

Thurston County Coroner



2025 Annual Report

Thurston County Coroner
2000 Lakeridge Dr SW
Olympia, 98502

Last Revised: June 8, 2026

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Thurston County Coroner's Office Staff

Gary Warnock, Coroner

Traci McCullah, Chief Deputy Coroner

Molly Ivanovich, Administrative Assistant 2 Karen Peek, Deputy Coroner

Donald Seese, Deputy Coroner

Meagan Heiden, Deputy Coroner

Rebeka Bain, Deputy Coroner

Leo Farr, Deputy Coroner

Gail Ryver, Deputy Coroner

Leah Musser, Deputy Coroner

Megan Quinn, M.D., Forensic Pathologist

Erika Wheeler, M.D., Forensic Pathologist

Amanda Maskovyak, M.D., Forensic
Pathologist

Emmanuel Lacsina, M.D., Forensic Pathologist

Abigail Lorenzo, Lead Autopsy Technician

Amber Sullivan, Autopsy Technician

Grace Stone, Autopsy Technician

Jermane Evans, Lead Autopsy Technician (January to February,
2025)

The Thurston County Coroner's Office

The Thurston County Coroner's Office investigates sudden, violent, unexpected, and suspicious deaths that occur in Thurston County. Deputy Coroners are medicolegal death investigators and respond to death scenes at any hour and anywhere within the geographical boundaries of Thurston County. The Coroner's Office determines cause and manner of death after a complete investigation and postmortem examination, if required. In addition, the Coroner's Office provides cause and manner of death for the death certificate. Complete findings of the death investigation are distributed to families and law enforcement agencies as appropriate.

The main duties of the Coroner's Office are to determine the cause and manner of death. The cause of death is the disease process or injury that resulted in death. There are thousands of diseases and injuries that may result in death. The manner of death is a classification in which a determination is made regarding whether the death resulted from natural causes, homicide, suicide, or accident. On occasion, the manner of death is classified as undetermined.

Information collected during the investigation helps clarify the circumstances, such as the sequence of events prior to death. Evidence collected during an investigation and/or postmortem examination may help lead to the arrest or successful conviction of a suspect in a homicide case.

Because deaths occur around the clock, Deputy Coroner Investigators are available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.

With the skill and experience of the medicolegal death investigators and board-certified forensic pathologists, the quality of death investigations in Thurston County are among the best in the State. The death scene investigation reports by the Deputy Coroners are very thorough and supply comprehensive information to the Forensic Pathologists conducting the postmortem examinations.

Our Coroner and Deputy Coroners also extend their duties to the living by answering questions and addressing concerns regarding deaths within the county. Deputy Coroners are frequently in contact with family members of a deceased and assist them by providing appropriate answers regarding the circumstances of the death and directing next steps in making final arrangements for their loved one.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the Thurston County Board of County Commissioners for their support of the Coroner's Office and the services we provide to the people of Thurston County.

Thurston County Coroner Cases

2025 Population (Estimated)	304,263
Deaths Reported to Coroner	2,925
Number of jurisdiction declined deaths	2,436
Number of jurisdiction assumed deaths	489
Number of scene responses	381
Number of cases receiving a full autopsy	140

Number of cases receiving a limited autopsy	17
Number of cases receiving an external examination	228
Number of cases with toxicology testing	391
Number of deaths certified by the Coroner's Office	496
Number of decedents brought to the Coroner's Office	399
Number of unidentified bodies for this year	0
Number of referrals for organ and tissue donation	590
Number of indigents	75

Definitions

Full Autopsy: A complete external and internal examination of a decedent

Limited Examination: An examination which is focused on a specific organ or region of the body, i.e., heart. The limited examination also includes an external examination.

External Examination: An examination of the exterior of a decedent.

