

Annual
Report

2019

Jefferson County
Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office



Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office

1515 6th Avenue South, Suite 220

Birmingham, Alabama 35233

Office: 205-930-3603

Fax: 205-930-3595

Email: Coroner@jccal.org

Webpage: www.jccal.org/coroner

Published: May 2020

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
Introduction	5
Mission.....	5
Death Statistics	5
Death Certificates	5
History.....	6
Medicolegal Death Investigation.....	7
Organizational Chart.....	8
Section 1: Summary Data.....	9
2018-2019 Comparison.....	9
Historical Summary: Year of Death, 2000-2019.....	10
Historical Summary: Manner of Death, 2000-2019.....	10
Section 2: 2019 Total Case Data	11
General Statistics and Notable Trends.....	11
Total Deaths by Place of Death Zip Code, 2019.....	11
Total Deaths Reported by Law Enforcement Agency and Jurisdiction, 2019.....	12
Total Assumed Cases by Law Enforcement Agency and Manner of Death, 2019.....	13
Percentage of Assumed Cases by Manner of Death, 2019.....	14
Total Assumed Cases by Manner of Death and Type of Examination, 2019.....	14
Total Assumed Cases by Race, 2019.....	15
Total Assumed Cases by Race and Manner of Death, 2019.....	15
Total Assumed Cases by Gender and Age Group, 2019.....	16
Total Assumed Cases by Gender and Manner of Death, 2019.....	16
Total Assumed Cases by Month of Death, 2019.....	17
Death Certificate Reviews of Declined Cases, 2019.....	17
Section 3: Manner of Death: Assumed Jurisdiction.....	18
Accident.....	18
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019.....	18
Total Number of Accidental Deaths Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019.....	19
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2019.....	20

Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019..... 20

Percentage of Accidental Deaths by Race, 2019 21

Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Month of Death, 2019..... 21

Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Means of Death, 2019..... 22

Homicide 23

 Total Number of Homicides by Year of Death 2000-2019..... 23

 Total Number of Homicides by Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019 24

 Total Number of Homicides by Gender and Age Group, 2019 25

 Total Number of Homicides by Gender and Race, 2019 25

 Percentage of Homicides by Race, 2019..... 26

 Total Number of Homicides by Month of Death, 2019..... 26

 Total Number of Homicides by Means of Death, 2019 27

Natural..... 28

 Total Number of Natural Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019 28

 Total Number of Natural Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2019 30

 Total Number of Natural Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019 30

 Percentage of Natural Deaths by Race, 2019 31

 Total Number of Natural Deaths by Month of Death, 2019..... 31

 Total Number of Natural Deaths by Means of Death, 2019 32

Suicide 33

 Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019 33

 Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019..... 34

 Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2019..... 35

 Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019..... 35

 Percentage of Suicide Deaths by Race, 2019 36

 Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Month of Death, 2019 36

 Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Means of Death, 2019..... 37

Undetermined 38

 Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019 38

 Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Place of Death Zip Code, 2019 39

 Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2019..... 40

 Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019..... 40

Percentage of Undetermined Deaths by Race, 2019	41
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Month of Death, 2019	41
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Means of Death, 2019	42
Section 4: Infant/Juvenile Deaths	43
Historical Summary	43
Total Number of Infant and Juvenile Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019	43
Infant Deaths	44
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019	44
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Gender and Age, 2019	45
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019	45
Percentage of Infant Deaths by Race, 2019.....	46
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Month of Death, 2019	46
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Means of Death, 2019	47
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Manner of Death and Race, 2019.....	47
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Manner of Death and Gender, 2019.....	48
Juvenile Deaths	49
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019.....	49
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Gender and Age, 2019.....	50
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019.....	50
Percentage of Juvenile Deaths by Race, 2019	51
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Month of Death, 2019.....	51
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Means of Death, 2019.....	52
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Manner of Death and Race, 2019	52
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Manner of Death and Gender, 2019	53
Section 5: Motor Vehicle Deaths	54
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019	54
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019	55
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2019.....	56
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019	56
Percentage of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Race, 2019	57
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Month of Death, 2019	57
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Means of Death, 2019	58

Section 6: Overdose Deaths.....	59
Overview	59
General Statistics and Notable Trends.....	60
Historical Summary	60
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019	60
Historical Summary: Illicit Drugs/Poisons, 2010-2019.....	62
2019 Overdose Deaths	63
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019.....	63
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2019	64
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019.....	64
Percentage of Overdose Deaths by Race, 2019	65
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Month of Death, 2019.....	65
Most Common Prescription Medications Causing Death: 2010-2019	66
References	67
End of Report	67

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.



American Board of
Medicolegal Death Investigators

The JCCMEO deputy coroner 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 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.

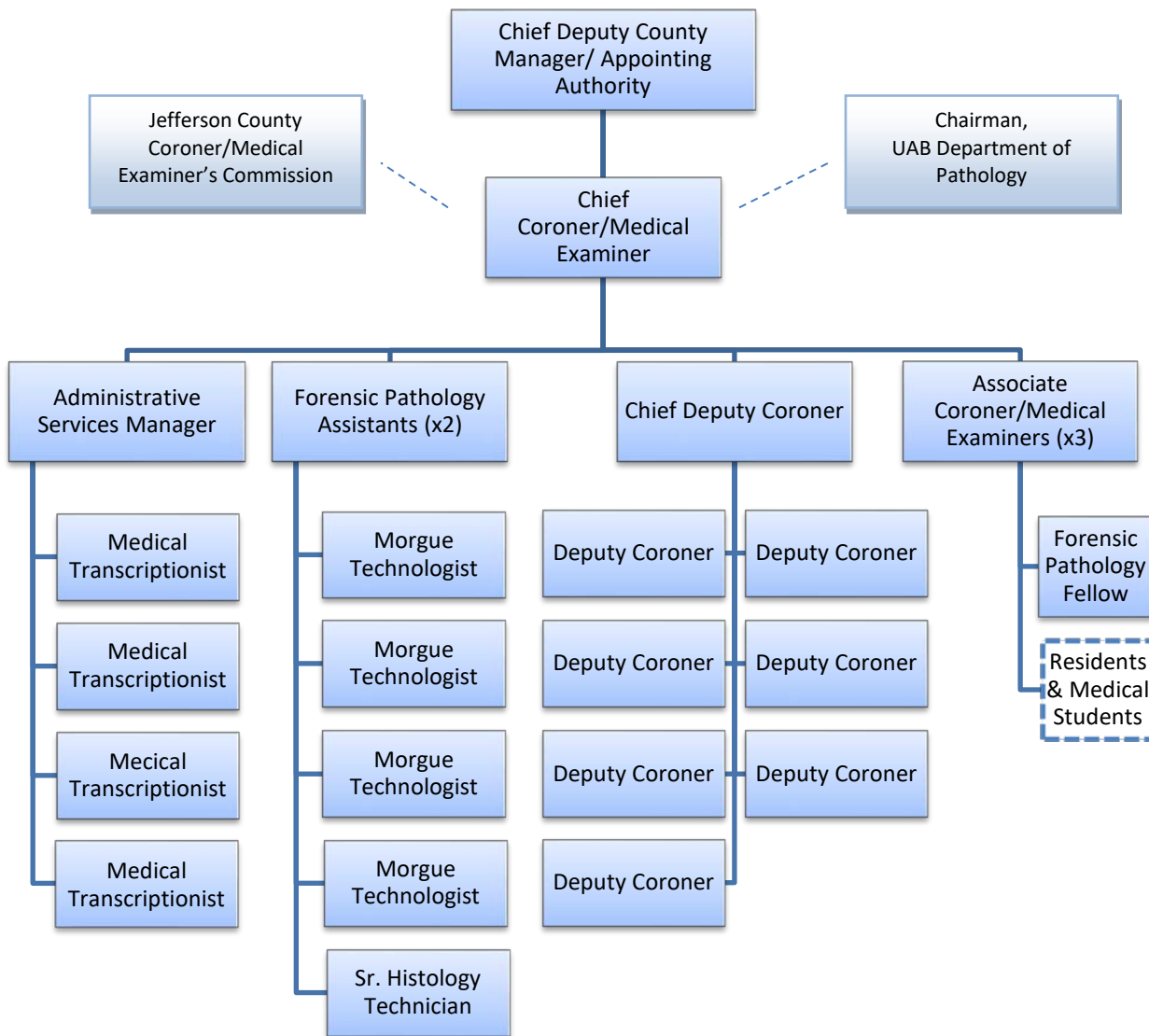
At the JCCMEO these investigations are begun by deputy coroners who are formally trained MDIs. When a death is reported to the JCCMEO it is the responsibility of the deputy coroner to determine if the death falls under the statutory jurisdiction of the JCCMEO and if so, will jurisdiction be assumed or 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 2018-2019 Comparison

Table 1.1: previous year comparison data.

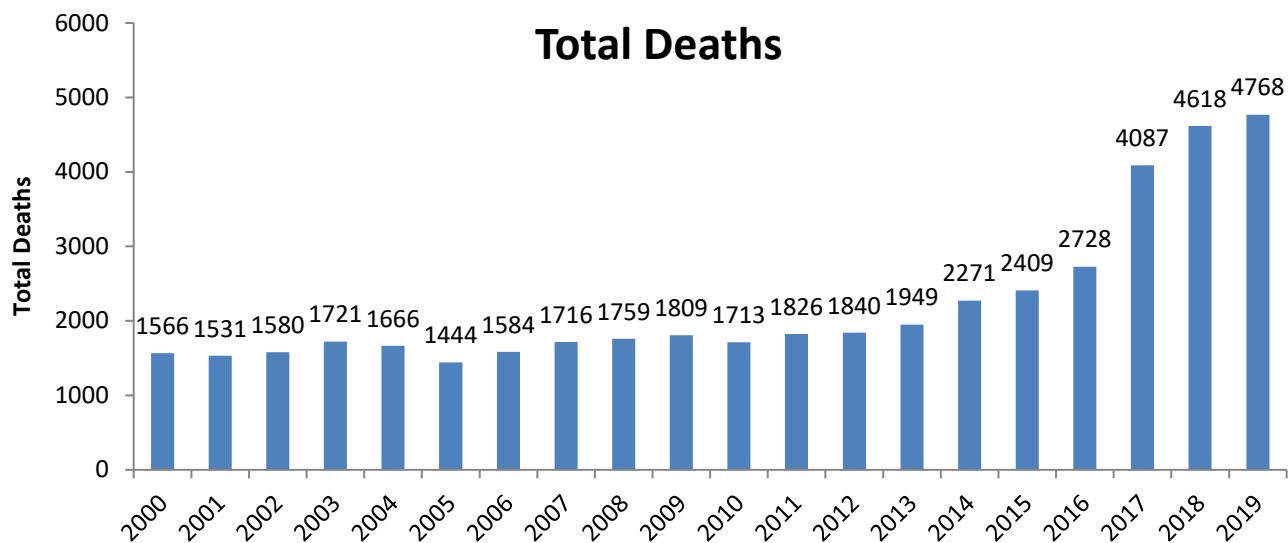
	2018	2019
Total cases reported to the JCCMEO:	4,618	4,768
Jurisdiction Assumed:	908	956
Accident	384	401
Homicide	161	171
Natural	260	270
Suicide	85	97
Undetermined	15	14
Pending	0	0
Stillborn ¹	2	3
Human-tissue ²	1	0
Jurisdiction Declined:	2,468	2,609
Natural	860	774
Hospice	1,428	1,699
Safekeeping	174	130
Non-human	6	6
Cremation Permits	1,242	1,900
Death Certificate Reviews of Declined Cases:	163	170
Total bodies transported by JCCMEO:	1,082	1,086
Examination	908	956
Safekeeping	174	130
Total Examinations:	908	956
Autopsies	608	666
Externals	300	290
No examination performed	0	0
Organ/Tissue procurements:		
Organ/Tissue	30	20
Corneas	28	26
Toxicology performed:		
Yes	850	899
No	58	57
Total scenes visited by investigators:	601	610
Unclaimed bodies (county burials):	54	50
Unidentified remains (cumulative total):	48	51

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

² Tissue of no forensic value.

