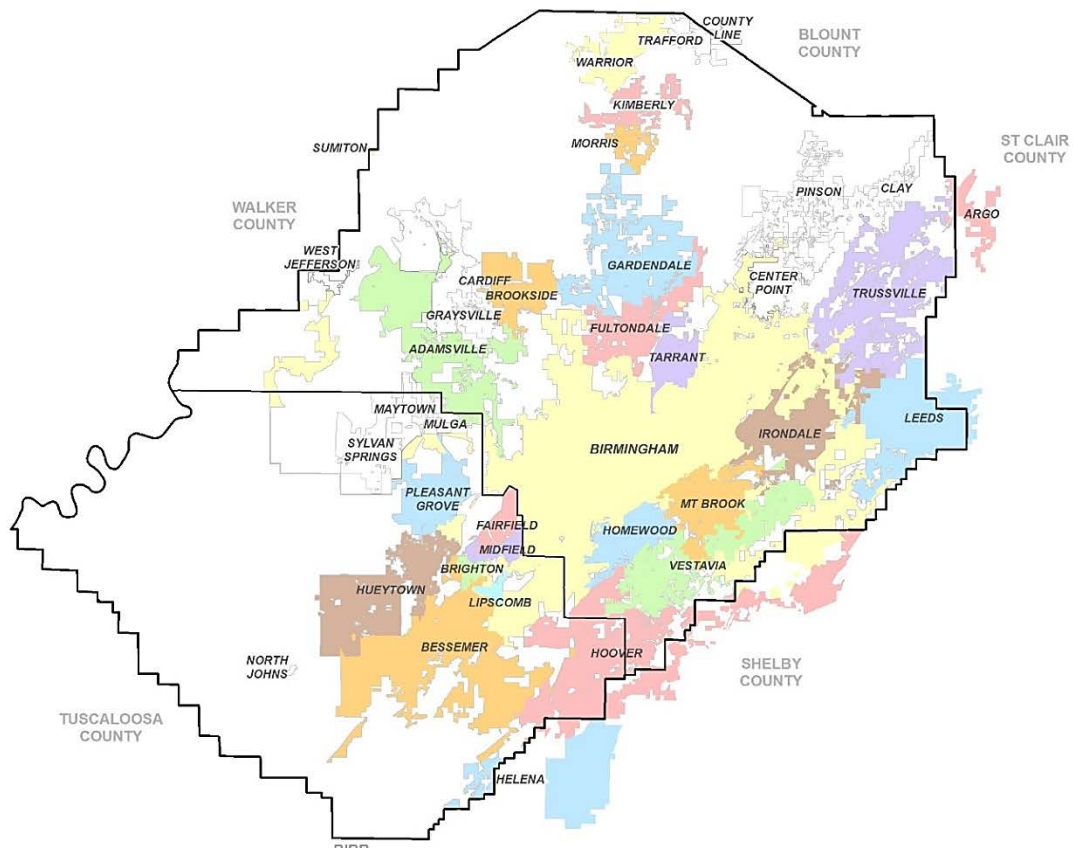


Annual Report

2017

Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office



Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office

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Introduction

The Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office (JCCMEO) is notified by law enforcement agencies and medical facilities to investigate approximately 33% of the deaths occurring in Jefferson County. Pursuant to State of Alabama, 45-37-60, (Act 79-454, p. 739, §1-10) notification is made when there is suspicion of criminal violence or criminal neglect, when death occurs in suspicious or unusual circumstances, when deaths are thought to result from trauma or violence, in any prison or penal institution, when in police custody, or deaths due to disease constituting a hazard to public health when requested in writing by the County Health Officer.



The Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office is fully accredited by the National Association of Medical Examiners www.thename.org.



The JCCMEO medicolegal death investigators are certified through the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators www.abmdi.org.

Mission

The mission of the Coroner/Medical Examiner office is to establish the identity of human remains and to determine the cause, manner, and circumstances surrounding death in all sudden and unexpected deaths occurring within Jefferson County, Alabama.

Death Statistics

This report contains aggregate data of the cases investigated by this office. This report does not contain data on all deaths that occurred within Jefferson County, but rather only those deaths that were investigated by the Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office.

You can visit the Alabama Department of Public Health website to obtain data on all deaths that occurred within Jefferson County, Alabama www.adph.org/healthstats.

Death Certificates

The Coroner's Office cannot provide copies of death certificates; death certificates must be obtained through the Jefferson County Department of Health or the State of Alabama Vital Records office.

Jefferson County Department of Health
1400 6th Avenue South
Birmingham, Alabama 35233
(205) 933-9110
<http://www.jcdh.org>

State of Alabama Vital Records
P.O. Box 5625
Montgomery, Alabama 36103-5625
(334) 206-5418
www.adph.org/vitalrecords

History



Jefferson County operated under an elected coroner system since the county's inception in 1819 until 1931. In a coroner system the County Coroner was elected to office by the citizens of Jefferson County and was typically a lay person with no formal training in medicolegal death investigation.

On May 27, 1931, the office of County Coroner was abolished by Act of State Legislature. The office was subsequently reestablished with the position of County Coroner being an appointed position by the Jefferson County Commission and not an elected position by the citizens of the county. The Act referred to the coroner as the "Agent, County Commission, as Coroner".

In January 1977, by Act of State Legislature, the office of County Coroner and the coroner system in Jefferson County was abolished and the Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office (JCCMEO) was established. This was the end of the coroner system and the beginning of the medical examiner system in Jefferson County. The new law required the Coroner/Medical Examiner of Jefferson County to be a board certified forensic pathologist.

On July 26, 1979, pursuant to State of Alabama Act 79-454, the office of County Coroner in Jefferson County was once again abolished and the Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office (JCCMEO) as it is known today was established. As with the previous Act, the new Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner Act set forth that the Coroner/Medical Examiner shall be an appointed position by the Jefferson County Commission and that the Coroner/Medical Examiner shall be a board certified forensic pathologist. The act also established a new regulatory commission, the "Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Commission", to promulgate rules and regulations governing the reviews and investigations of the Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office and the conditions upon which such investigations shall be conducted. The act also retained in the office all the authority vested in coroners by the state laws of Alabama.

The Coroner retained a physical office on the second floor of the [Jefferson County Courthouse](#) and at the [Bessemer Courthouse](#) until 1977, when at that time both offices were consolidated and moved to its current location at [Cooper Green Mercy Health Services](#).

Medicolegal Death Investigation



A medicolegal death investigation is an official investigation or inquest into the manner, cause, and circumstances surrounding death. As it applies a medicolegal death investigation is a combination of medicine and law, with a purpose to answer the questions of death. The answers obtained in these investigations can assist with criminal and civil litigation, insurance claims, the distribution of estates, and the health and safety of the public. These investigations are performed by trained medicolegal death investigators (MDIs) and can represent multiple different disciplines. The MDI investigators can be a coroner, deputy coroner, forensic pathologist, morgue technologist, forensic odontologist, forensic anthropologist, forensic toxicologist, or a criminalist.

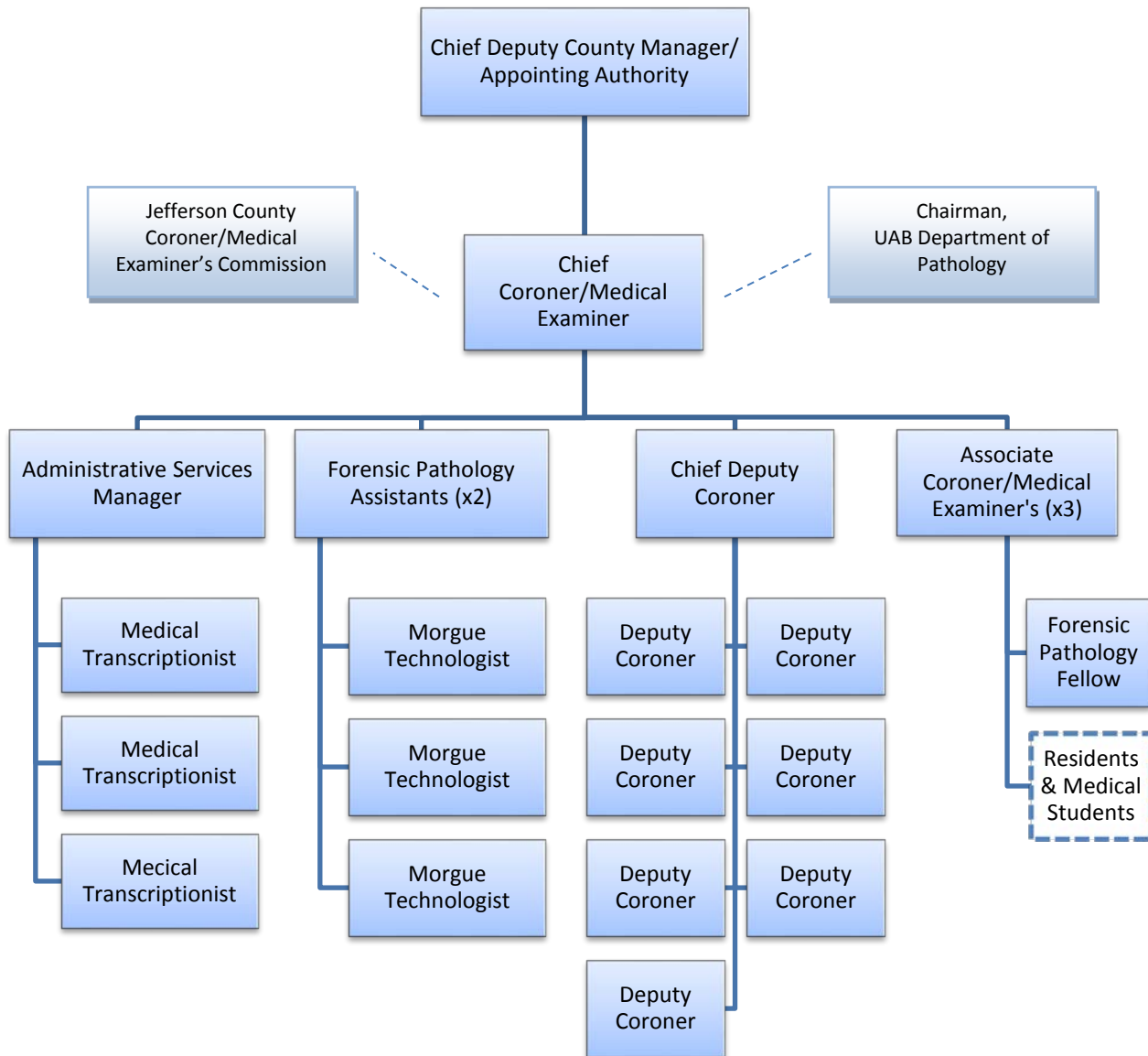
At the JCCMEO these investigations are begun by deputy coroners who are formally trained MDIs. When a death is reported to the JCCMEO it is the responsibility of the deputy coroner to determine if the death falls under the statutory jurisdiction of the JCCMEO and if so, will jurisdiction be assumed or declined. Pursuant to State of Alabama Code 11-5-35 (*Act 2006-581, p. 1527, §6.*) the Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office only has the authority to certify a death if the offense, occurrence, or incident that ultimately resulted in the death occurred within the geographical boundaries of Jefferson County, Alabama. Therefore, if the sequence of events that ultimately resulted in the death began in a county or state other than Jefferson County, Alabama then the coroner's office of that county should be notified of the death.

Declined Jurisdiction: Jurisdiction is declined if investigators (i.e. law enforcement, paramedics, and/or medical staff, and the deputy coroner) find no signs of foul play, injury, and/or evidence of current substance abuse associated with the death and; if the decedent has a documented significant medical history and is currently under the care of a primary care physician.

Assumed Jurisdiction: Jurisdiction is assumed if there is suspicion of criminal violence or criminal neglect, when death occurs in suspicious or unusual circumstances, when deaths are thought to result from trauma or violence, in any prison or penal institution, when in police custody, or a death due to disease constituting a hazard to public health when requested in writing by the County Health Officer.

If jurisdiction is to be assumed a deputy coroner in most cases responds to the scene of the death to begin the investigation. The decedent is transported from the scene to the JCCMEO for examination, which is usually completed within 24 hours from the time of death by one of the forensic pathologist on staff. An examination/autopsy is necessary to accurately determine cause, manner, and circumstances surrounding the death, so to satisfy statutory requirements, for the good of public health, and to assist with potential civil and criminal litigation. Depending on the circumstances surrounding the death and the evidence that is needed to substantiate the death an autopsy may not be performed in every case, but rather a less invasive external examination is performed. The final examination/autopsy report is usually available 4-6 weeks after the date of death.

Organizational Chart



Section 1: Summary Data

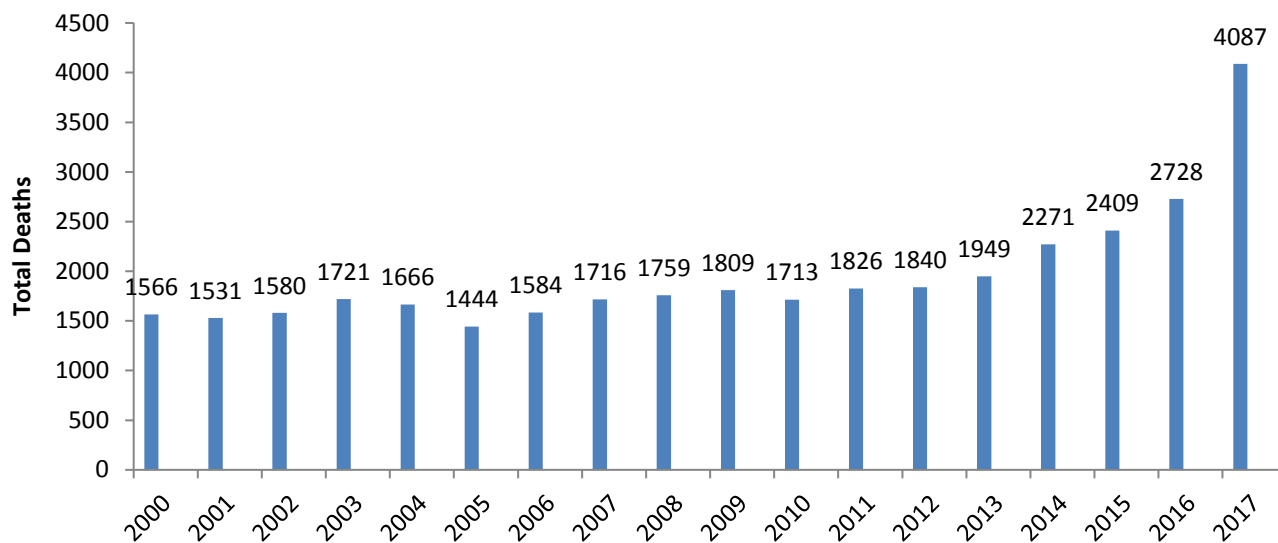
2016-2017 Comparison

Table 1.1: previous year comparison data.

	2016	2017
Total cases reported to the JCCMEO:	2,728	4,087
Jurisdiction Assumed:		
Accident	436	415
Homicide	152	172
Natural	238	248
Suicide	76	107
Undetermined	19	22
Pending	0	0
Stillborn	3	3
Jurisdiction Declined:		
Natural	829	824
Cremation	445	1,200
Hospice	422	991
Safekeeping	105	101
Non-human	4	4
Death Certificate Reviews of Declined Cases:	196	191
Total bodies transported by JCCMEO:		
Examination	924	967
Safekeeping	105	101
Total Examinations:		
Autopsies	662	662
Externals	261	305
No examination performed	1	0
Organ/Tissue procurements:		
Organ/Tissue	25	16
Corneas	27	28
Toxicology performed:		
Yes	886	910
No	38	57
Total scenes visited by investigators:	653	659
Unclaimed bodies (county burials):	38	57
Exhumations:	0	0
Unidentified remains (cumulative total):	50	50

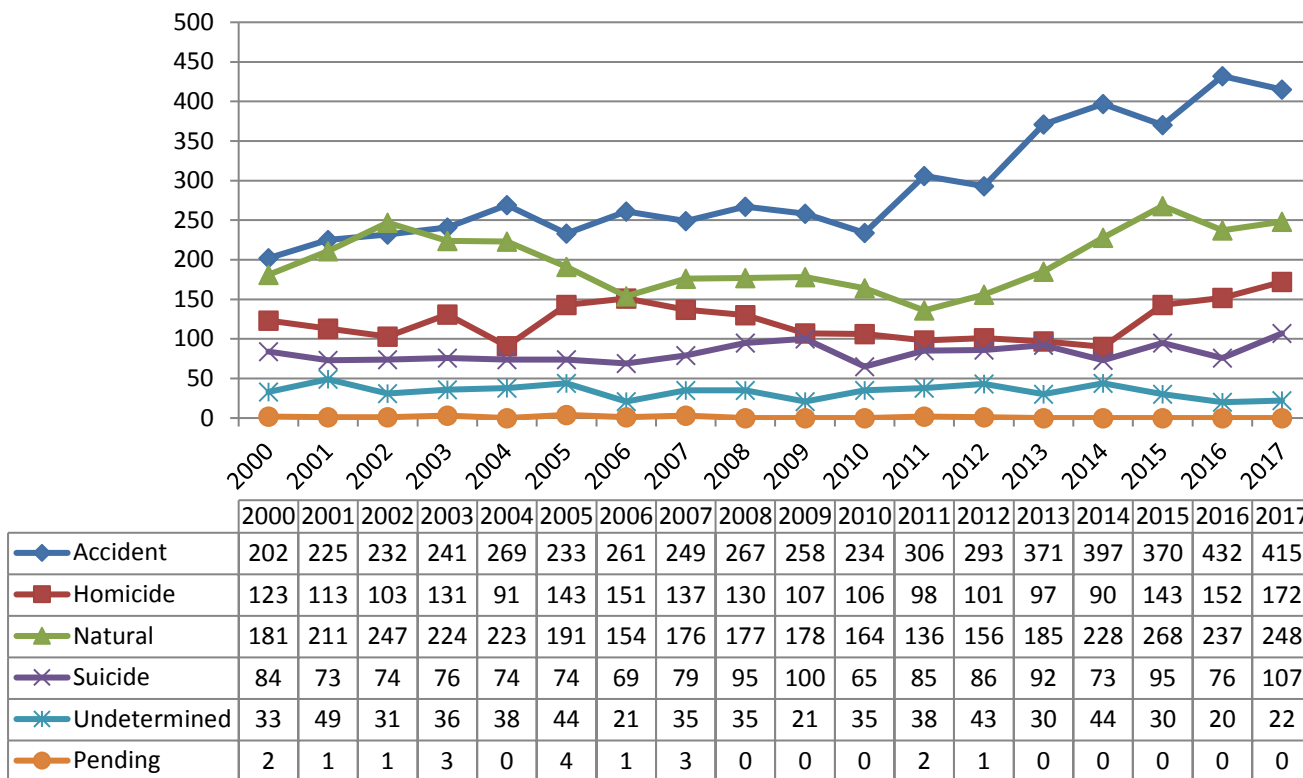
Historical Summary: Year of Death, 2000-2017

Figure 1.1: represents the total number of cases reported to the JCCMEO by year of death.



Historical Summary: Manner of Death, 2000-2017

Figure 1.2: represents the total number of cases by manner of death, includes only Assumed cases.



Section 2: 2017 Total Case Data

General Statistics and Notable Trends

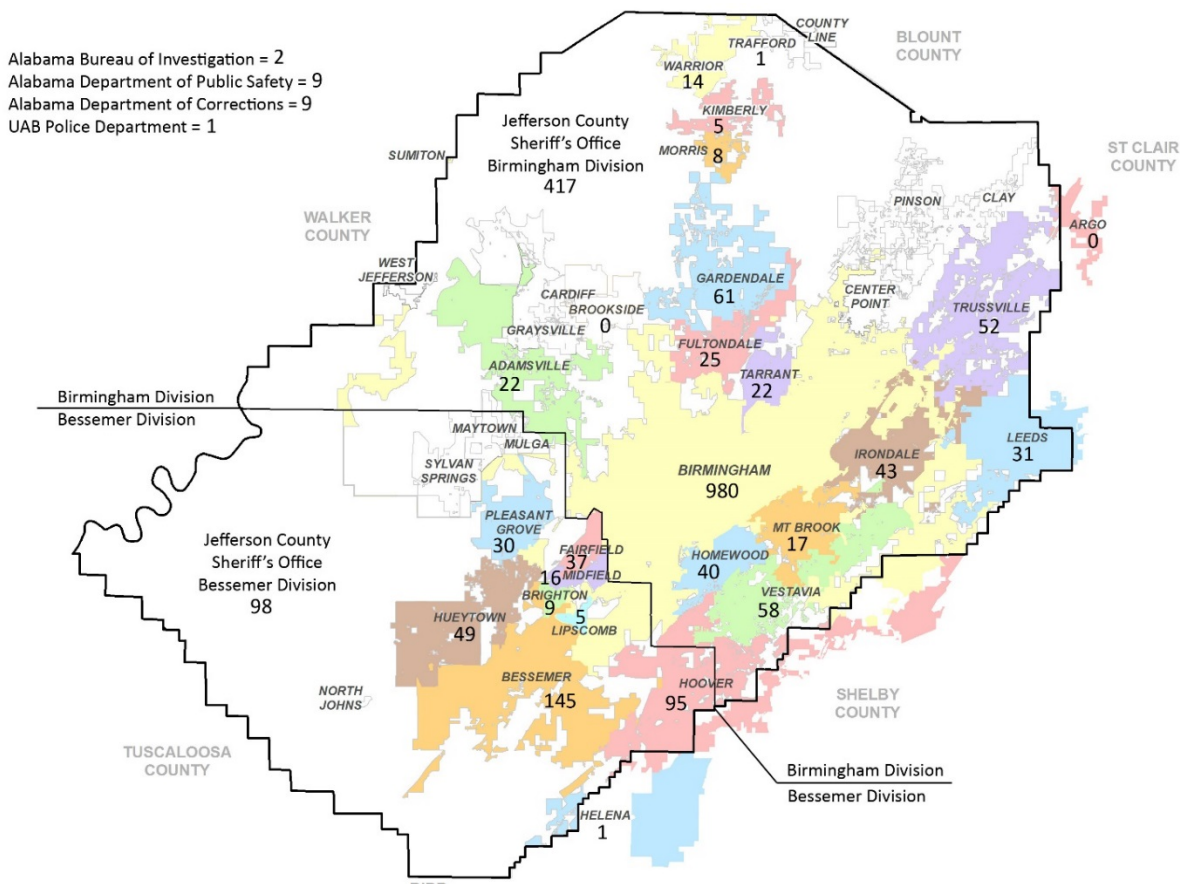
There was a 49.8% increase in the total number of deaths reported to the JCCMEO this past year, from 2,728 deaths in 2016 to 4,087 deaths in 2017. This significant increase was primarily seen in reported Cremations, where there was a 169.6% increase from 445 cases in 2016 to 1,200 cases in 2017. There also was a 134.8% increase in reported Hospice deaths, from 422 deaths in 2016 to 991 deaths in 2017.

There was a 4.6% increase in the total number of deaths where jurisdiction was assumed, from 924 cases in 2016 to 967 cases in 2017.

The total number of homicide, natural, suicide, and undetermined deaths increased in 2017 compared to 2016; while accidental deaths decreased in 2017.

Map: Total Deaths Reported by Law Enforcement Agency and Jurisdiction, 2017

Figure 2.1: N=2,308, represents total deaths reported, by law enforcement jurisdiction; includes Assumed, Declined, Hospice, Safekeeping, and Non-human cases. It excludes Cremations which are reported to the JCCMEO by funeral homes, crematories, and mortuaries and; it also excludes some Hospice deaths that were reported by hospice companies.



Total Deaths Reported by Law Enforcement Agency and Jurisdiction, 2017

Table 2.1: N=2,308, represents the total deaths reported to the JCCMEO. Table includes Assumed, Declined, Hospice, Safekeeping, and Non-human cases. It excludes Cremations which are reported to the JCCMEO by funeral homes, crematories, and mortuaries and; it also excludes some Hospice deaths that were reported by hospice companies.

<u>Law Enforcement Agency</u>	<u>Assumed</u>	<u>Declined</u>	<u>Hospice</u>	<u>Safekeeping</u>	<u>Non-human</u>	<u>Total</u>
Alabama Bureau of Investigation	2	0	0	0	0	2
Alabama Dept. of Public Safety	9	0	0	0	0	9
Alabama Dept. of Corrections	9	0	0	0	0	9
Adamsville Police Department	10	6	4	2	0	22
Argo Police Department	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bessemer Police Department	69	53	17	6	0	145
Birmingham Police Department	433	341	146	57	3	980
Brighton Police Department	8	1	0	0	0	9
Brookside Police Department	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fairfield Police Department	21	13	3	0	0	37
Fultondale Police Department	10	4	10	1	0	25
Gardendale Police Department	19	15	26	1	0	61
Helena Police Department	0	1	0	0	0	1
Homewood Police Department	18	17	5	0	0	40
Hoover Police Department	40	40	4	11	0	95
Hueytown Police Department	19	20	8	1	1	49
Irondale Police Department	16	16	9	2	0	43
Jefferson County Sheriff's Office	179	196	133	13	0	521
Kimberly Police Department	2	3	0	0	0	5
Leeds Police Department	12	12	7	0	0	31
Lipscomb Police Department	3	2	0	0	0	5
Midfield Police Department	11	5	0	0	0	16
Morris Police Department	1	2	4	1	0	8
Mountain Brook Police Department	9	6	2	0	0	17
Pleasant Grove Police Department	10	13	6	1	0	30
Tarrant Police Department	12	4	5	1	0	22
Trafford Police Department	0	1	0	0	0	1
Trussville Police Department	16	23	12	1	0	52
UAB Police Department	1	0	0	0	0	1
Vestavia Hills Police Department	22	23	10	3	0	58
Warrior Police Department	6	7	1	0	0	14
Totals:	967	824	412	101	4	2,308

Total Assumed Cases by Law Enforcement Agency and Manner of Death, 2017

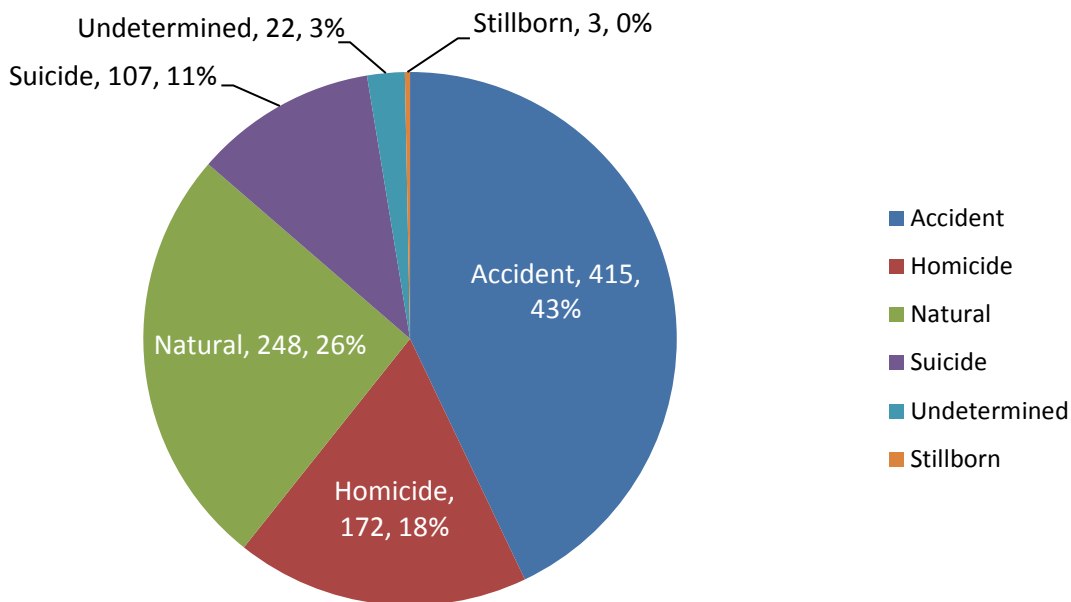
Table 2.2: N=967, represents all Assumed cases by law enforcement agency and manner of death.