Types of Deaths Reportable to the Coroner

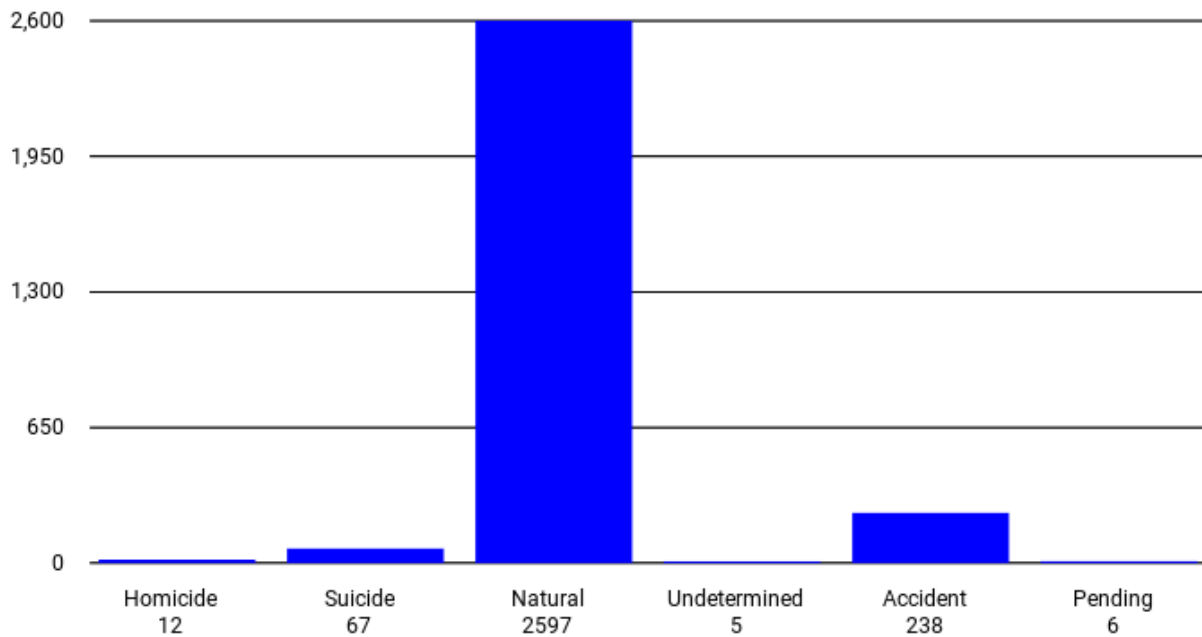
EXAMPLE: State Law mandates that specific types of death be referred to the Coroner for investigation (see list below). These deaths include sudden and unexpected deaths, accidental deaths, and violent deaths. The coroner has the authority under these Acts to order an autopsy at any time it is deemed necessary to determine or confirm the cause and manner of death.

Deaths Reportable to the Coroner:

- Violent death (e.g., strangulation, gunshot, stabbing, poisoning, etc.)
- Accidental deaths (e.g., falls, drowning, motor vehicle collisions, burns, overdose, etc.)
- Death of a prisoner (e.g., deaths in any county or city jail while imprisoned or in custody).
- Suspicious Circumstances (e.g., Unidentified Bodies or events surrounding death)
- Sudden and Unexpected deaths (e.g., all deaths during a surgical procedure, in recovery, anesthesia-related, unexpected natural death, occupational-related deaths)*
- Without medical attendance within 48 hours of death:
- In cases of chronic illness, the attending physician may sign the death certificate if s/he can be reasonably certain of the cause of death.
- Death of a mother due to an abortion.
- Unexpected infant deaths

The coroner would generally order an autopsy for any of the reportable deaths listed above.