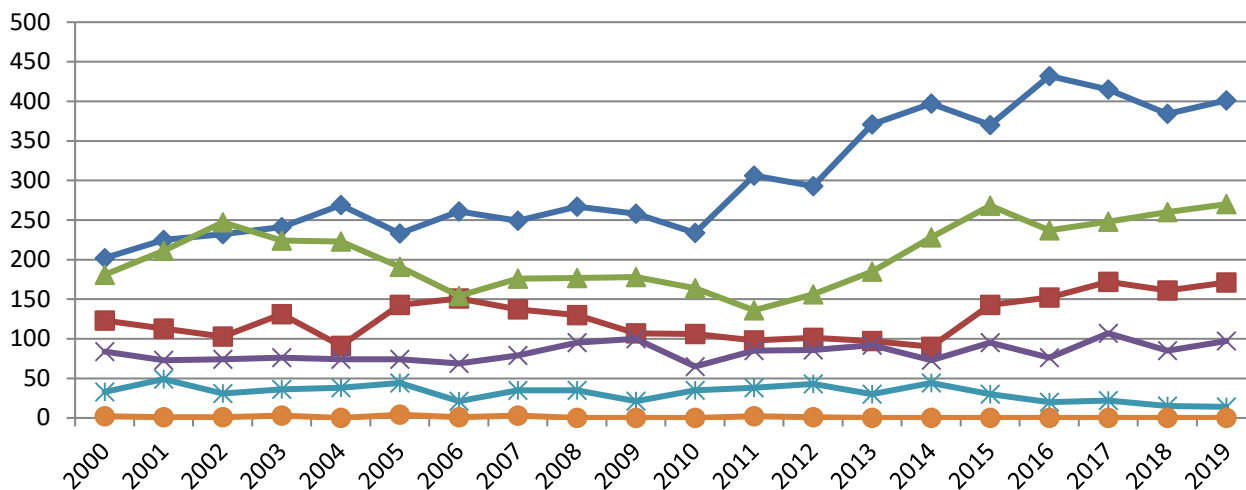
Historical Summary: Year of Death, 2000-2019

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



Historical Summary: Manner of Death, 2000-2019

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



	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
◆ Accident	202	225	232	241	269	233	261	249	267	258	234	306	293	371	397	370	432	415	384	401
■ Homicide	123	113	103	131	91	143	151	137	130	107	106	98	101	97	90	143	152	172	161	171
▲ Natural	181	211	247	224	223	191	154	176	177	178	164	136	156	185	228	268	237	248	260	270
✕ Suicide	84	73	74	76	74	74	69	79	95	100	65	85	86	92	73	95	76	107	85	97
* Undetermined	33	49	31	36	38	44	21	35	35	21	35	38	43	30	44	30	20	22	15	14
● Pending	2	1	1	3	0	4	1	3	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Section 2: 2019 Total Case Data

General Statistics and Notable Trends

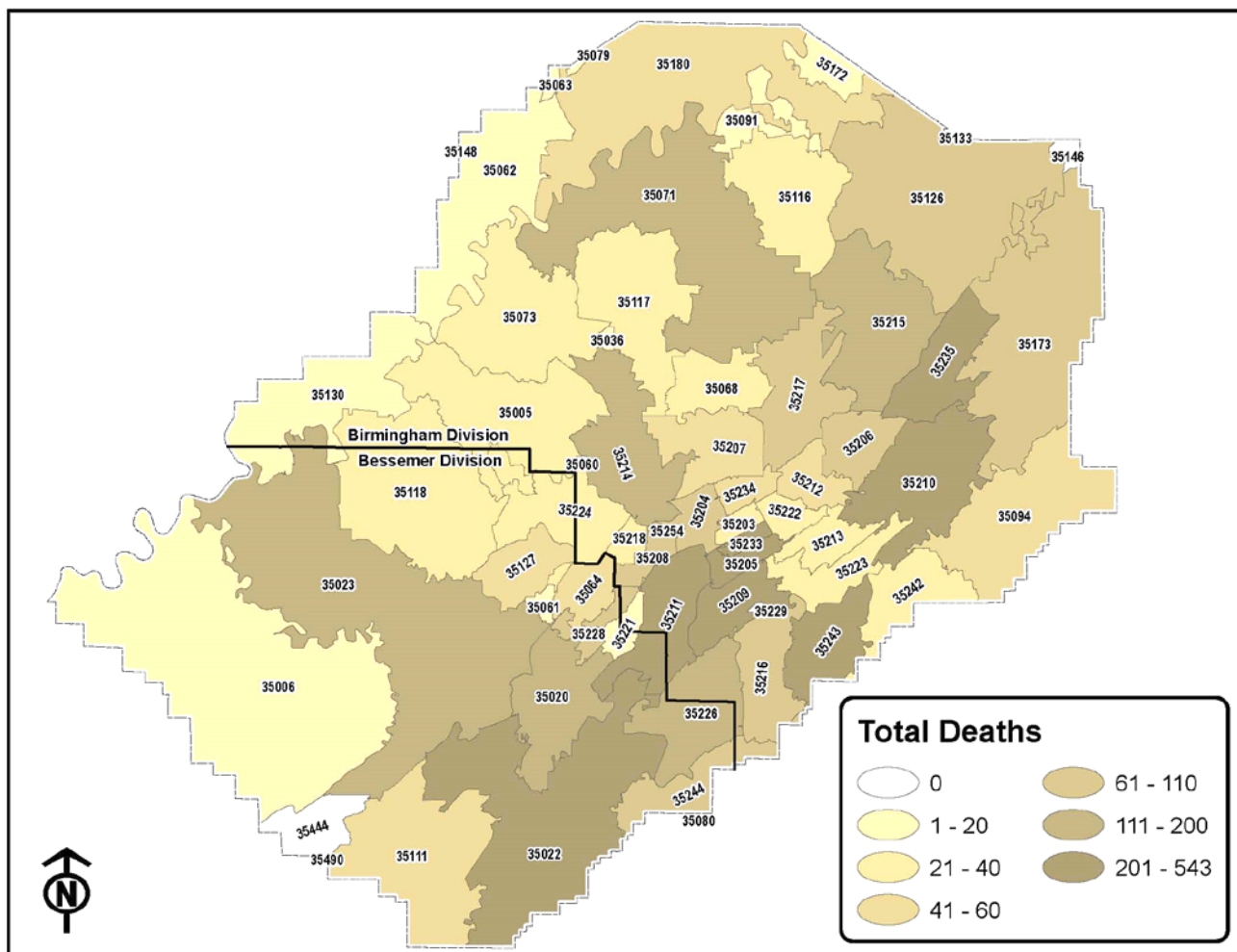
There was a 3.43% increase in the total number of deaths reported to the JCCMEO this past year, from 4,618 deaths in 2018 to 4,768 deaths in 2019. This increase was primarily seen in reported Hospice deaths, where there was a 18.98% increase from 1,428 cases in 2018 to 1,699 cases in 2019.

There was a 5.29% increase in the total number of deaths where jurisdiction was assumed, from 908 cases in 2018 to 956 cases in 2019.

The total number of accident, homicide, natural, and suicide deaths examined by the JCCMEO increased in 2019 compared to 2018; while undetermined deaths decreased in 2019.

Total Deaths by Place of Death Zip Code, 2019

Figure 2.1: N=4,672, represents total deaths reported by place of death zip code; includes Assumed, Declined, Cremations, Hospice, and Safekeeping cases.



Total Deaths Reported by Law Enforcement Agency and Jurisdiction, 2019

Table 2.1: N=2,718, 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 mortuaries and Hospice companies.

<u>Law Enforcement Agency</u>	<u>Assumed</u>	<u>Declined</u>	<u>Safekeeping</u>	<u>Non-human</u>	<u>Total</u>
Alabama Bureau of Investigation	4	0	0	0	4
Alabama Dept. of Public Safety	14	0	0	0	14
Alabama Dept. of Corrections	20	0	0	0	20
Adamsville Police Department	10	15	0	0	25
Argo Police Department	0	0	1	0	1
Bessemer Police Department	53	99	9	0	161
Birmingham Police Department	443	652	62	5	1,162
Brighton Police Department	3	4	0	3	10
Brookside Police Department	2	3	0	0	5
Fairfield Police Department	15	13	1	0	29
Fultondale Police Department	12	15	0	0	27
Gardendale Police Department	16	59	3	0	78
Graysville Police Department	3	5	0	0	8
Helena Police Department	2	2	0	0	4
Homewood Police Department	17	50	3	0	70
Hoover Police Department	41	51	9	0	101
Hueytown Police Department	16	41	4	0	61
Irondale Police Department	9	29	3	0	41
Jefferson County Sheriff's Office	187	333	20	1	541
Kimberly Police Department	4	5	0	0	9
Leeds Police Department	10	25	1	0	36
Lipscomb Police Department	0	4	0	0	4
Midfield Police Department	10	16	1	0	27
Morris Police Department	1	6	0	0	7
Mountain Brook Police Department	6	22	1	0	29
Pleasant Grove Police Department	9	25	8	0	42
Tarrant Police Department	15	7	2	0	24
Trafford Police Department	0	0	0	0	0
Trussville Police Department	10	51	0	0	61
UAB Police Department	1	0	0	0	1
Vestavia Hills Police Department	17	80	2	0	99
Warrior Police Department	6	11	0	0	17
Totals:	956	1,623	130	9	2,718

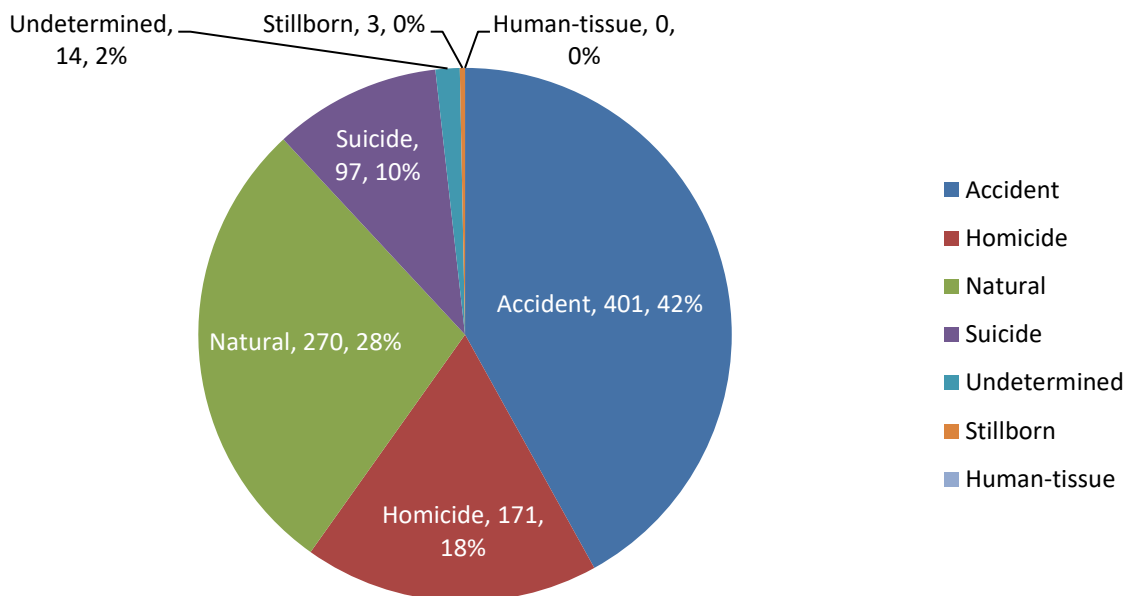
Total Assumed Cases by Law Enforcement Agency and Manner of Death, 2019