<u>Law Enforcement Agency</u>	<u>Accident</u>	<u>Homicide</u>	<u>Natural</u>	<u>Suicide</u>	<u>Undetermined</u>	<u>Stillborn¹</u>	<u>Total</u>
Alabama Bureau of Investigation	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Alabama Dept. of Public Safety	9	0	0	0	0	0	9
Alabama Dept. of Corrections	0	0	9	0	0	0	9
Adamsville Police Department	4	0	1	5	0	0	10
Argo Police Department	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bessemer Police Department	35	12	19	2	1	0	69
Birmingham Police Department	164	111	110	37	8	3	433
Brighton Police Department	4	4	0	0	0	0	8
Brookside Police Department	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fairfield Police Department	9	8	3	1	0	0	21
Fultondale Police Department	5	0	3	2	0	0	10
Gardendale Police Department	7	4	6	2	0	0	19
Helena Police Department	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Homewood Police Department	9	1	5	2	1	0	18
Hoover Police Department	14	3	13	9	1	0	40
Hueytown Police Department	7	2	5	4	1	0	19
Irondale Police Department	9	2	4	1	0	0	16
Jefferson County Sheriff's Office	90	15	46	23	5	0	179
Kimberly Police Department	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Leeds Police Department	5	2	2	2	1	0	12
Lipscomb Police Department	1	0	2	0	0	0	3
Midfield Police Department	5	3	1	1	1	0	11
Morris Police Department	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Mountain Brook Police Department	1	0	4	3	1	0	9
Pleasant Grove Police Department	7	0	3	0	0	0	10
Tarrant Police Department	7	3	1	0	1	0	12
Trafford Police Department	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trussville Police Department	11	0	1	4	0	0	16
UAB Police Department	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Vestavia Hills Police Department	6	0	8	8	0	0	22
Warrior Police Department	2	0	2	1	1	0	6
Totals:	415	172	248	107	22	3	967

1. Pursuant to the State of Alabama Vital Records laws, stillborn deaths are not assigned a manner of death.

Percentage of Assumed Cases by Manner of Death, 2017

Figure 2.2: N=967, represents number and percentage of cases by manner of death, includes only Assumed jurisdiction.



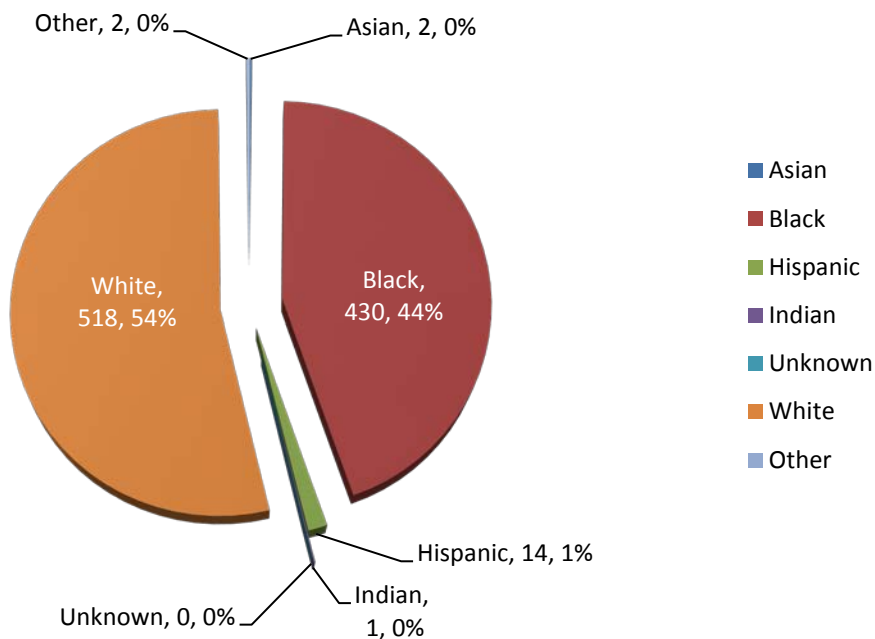
Total Assumed Cases by Manner of Death and Type of Examination, 2017

Table 2.3: N=967, represents all Assumed cases by manner of death and type of examination performed.

Examination	Accident / %	Homicide / %	Natural / %	Suicide / %	Undetermined / %	Stillborn / %	Total
Autopsy	312 / 75%	171 / 99 %	138 / 56%	20 / 19%	19 / 86%	2 / 67%	662
External	103 / 25%	1 / 1%	110 / 44%	87 / 81%	3 / 14%	1 / 33%	305
No Exam	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0
Total	415	172	248	107	22	3	967

Total Assumed Cases by Race, 2017

Figure 2.3: N=967, represents all Assumed cases by race, with totals and percentages.



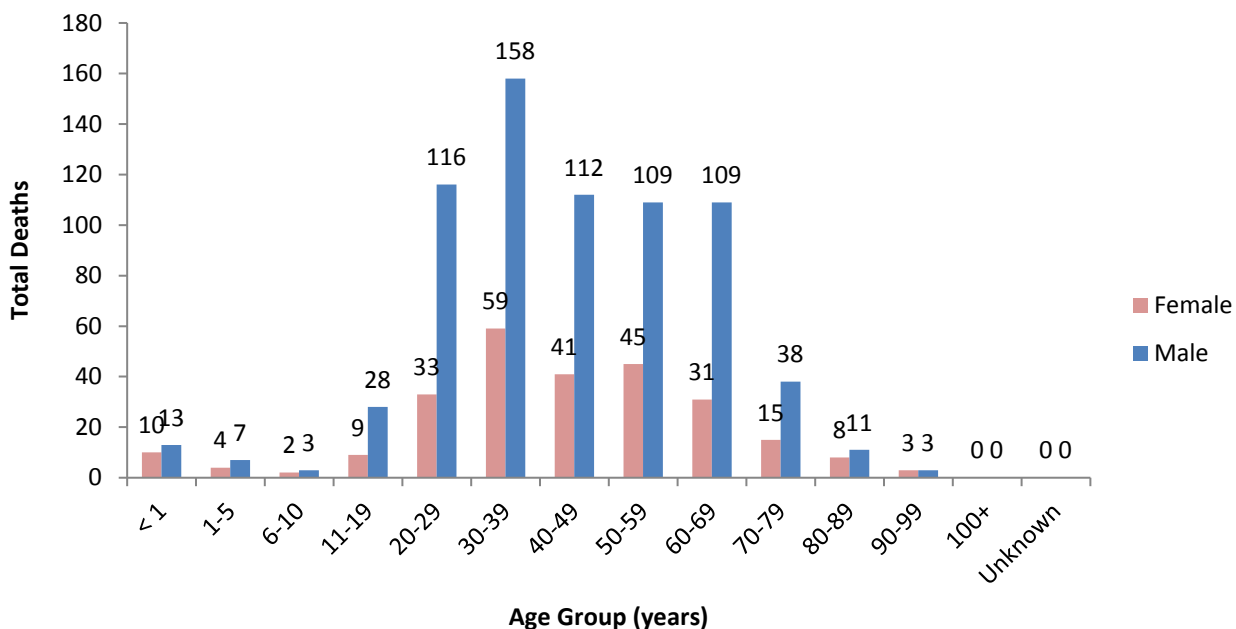
Total Assumed Cases by Race and Manner of Death, 2017

Table 2.4: N=967, represents all Assumed cases by race and manner of death.

Race	Accident	Homicide	Natural	Suicide	Undetermined	Stillborn	Total
Asian	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Black	144	147	107	21	9	2	430
Hispanic	5	3	4	2	0	0	14
Indian	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Other	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	264	21	135	84	13	1	518
Total	415	172	248	107	22	3	967

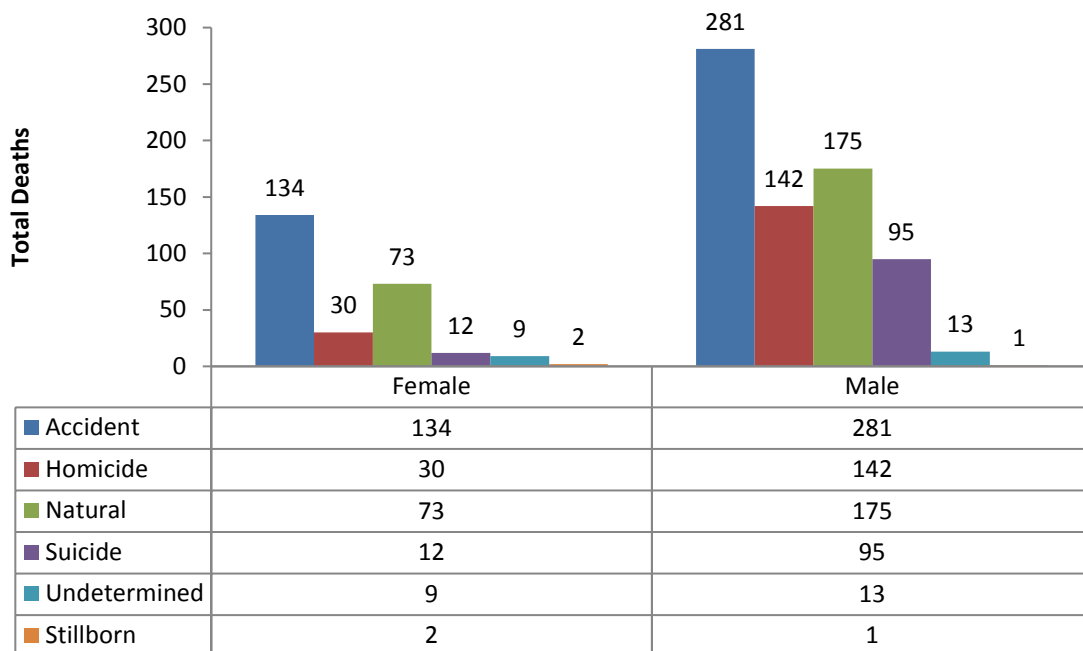
Total Assumed Cases by Gender and Age Group, 2017

Figure 2.4: N=967, represents all Assumed cases by gender and age group.



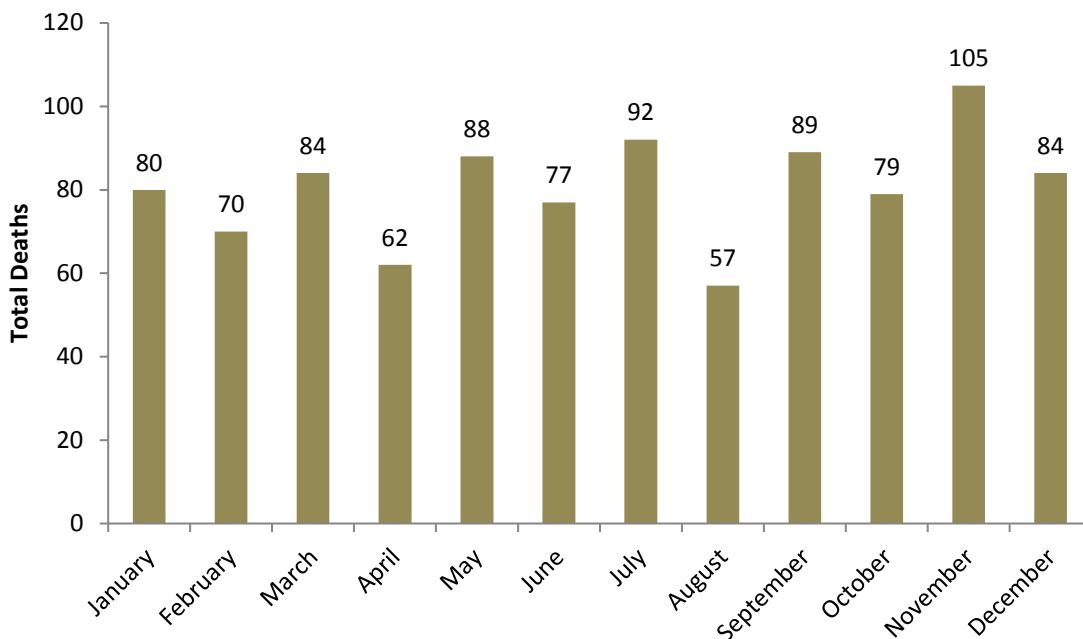
Total Assumed Cases by Gender and Manner of Death, 2017

Figure 2.5: N=967, represents all Assumed cases by gender and manner of death.



Total Assumed Cases by Month of Death, 2017

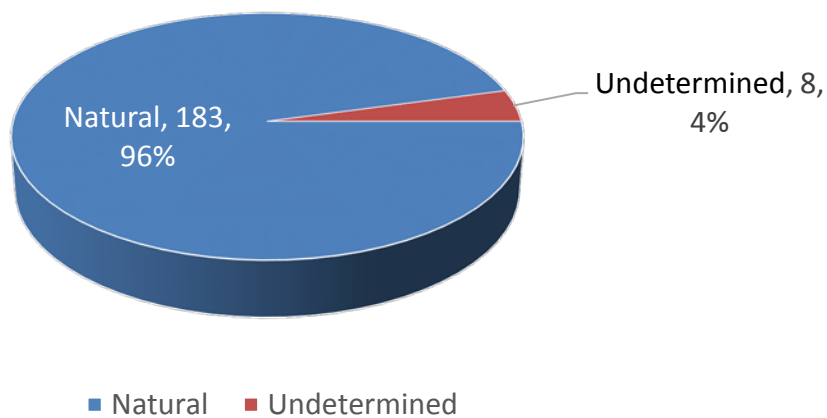
Figure 2.6: N=967, represents all Assumed cases by month of death.



Death Certificate Reviews of Declined Cases, 2017

Figure 2.7: N=191, represents all death certificate reviews (D.C.R.) of declined jurisdiction cases, by manner of death.

Death Certificate Reviews: Manners of Death



Section 3: Manner of Death: Assumed Jurisdiction

Accident

Accidental deaths accounted for 43% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2017, and is the largest percentage of all manners of death.

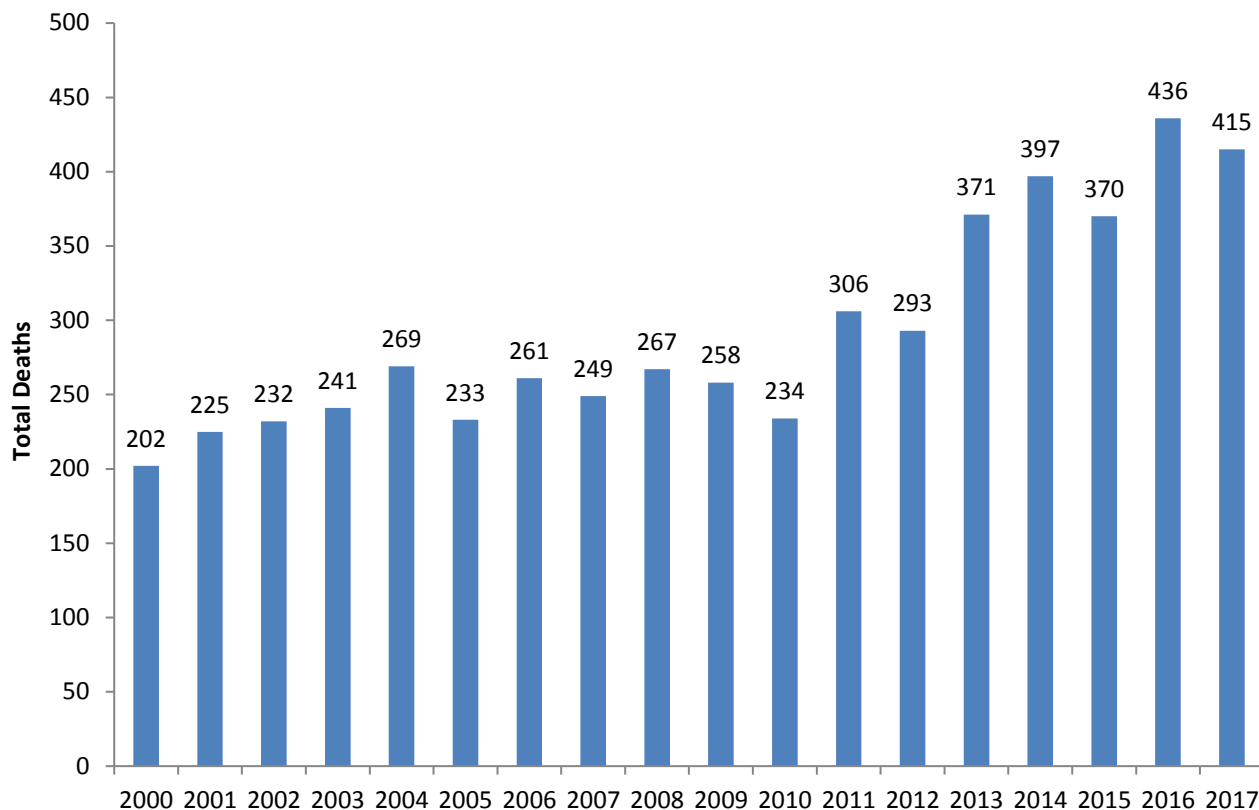
There was a 4.8% decrease in the total number of accidental deaths, from 436 deaths in 2016 to 415 deaths in 2017.

Drug deaths were the most common cause of accidental death in 2017 accounting for 62.7% of the deaths, followed by motor vehicle deaths at 24.3% of the deaths.

The most common race was white representing 63.6% of the accidental deaths, while male was the most common gender representing 67.7% of the accidental deaths.

Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2017

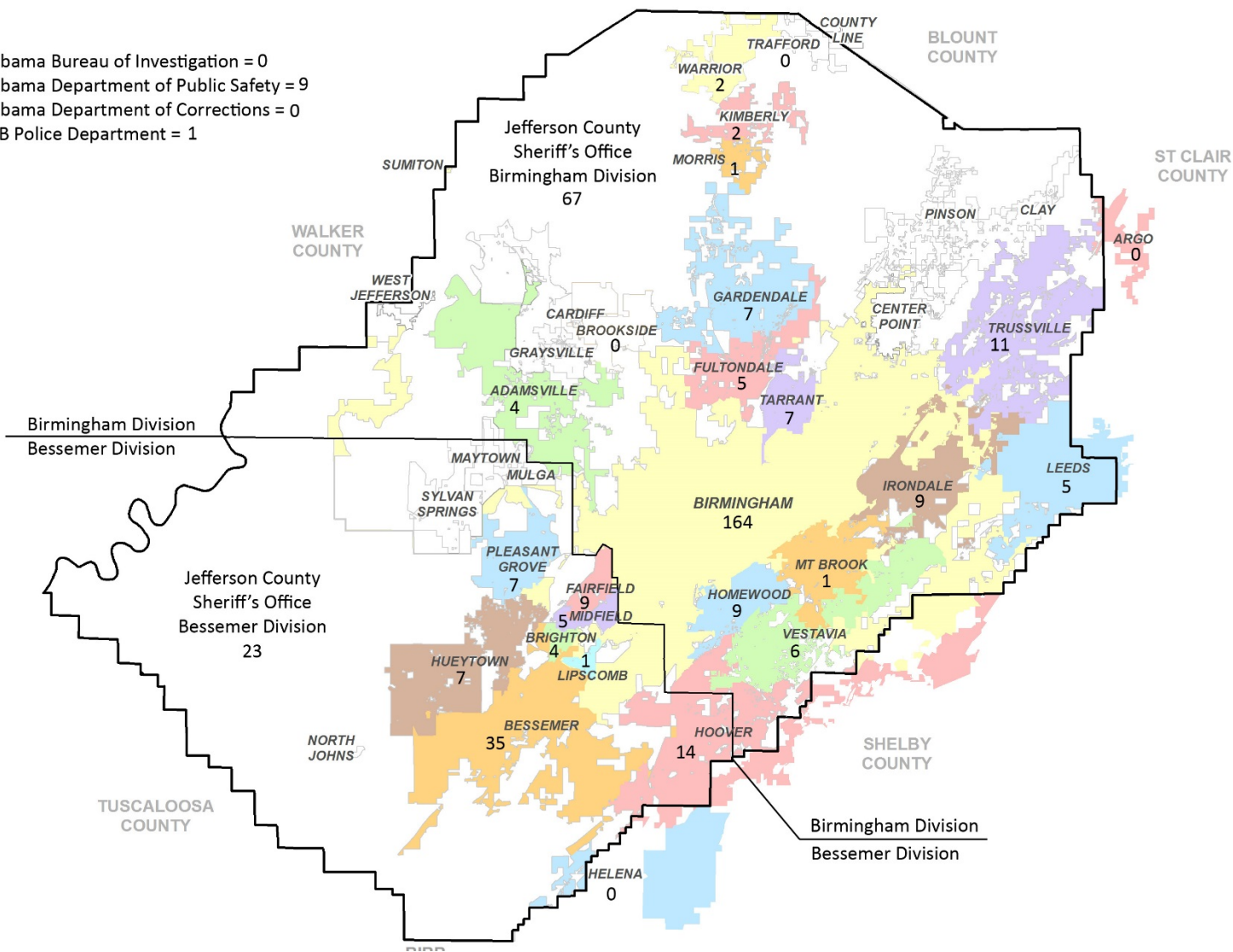
Figure 3.1: represents all accidental deaths investigated by the JCCMEO.



Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Law Enforcement Agency, 2017

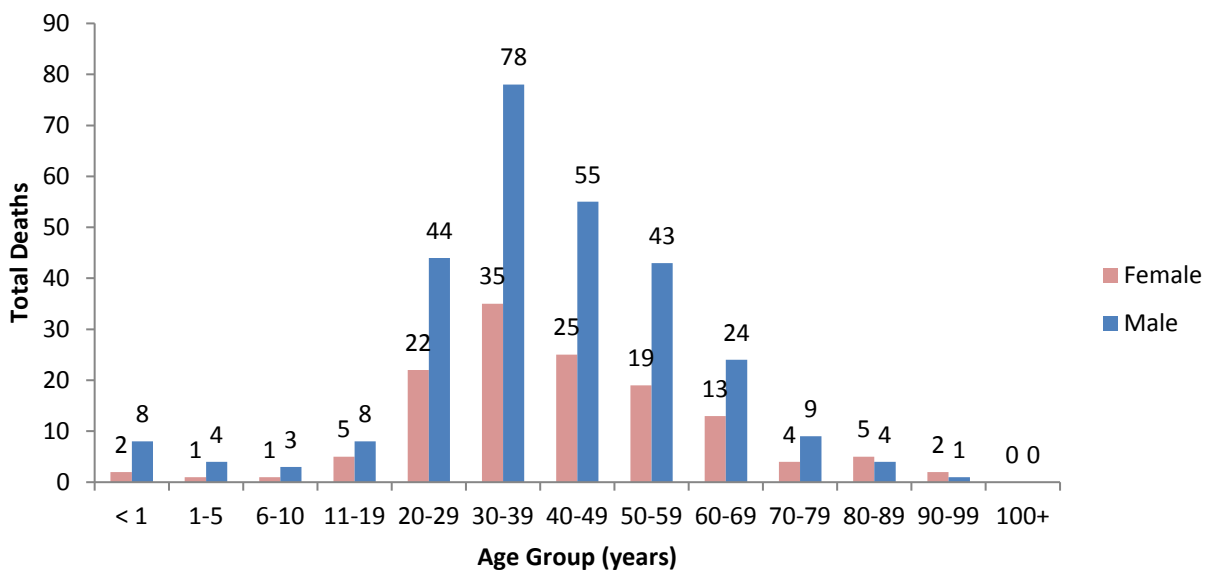
Figure 3.2: N=415, represents all accidental deaths by law enforcement agency.

Alabama Bureau of Investigation = 0
 Alabama Department of Public Safety = 9
 Alabama Department of Corrections = 0
 UAB Police Department = 1



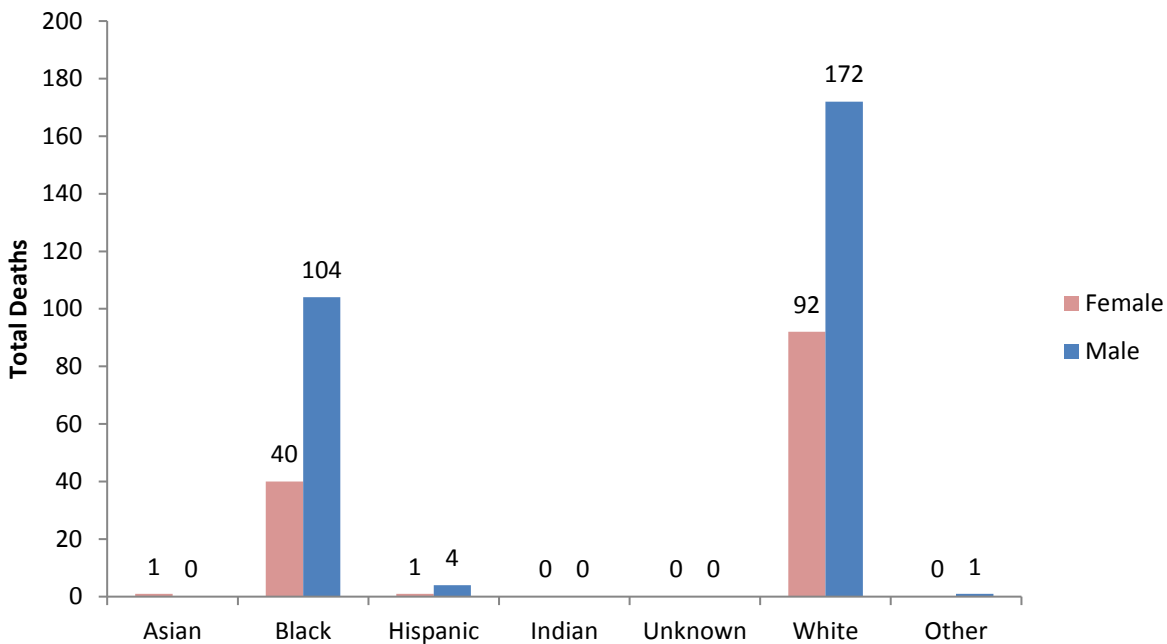
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2017

Figure 3.3: N=415, represents all accidental deaths by gender and age group.



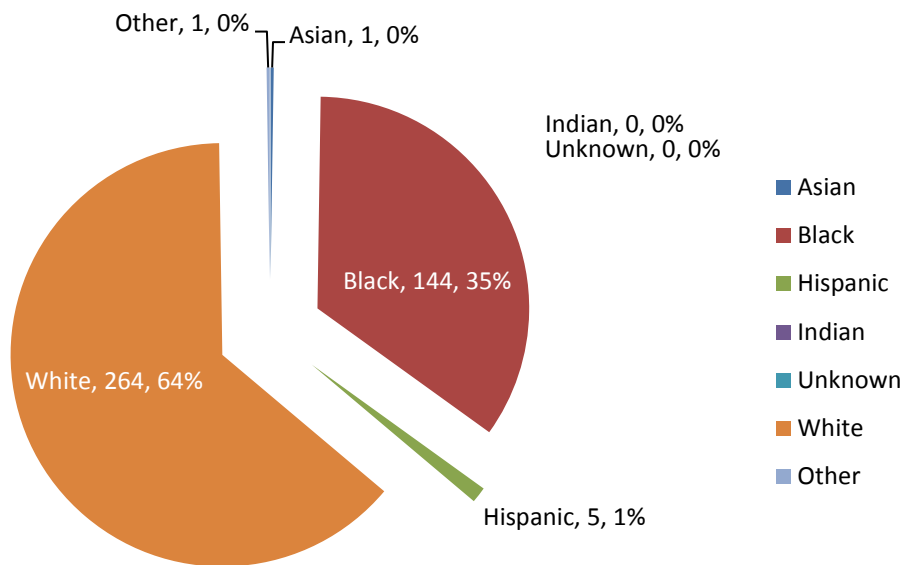
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Gender and Race, 2017

Figure 3.4: N=415, represents all accidental deaths by gender and race.



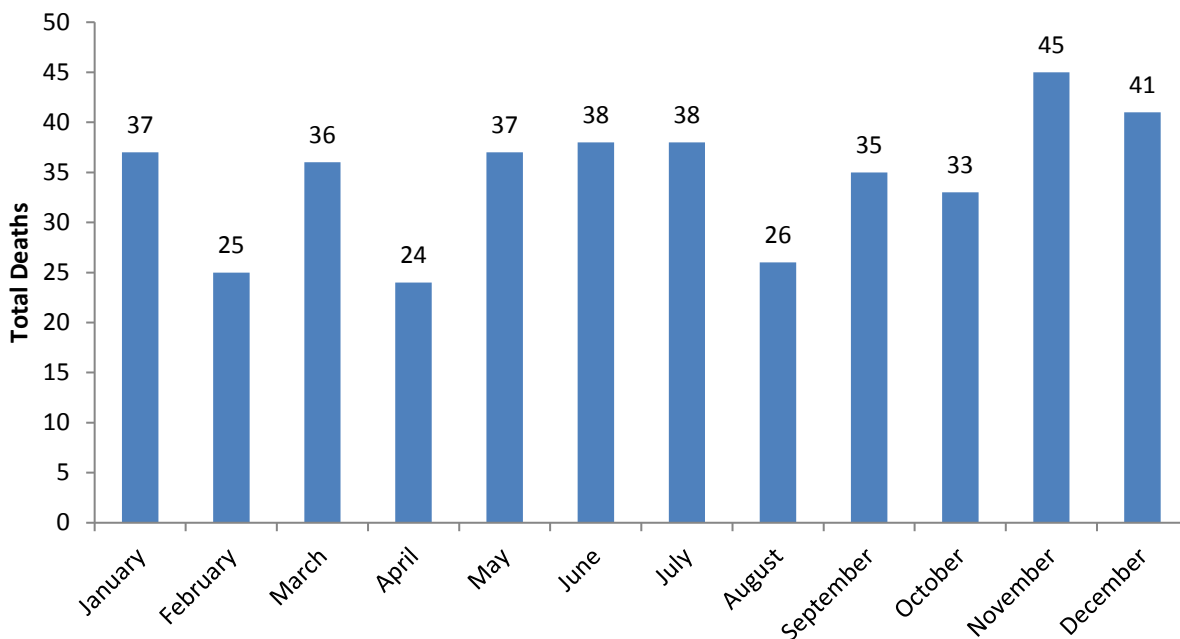
Percentage of Accidental Deaths by Race, 2017

Figure 3.5: N=415, represents all accidental deaths by race.



Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Month of Death, 2017

Figure 3.6: N=415, represents all Accidental deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Means of Death, 2017

Table 3.1: N=415, represents all Accidental deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Animal: Yellow jackets	1
Asphyxia:	
ATV	1
Food	5
Blunt	
Log	1
Roadway	1
Tractor	1
Co-sleeping:	
Bed	4
Chair	1
Mattress	1
Recliner	1
Drowning:	
Bathtub	3
Lake	2
Pool	1
Drug:	
Illicit	227
Prescription medication	24
Prescription opioid	9
Ethanol (alcohol) – acute toxicity	2
Exposure: Motor vehicle	2
Fall:	
Driveway	2
Ladder	1
Parking lot	1
Roadway	1
Roof	1
Stairs	6
Fire:	
Home	7
Firearm:	
Handgun	1
Rifle	1
Motor vehicle:	
Bicycle	1
Pedestrian	19
Single vehicle	38
Multiple vehicles	43
Sharp: Pottery	1
Smothering: Blanket	1
Train: Pedestrian	4
Total	415

Homicide

Homicides accounted for 17.8% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2017.

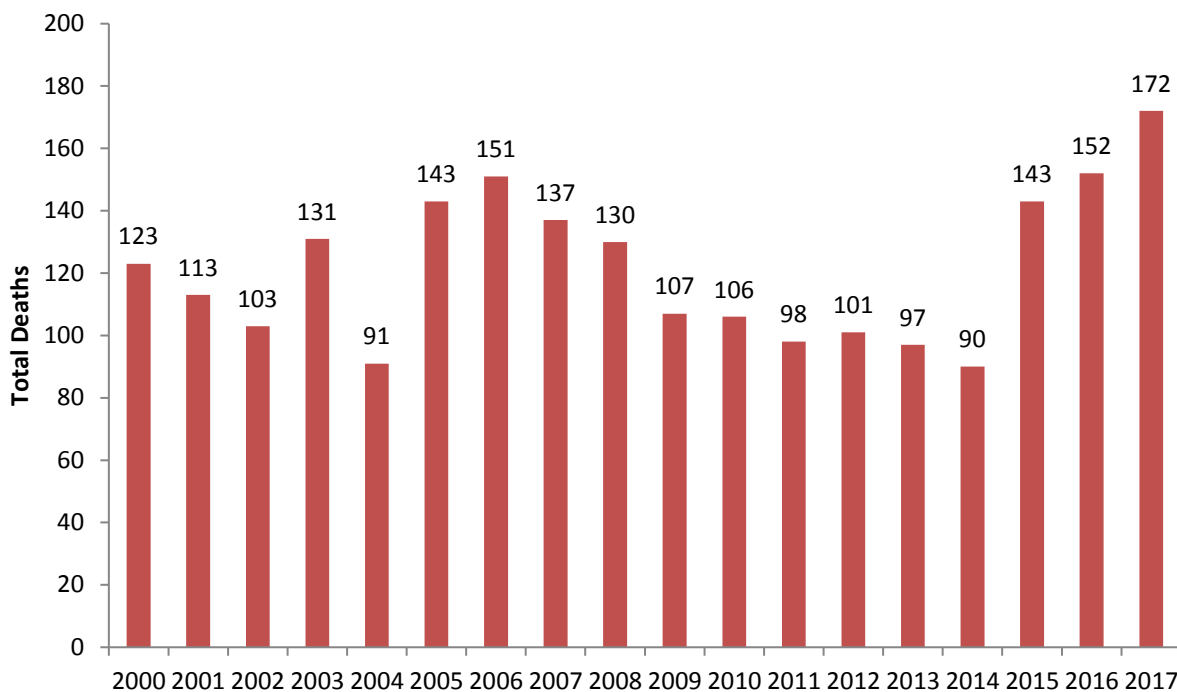
There was a 13.2% increase in the total number of homicides, from 152 deaths in 2016 to 172 deaths in 2017; and is the highest year since the year 2000.

Death due to firearms was the most common cause of homicide in 2017 accounting for 90.1% of the deaths, followed by sharp force at 4.1% and blunt force at 2.9% of the deaths.

The most common race was black representing 85.5% of the homicides, while males were the most common gender representing 82.6% of homicide deaths.

Total Number of Homicides by Year of Death 2000-2017

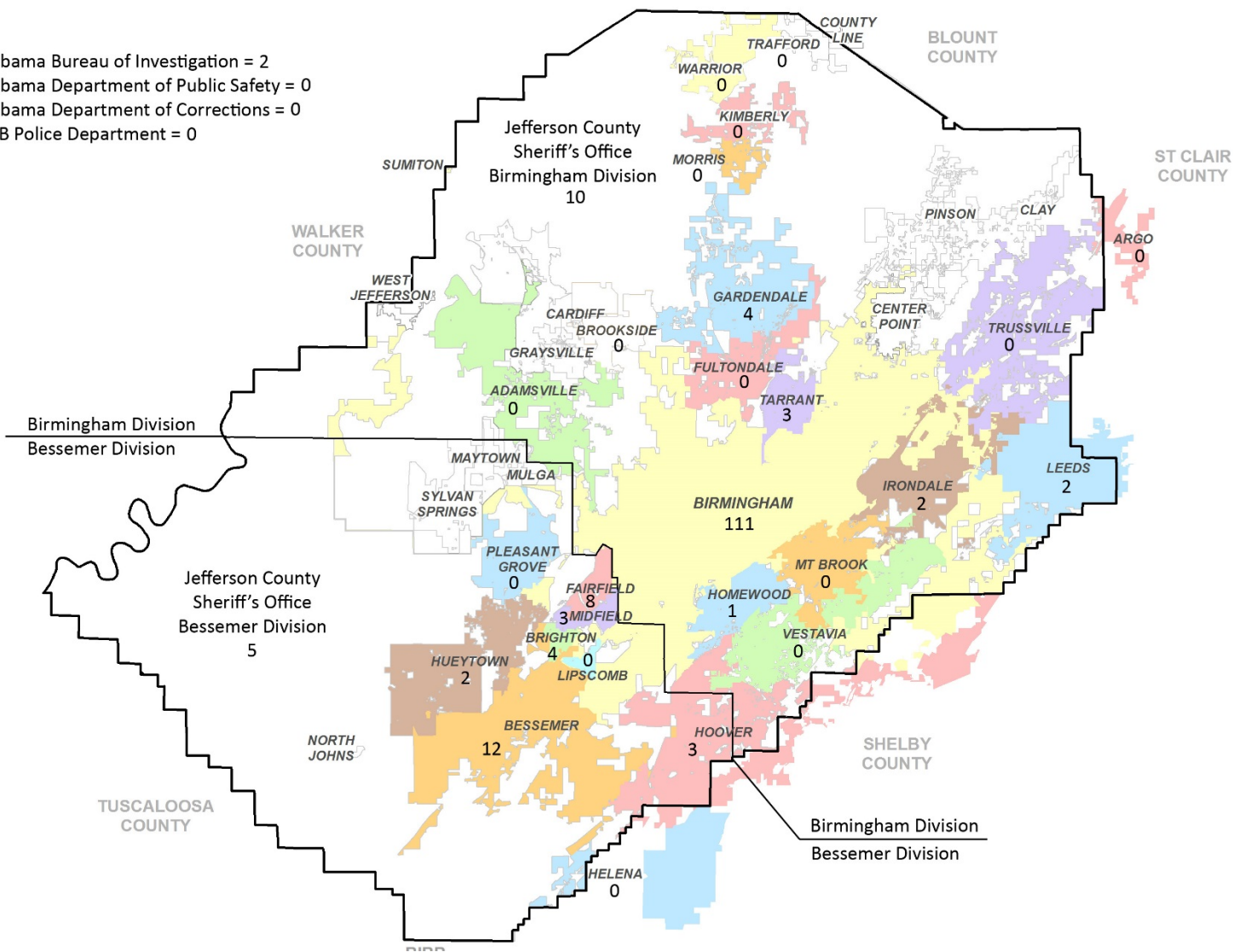
Figure 3.7: represents all homicides investigated by the JCCMEO.



Total Number of Homicides by Law Enforcement Agency, 2017

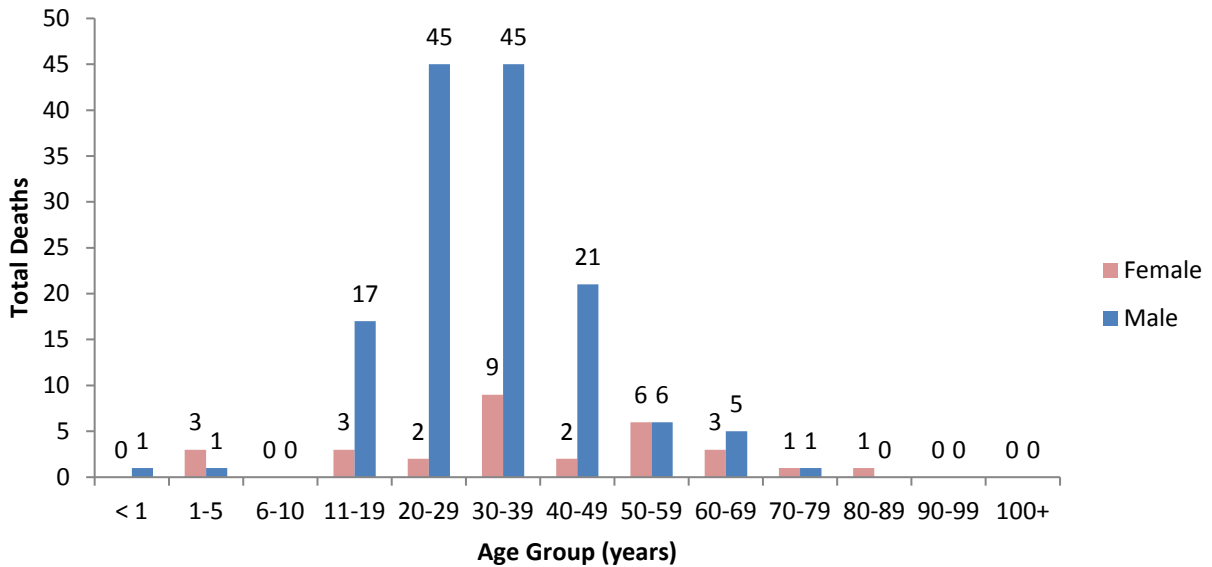
Figure 3.8: N=172, represents all homicide deaths by law enforcement agency.

Alabama Bureau of Investigation = 2
 Alabama Department of Public Safety = 0
 Alabama Department of Corrections = 0
 UAB Police Department = 0



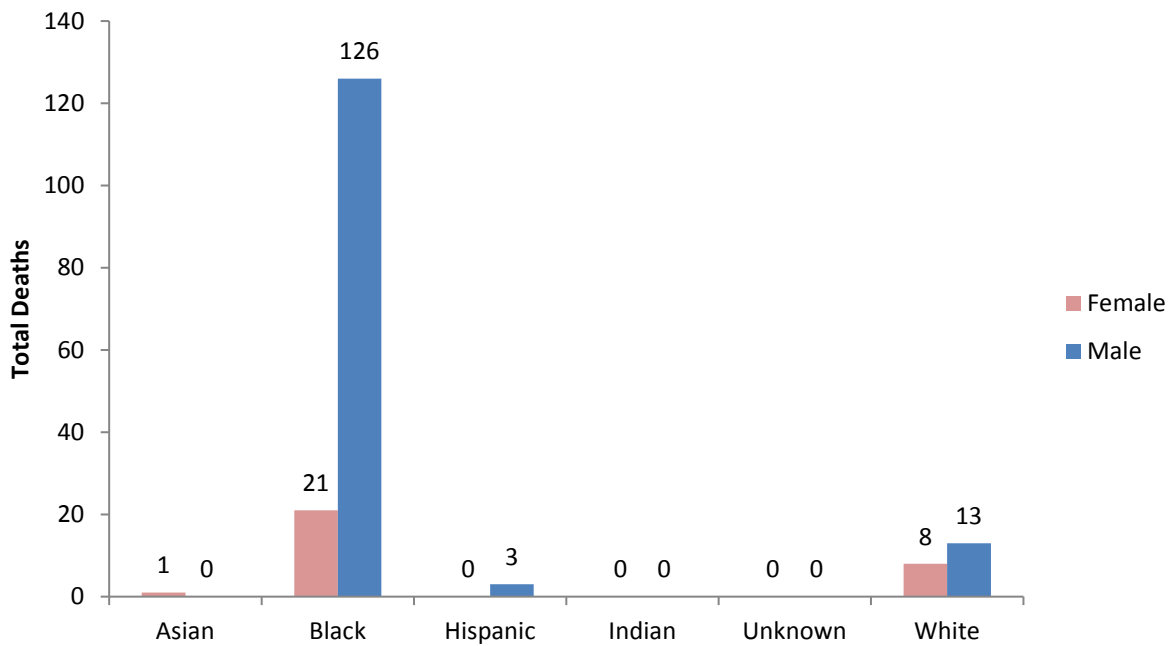
Total Number of Homicides by Gender and Age Group, 2017

Figure 3.9: N=172, represents all homicides by gender and age group.



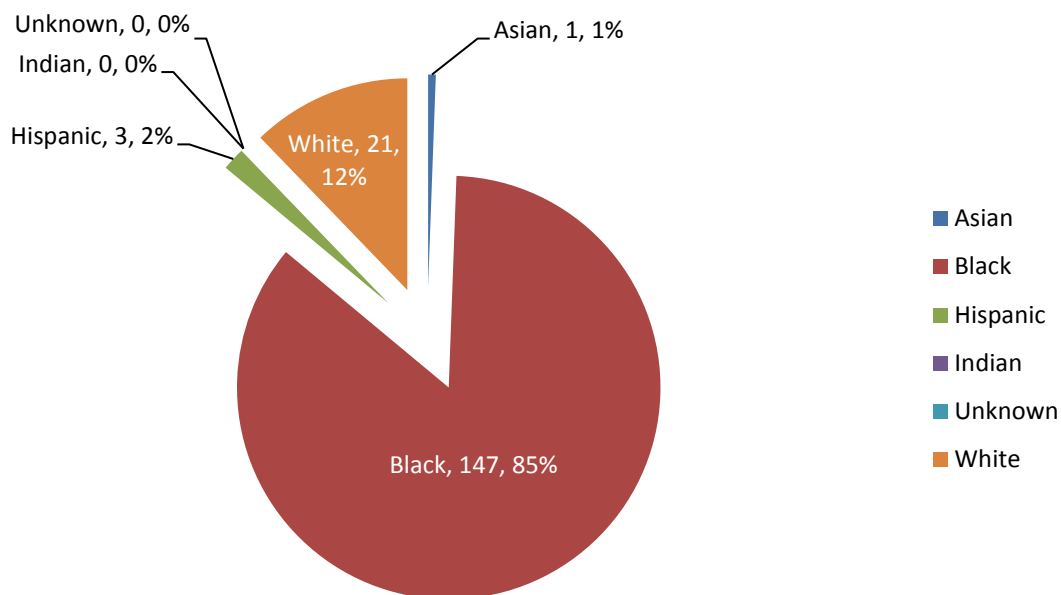
Total Number of Homicides by Gender and Race, 2017

Figure 3.10: N=172, represents all homicides by gender and race.



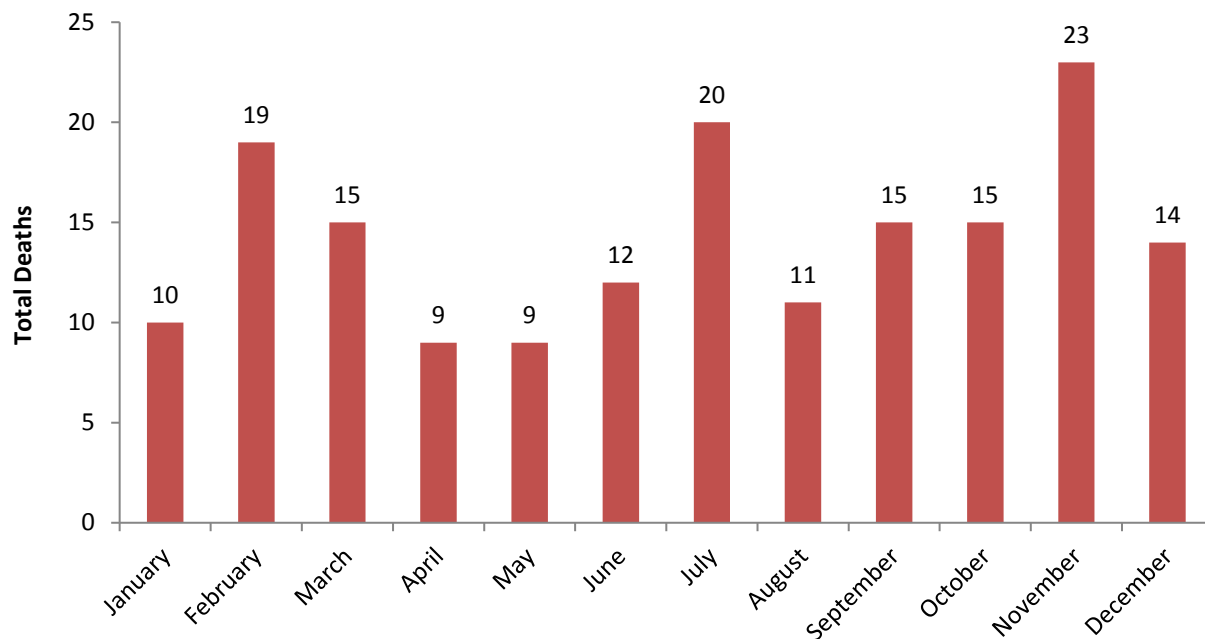
Percentage of Homicides by Race, 2017

Figure 3.11: N=172, represents all homicides by race.



Total Number of Homicides by Month of Death, 2017

Figure 3.12: N=172, represents all homicides by month of death.



Total Number of Homicides by Means of Death, 2017

Table 3.2: N=172, represents all Homicides by means of death and weapon type.

Means of Death	Total
Asphyxia:	
Hands	2
Unknown	1
Blunt:	
Fist	1
Fist/feet	1
Hammer	1
Unknown	2
Fire: House	1
Firearm:	
Handgun	84
Rifle	11
Shotgun	3
Unknown	57
Sharp:	
Knife	4
Unknown	3
Unknown: Undetermined	1
Total	172

Natural

Natural deaths accounted for 25.7% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2017.

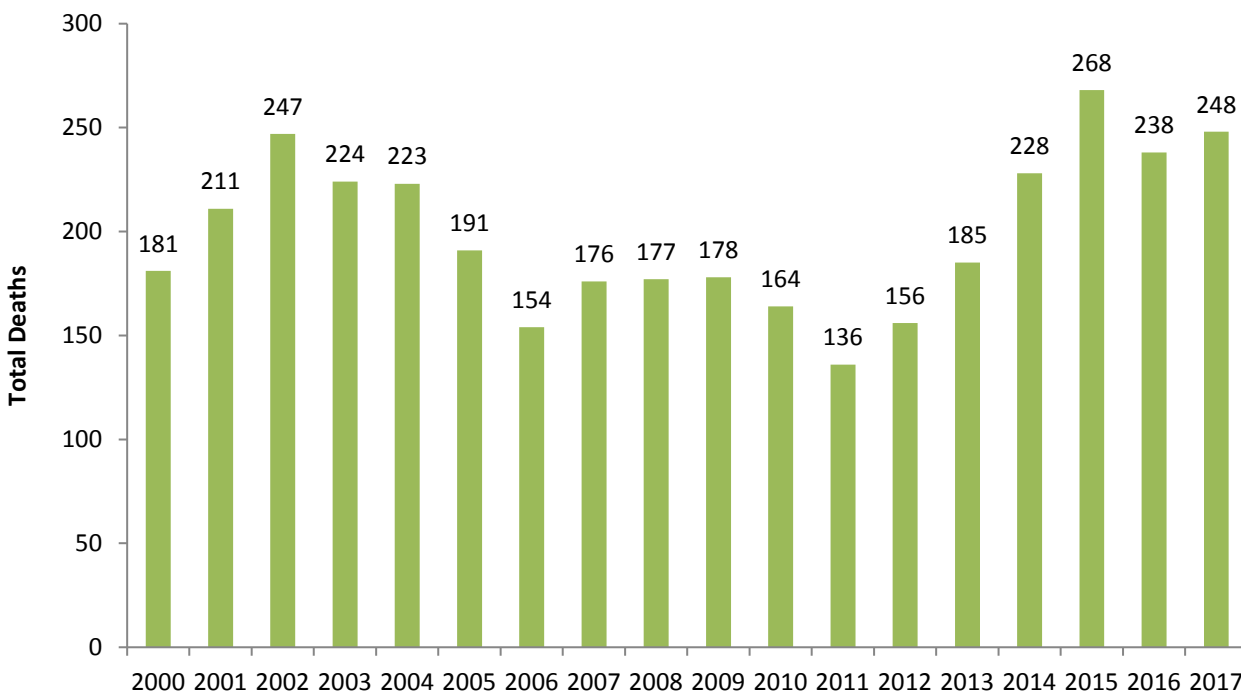
There was a 4.2% increase in the total number of natural deaths, from 238 deaths in 2016 to 248 deaths in 2017 and; is the second highest year since year 2000.

Deaths due to heart disease were the most common cause of natural death in 2017 accounting for 55.2% of the deaths.

The most common race was white representing 54.4% of the natural deaths, while males were the most common gender representing 70.6% of natural deaths.

Total Number of Natural Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2017

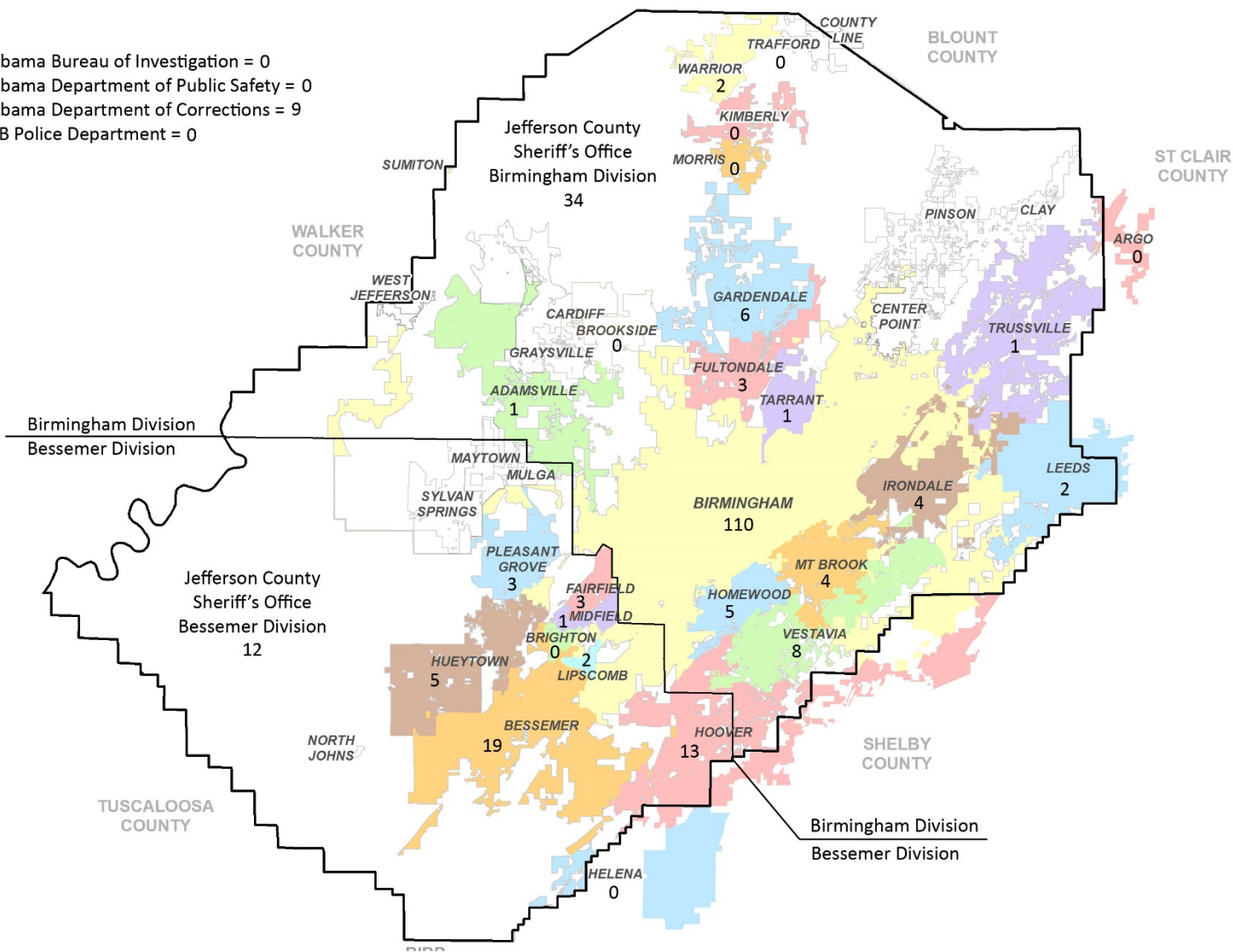
Figure 3.13: represents all natural deaths investigated by the JCCMEO.



Total Number of Natural Deaths by Law Enforcement Agency, 2017

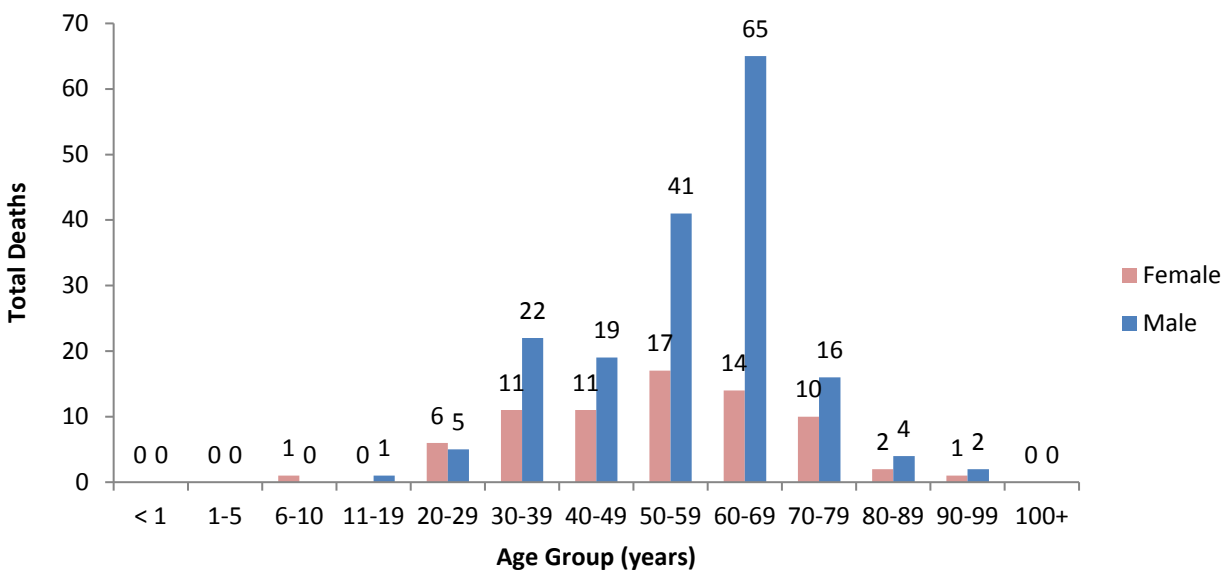
Figure 3.14: N=248, represents all natural deaths by law enforcement agency.