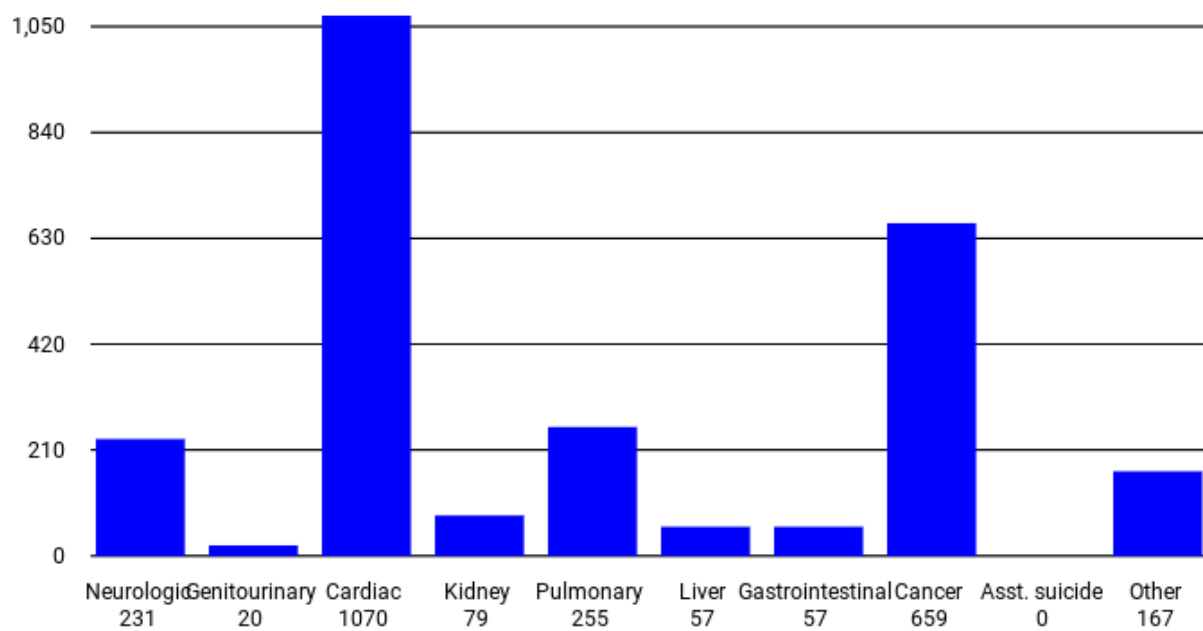
Manner of Death Determinations



Number of Deaths by Manner

Homicide	12
Suicide	67
Natural	2597
Undetermined	5
Accident	238
Pending	6

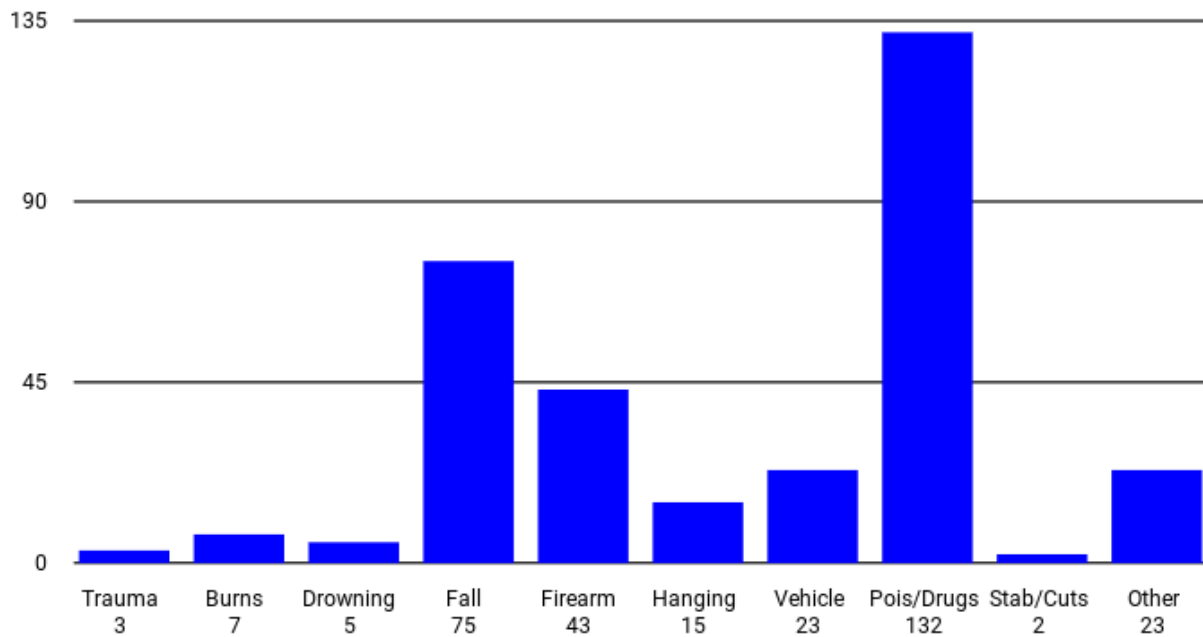
Deaths by Natural Causes Categorized



**Deaths by Natural Causes
Categorized**

Neurologic	231