Table 2.2: N=956, 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>Human Tissue²</u>	<u>Total</u>
Alabama Bureau of Investigation	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
Alabama Dept. of Public Safety	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
Alabama Dept. of Corrections	5	2	11	2	0	0	0	20
Adamsville Police Department	7	0	3	0	0	0	0	10
Argo Police Department	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bessemer Police Department	19	13	18	3	0	0	0	53
Birmingham Police Department	172	104	119	36	9	3	0	443
Brighton Police Department	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Brookside Police Department	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Fairfield Police Department	3	6	5	1	0	0	0	15
Fultondale Police Department	6	0	4	2	0	0	0	12
Gardendale Police Department	6	1	9	0	0	0	0	16
Graysville Police Department	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
Helena Police Department	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Homewood Police Department	9	0	7	1	0	0	0	17
Hoover Police Department	21	3	9	8	0	0	0	41
Hueytown Police Department	7	0	6	3	0	0	0	16
Irondale Police Department	5	0	1	2	1	0	0	9
Jefferson County Sheriff's Office	83	24	47	29	4	0	0	187
Kimberly Police Department	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	4
Leeds Police Department	3	2	5	0	0	0	0	10
Lipscomb Police Department	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Midfield Police Department	4	3	3	0	0	0	0	10
Morris Police Department	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Mountain Brook Police Department	2	1	1	2	0	0	0	6
Pleasant Grove Police Department	2	0	4	3	0	0	0	9
Tarrant Police Department	8	3	3	1	0	0	0	15
Trafford Police Department	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trussville Police Department	7	1	2	0	0	0	0	10
UAB Police Department	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Vestavia Hills Police Department	10	0	4	3	0	0	0	17
Warrior Police Department	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	6
Totals:	402	171	269	97	14	3	0	956

Percentage of Assumed Cases by Manner of Death, 2019

Figure 2.2: N=956, represents number and percentage of cases by manner of death, includes only Assumed jurisdiction.^{1,2}



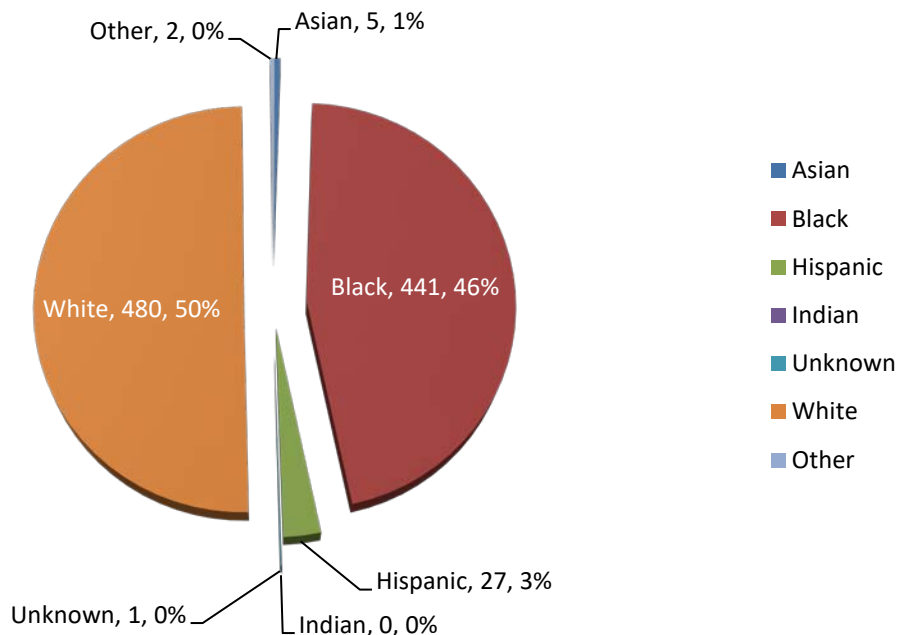
Total Assumed Cases by Manner of Death and Type of Examination, 2019

Table 2.3: N=956, represents all Assumed cases by manner of death and type of examination performed.

Examination	Accident	Homicide	Natural	Suicide	Undetermined	Stillborn ¹	Human-tissue ²	Total
Autopsy	301 / 75%	170 / 99%	153 / 57%	25 / 26%	14 / 100%	3 / 100%	0 / 0%	666
External	100 / 25%	1 / 1%	117 / 43%	72 / 74%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	290
No Exam	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0
Total	401	171	270	97	14	3	0	956

Total Assumed Cases by Race, 2019

Figure 2.3: N=956, represents all Assumed cases by race, with totals and percentages.



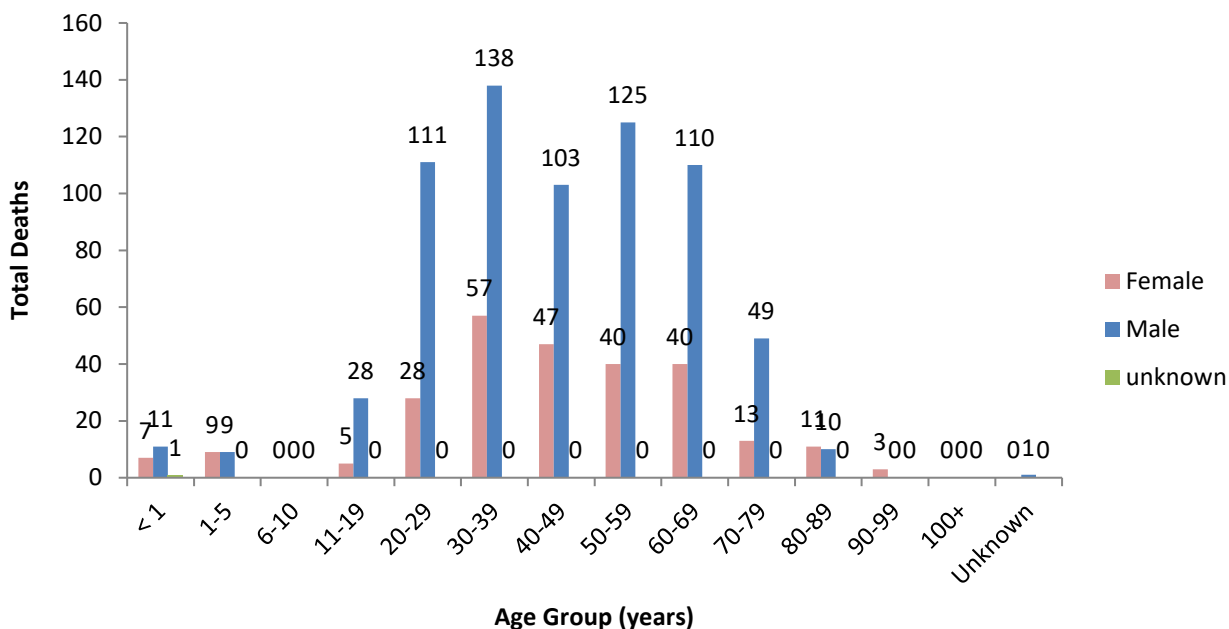
Total Assumed Cases by Race and Manner of Death, 2019

Table 2.4: N=956, represents all Assumed cases by race and manner of death.

Race	Accident	Homicide	Natural	Suicide	Undetermined	Stillborn ¹	Human-tissue ²	Total
Asian	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	5
Black	146	138	125	21	9	2	0	441
Hispanic	16	4	6	1	0	0	0	27
Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
White	237	29	137	72	5	0	0	480
Total	401	171	270	97	14	3	0	956

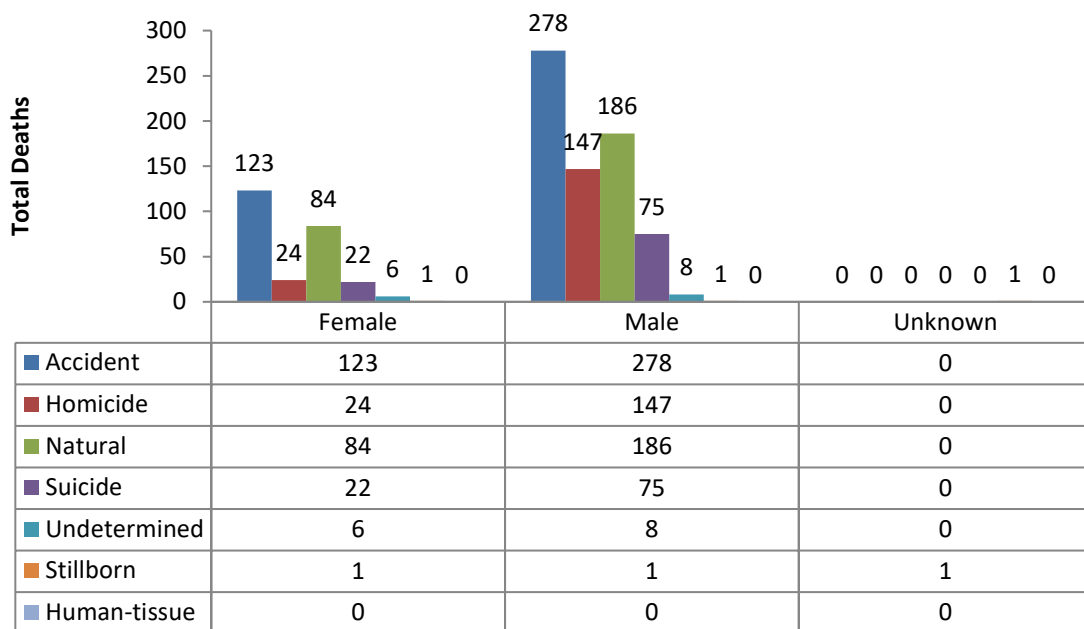
Total Assumed Cases by Gender and Age Group, 2019

Figure 2.4: N=956, represents all Assumed cases by gender and age group.



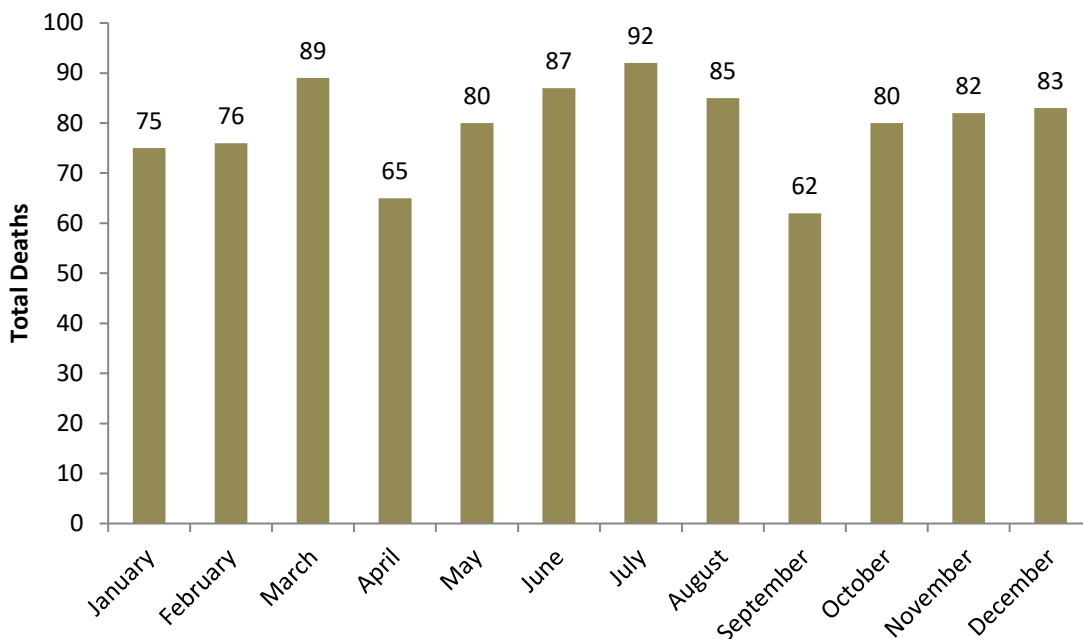
Total Assumed Cases by Gender and Manner of Death, 2019

Figure 2.5: N=956, represents all Assumed cases by gender and manner of death.^{1,2}



Total Assumed Cases by Month of Death, 2019

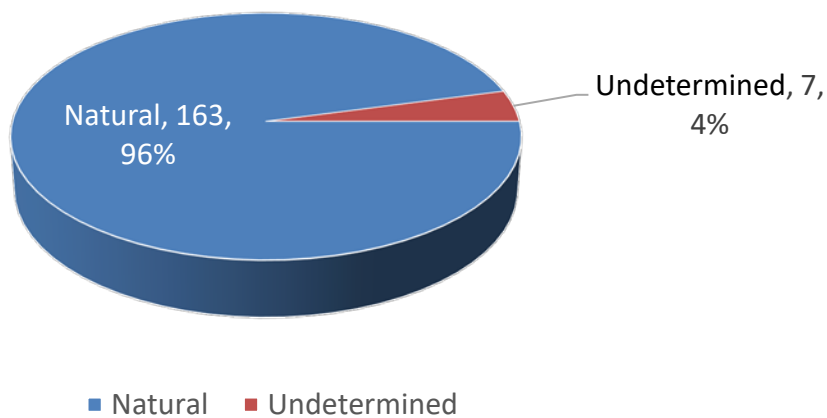
Figure 2.6: N=956, represents all Assumed cases by month of death.