Alabama Bureau of Investigation = 0
 Alabama Department of Public Safety = 0
 Alabama Department of Corrections = 9
 UAB Police Department = 0



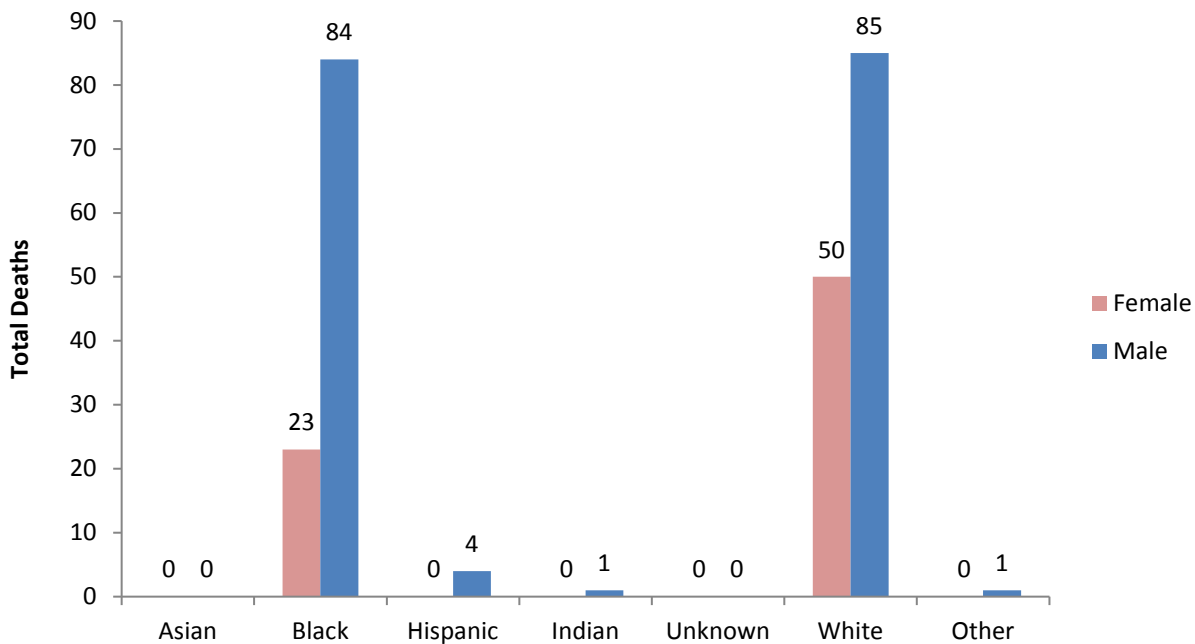
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2017

Figure 3.15: N=248, represents all natural deaths by gender and age group.



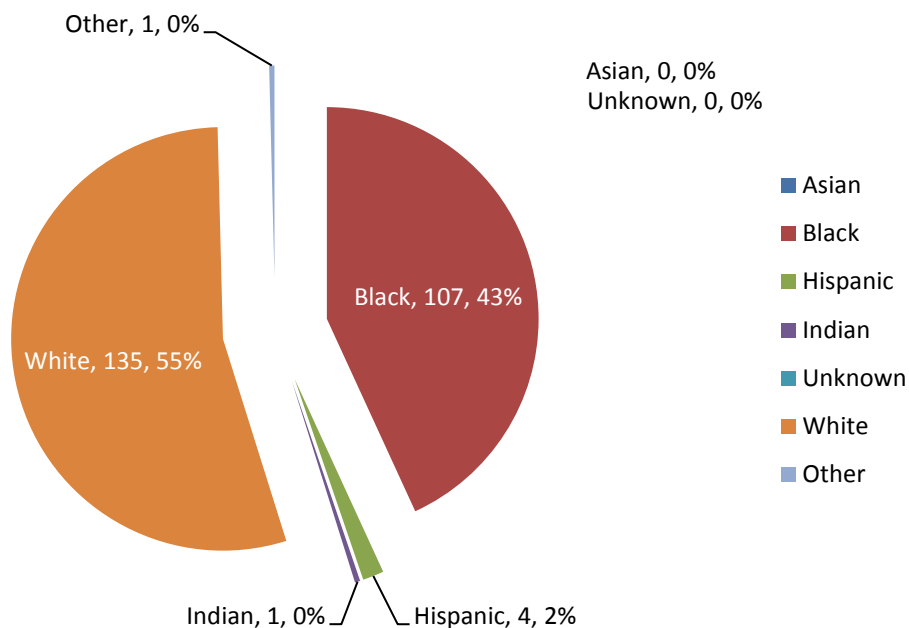
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Gender and Race, 2017

Figure 3.16: N=248, represents all natural deaths by gender and race.



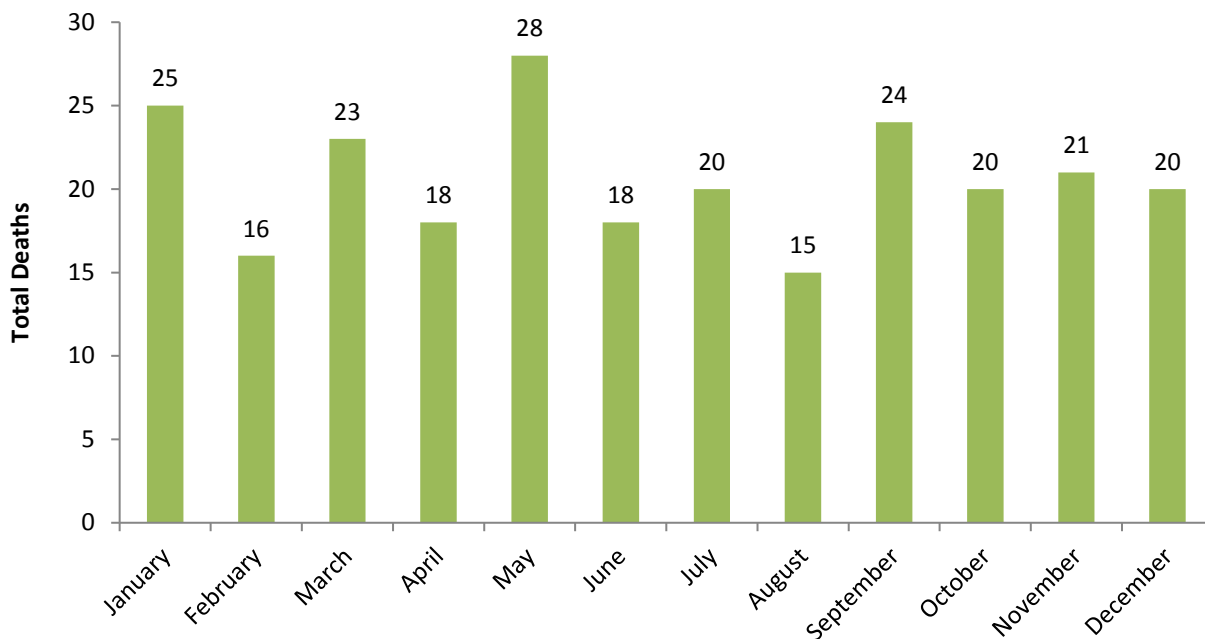
Percentage of Natural Deaths by Race, 2017

Figure 3.17: N=248, represents all natural deaths by race.



Total Number of Natural Deaths by Month of Death, 2017

Figure 3.18: N=248, represents all natural deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Natural Deaths by Means of Death, 2017

Table 3.3: N=248, represents all natural deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Heart:	
Coronary artery atherosclerosis	24
Hypertensive heart disease	45
Arteriosclerotic cardiovascular disease	45
Other heart disease	23
Lungs:	
Pneumonia	5
COPD / asthma	5
Pulmonary thromboembolism	7
Liver:	
Cirrhosis	1
Brain:	
Seizure disorder (epilepsy)	6
Meningitis	0
Nontraumatic intracranial hemorrhage	6
Malignancy NOS (includes all organ systems)	11
Chronic substance (ethanol/drug) use	33
Diabetes	12
Gastrointestinal bleeding	0
Other	25
Total	248

Suicide

Suicide deaths accounted for 11.1% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2017.

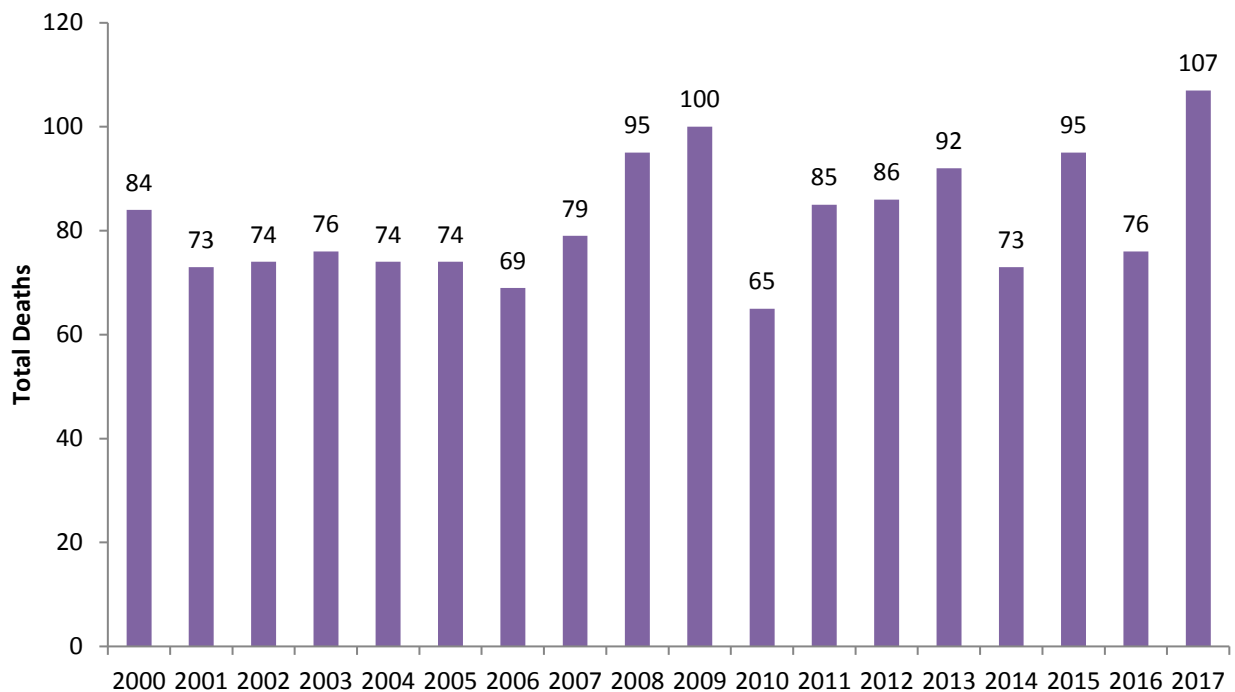
There was a 40.8% increase in the total number of suicide deaths, from 76 deaths in 2016 to 107 deaths in 2017.

Deaths due to gunshot wounds were the most common cause of suicide death in 2017 accounting for 60.7% of the deaths and, followed by deaths due to hanging accounting for 18.7% of the suicide deaths.

The most common race was white representing 78.5% of the suicide deaths, while males were the most common gender representing 88.7% of suicide deaths.

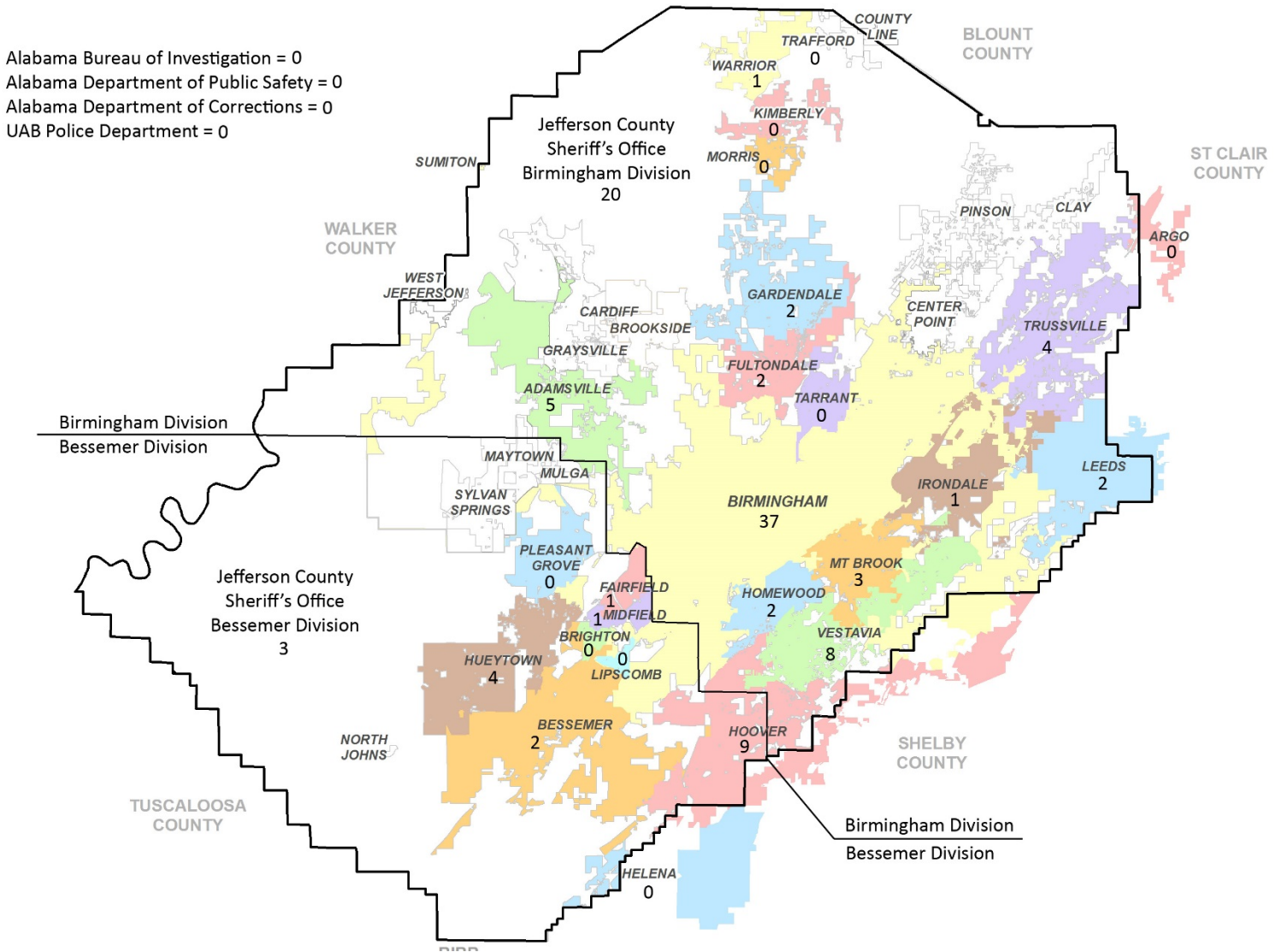
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2017

Figure 3.19: represents all suicide deaths investigated by the JCCMEO.



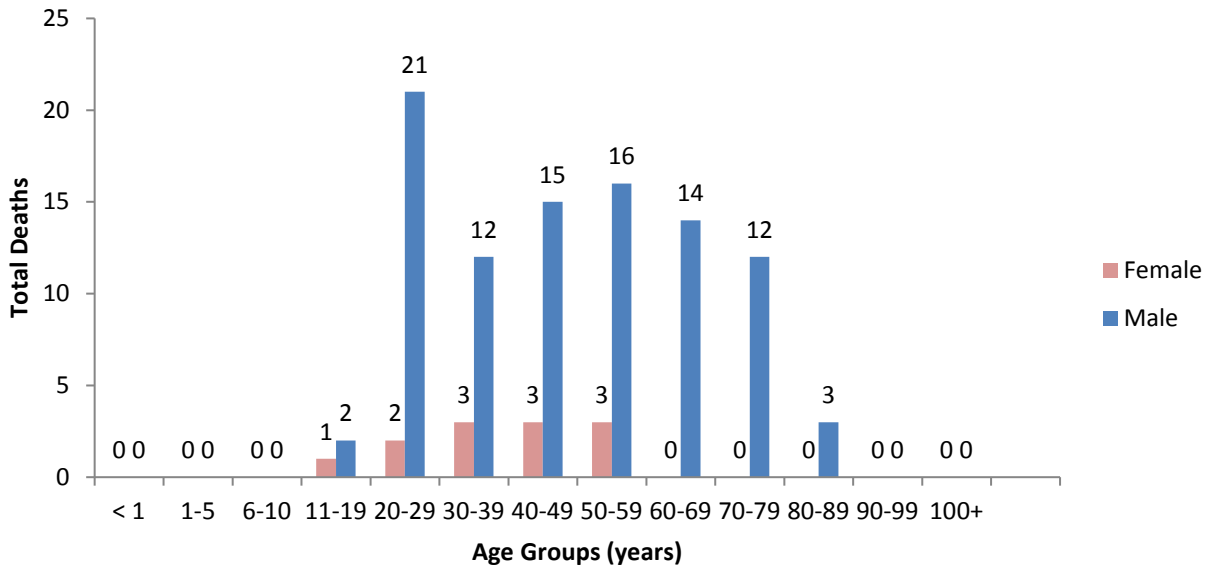
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Law Enforcement Agency, 2017

Figure 3.20: N=107, represents all suicide deaths by law enforcement agency.



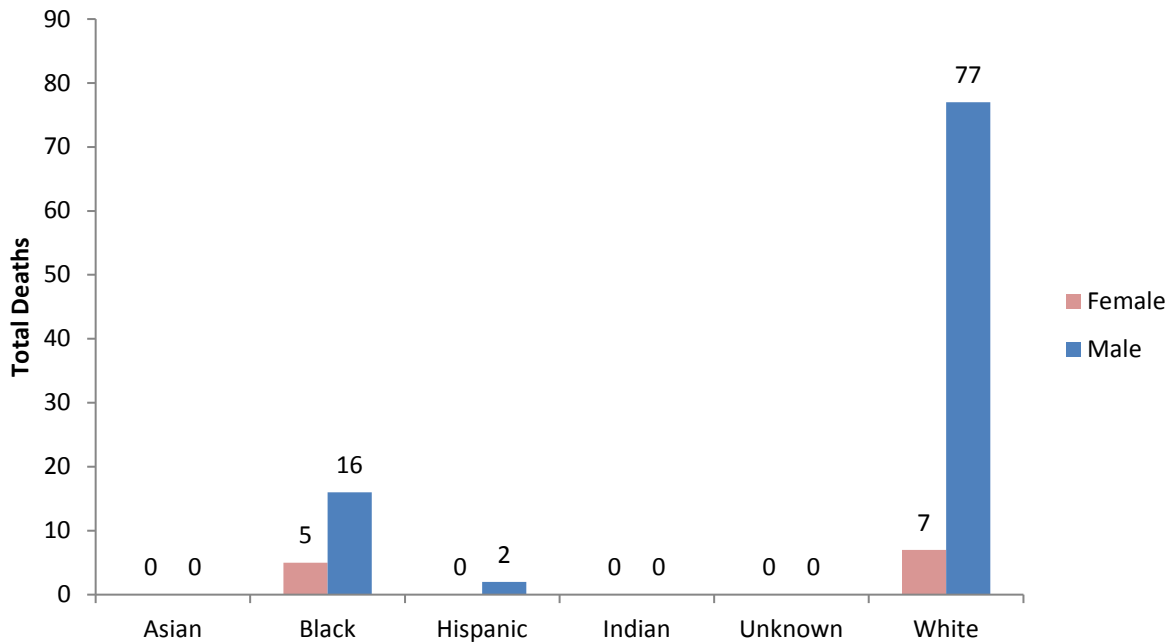
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2017

Figure 3.21: N=107, represents all suicide deaths by gender and age group.



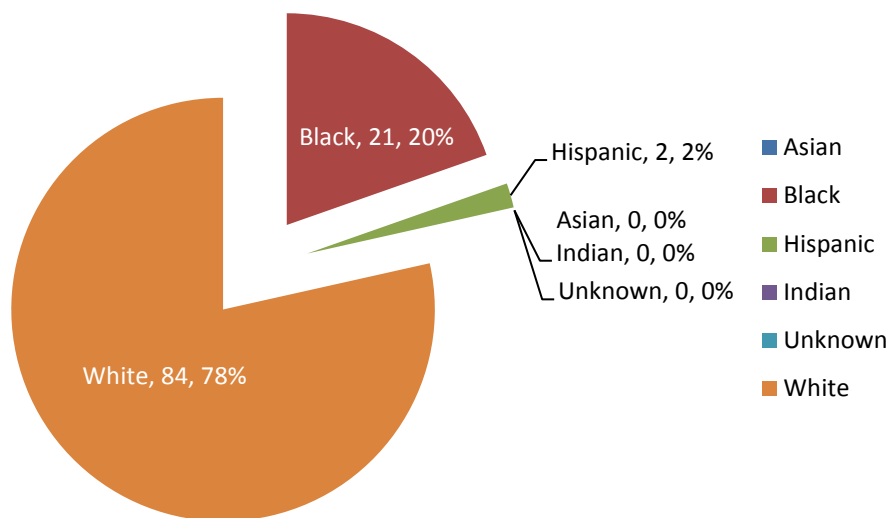
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Gender and Race, 2017

Figure 3.22: N=107, represents all suicide deaths by gender and race.



Percentage of Suicide Deaths by Race, 2017

Figure 3.23: N=107, represents all suicide deaths by race.



Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Month of Death, 2017

Figure 3.24: N=107, represents all suicide deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Means of Death, 2017

Table 3.4: N=107, represents all suicide deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Asphyxia:	
Bag	2
Helium	2
Twine	1
Carbon Monoxide:	
Motor cycle	1
Motor vehicle	1
Drug:	
Drug (Illicit)	1
Prescription medications	4
Fall:	
Bridge	2
Parking deck	1
Stairway	1
Window	2
Fire: Gasoline	1
Firearm:	
Handgun	56
Rifle	3
Shotgun	4
Unknown	2
Hanging:	
Belt	5
Electrical cord	6
Nylon strap	1
Rope	5
Sheet	2
Shoe string	1
Sharp: Knife	2
Train: Pedestrian	1
Total	107

Undetermined

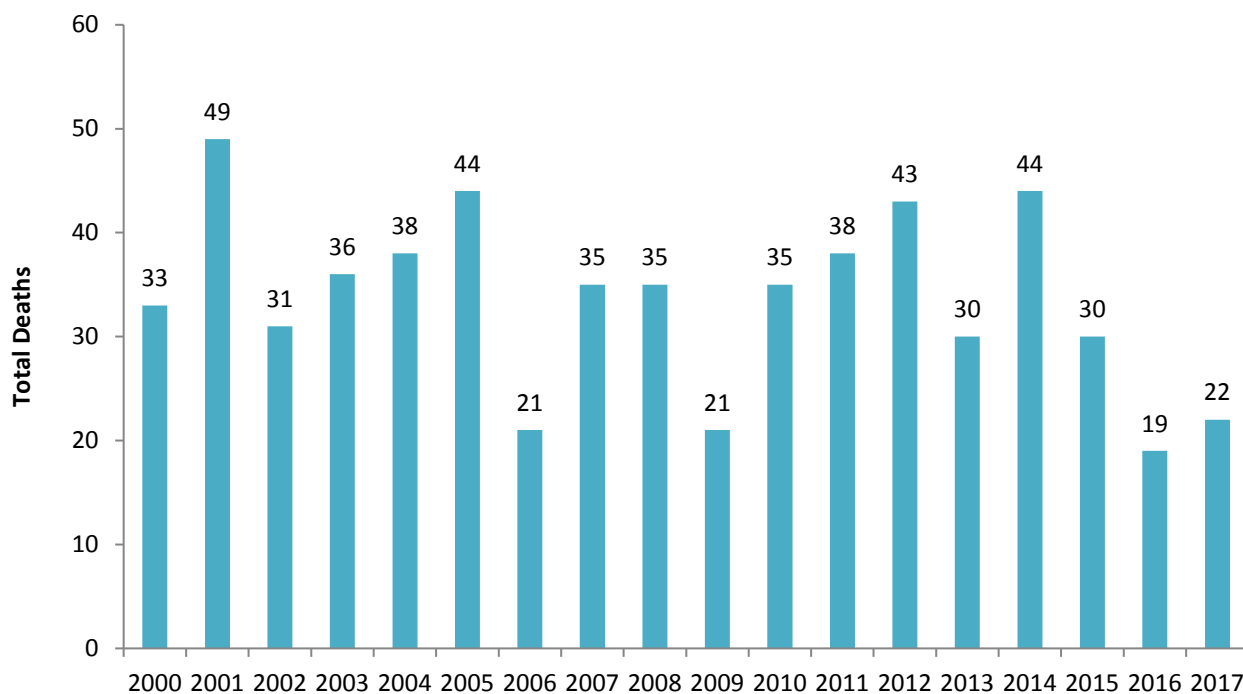
Undetermined deaths accounted for 2.3% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2017.

There was a 15.8% increase in the total number of undetermined deaths, from 19 deaths in 2016 to 22 deaths in 2017.

Undetermined was the most common means of Undetermined death, accounting for 63.6% of the deaths.

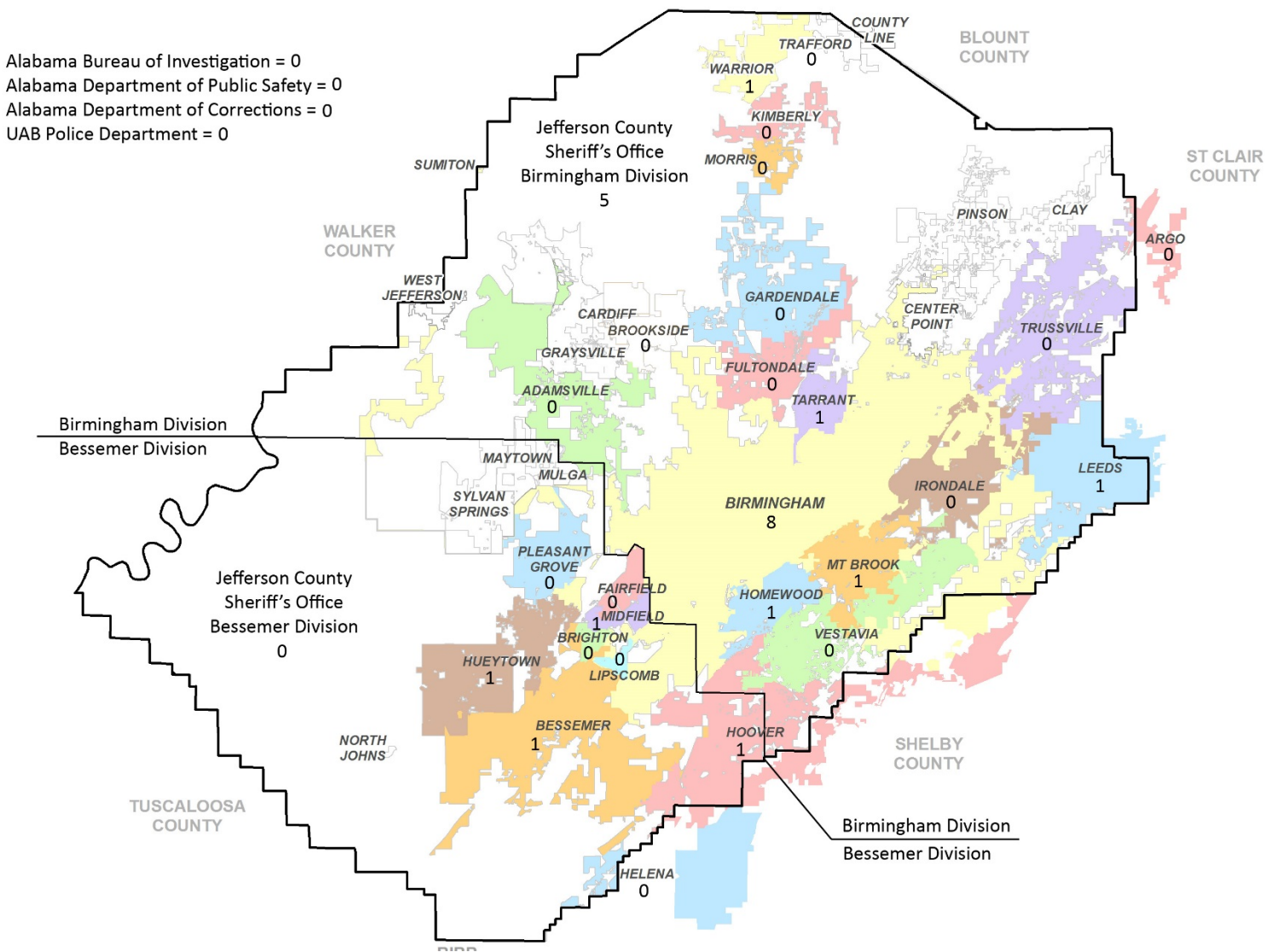
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2017

Figure 3.25: represents all undetermined deaths investigated by the JCCMEO.