Genitourinary	20
Cardiac	1070
Kidney	79
Pulmonary	255
Liver	57
Gastrointestinal	57
Cancer	659
Other	167

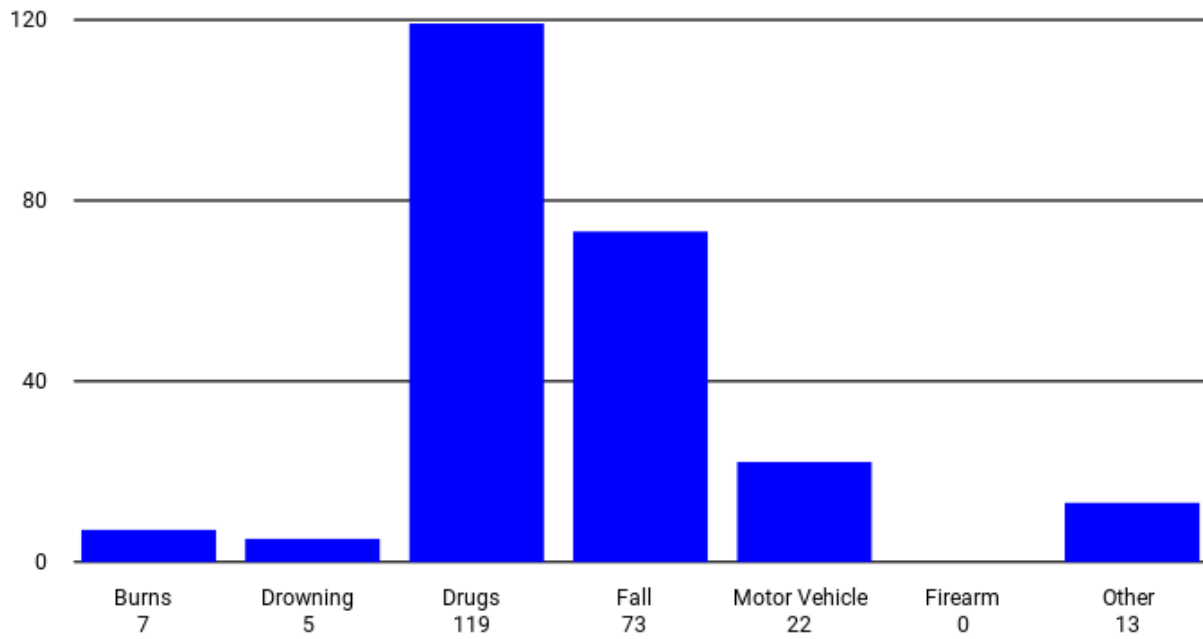
Deaths by Unnatural Causes



Deaths by Unnatural Causes

Trauma	3
Burns	7
Drowning	5
Fall	75
Firearm	43
Hanging	15
Vehicle	23
Poison/Drugs	132
Stabs/Cuts	2
Other	23