Death Certificate Reviews of Declined Cases, 2019

Figure 2.7: N=170, 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 42% of the Assumed cases investigated by the JCCMEO in 2019 and represents the largest percentage of all manners of death.

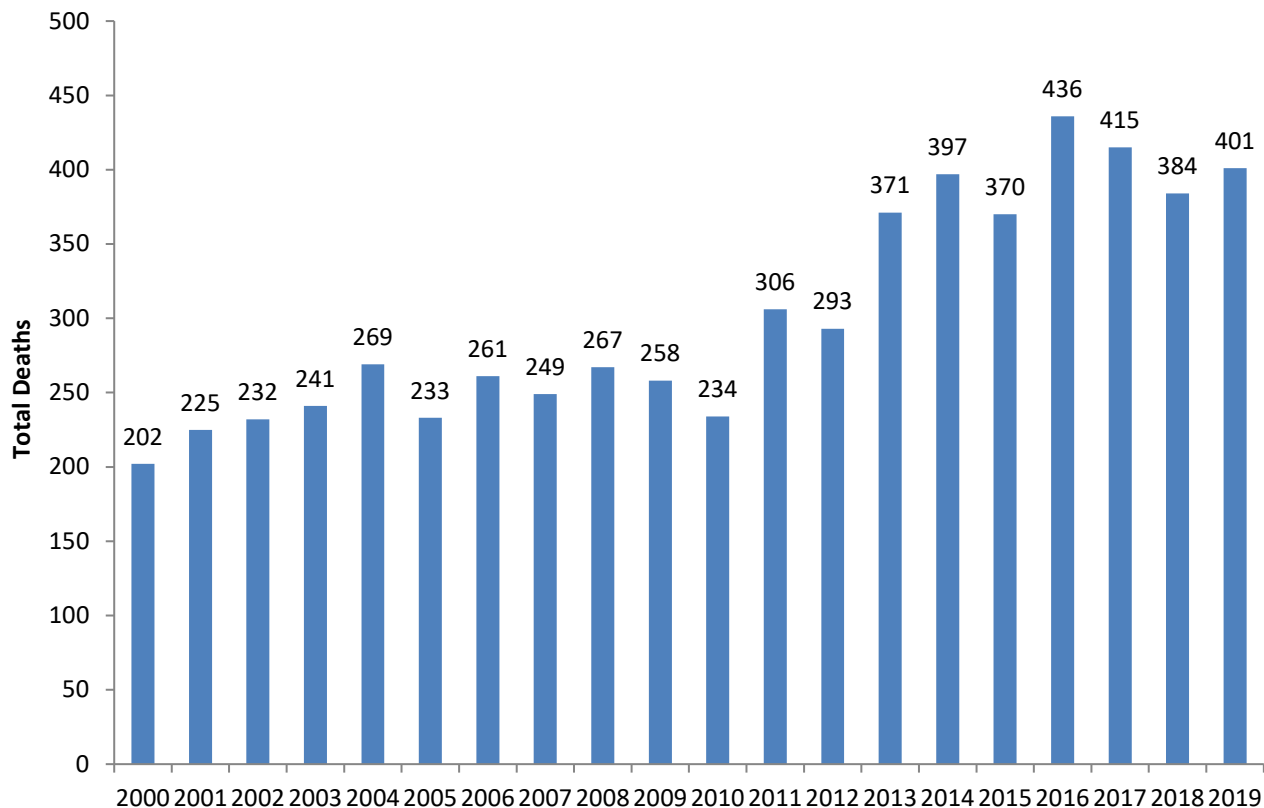
There was a 4.4% increase in the total number of accidental deaths, from 384 deaths in 2018 to 401 deaths in 2019.

Drug deaths were the most common cause of accidental death in 2019 accounting for 56% of the deaths, followed by motor vehicle deaths at 26% of the deaths.

The most common race was white representing 59% of the accidental deaths, while male was the most common gender representing 69% of the accidental deaths.

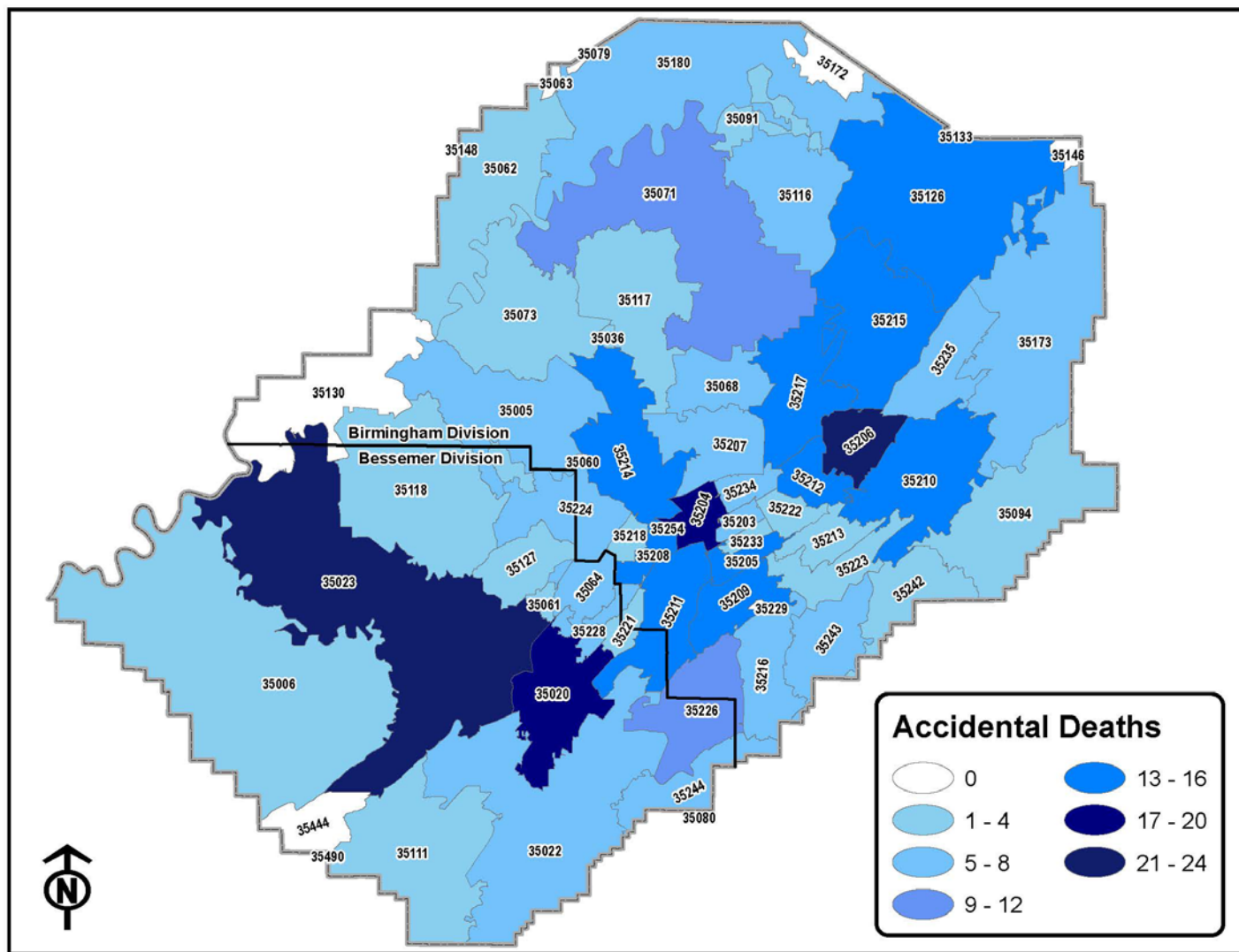
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019

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



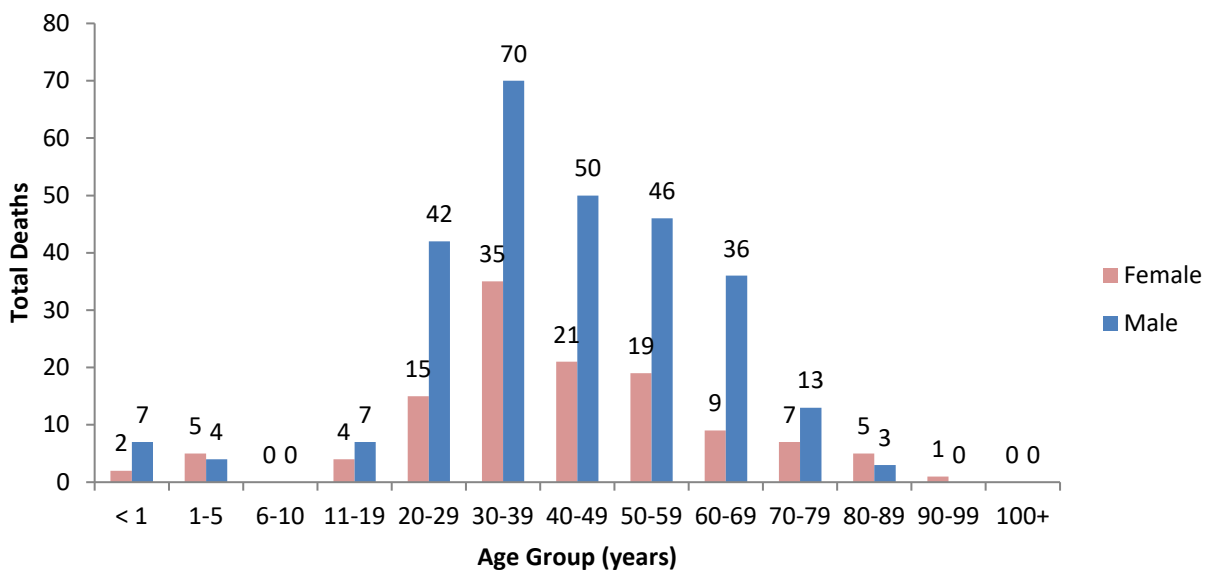
Total Number of Accidental Deaths Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019

Figure 3.2: N=401, represents all accidental deaths by place of injury zip code.



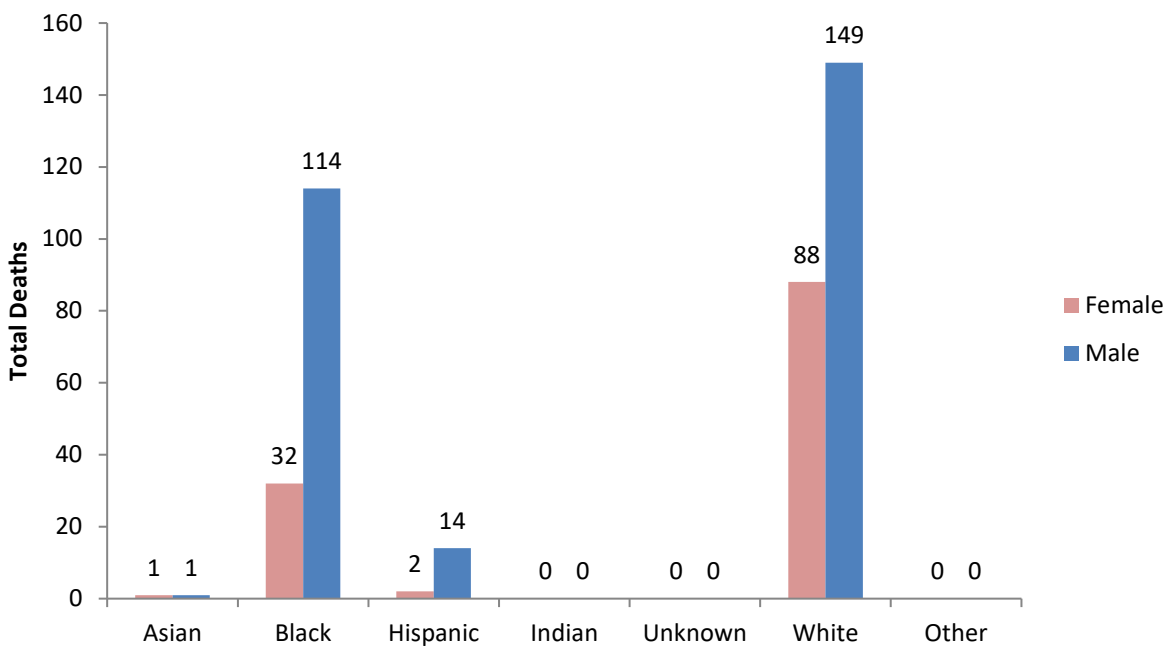
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2019

Figure 3.3: N=401, represents all accidental deaths by gender and age group.