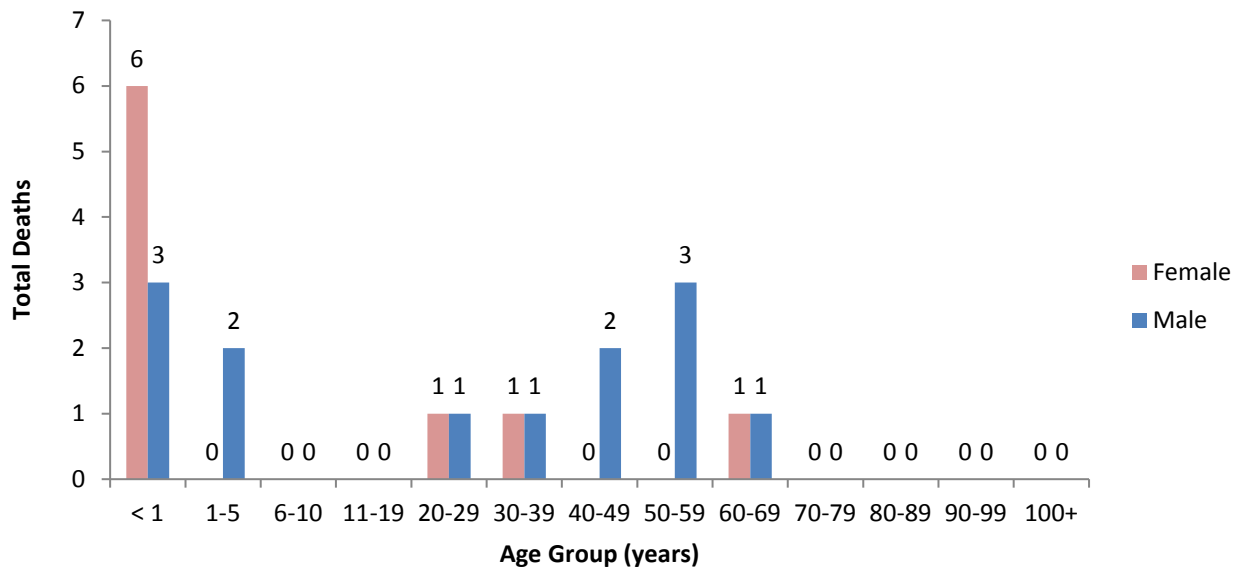
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Law Enforcement Agency, 2017

Figure 3.26: N=22, represents all undetermined deaths by law enforcement agency.



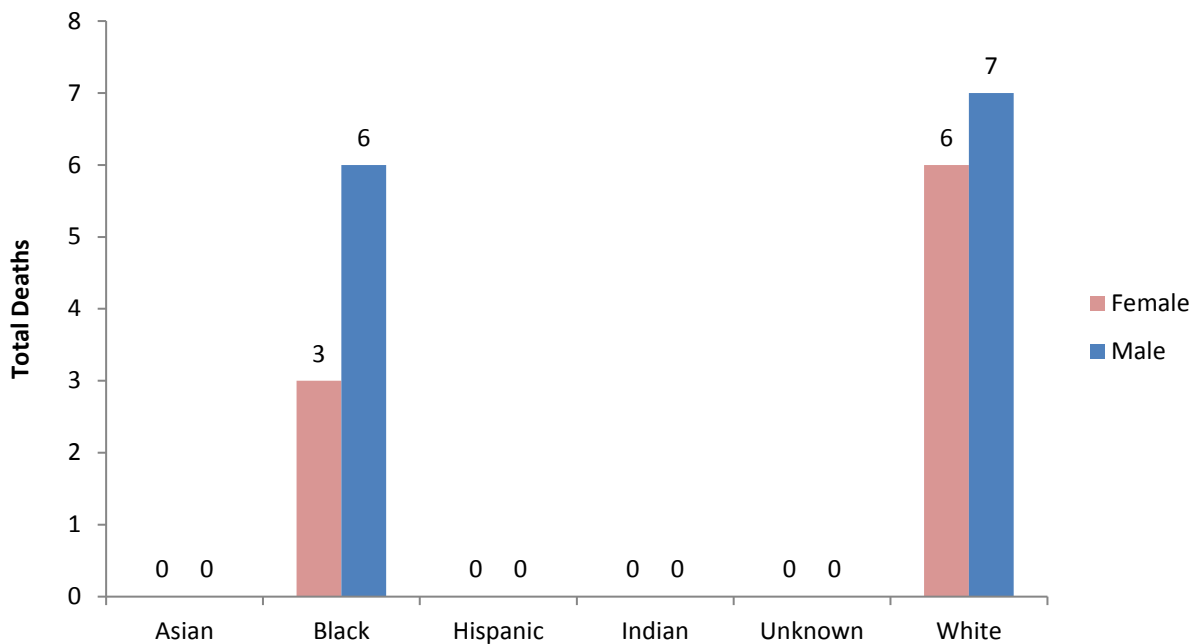
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2017

Figure 3.27: N=22, represents all undetermined deaths by gender and age group.



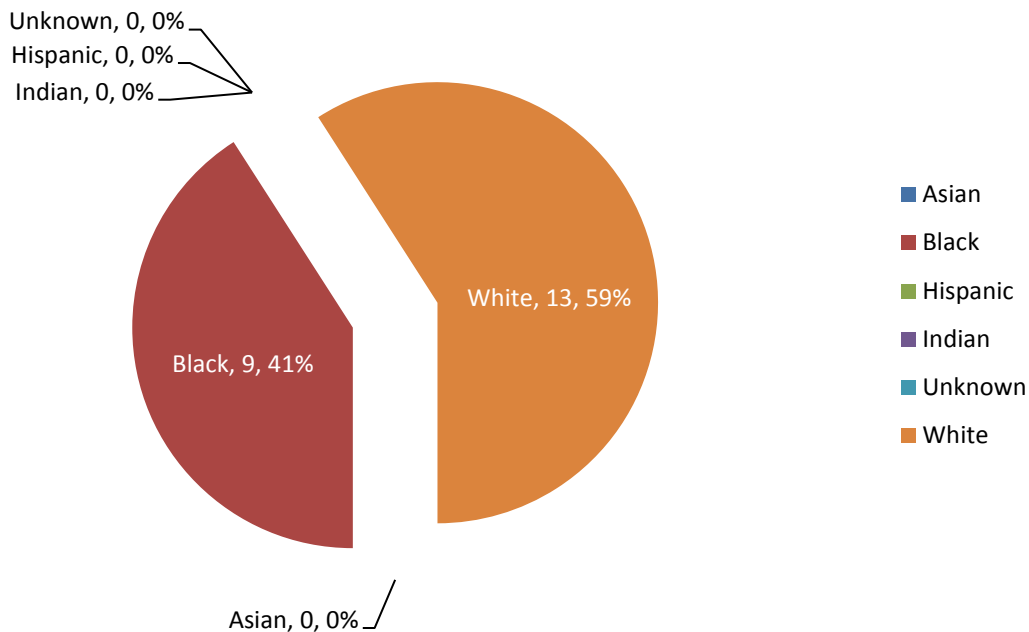
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Gender and Race, 2017

Figure 3.28: N=22, represents all undetermined deaths by gender and race.



Percentage of Undetermined Deaths by Race, 2017

Figure 3.29: N=22, represents all undetermined deaths by race.



Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Month of Death, 2017

Figure 3.30: N=22, represents all undetermined deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Means of Death, 2017

Table 3.5: N=22, represents all undetermined deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Co-sleeping:	
Bed	2
Drug:	
Illicit	1
Prescription medications	1
Fall: Bridge	1
Fire: House	1
Motor vehicle:	
Pedestrian	1
Motor vehicle	1
Undetermined:	
Bassinet	1
Bed	1
Crib	2
Undetermined	10
Total	22

Section 4: Infant/Juvenile Deaths

Infant/Juvenile deaths accounted for 6.2% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2017. There was a 46.3% increase in the total number of infant/juvenile deaths, from 41 deaths in 2016 to 60 deaths in 2017 and; 2017 represents the highest year for infant/juvenile deaths in the past 17 years. Infant deaths decreased 17.9%, from 28 deaths in 2016 to 23 deaths in 2017, while juvenile deaths increased 184.6%, from 13 deaths in 2016 to 37 deaths in 2017.

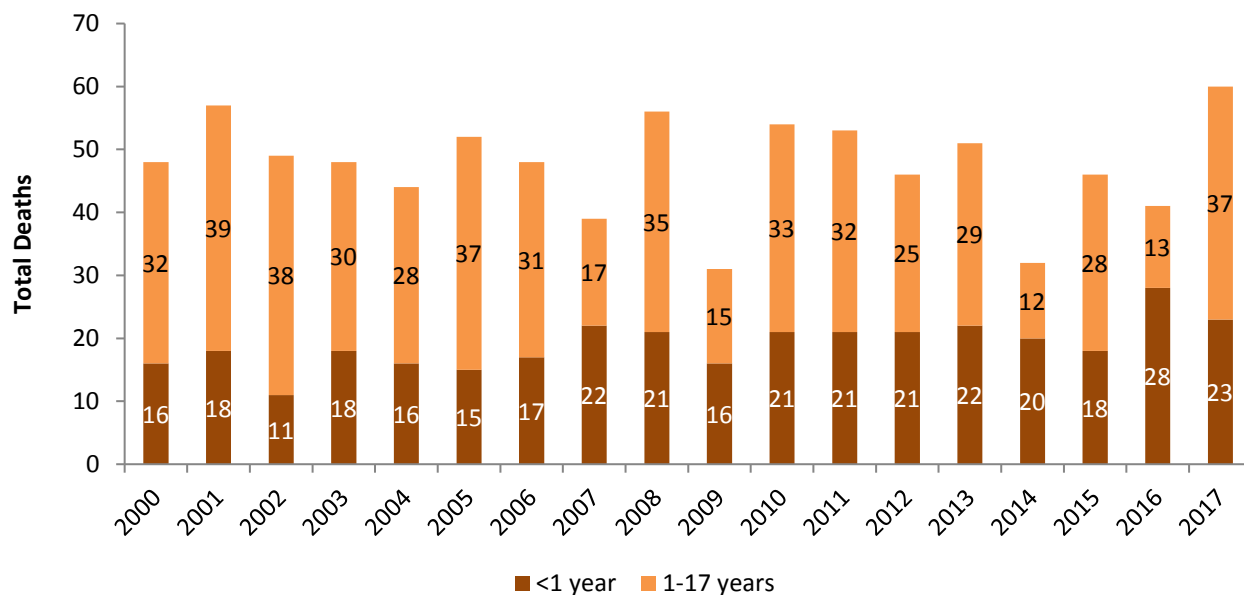
Infants (<1 year of age): Deaths due to co-sleeping was the most common means of infant death in 2017, accounting for 9 of the 23 or 39.1% of the infant deaths. Accidental death was the most common manner of infant death, accounting for 43.5% of the deaths. The most common race was black representing 60.9% of the infant deaths, with white accounting for 39.1% of the infant deaths. Infants 2 months of age had the highest mortality rate accounting for 34.8% of the deaths.

Juveniles (1–17 years of age): Deaths due to firearms was the most common means of juvenile death in 2017, accounting for 35.1% of the deaths. Accident was the most common manner of death, accounting for 43.2% of the juvenile deaths, with Homicide accounting for 40.5% of the deaths. The most common race was black representing 70% of the juvenile deaths, with white accounting for remaining 30% of the juvenile deaths.

Historical Summary

Total Number of Infant and Juvenile Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2017

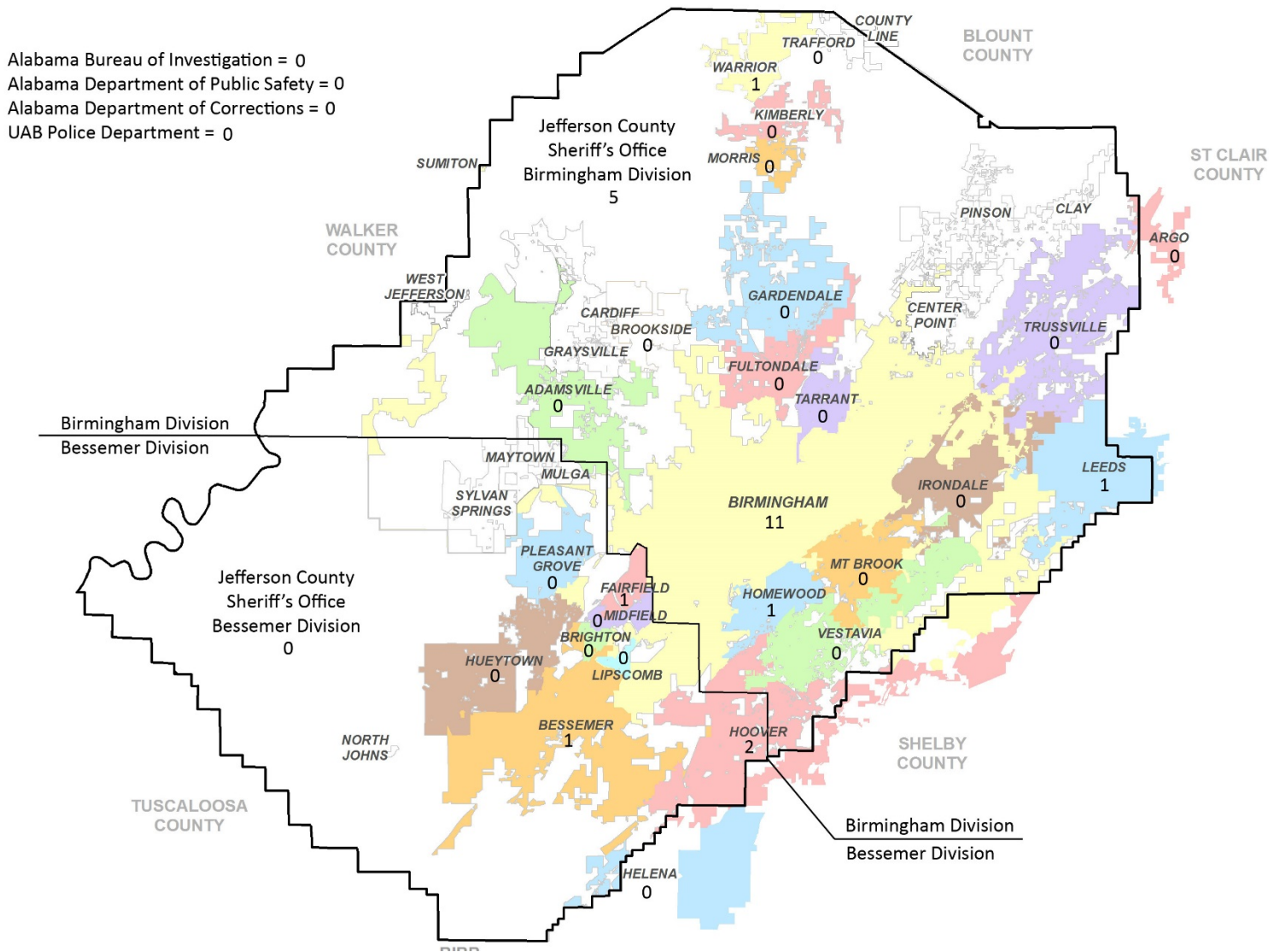
Figure 4.1: represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) and juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) investigated by the JCCMEO.



Infant Deaths

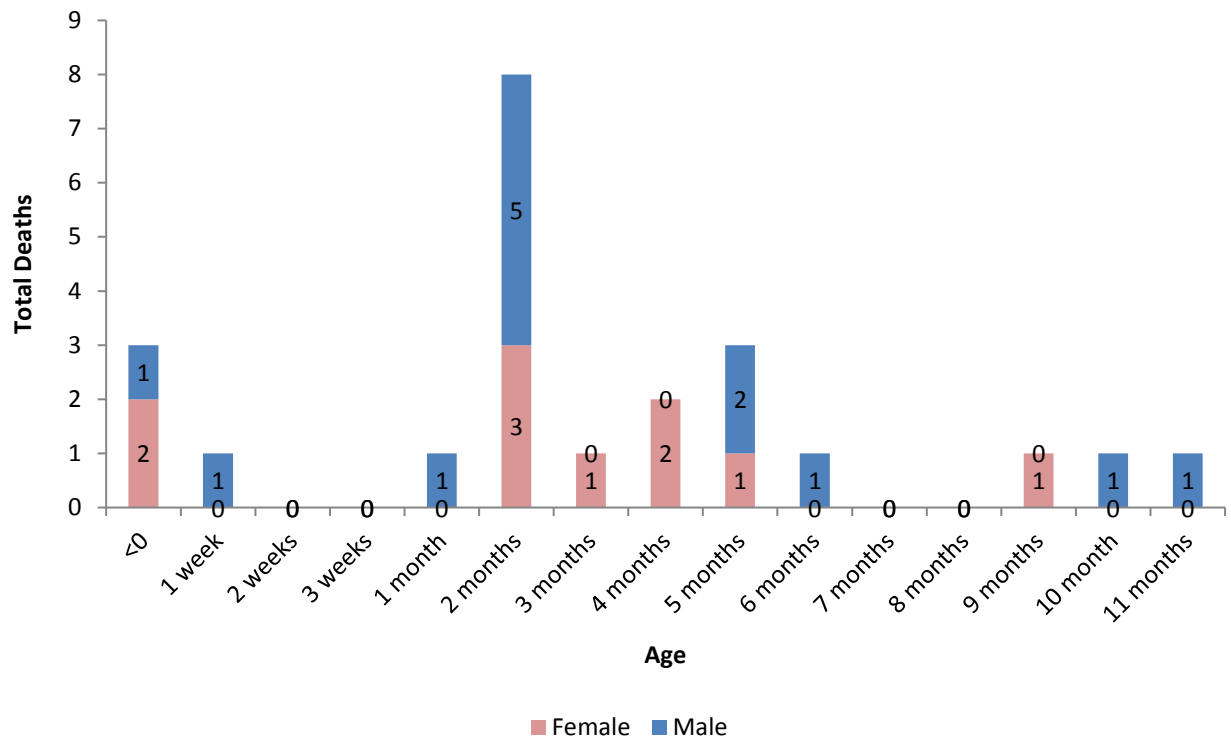
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Law Enforcement Agency, 2017

Figure 4.2: N=23, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by law enforcement agency.



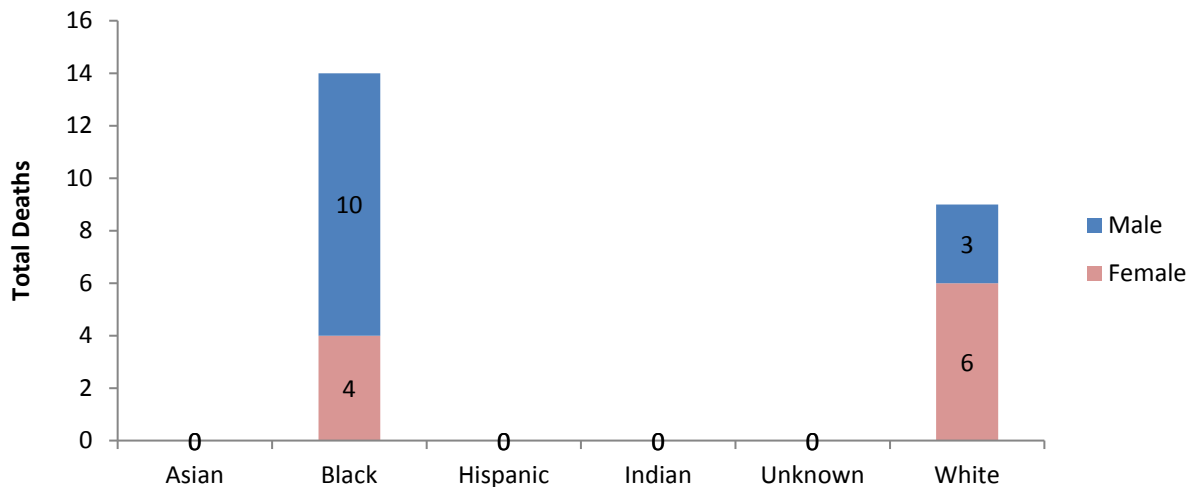
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Gender and Age, 2017

Figure 4.3: N=23, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by gender and age.



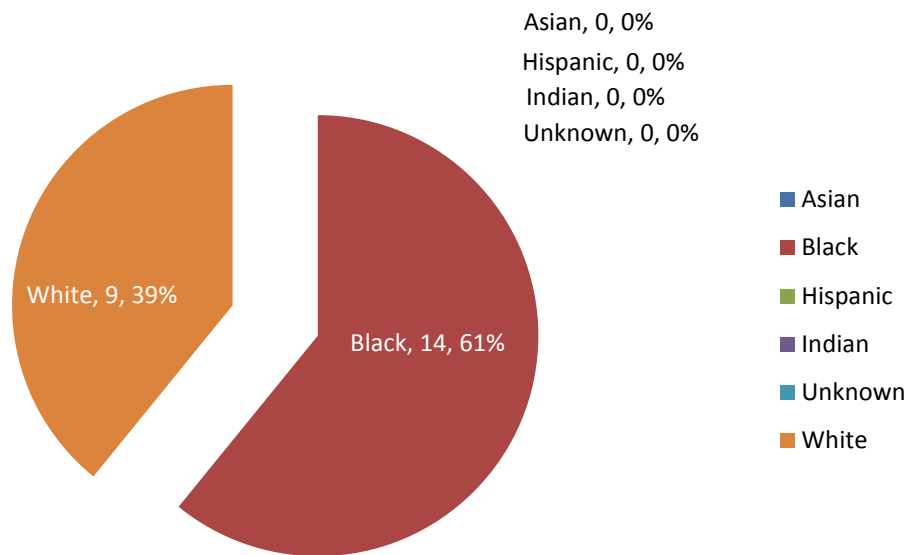
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Gender and Race, 2017

Figure 4.4: N=23, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by gender and race.



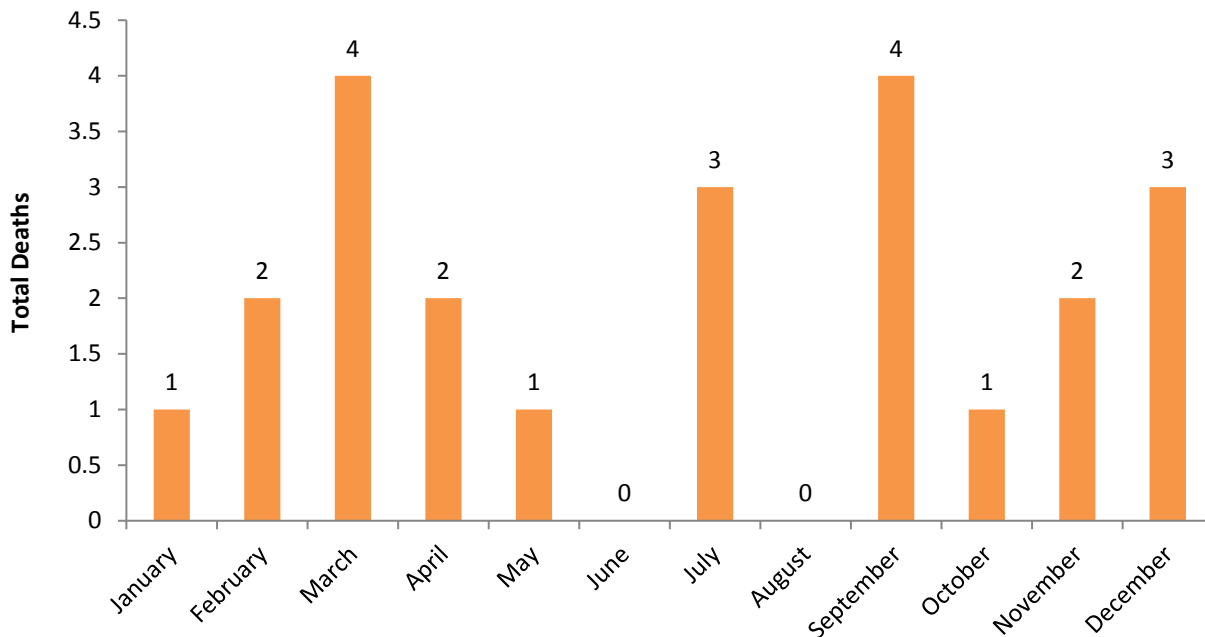
Percentage of Infant Deaths by Race, 2017

Figure 4.5: N=23, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by race.



Total Number of Infant Deaths by Month of Death, 2017

Figure 4.6: N=23, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by month of death.



Total Number of Infant Deaths by Means of Death, 2017

Table 4.1: N=23, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Asphyxia: Food	1
Blunt: Unknown type	1
Co-sleeping:	
Bed	6
Chair	1
Mattress	1
Recliner	1
Firearm: Unknown type	1
Motor vehicle collision:	2
Natural:	
Preterm Delivery: acute chorioamnionitis	1
Smothering (unsafe sleep environment): blanket	1
Undetermined:	
Bassinet	1
Bed	1
Crib	1
Undetermined	4
Total	23

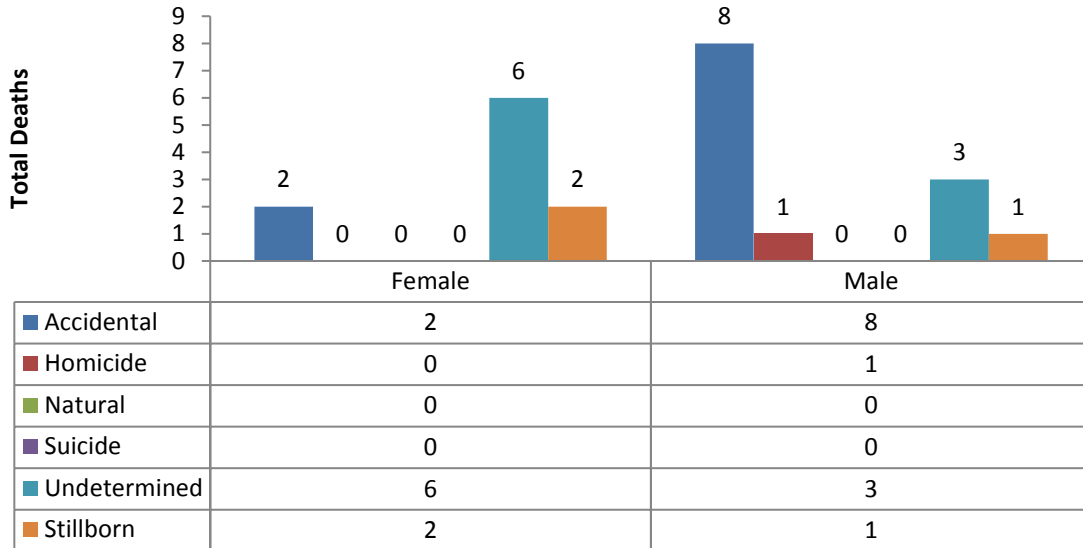
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Manner of Death and Race, 2017

Table 4.2: N=23, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by manner of death and race. Pursuant to the State of Alabama Vital Records laws, stillborn deaths are not assigned a manner of death.

Race	Accident	Homicide	Natural	Suicide	Undetermined	Stillborn	Total
Asian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black	6	1	0	0	5	2	14
Hispanic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	4	0	0	0	4	1	9
Total	10	1	0	0	9	3	23

Total Number of Infant Deaths by Manner of Death and Gender, 2017

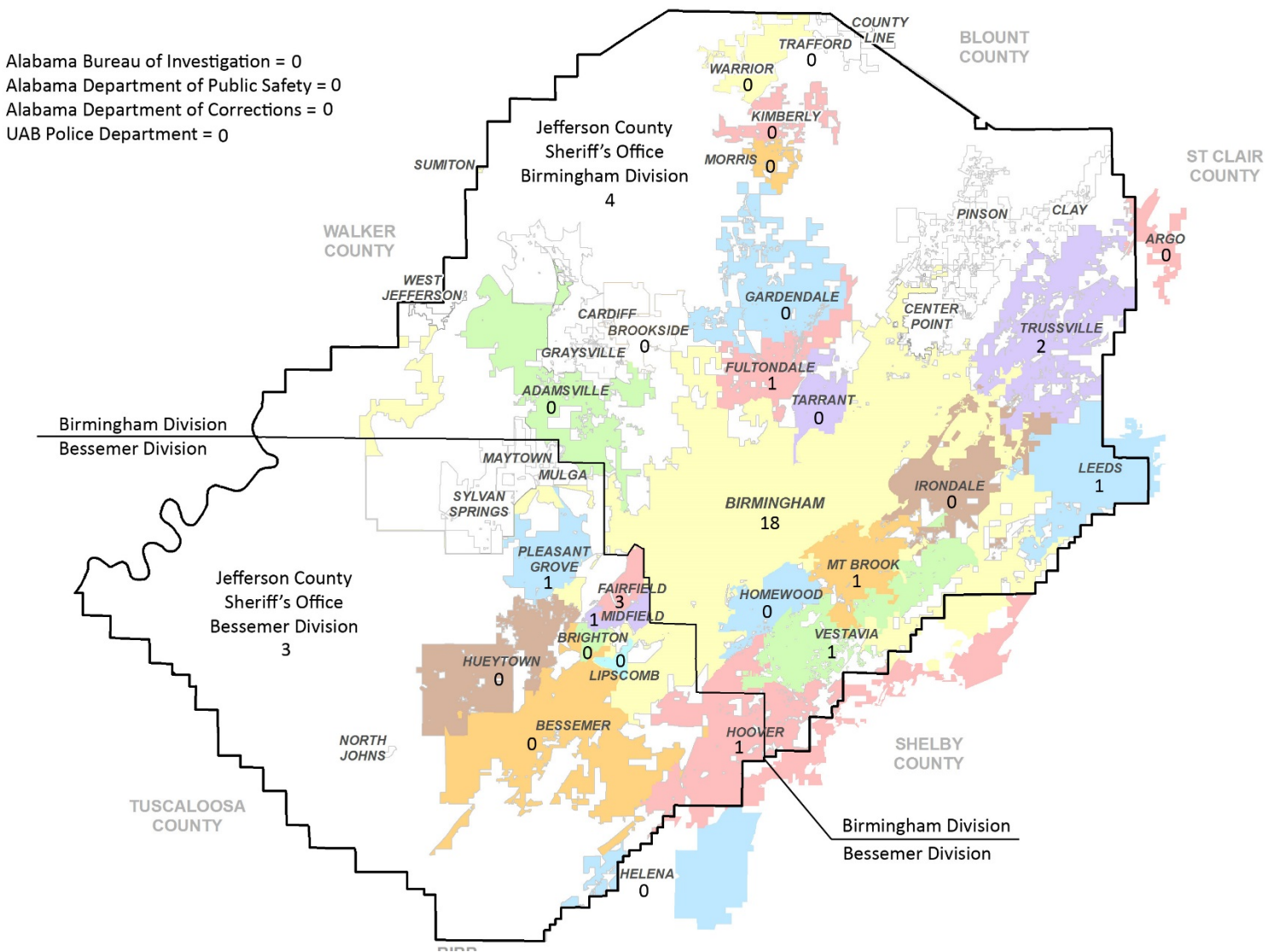
Figure 4.7: N=23, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by manner of death and gender. Pursuant to the State of Alabama Vital Records laws, stillborn deaths are not assigned a manner of death.