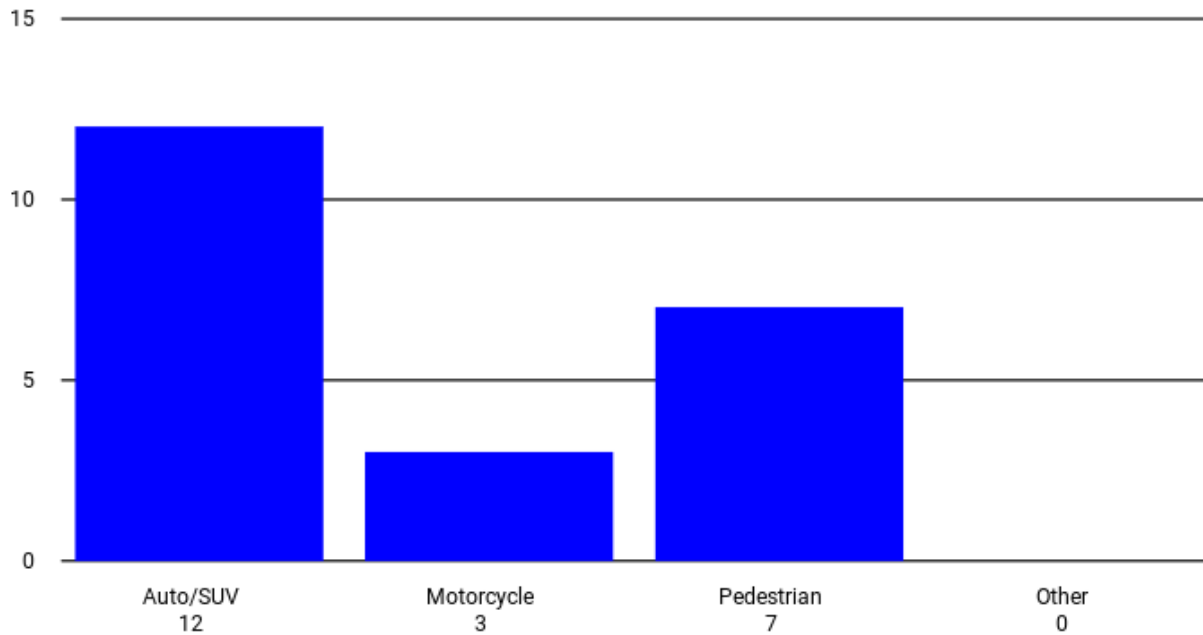
Accidental Deaths by Type



Accidental Deaths by Type

Burns	7
Drowning	5
Drugs	119
Fall	73
Vehicle	22
Firearm	0
Other	13

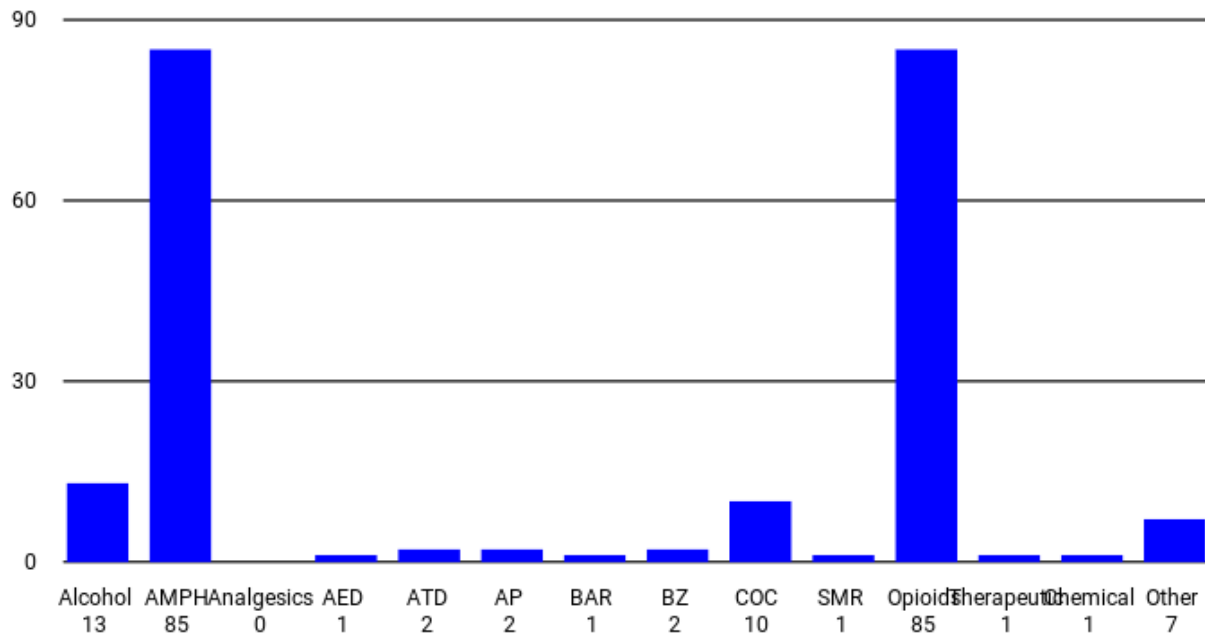
Accidental Deaths - Motor Vehicle Crashes



