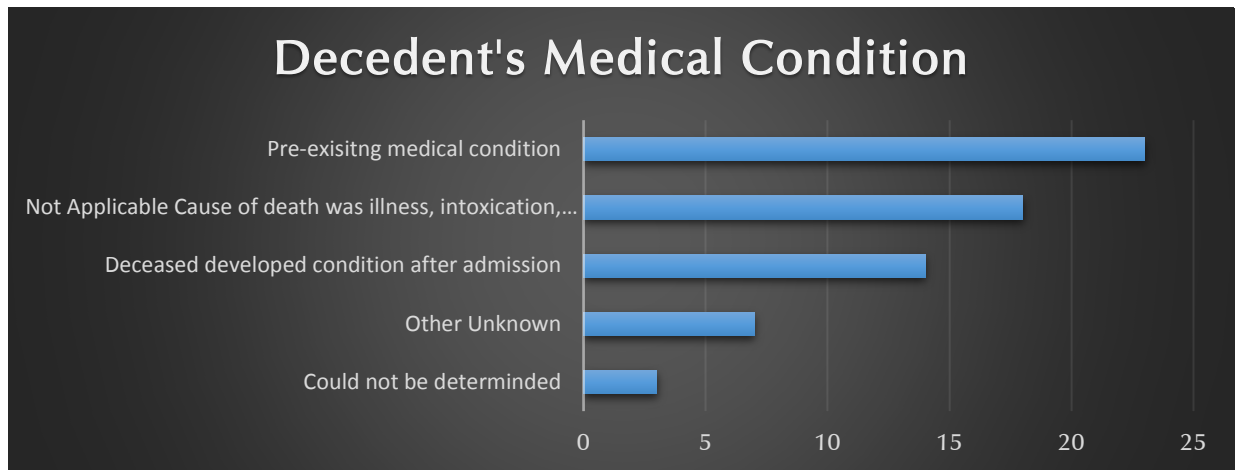
Additional decedent characteristics such as age are analyzed in this study. Although local jails book individuals of all ages, decedents under 24 are less likely to be reported by state prison. Local jails generally hold inmates less than a year whereas state prisons generally hold inmates for more than one year.



Mortality rates are the most predominate between the ages of 45 and 54. Among all age groups, ages 18-24 represented the lowest mortality rates in 2019.



Illness-related deaths constituted 56.9% of the reported types of causes for 2019. Suicides made up 18.5%. Other/Unknown, in this study, refers to deaths that involved drugs intoxication or deaths that had missing or results pending “Cause of Death” information.

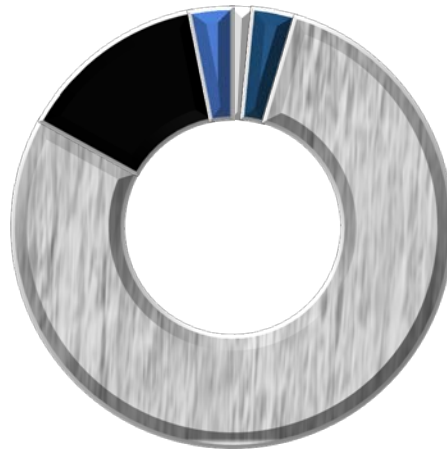


Another important data element to assess when examining the cause of death is whether the decedent had a pre-existing medical condition. Data analysis revealed most decedents had a pre-existing medical condition in incidents reported in 2019.

Further findings on medical condition indicate that 35.4% of decedents had pre-existing medical conditions while 21.5% developed conditions after admission. Close to 1/4 of decedents (27.7%) were classified as Not Applicable - Cause of death was illness, intoxication, or AIDS-related. Other/Unknown accounted for 10.8% of the total reportable categories.

It is important to note that 13.8% of decedents were not convicted of a crime. 85% of deaths in custody occurred in decedents who were already in jail. The youngest decedent was aged 22 while the oldest was 85 years of age.

Legal Status



- Convicted - new court commitment
- In Prison
- Other
- Convicted - returned probation/parole violator
- Not Convicted

Location of Death	#
In a general housing unit within the jail facility or in a general housing unit on jail grounds	8
In a segregation unit	6
In a special medical unit/infirmery within the jail facility	12
In a special mental health services unit within the jail facility	1
In a medical center outside the jail facility	37
In a mental health center outside the jail facility	0
While in transit	1
Elsewhere	0
Total	65

To conclude, most decedents who had an illness related death died in a medical center outside the jail facility or in a medical unit/infirmery within the jail facility. Deaths reported as Suicide, Accident, or Homicide occurred *in a special mental health center outside the jail facility, in a general housing unit within the facility, or in a segregation unit.*



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