Juvenile Deaths

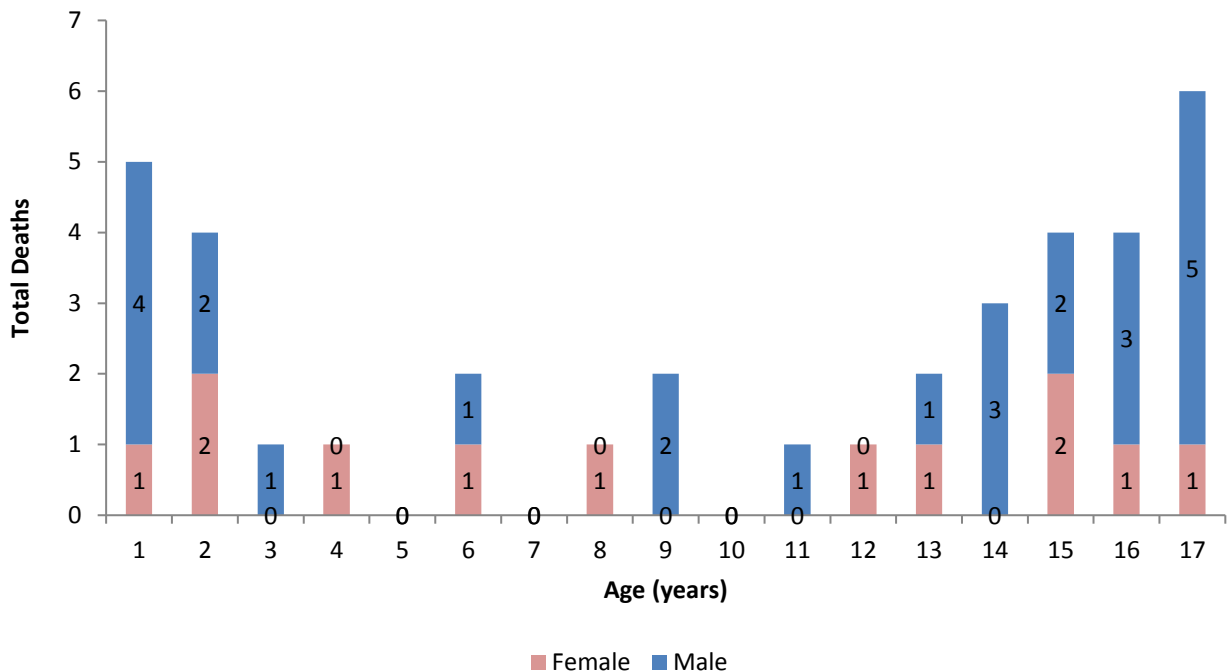
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Law Enforcement Agency, 2017

Figure 4.8: N=37, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by law enforcement agency.



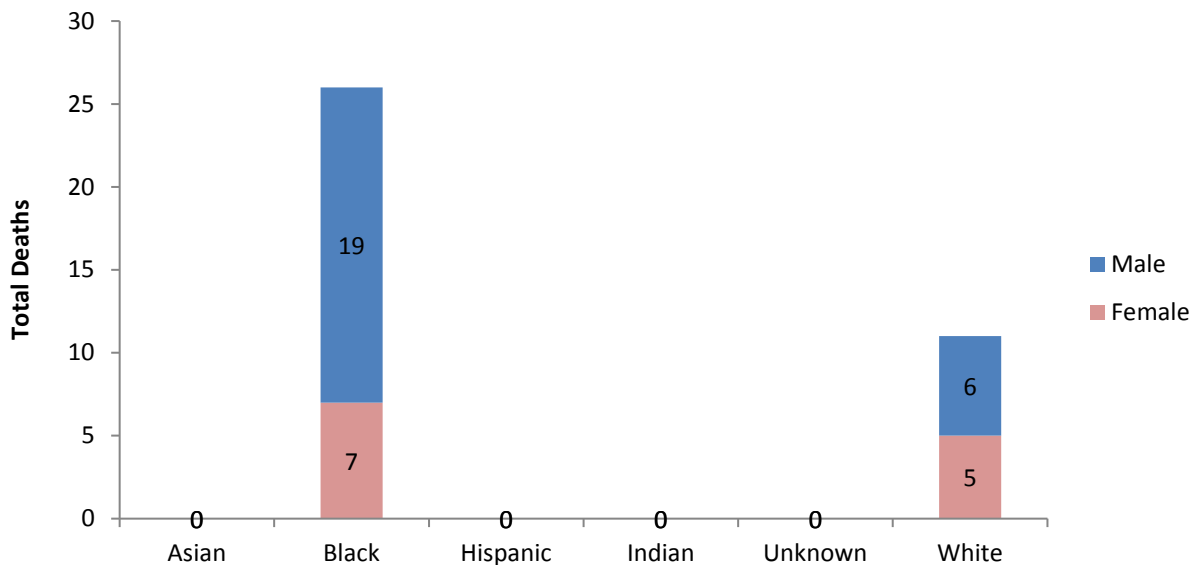
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Gender and Age, 2017

Figure 4.9: N=37, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by gender and age.



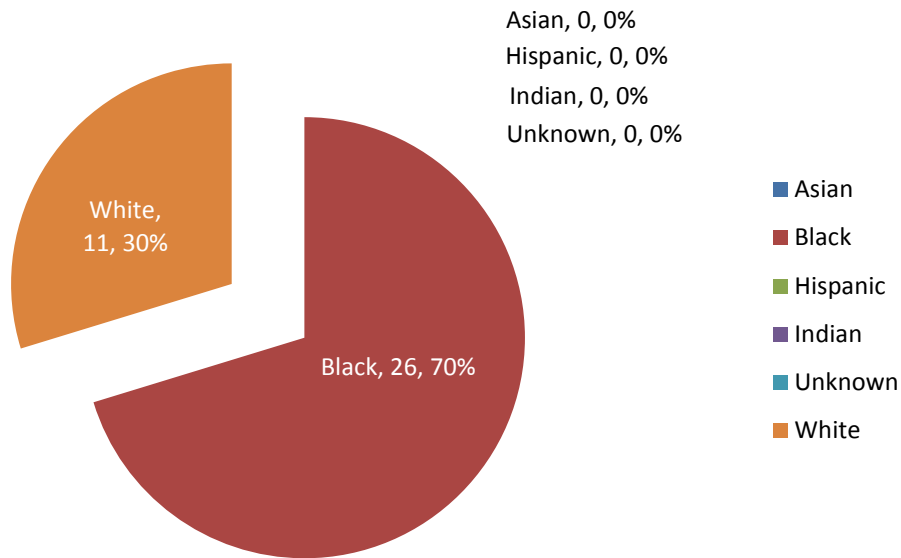
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Gender and Race, 2017

Figure 4.10: N=37, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by gender and race.



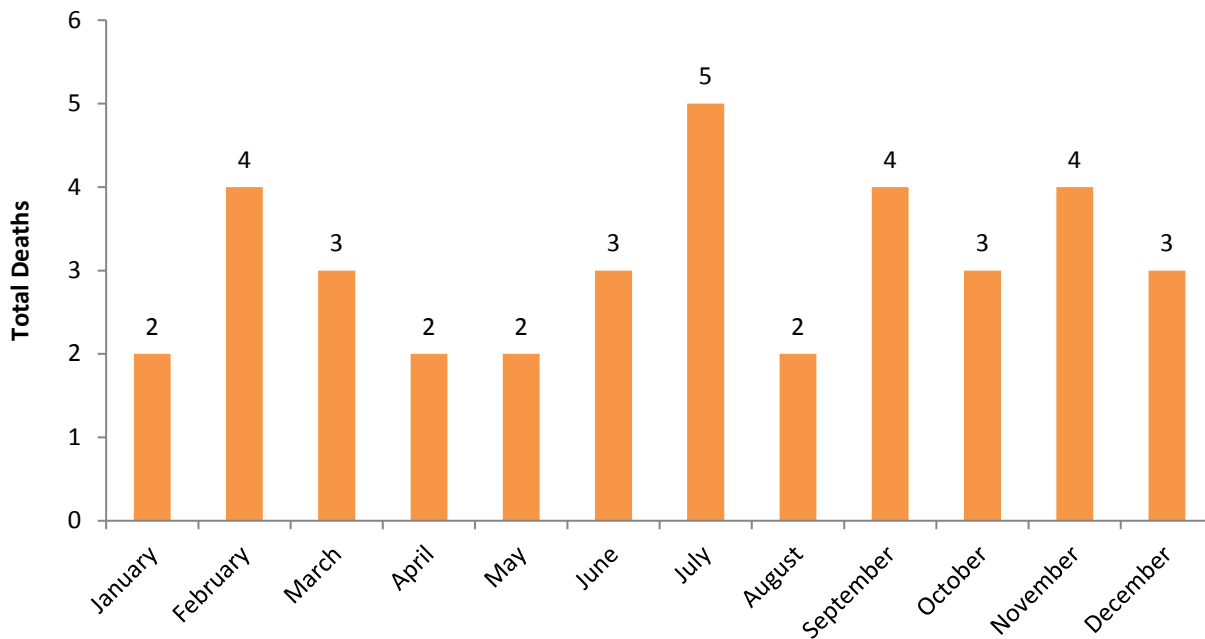
Percentage of Juvenile Deaths by Race, 2017

Figure 4.11: N=37, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by race.



Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Month of Death, 2017

Figure 4.12: N=37, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by month of death.



Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Means of Death, 2017

Table 4.3: N=37, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Blunt:	
Fist	1
Fist / feet	1
Unknown	1
Drowning: Pool	1
Drug: Prescription opioid	1
Exposure (hypothermia): motor vehicle	2
Fire: House	1
Gun:	
Handgun	5
Rifle	4
Unknown	4
Hanging:	
Belt	1
Nylon strap	1
Motor vehicle:	
Motor vehicle	7
Pedestrian	3
Natural:	
Diabetes	1
Seizure disorder (epilepsy)	1
Undetermined:	
Crib	1
Undetermined	1
Total	37

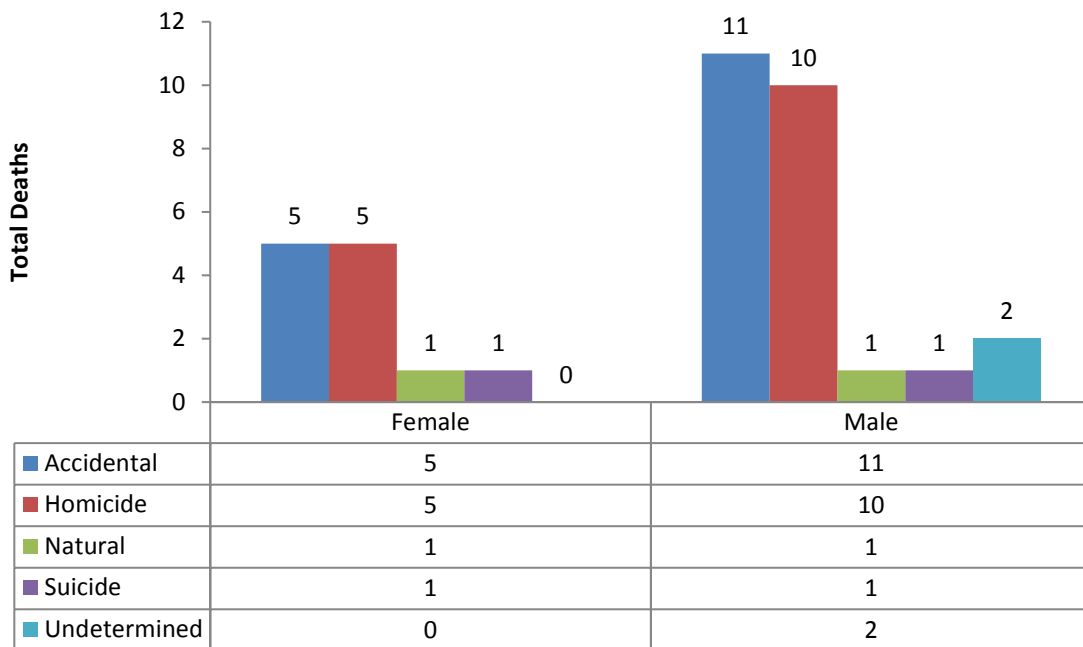
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Manner of Death and Race, 2017

Table 4.4: N=37, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by manner of death and race.

Race	Accident	Homicide	Natural	Suicide	Undetermined	Total
Asian	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black	9	15	1	0	1	26
Hispanic	0	0	0	0	0	0
Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	7	0	1	2	1	11
Total	16	15	2	2	2	37

Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Manner of Death and Gender, 2017

Figure 4.13: N=37, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by manner of death and gender.



Section 5: Motor Vehicle Deaths

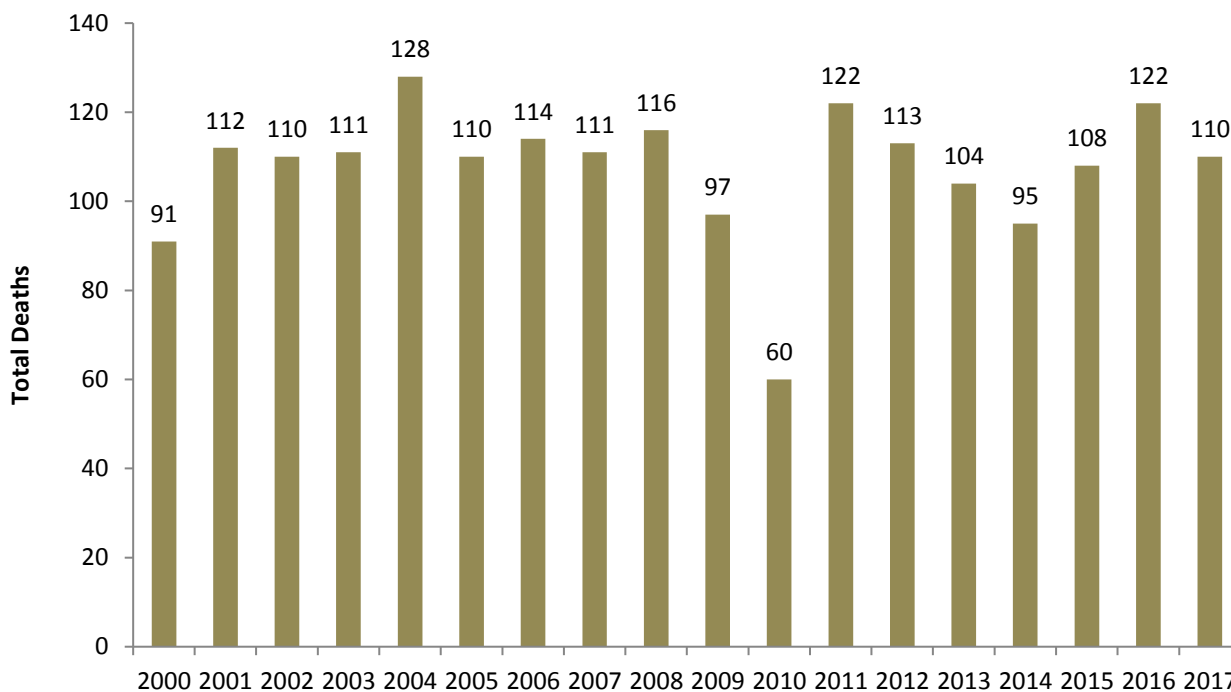
Motor vehicle deaths accounted for 11.4% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2017. For the purpose of this report motor vehicle deaths include airplane, all-terrain vehicle, automobile, motorcycle, train, and pedestrian deaths.

There was a 9.8% decrease in the total number of motor vehicle deaths, from 122 deaths in 2016 to 110 deaths in 2017.

Multiple-vehicle collisions were the most common means of motor vehicle death, accounting for 39.1% of the deaths, followed by single vehicle collisions accounting for 36.4% of the deaths and motor vehicle-pedestrian collisions accounting for 18.2% of the deaths.

Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2017

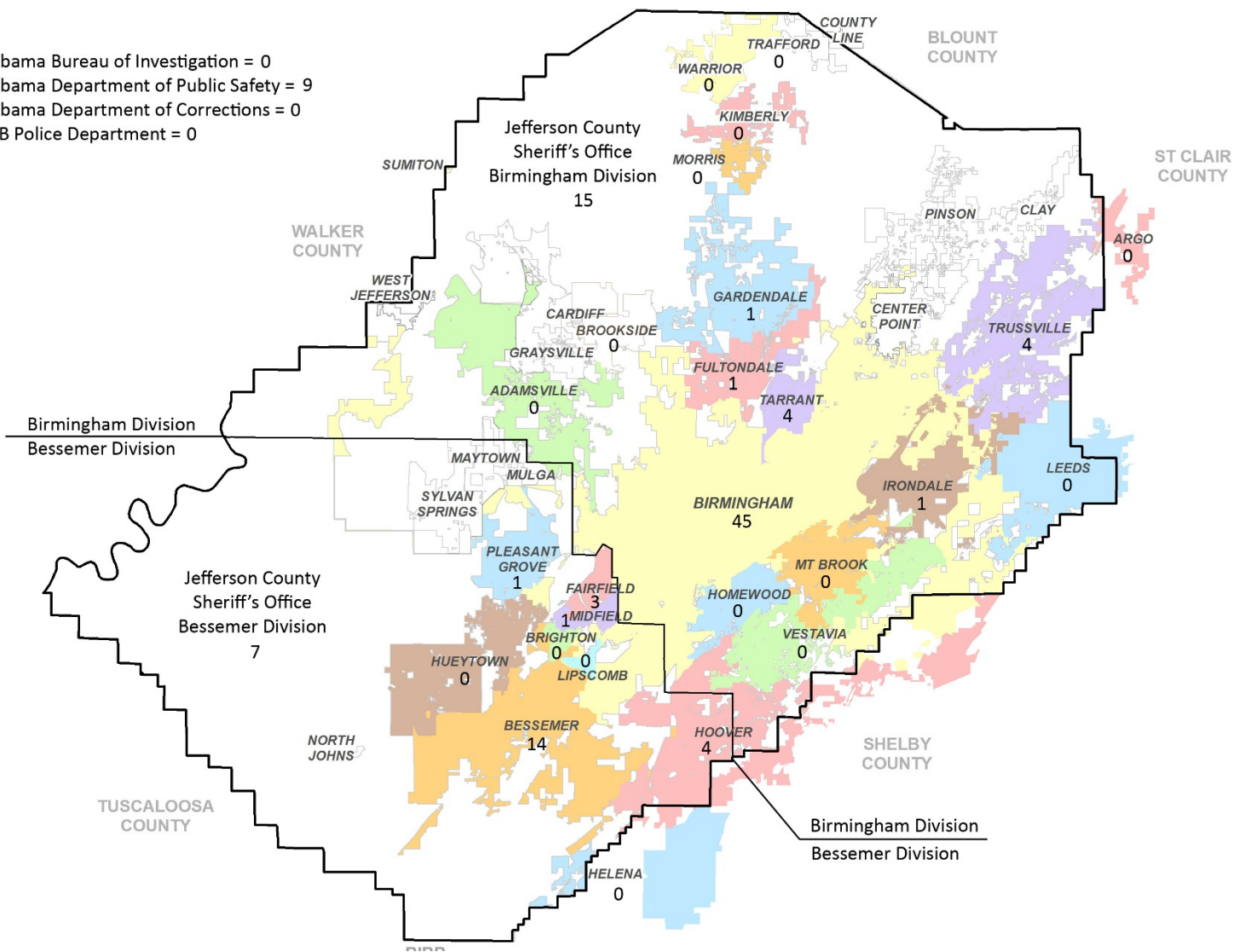
Figure 5.1: represents all motor vehicle deaths investigated by the JCCMEO.



Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Law Enforcement Agency, 2017

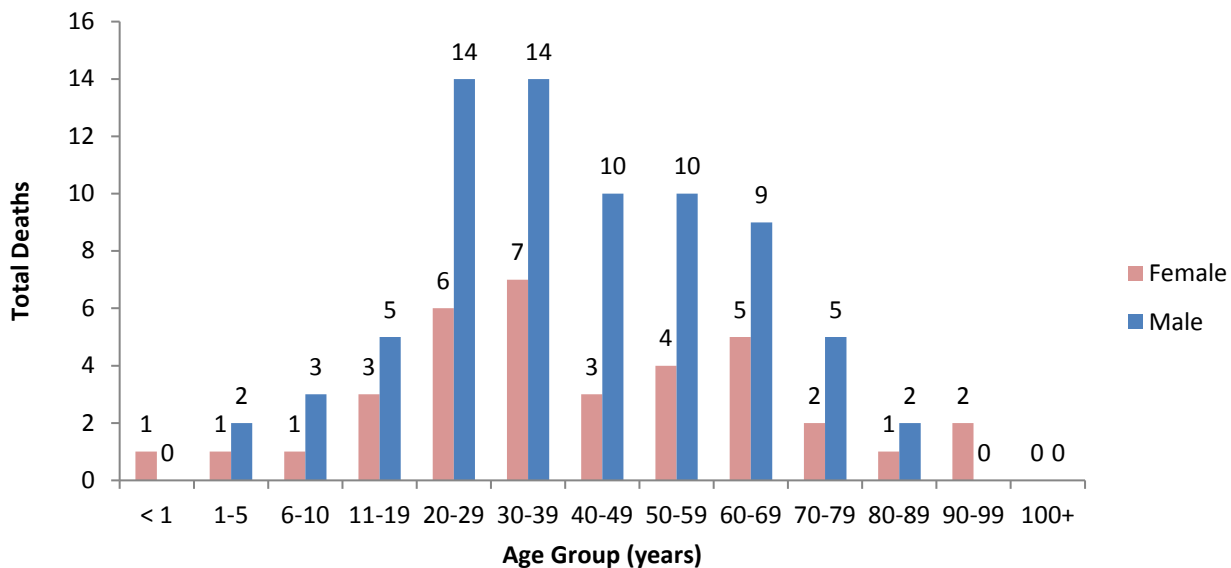
Figure 5.2: N=110, represents all motor vehicle deaths by law enforcement agency.

Alabama Bureau of Investigation = 0
 Alabama Department of Public Safety = 9
 Alabama Department of Corrections = 0
 UAB Police Department = 0



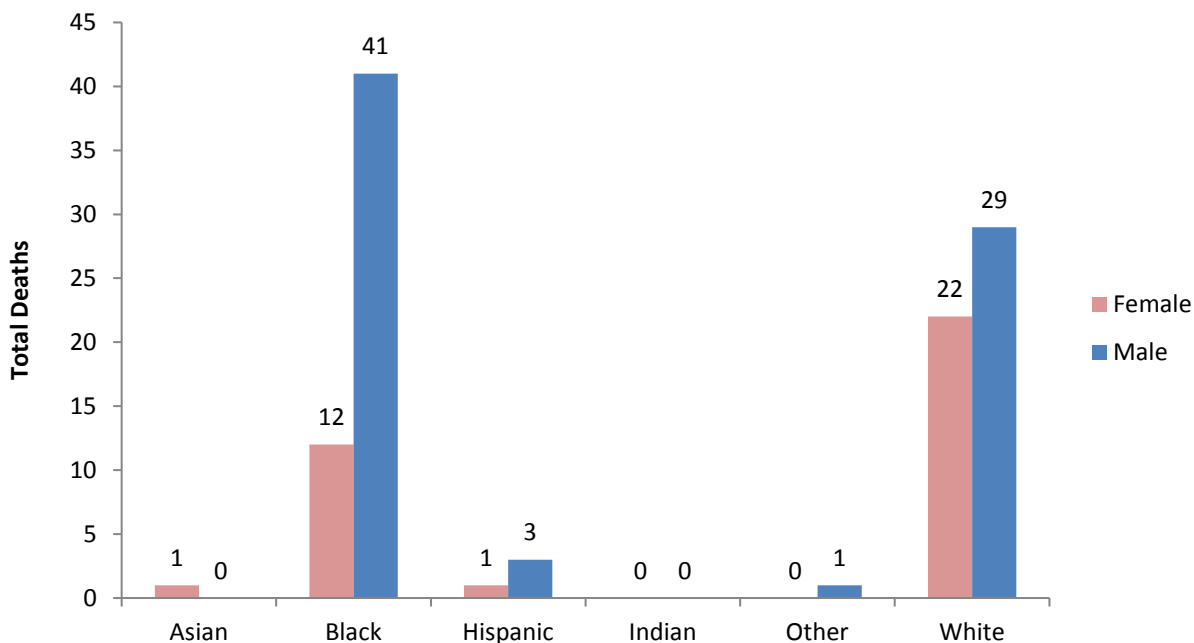
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2017

Figure 5.3: N=110, represents all motor vehicle deaths by gender and age group.



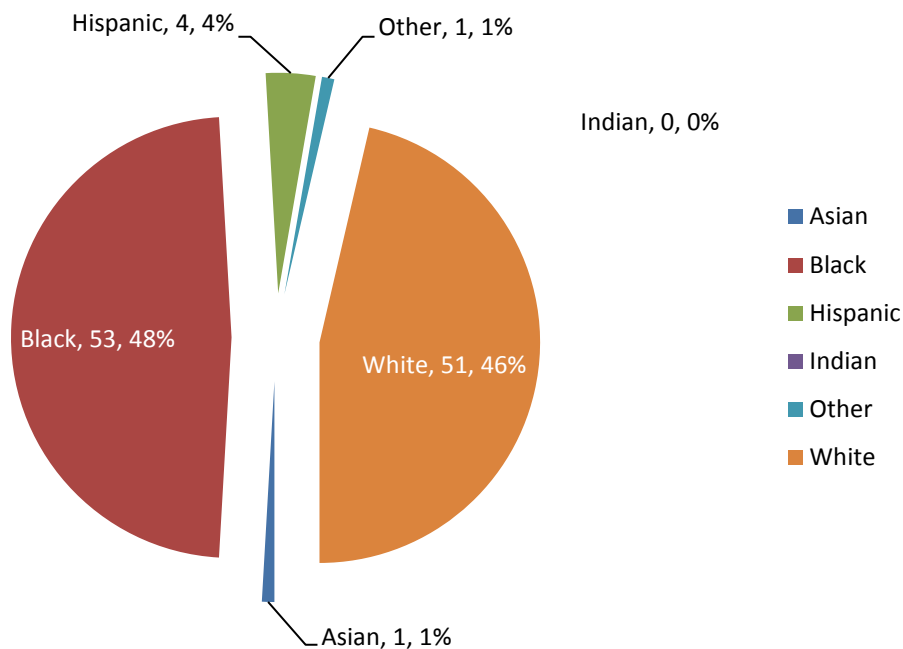
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Gender and Race, 2017

Figure 5.4: N=110, represents all motor vehicle deaths by gender and race.