Accidental Deaths - Motor Vehicle Crashes

Auto/SUV	12
Motorcycle	3
Pedestrian	7
Other	0

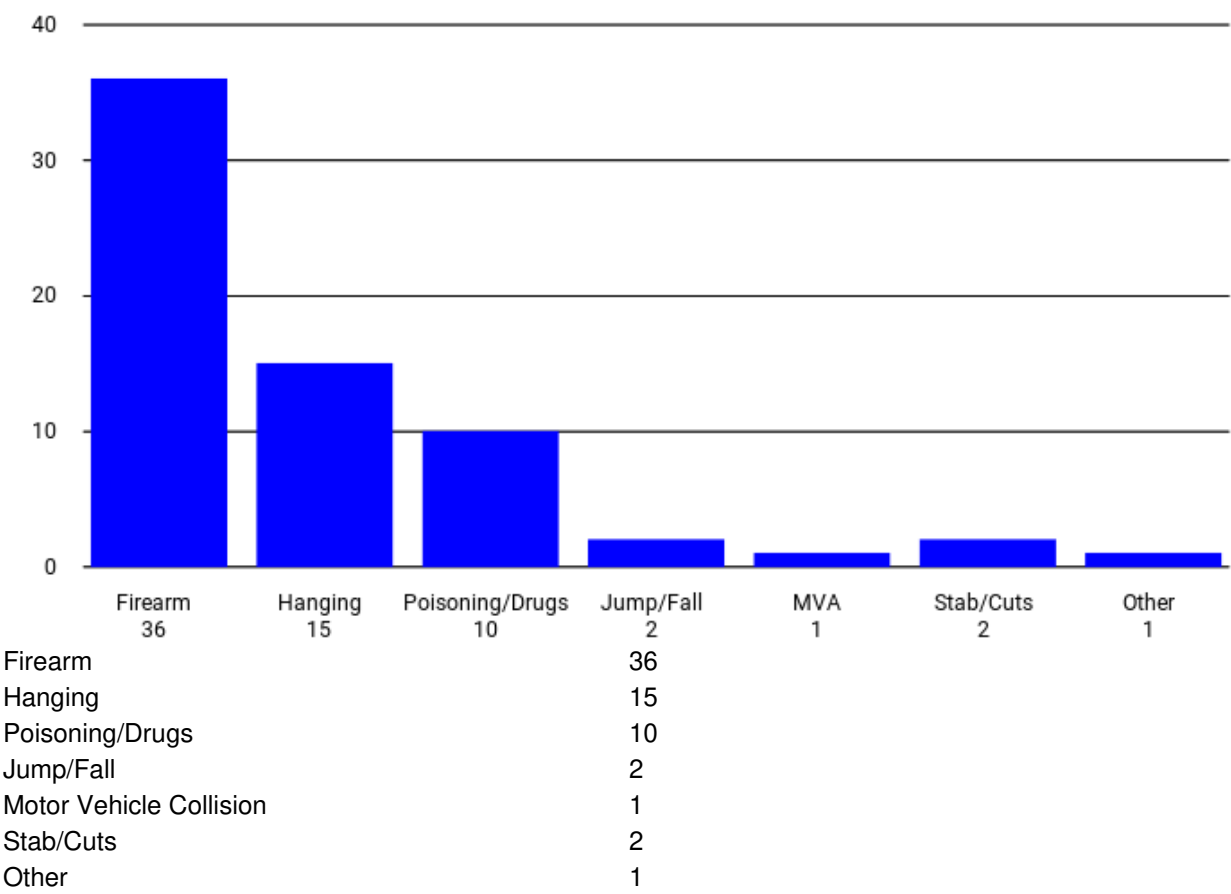
Drugs Contributing to Cause of Death



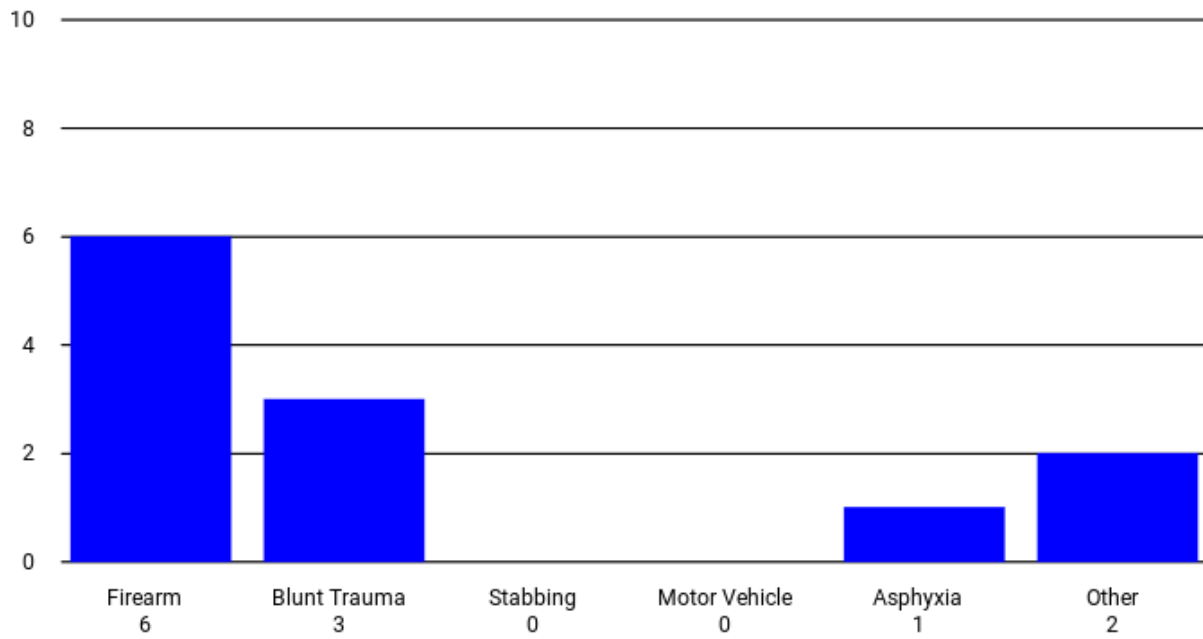
Drugs Contributing to Cause of Death

Alcohol	13
Amphetamines	85
Analgesics	0
Anti-Convulsant	1
Anti-Depressant	2
Anti-Psychotic	2
Barbiturate	1
Benzodiazepines	2
Cocaine	10
Muscle Relaxer	1
Opioids	85
Therapeutic	1
Chemical	1
Other	7