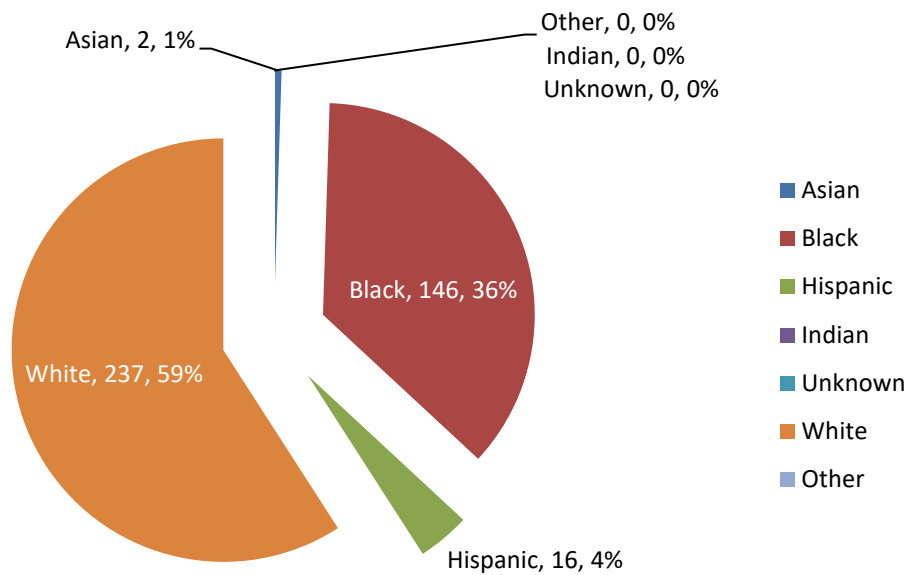
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019

Figure 3.4: N=401, represents all accidental deaths by gender and race.



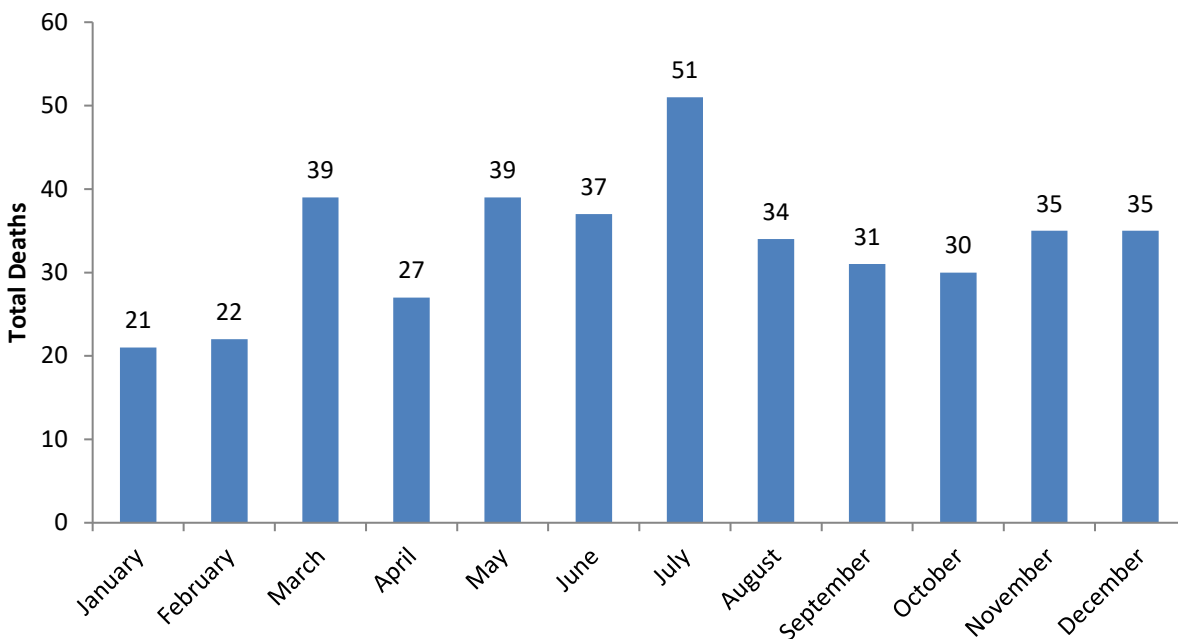
Percentage of Accidental Deaths by Race, 2019

Figure 3.5: N=401, represents all accidental deaths by race.



Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Month of Death, 2019

Figure 3.6: N=401, represents all Accidental deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Means of Death, 2019

Table 3.1: N=401, represents all Accidental deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total	Means of Death	Total
Asphyxia:		Fire:	
Motor vehicle	1	Home	11
Bed	2	Mobile home	3
Blunt		Other	1
Piston rod	1	Firearm: Rifle	1
Steel coil	1	Foreign Body: Bullet	1
Unknown	1	Motor vehicle:	
Co-sleeping:		Bicycle	2
Bed	5	Pedestrian	17
Couch	1	Multiple vehicles	43
Pack-N-Play	1	Single vehicle	43
Drowning:		Smothering: Dirt trench	2
Bathtub	3	Train: Pedestrian	3
Creek	1	Total	401
Lake	1		
Pool	5		
River	1		
Drug:			
Opioid	173		
Other drugs –Rx and illicit drugs	44		
Ethanol (alcohol) – acute toxicity	6		
Explosion: Oxygen cylinder	2		
Exposure:	2		
Fall:			
Building	1		
Chair	1		
Floor	4		
Forklift	1		
Stairs	4		
Tree	1		
Unknown	1		
Water slide	1		
Windowsill	1		
Falling Object			
Boulder	1		
Deck	1		

Homicide

Homicides accounted for 18% of the Assumed cases investigated by the JCCMEO in 2019.

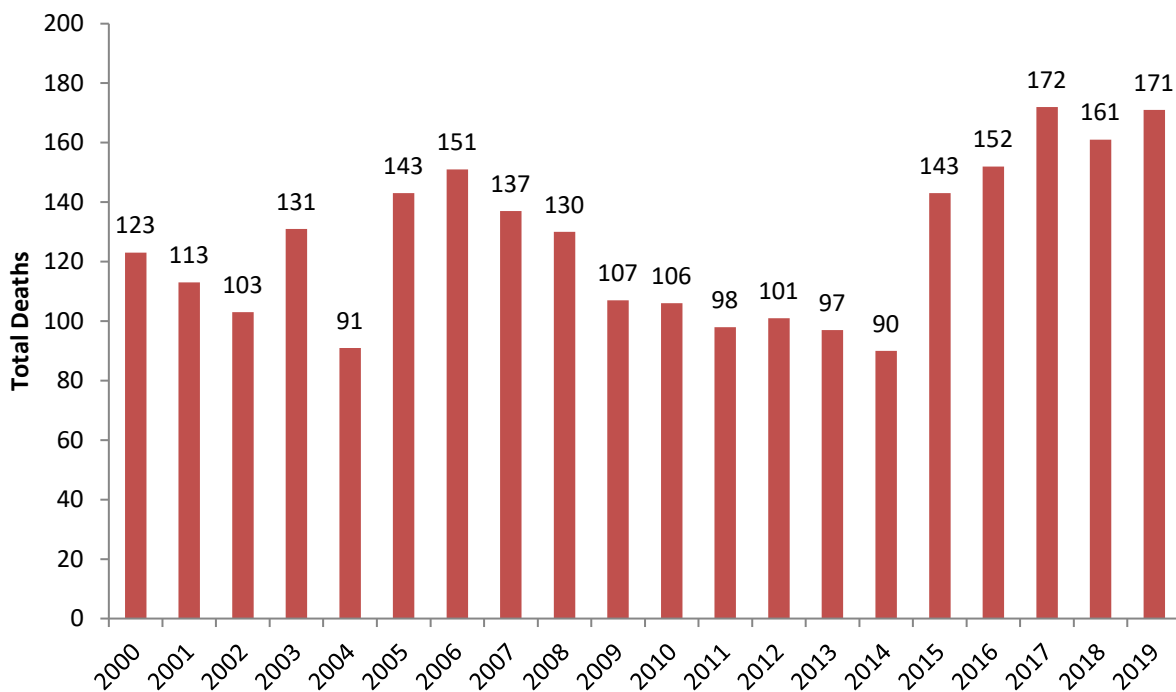
There was a 6% increase in the total number of homicides, from 161 deaths in 2018 to 171 deaths in 2019; and represents the second highest year since the year 2000.

Death due to firearms was the most common cause of homicide in 2019 accounting for 87% of the deaths.

The most common race was black representing 81% of the homicides, while males were the most common gender representing 86% of homicide deaths.

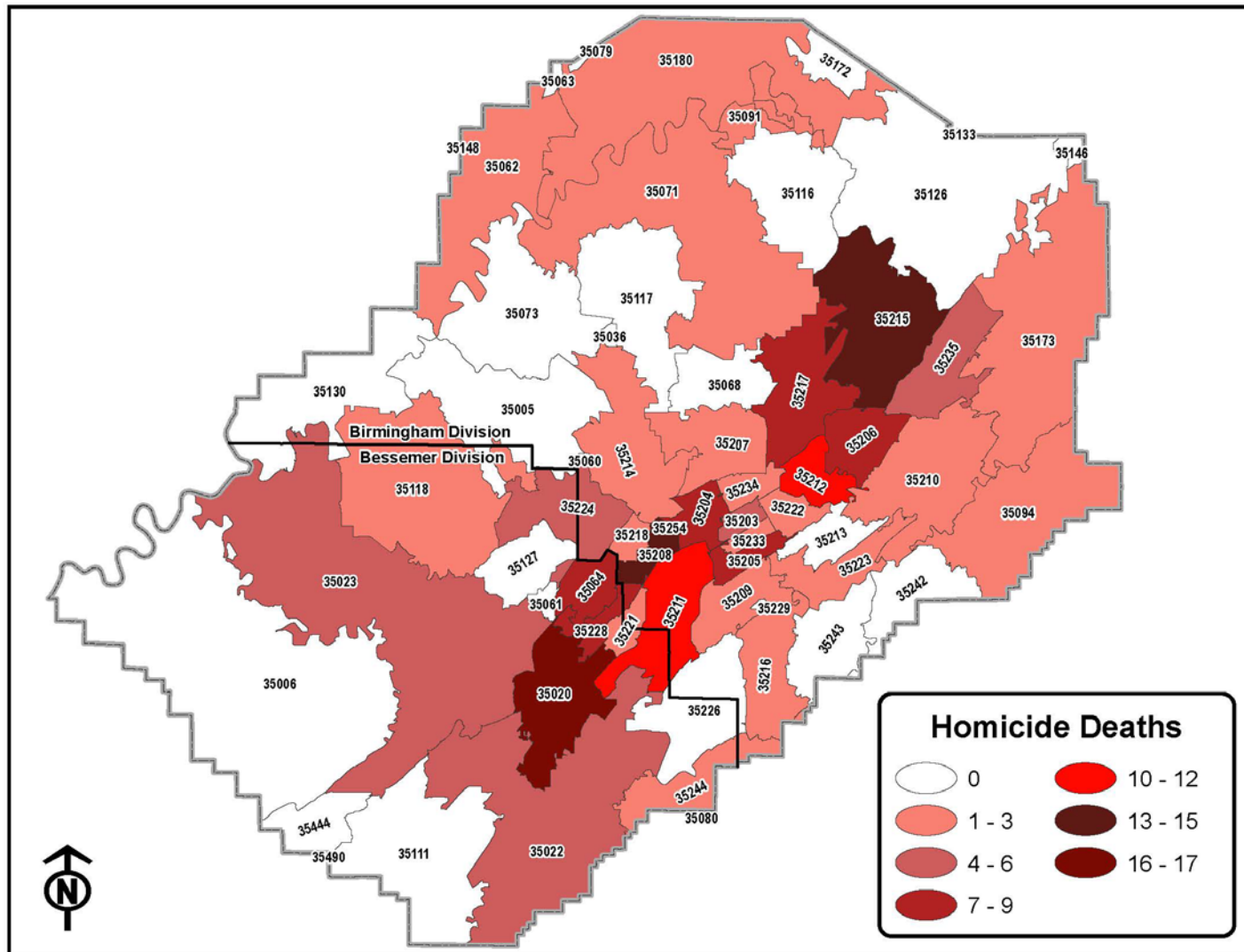
Total Number of Homicides by Year of Death 2000-2019

Figure 3.7: represents all homicides investigated by the JCCMEO.