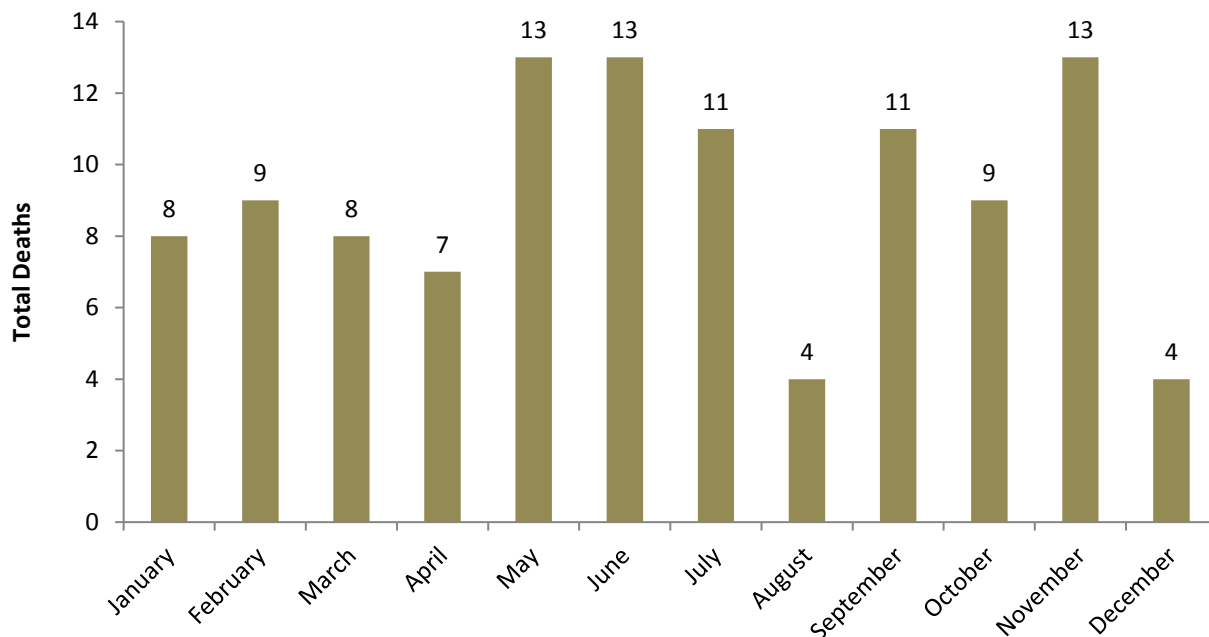
Percentage of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Race, 2017

Figure 5.5: N=110, represents all motor vehicle deaths by race.



Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Month of Death, 2017

Figure 5.6: N=110, represents all motor vehicle deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Means of Death, 2017

Table 5.1: N=110, represents all motor vehicle deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Motor-vehicle:	
Bicycle	1
Single vehicle	41
Multiple vehicles	43
Train	0
Pedestrian:	
Motor vehicle	20
Train	5
Total	110

Section 6: Overdose Deaths

Overview

The data in this section represent all overdose deaths investigated by the Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office in the 2017 calendar year where the direct cause of death was due to an overdose/toxic level of illicit drug(s), prescription medication(s), prescription opioid(s), ethanol (alcohol), or other poison(s).

This section does not reflect data on other types of deaths where drugs or ethanol contributed to the death, but was not the direct cause of death. An example of a death that would not be included in this section would be a motor vehicle fatality where the decedent/driver of the vehicle was intoxicated, but the immediate cause of death was trauma due to the collision.

For the purpose of this report overdoses have been categorized into the following four Means of Death:

- Drug - refers to all overdoses where the direct cause of death was due to illicit drug(s) or, the direct cause of death was due to prescription medication(s) and/or prescription opioid(s) in combination with illicit drug(s). For the purpose of this report "illicit drugs" refers to illegal street type drugs (i.e. cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, etc.).
- Prescription Medication - refers to all overdoses where the direct cause of death was due to only prescription medication(s).
- Prescription Opioid – refers to all overdoses where the direct cause of death was due to only prescription opioid(s).
- Ethanol (alcohol) – refers to all overdoses where the direct cause of death was due to a toxic level of ethanol (alcohol).

Often drug overdoses are found to be a combination of illicit drugs, prescription medications, ethanol (alcohol), and/or other poisons; therefore a single death might be represented multiple times in this section. Because of this it is important to recognize that in the following graphs and tables the totals for each of the drugs represents the number of occurrences that particular drug was found to be either the single cause of death or a component in conjunction with another drug(s) that combined was the cause of death.

General Statistics and Notable Trends

There was a 7.2% increase in the total drug deaths this past year, from 251 drug deaths in 2016 to 269 drug deaths in 2017.

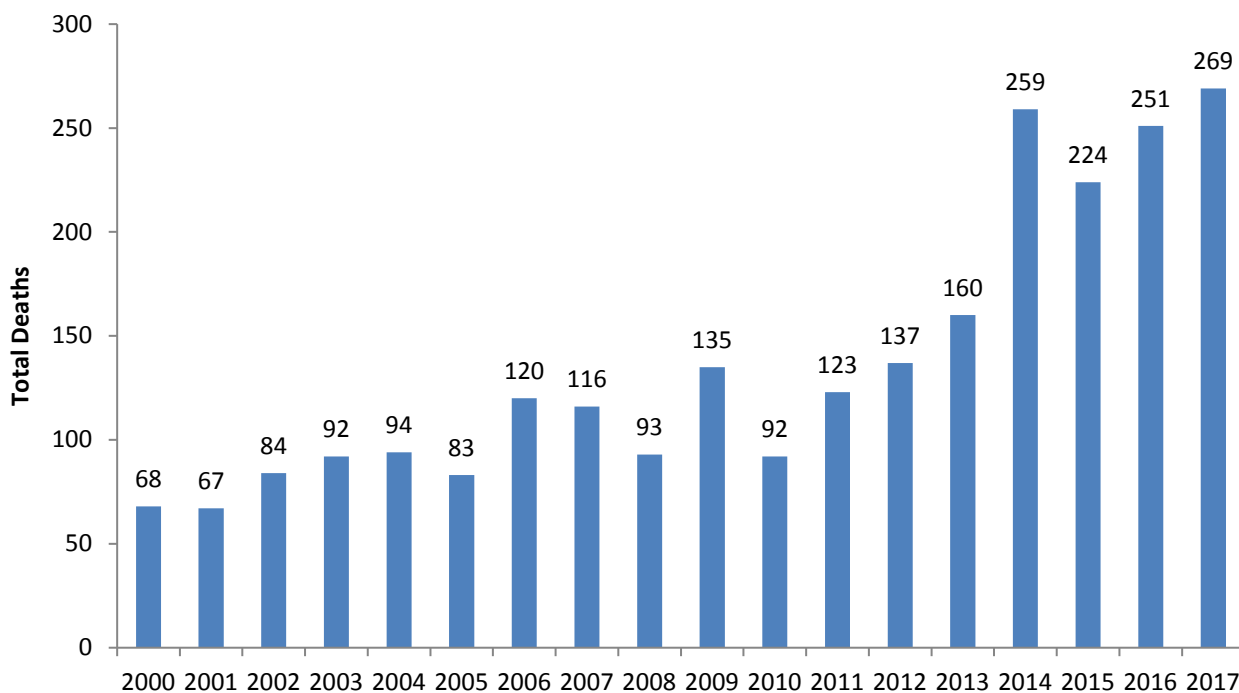
There was a 1.9% decrease in fentanyl deaths, from 106 deaths in 2016 to 104 deaths in 2017.

There was a 2.0% decrease in heroin deaths, from 100 deaths in 2016 to 98 deaths in 2017.

Historical Summary

Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2017

Figure 6.1: represents all overdose deaths investigated by the JCCMEO.

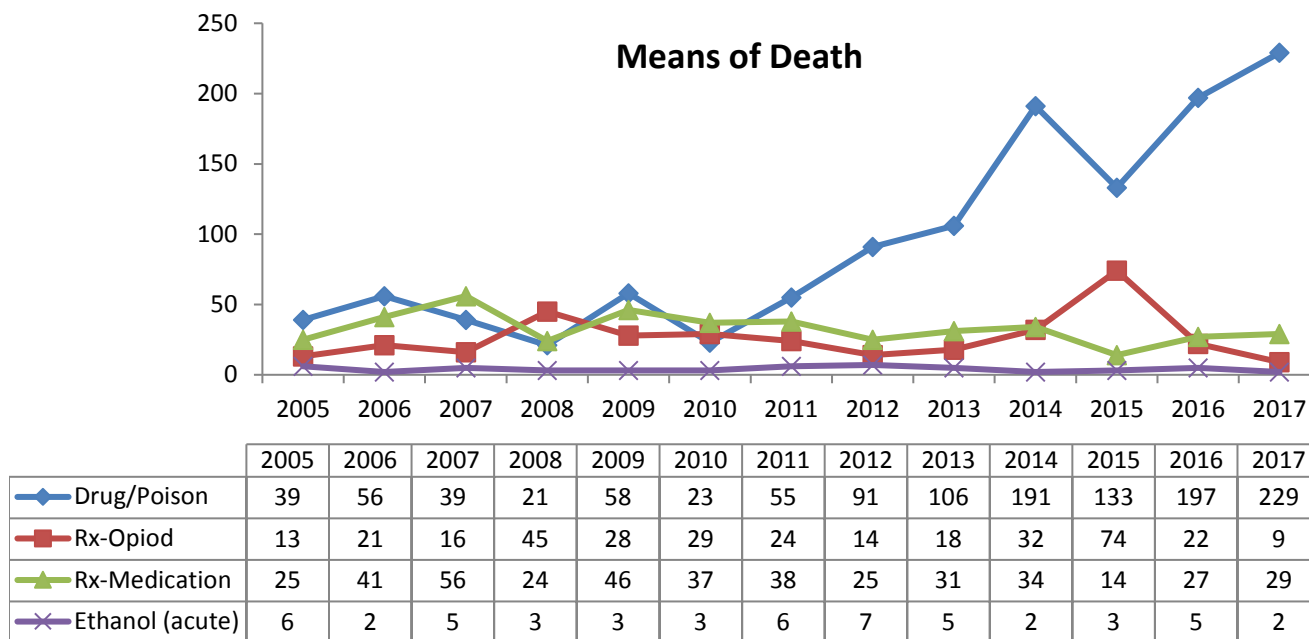


Historical Summary: Means of Death, 2005-2017

Table 6.1: represents all overdoses by means of death.

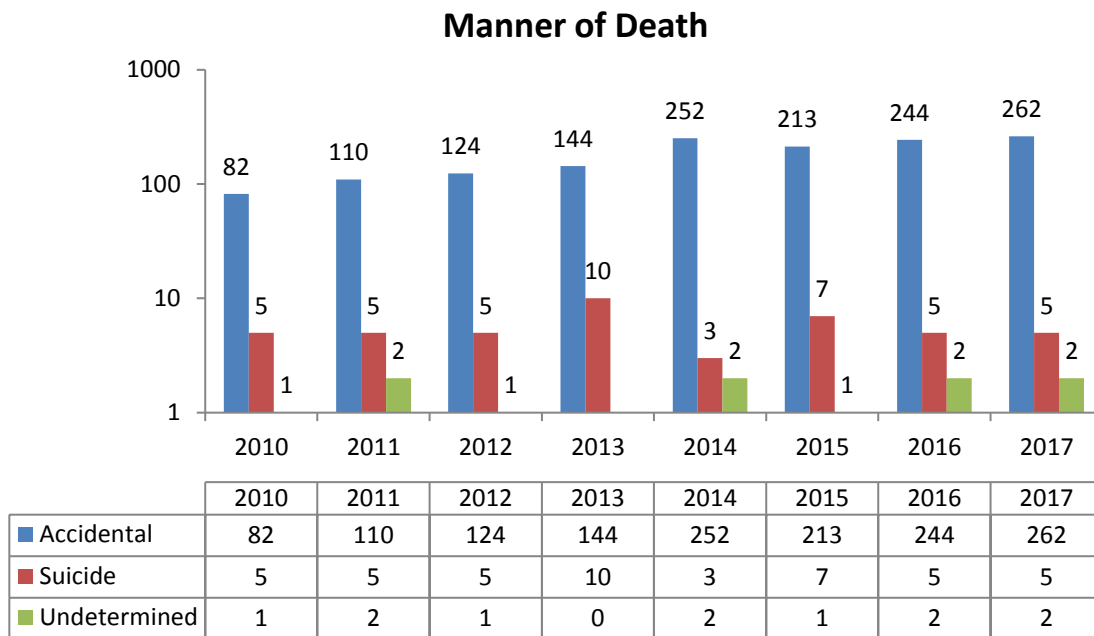
Year	Drug/ Poison	Prescription Medication	Prescription Opioid	Ethanol (acute)	Total Overdose Deaths
2005	39	25	13	6	= 83
2006	56	41	21	2	= 120
2007	39	56	16	5	= 116
2008	21	24	45	3	= 93
2009	58	46	28	3	= 135
2010	23	37	29	3	= 92
2011	55	38	24	6	= 123
2012	91	25	14	7	= 137
2013	106	31	18	5	= 160
2014	191	34	32	2	= 259
2015	133	14	74	3	= 224
2016	197	27	22	5	= 251
2017	229	29	9	2	= 269

Figure 6.2: represent all overdoses by means of death, 2005-2017.



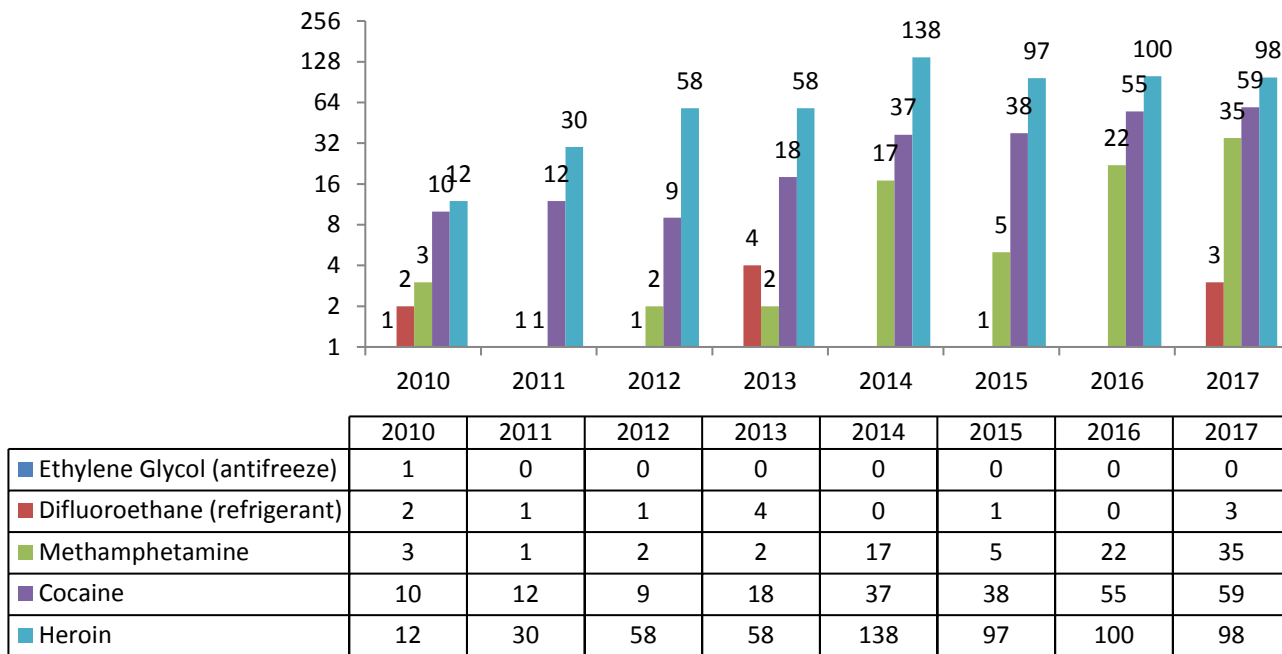
Historical Summary: Manner of Death, 2010-2017

Figure 6.3: represents all overdoses by manner of death.



Historical Summary: Illicit Drugs/Poisons, 2010-2017

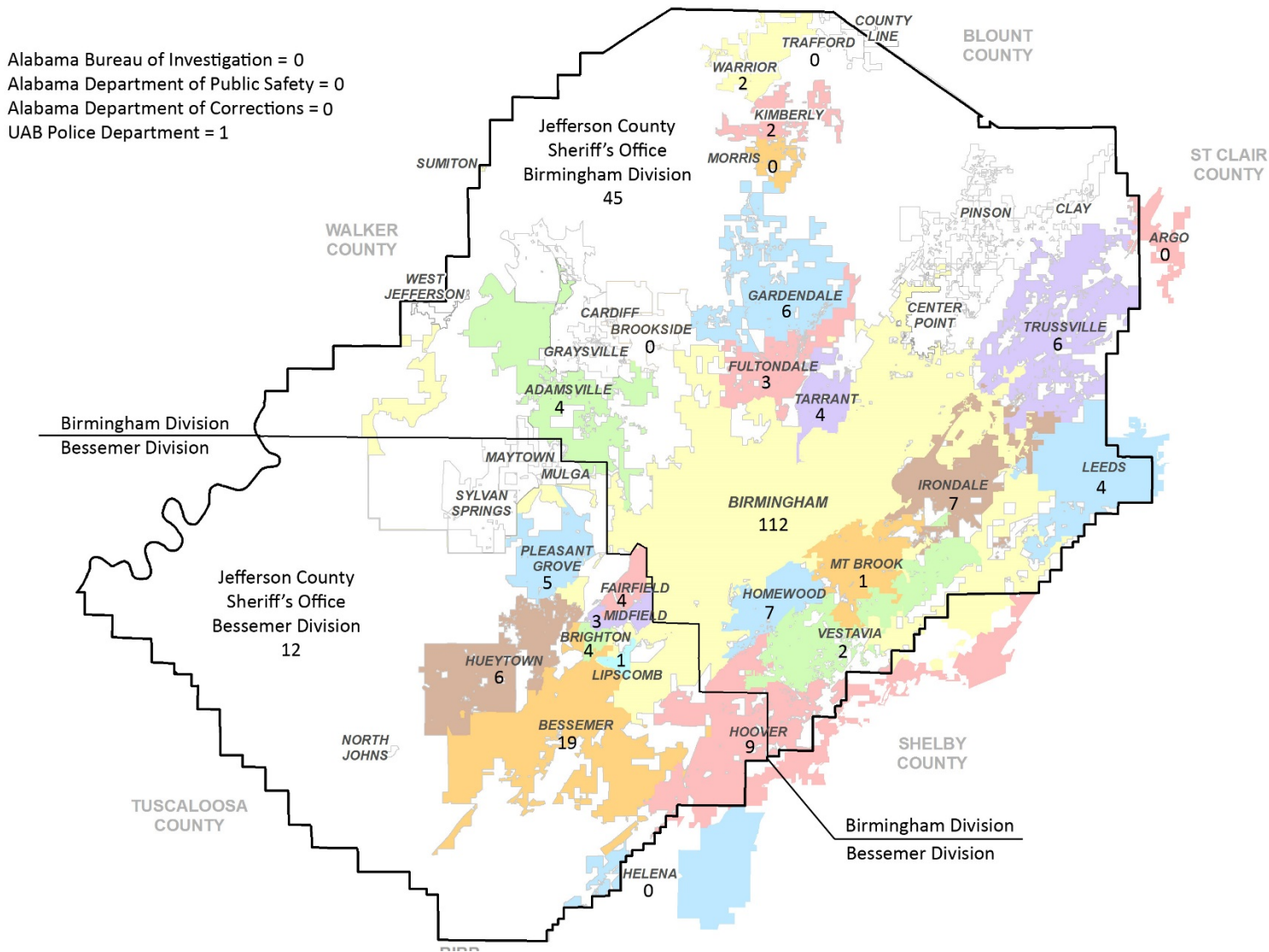
Figure 6.4: represents illicit drugs and poisons.



2017 Overdose Deaths

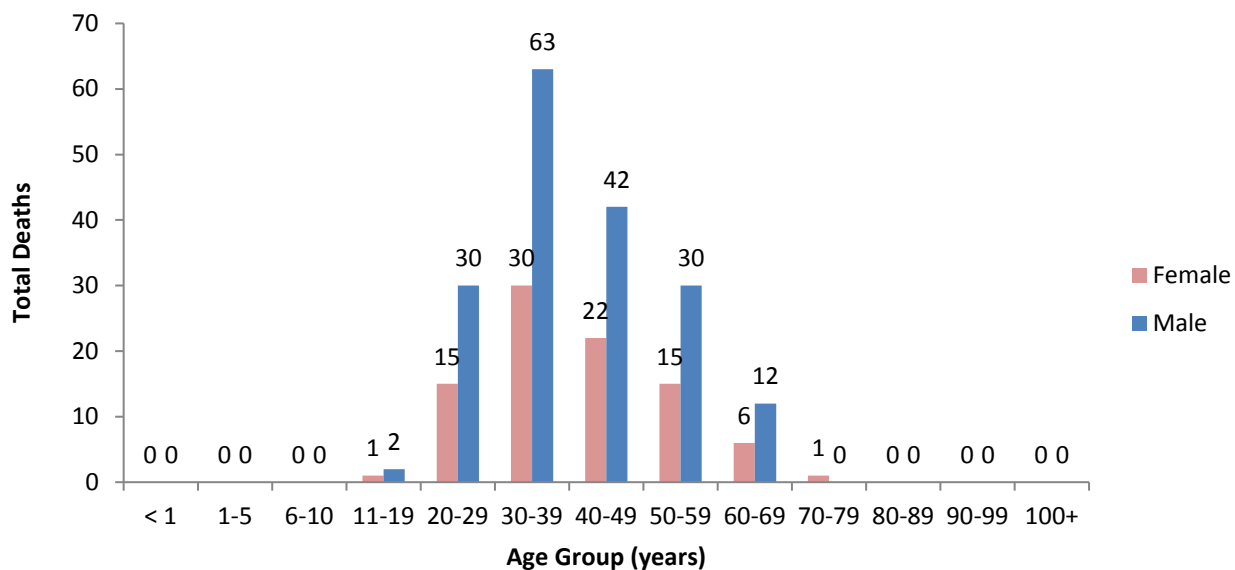
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Law Enforcement Agency, 2017

Figure 6.5: N=269, represents all overdose deaths by law enforcement agency.



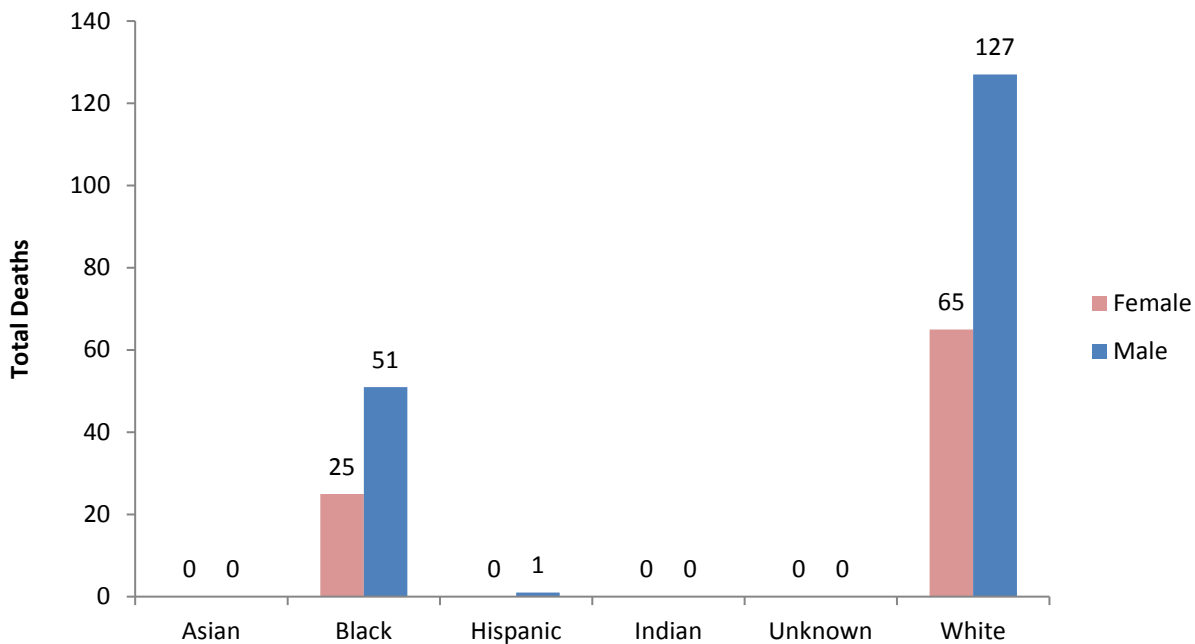
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2017

Figure 6.6: N=269, represents all overdose deaths by gender and age group.



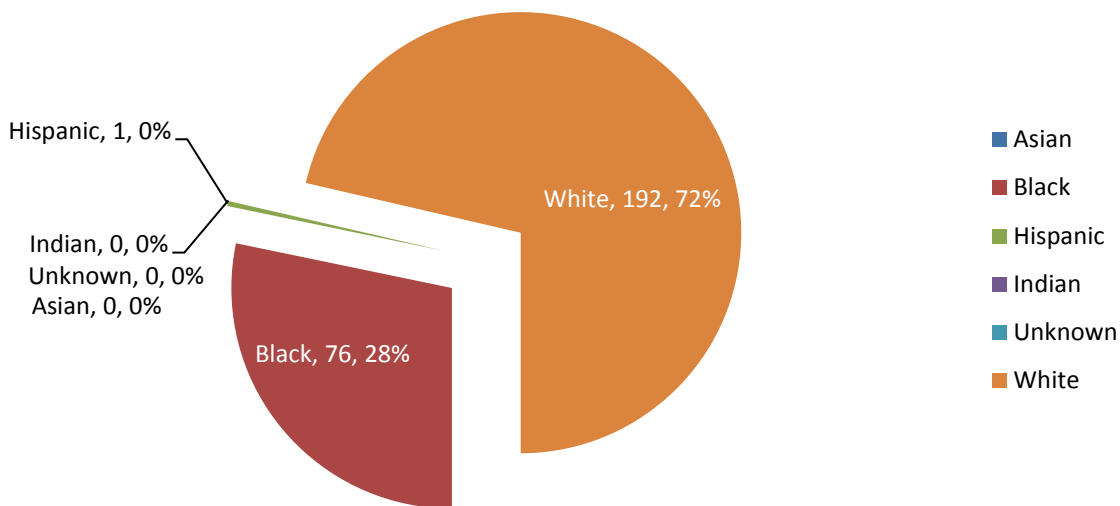
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Gender and Race, 2017

Figure 6.7: N=269, represents all overdose deaths by gender and race.



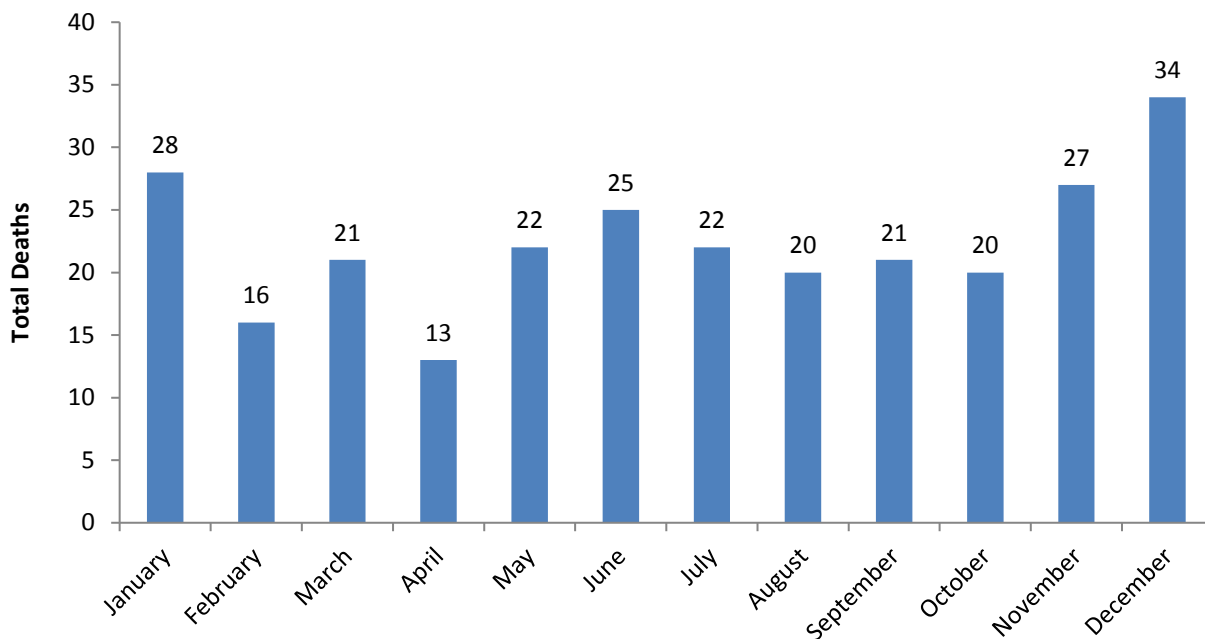
Percentage of Overdose Deaths by Race, 2017

Figure 6.8: N=269, represents all overdose deaths by race.



Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Month of Death, 2017

Figure 6.9: N=269, represents all overdose deaths by month of death.

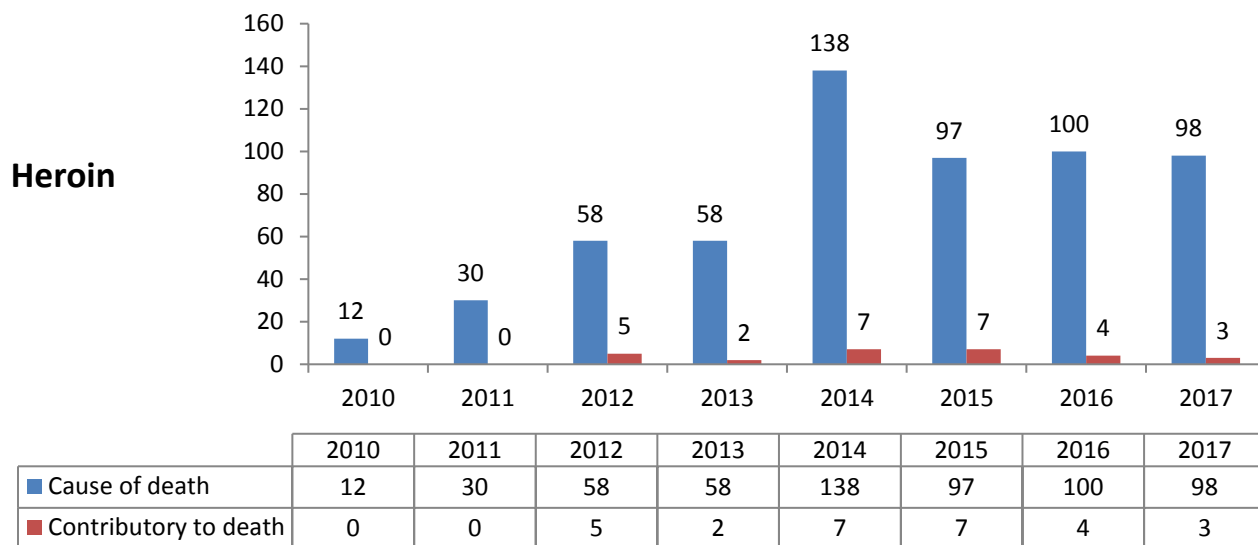


Heroin, 2017

Table 6.2, N= 98, represents all overdoses where heroin as a single component or combined in conjunction with another drug(s) was the cause of death in 2017.

Month		Age		Race		Gender		Law Enforcement Agency	
January	13	0-19	0	W	80	M	71	Adamsville	2
February	4	20-29	19	B	18	F	27	Bessemer	7
March	6	30-39	37	H	0			Birmingham	36
April	7	40-49	22	A	0			Brighton	2
May	10	50-59	14	I	0			Fultondale	2
June	10	60-69	5					Gardendale	3
July	3	70-79	1					Homewood	3
August	7	80+	0					Hoover	5
September	10							Hueytown	1
October	4							Irondale	3
November	9							Jefferson County	22
December	15							Kimberly	1
								Lipscomb	1
								Midfield	1
								Pleasant Grove	2
								Tarrant	3
								Trussville	1
								Vestavia Hills	1
								Warrior	2
Totals	98		98		98		98		98

Figure 6.10: includes all cases in 2017 where heroin as a single component or combined with other drugs was the direct cause or contributing factor in the death.

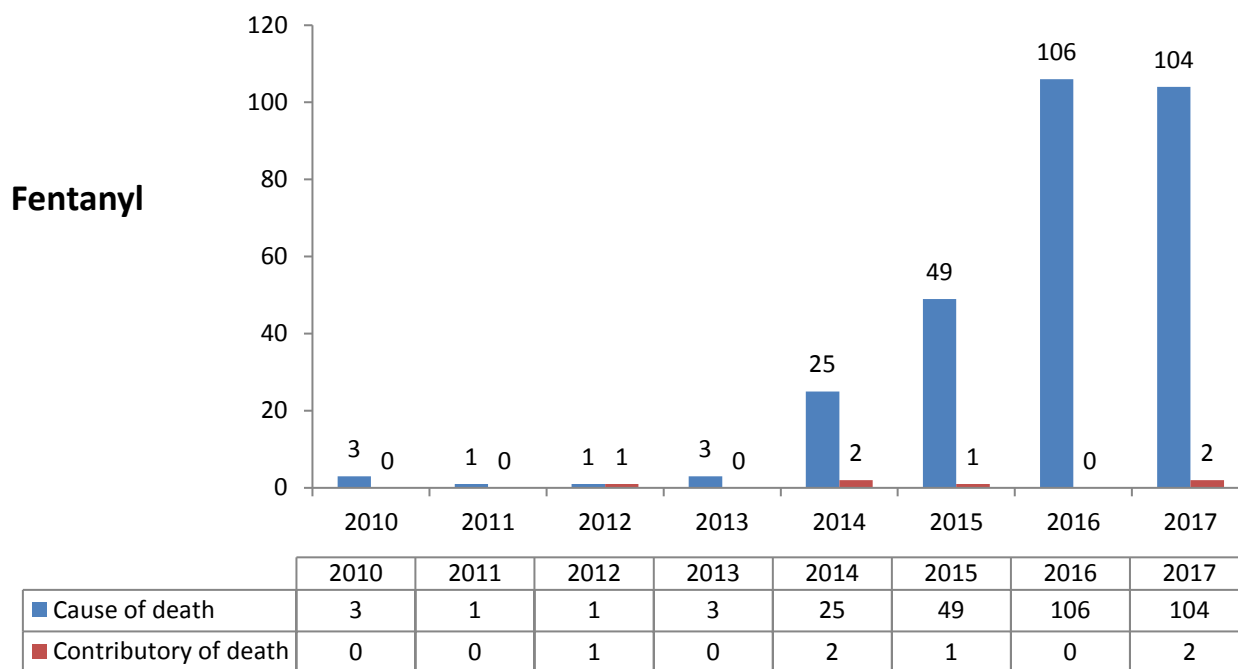


Fentanyl, 2017

Table 6.3, N= 104, represents all overdoses where fentanyl as a single component or combined in conjunction with another drug(s) was the cause of death in 2017.

Month		Age		Race		Gender		Law Enforcement Agency	
January	3	0-19	1	W	75	M	79	Adamsville	2
February	4	20-29	24	B	28	F	25	Bessemer	6
March	3	30-39	42	H	1			Birmingham	47
April	3	40-49	24	A	0			Fairfield	1
May	10	50-59	10	I	0			Fultondale	3
June	15	60-69	2					Gardendale	2
July	12	70-79	1					Homewood	1
August	10	80+	0					Hoover	4
September	6							Hueytown	3
October	11							Irondale	2
November	9							Jefferson County	23
December	18							Leeds	1
								Midfield	2
								Pleasant Grove	2
								Trussville	4
								Vestavia Hills	1
Totals	104		104		104		104		104

Figure 6.11: includes all cases in 2017 where fentanyl as a single component or combined with other drugs was the direct cause or contributing factor in the death.



Most Common Prescription Medications Causing Death: 2010-2017

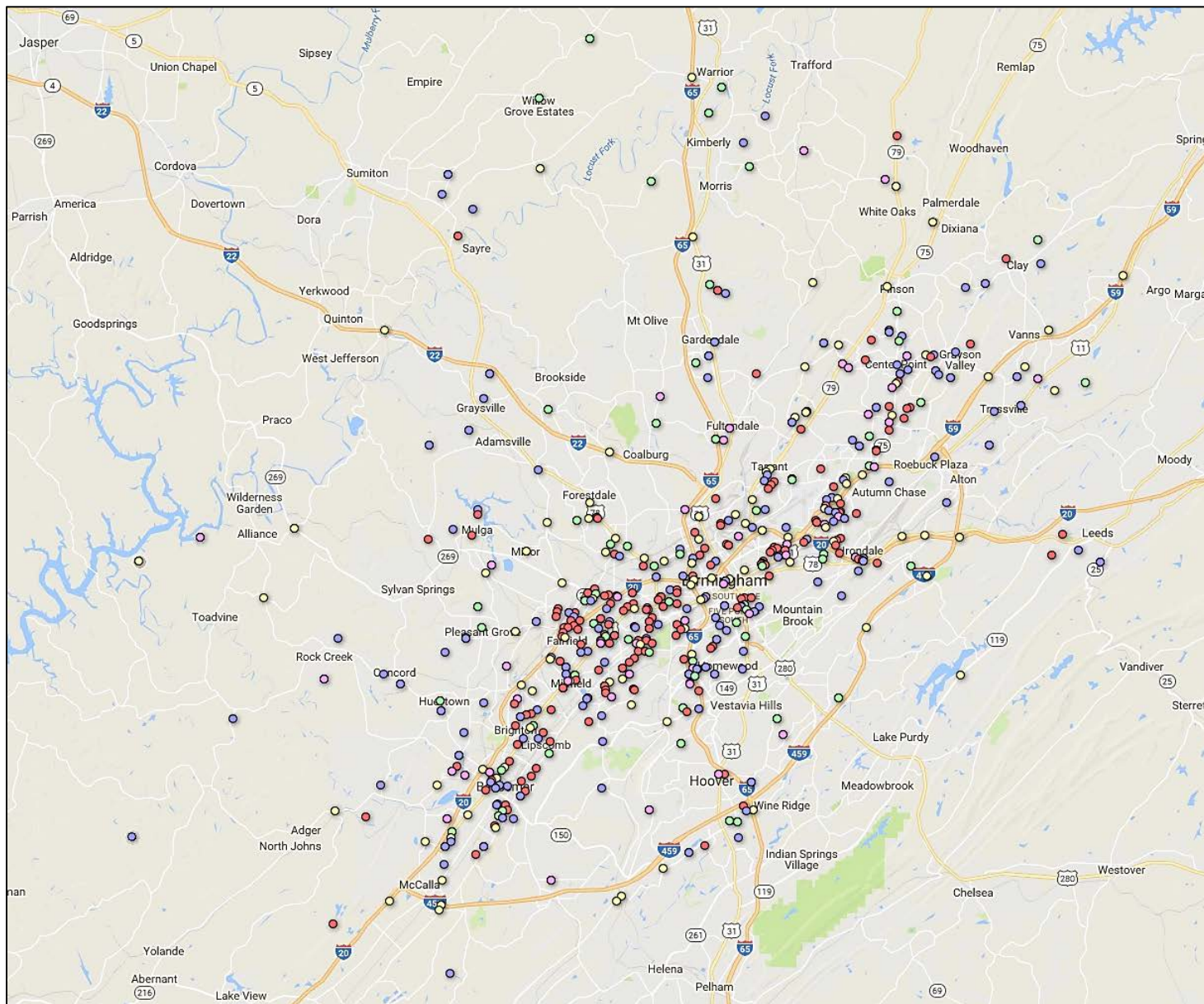
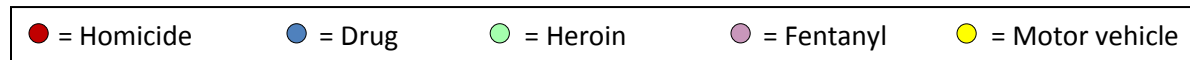
Table 6.4: Rx medications and Rx opioids. A single death might contain multiple drugs therefore; a single death might be represented multiple times in this table. The total for each drug represents the number of occurrences for that calendar year where that particular drug was found to be either the single cause of death or a component in conjunction with another drug(s) that combined was the cause of death. Also, the deaths represented in this table might be a result of a combination of prescription drug(s) and illicit drug(s). Often drug overdoses are found to be a combination of both prescription and illicit drugs.

Prescription Medications	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Opioids:								
Hydrocodone	8	7	8	12	28	11	13	15
Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1
Fentanyl	3	1	1	3	25	49	106	104
Methadone	22	13	11	21	21	17	16	7
Morphine	10	17	12	5	7	3	5	3
Oxycodone	4	8	4	13	21	11	12	11
Tramadol	2	0	1	6	5	3	3	9
Benzodiazepines:								
Alprazolam (Xanax)	5	3	7	12	32	8	31	28
Clonazepam (Klonopin)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Diazepam (Valium)	3	1	2	7	11	5	3	6
Barbiturates:								
Butalbital	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Phenobarbital	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Antidepressants:								
Citalopram (Celexa)	4	2	1	1	2	0	1	5
Nortriptyline (Palmelor)	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Velafaxine (Effexor)	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Other:								
Acetaminophen (Tylenol)	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	0
Amphetamine	3	0	1	0	2	1	2	0
Carisoprodol (Soma)	1	3	0	2	4	0	0	0
Fluoxetine (Prozac)	3	2	1	1	1	4	1	3
Gabapentin	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Promethazine (Phenergan)	0	0	1	3	4	1	0	2
Quetiapine (Seroquel)	1	0	0	2	2	1	1	1
Sertraline (Zoloft)	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	1
Trazodone (Oleptro)	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
Gamma-Hydroxybutyrate (GHB)	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0

Section 7: Geo-Maps

Homicide, Drug, Heroin, Fentanyl, and Motor Vehicle Deaths, 2017

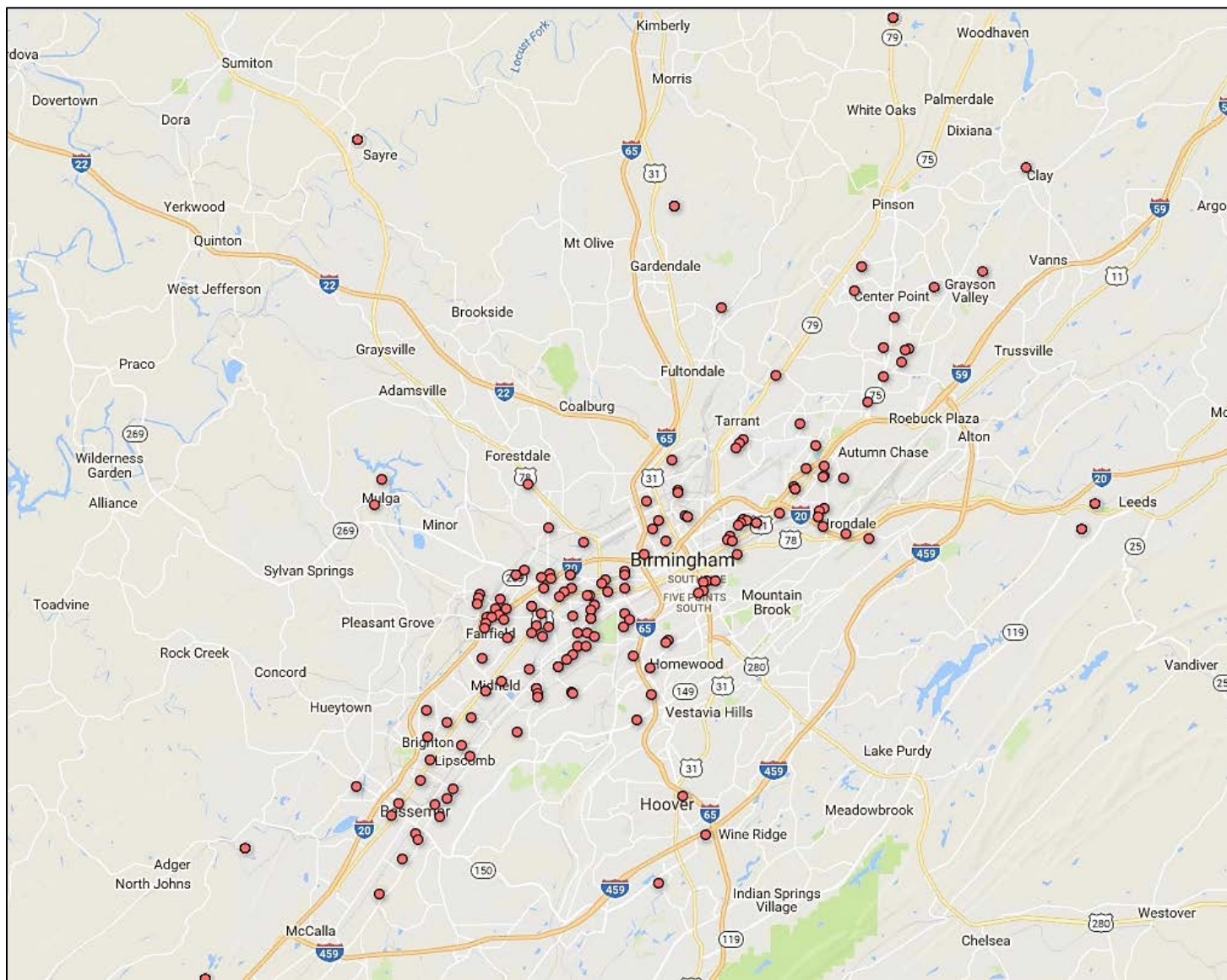
Figure 7.1: N=551, represents all homicides, drug, heroin, fentanyl, and motor vehicle deaths by place of injury.



Homicide, Jefferson County, 2017

Figure 7.2: N=172, represents all homicides by place of injury.

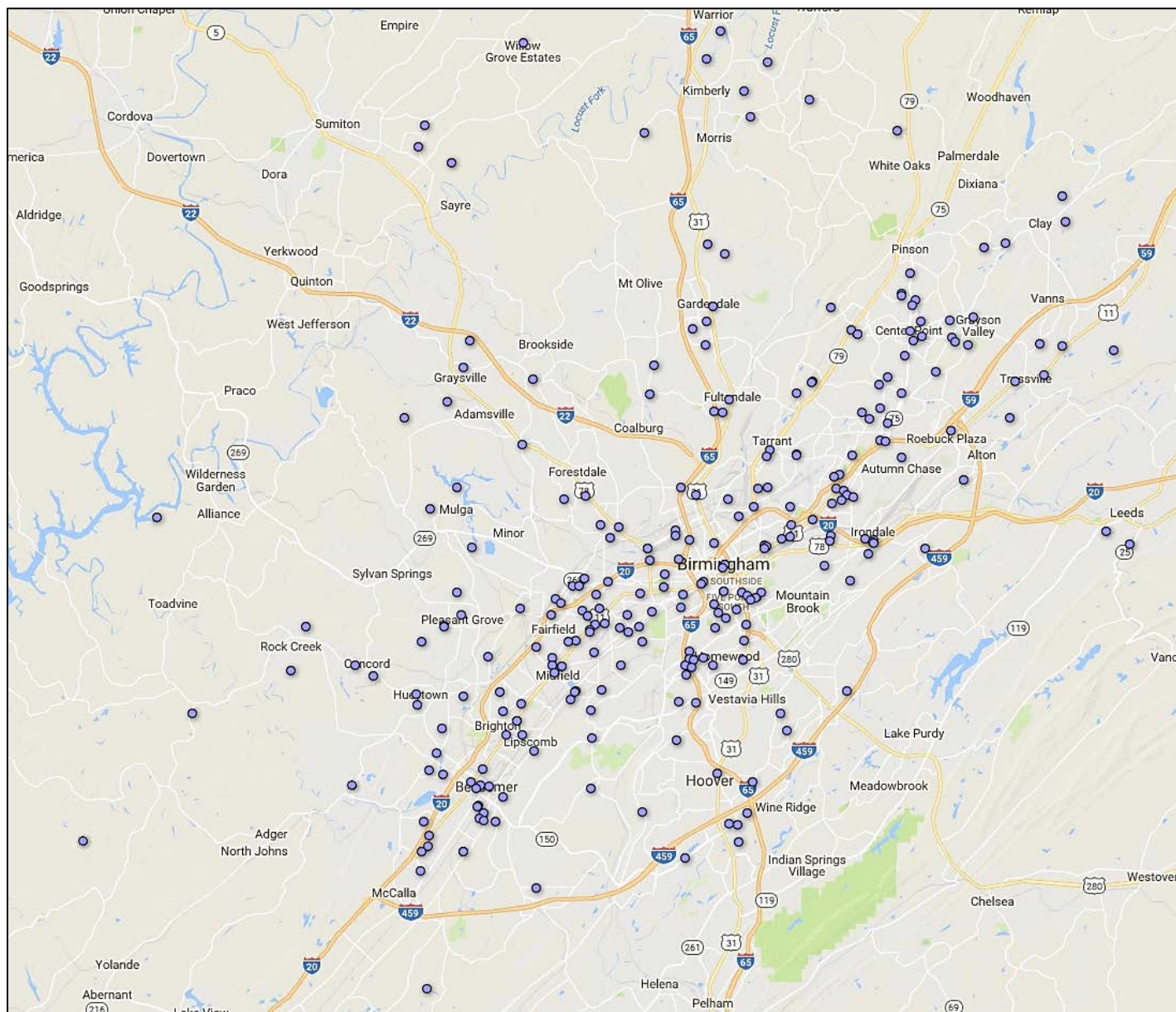
● = Homicide



Drug Overdoses, 2017

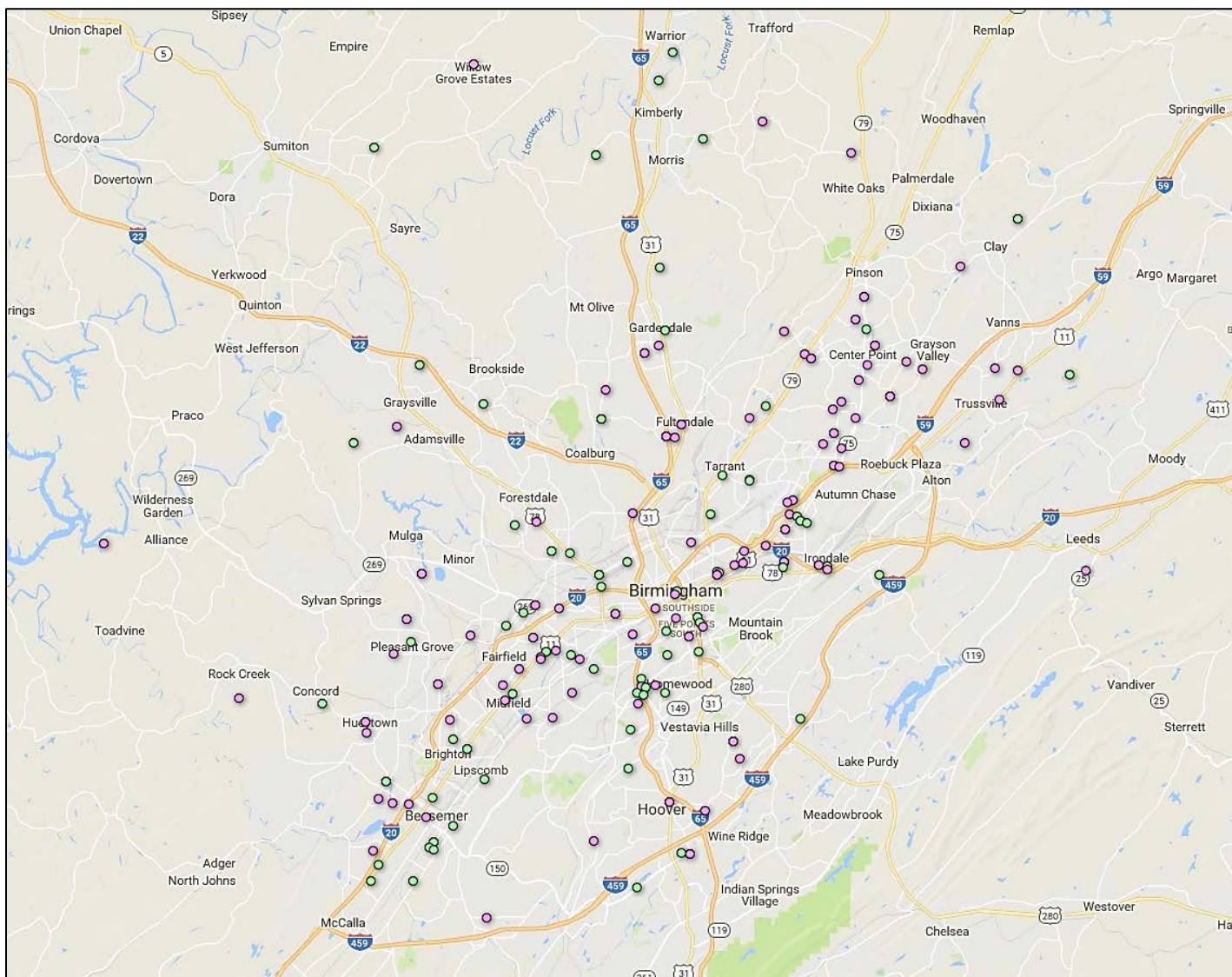
Figure 7.3: N=269, represents all overdose deaths by place of injury/overdose.

● = Drug overdose



Heroin and Fentanyl Overdoses, 2017

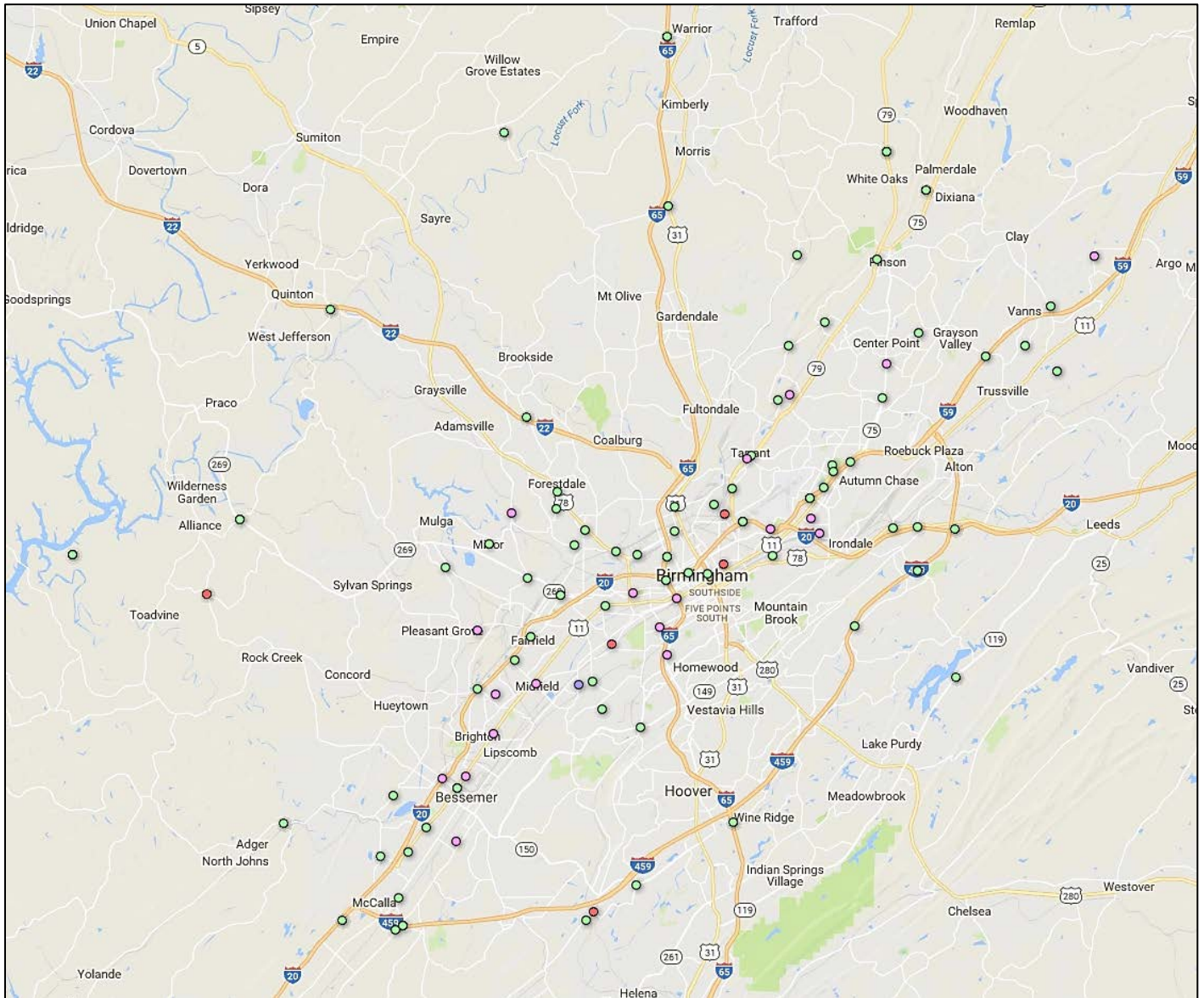
Figure 7.4: N=202, represents all heroin and fentanyl deaths by place of injury/overdose.



Motor Vehicle, Train, and Pedestrian Fatalities, 2017

Figure 7.5: N=110, represents all motor vehicle, train, and pedestrian deaths by place of injury.

● = Automobile ● = Automobile/pedestrian ● = Automobile/bicycle ● = Train/pedestrian



End of Report