Suicide by Means

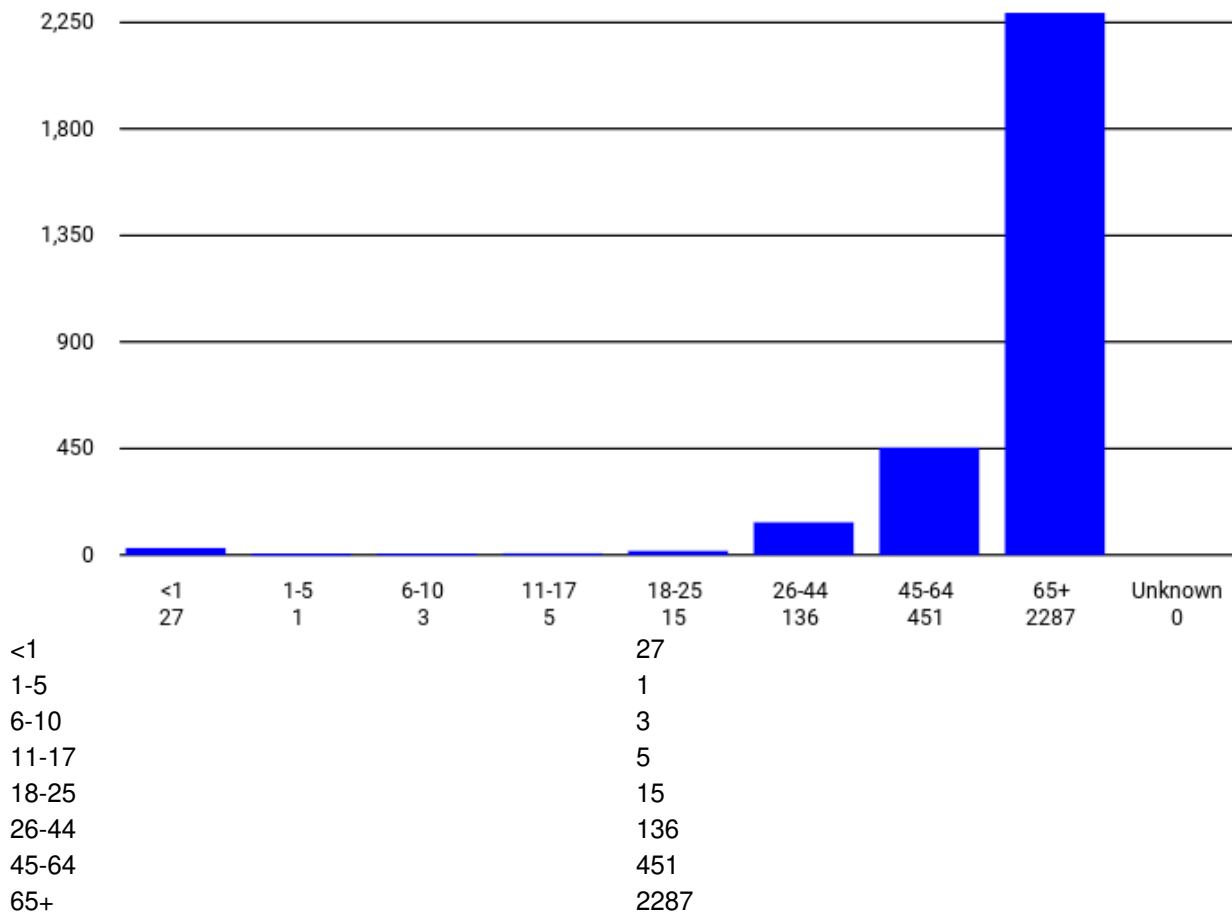


Homicide Deaths



Firearm	6
Blunt Trauma	3
Stabbing	0
Motor Vehicle	0
Asphyxia	1
Other	2

Deaths by Age Group



Disclaimer

The Coroner's Office endeavors to provide accurate and up-to-date information in the Annual Report; however, this report is not complete and may be updated at any time. When the report is updated, the previous report will be removed and a new report will be posted.