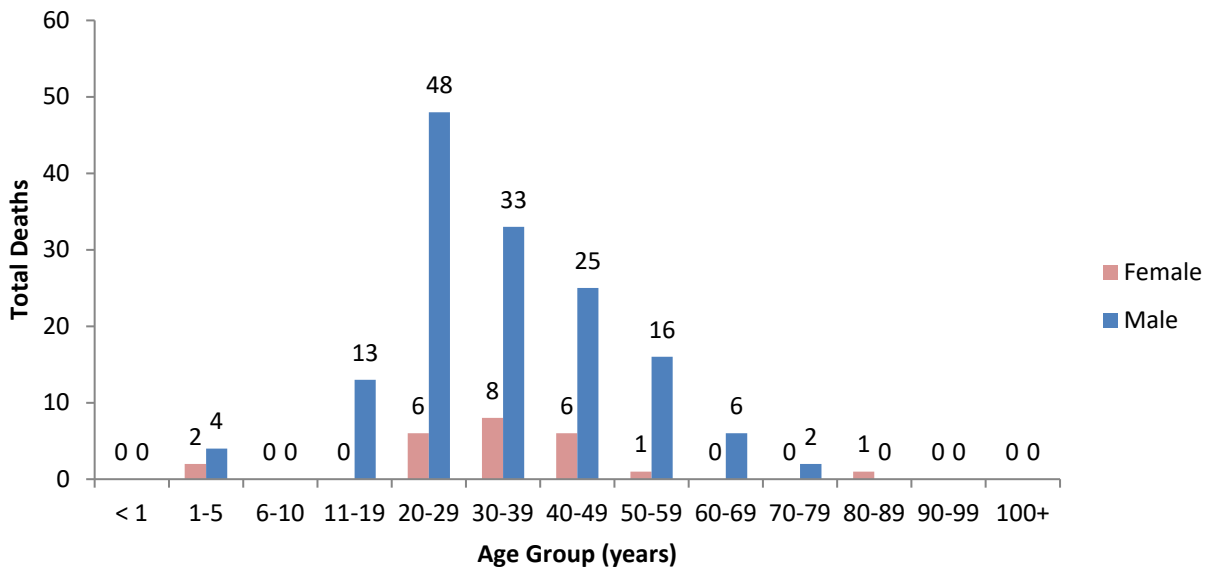
Total Number of Homicides by Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019

Figure 3.8: N=171, represents all homicide deaths by place of injury zip code.



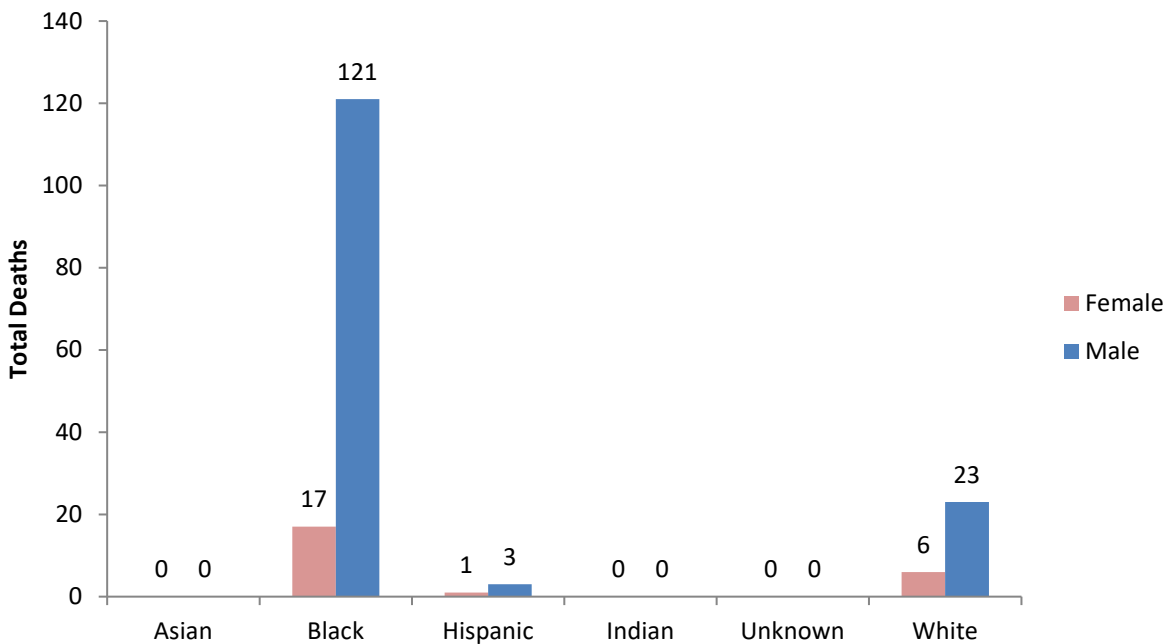
Total Number of Homicides by Gender and Age Group, 2019

Figure 3.9: N=171, represents all homicides by gender and age group.



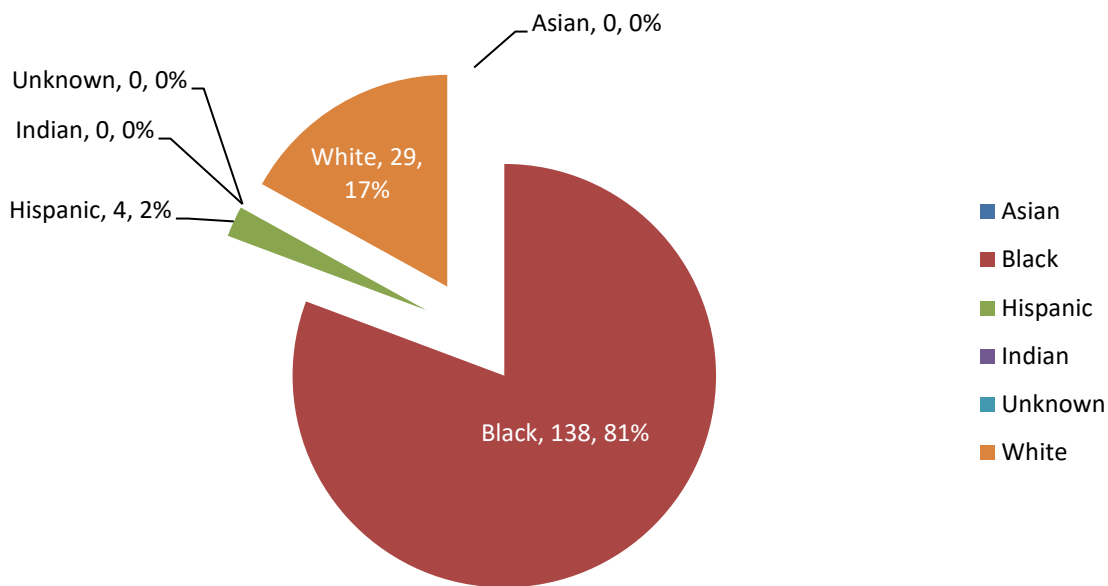
Total Number of Homicides by Gender and Race, 2019

Figure 3.10: N=171, represents all homicides by gender and race.



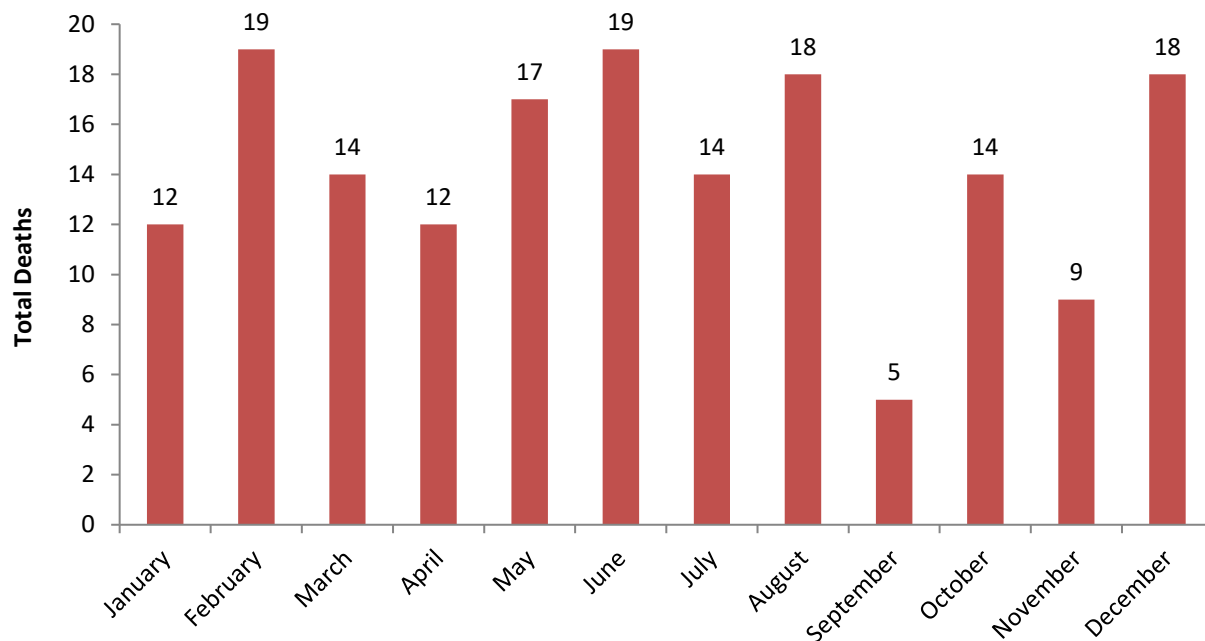
Percentage of Homicides by Race, 2019

Figure 3.11: N=171, represents all homicides by race.



Total Number of Homicides by Month of Death, 2019

Figure 3.12: N=171, represents all homicides by month of death.



Total Number of Homicides by Means of Death, 2019

Table 3.2: N=171, represents all Homicides by means of death and weapon type.

Means of Death	Total
Asphyxia:	
Clothing	1
Hands	2
Unknown	1
Blunt:	
Baton/Hand/Foot	1
Floor	1
Foot	1
Unknown	4
Wooden board	1
Drowning: Bathtub	1
Fire: Apartment	3
Firearm:	
Handgun	94
Handgun/Rifle	3
Rifle	8
Shotgun	2
Unknown	44
Motor vehicle	2
Sharp:	
Knife	5
Total	171

Natural

Natural deaths accounted for 28% of the Assumed cases investigated by the JCCMEO in 2019.

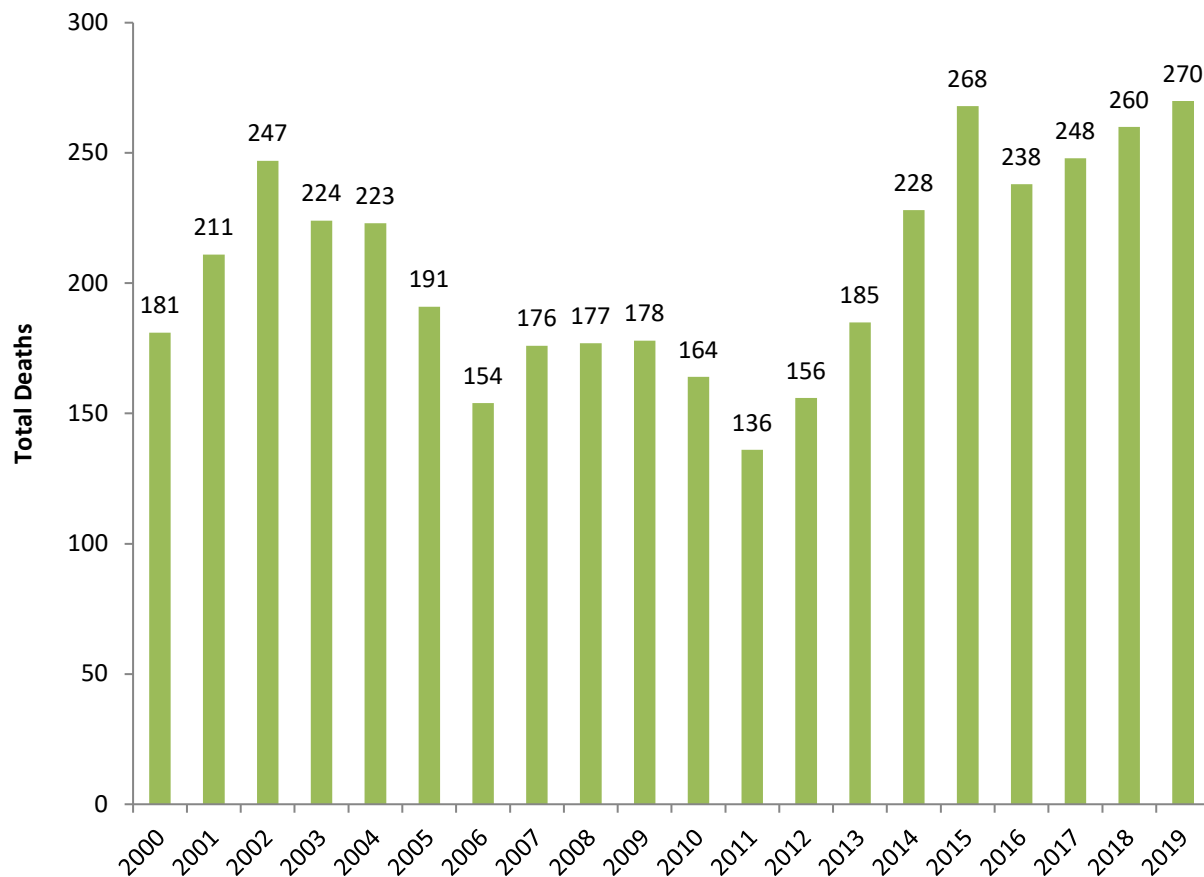
There was a 4% increase in the total number of natural deaths, from 260 deaths in 2018 to 270 deaths in 2019 and, is the highest year since year 2000.

Deaths due to heart disease were the most common cause of natural death in 2019 accounting for 56% of the deaths, followed by chronic substance abuse accounting for 14% of the deaths.

The most common race was white representing 51% of the natural deaths, while males were the most common gender representing 69% of natural deaths.

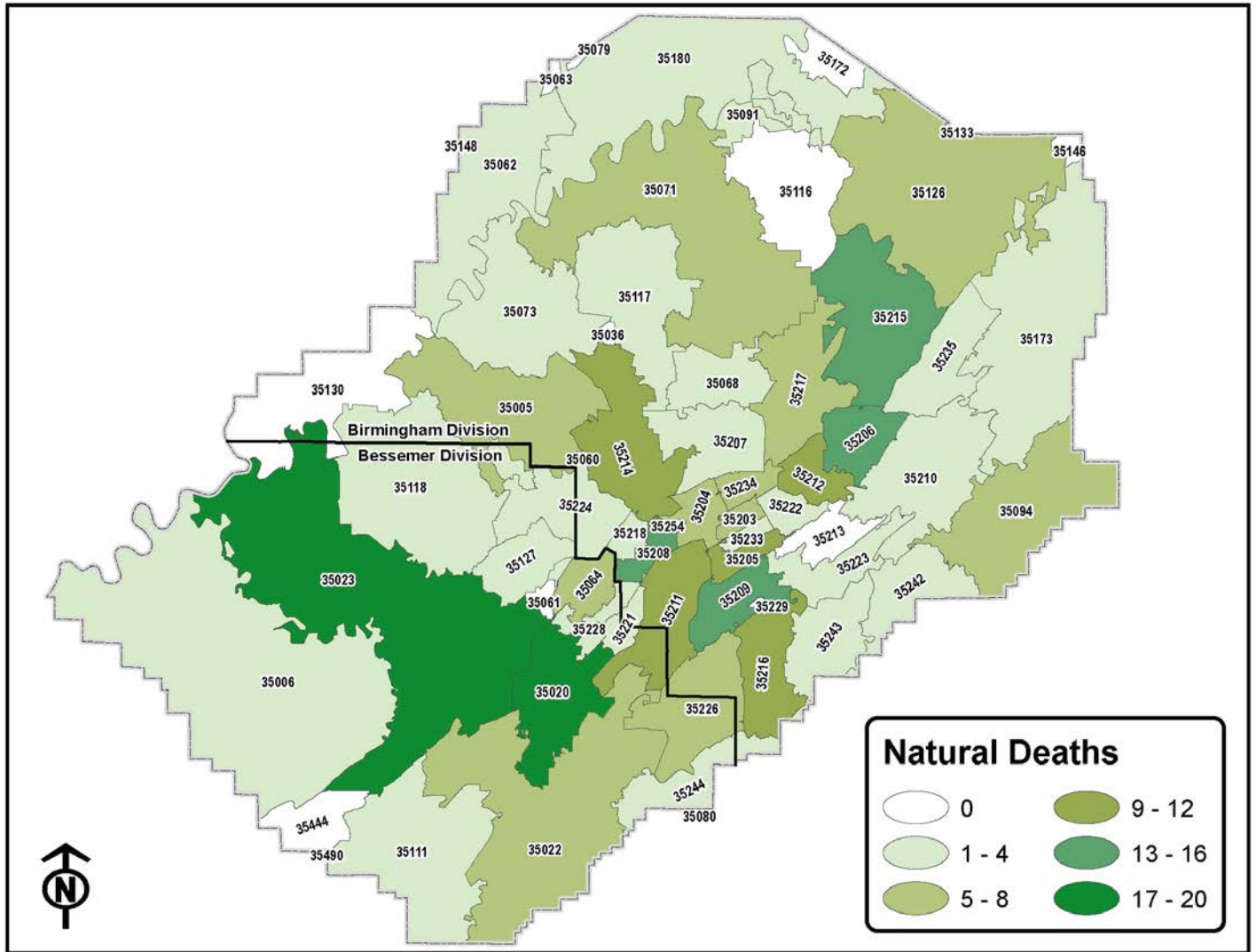
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019

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



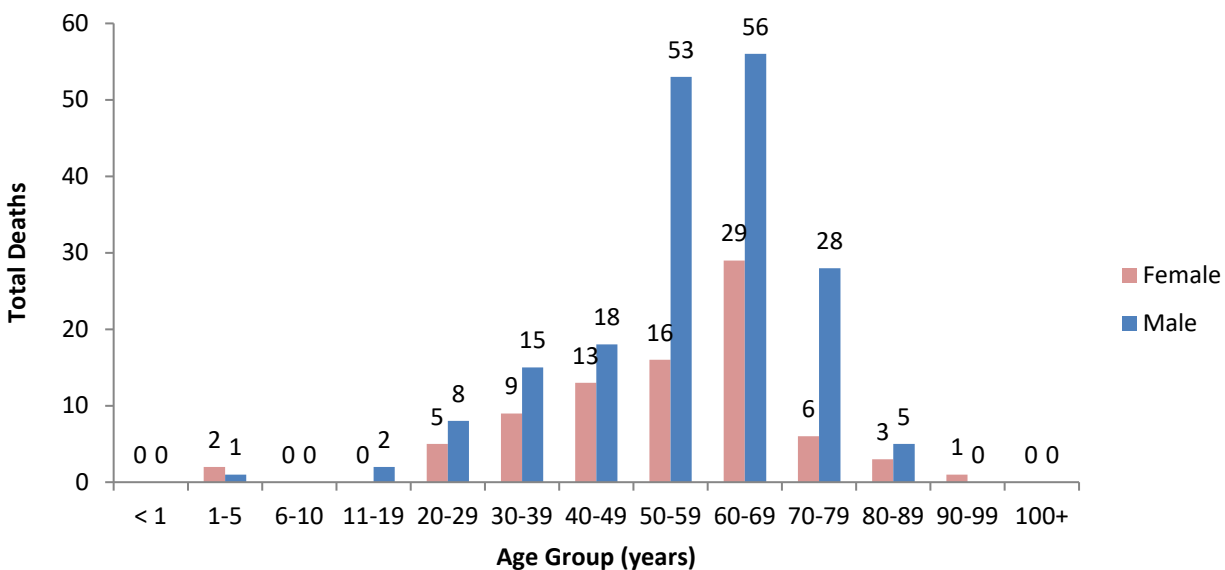
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Place of Death Zip Code, 2019

Figure 3.14: N=270, represents all natural deaths by place of death zip code.



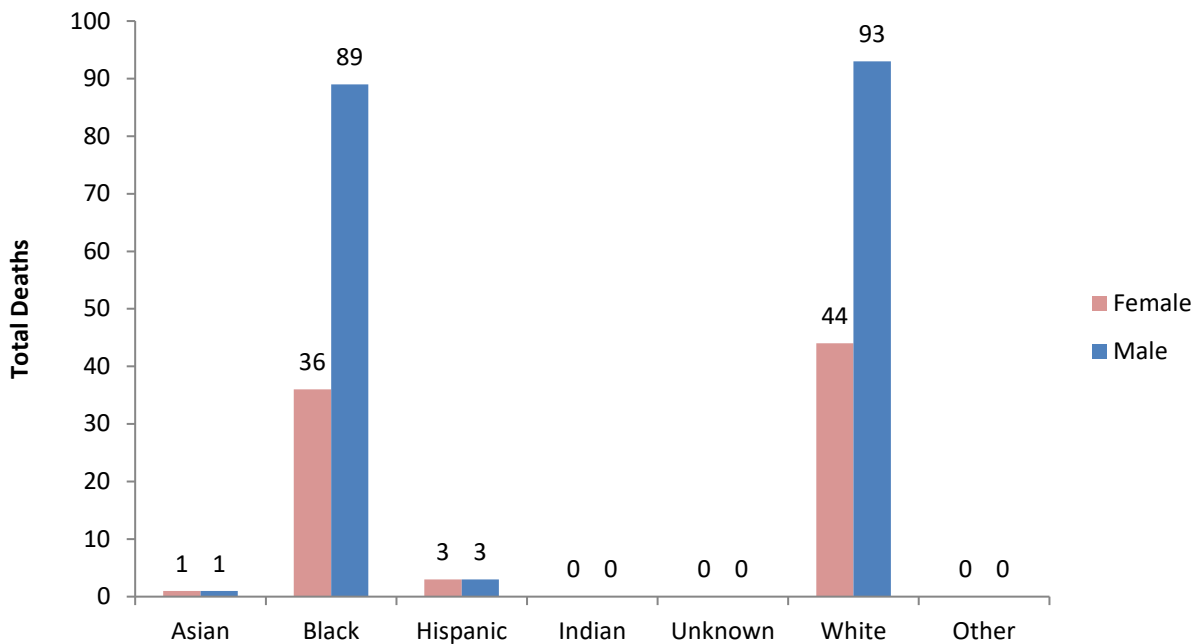
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2019

Figure 3.15: N=270, represents all natural deaths by gender and age group.



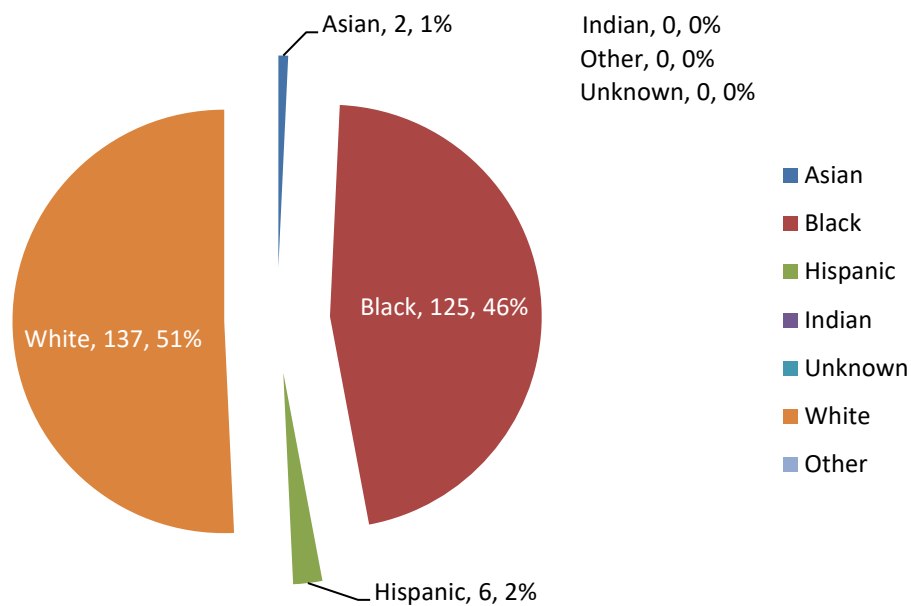
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019

Figure 3.16: N=270, represents all natural deaths by gender and race.



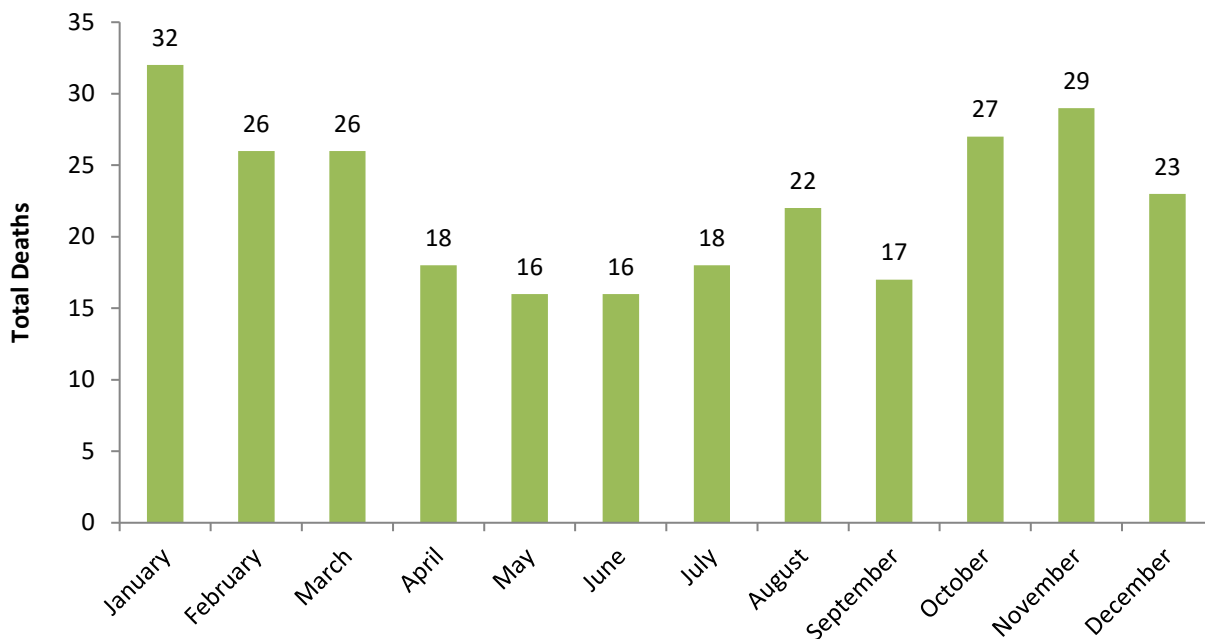
Percentage of Natural Deaths by Race, 2019

Figure 3.17: N=270, represents all natural deaths by race.



Total Number of Natural Deaths by Month of Death, 2019

Figure 3.18: N=270, represents all natural deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Natural Deaths by Means of Death, 2019

Table 3.3: N=270, represents all natural deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Heart:	
Coronary artery atherosclerosis	22
Hypertensive heart disease	57
Arteriosclerotic cardiovascular disease	45
Other heart disease	28
Lungs:	
Pneumonia	8
COPD / asthma	4
Pulmonary thromboembolism	11
Liver: Cirrhosis	0
Brain:	
Seizure disorder (epilepsy)	4
Meningitis	1
Nontraumatic intracranial hemorrhage	5
Malignancy NOS (includes all organ systems)	12
Chronic substance (ethanol/drug) use	39
Diabetes	3
Gastrointestinal bleeding	1
Other	29
Total	270

Suicide

Suicide deaths accounted for 10.1% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2019.

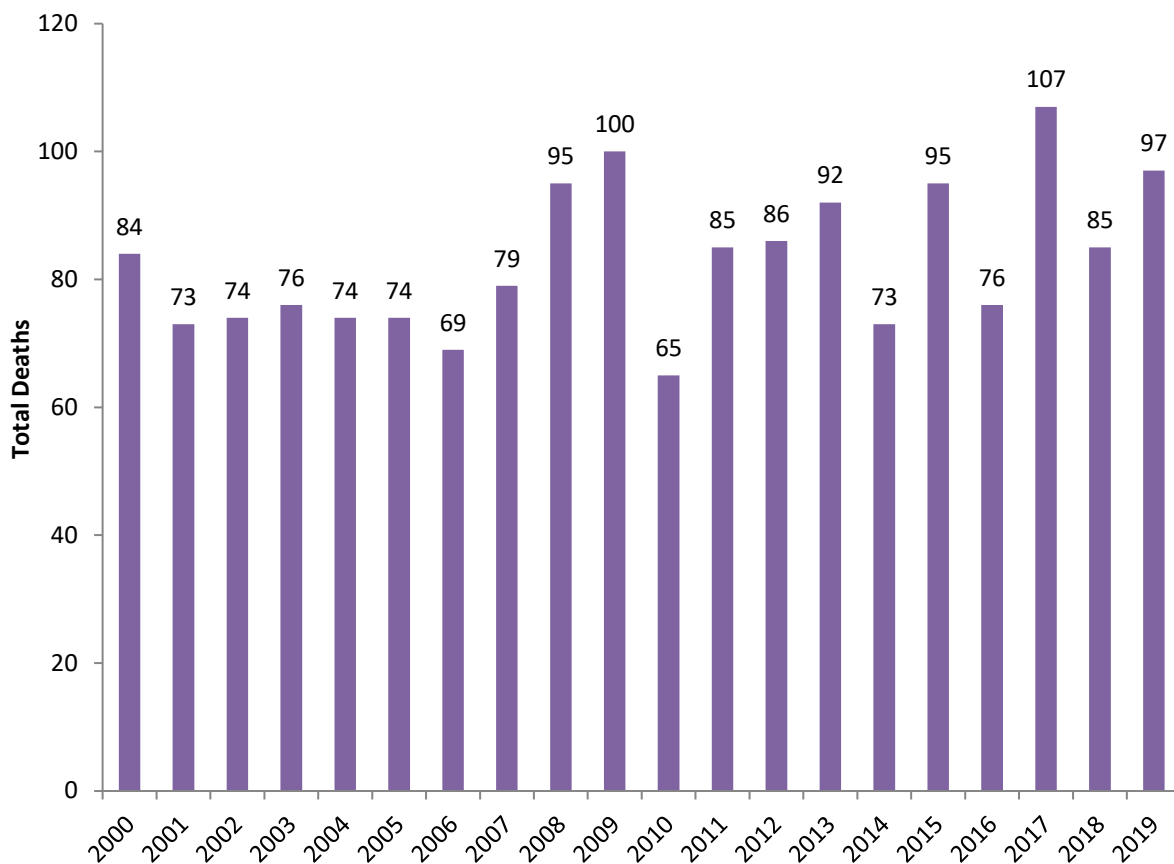
There was a 14.1% increase in the total number of suicide deaths, from 85 deaths in 2018 to 97 deaths in 2019.

Deaths due to gunshot wounds were the most common cause of suicide death in 2019 accounting for 68% of the deaths and, followed by deaths due to hanging accounting for 16.5% of the suicide deaths.

The most common race was white representing 74.2% of the suicide deaths, while males were the most common gender representing 77.3% of suicide deaths.

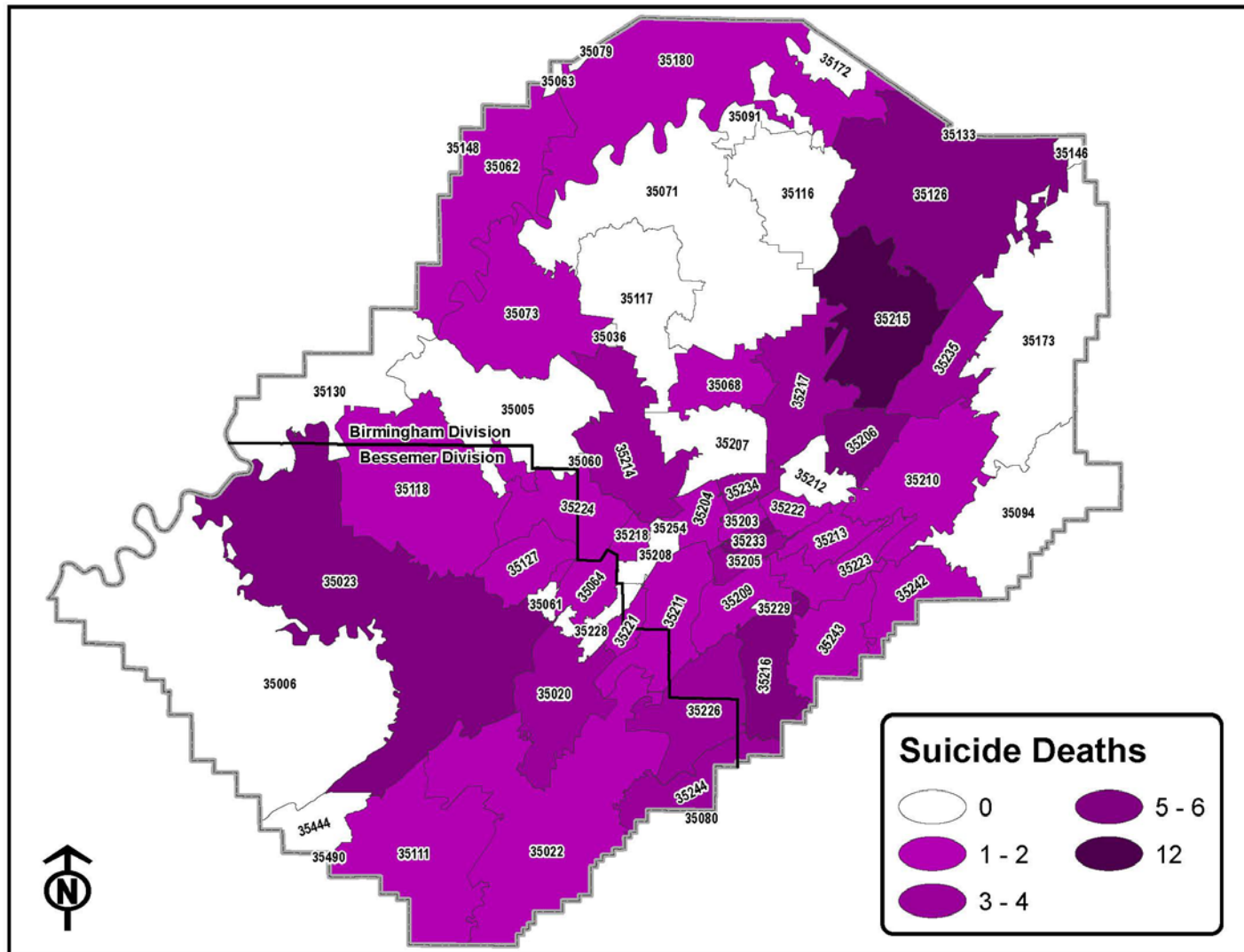
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019

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



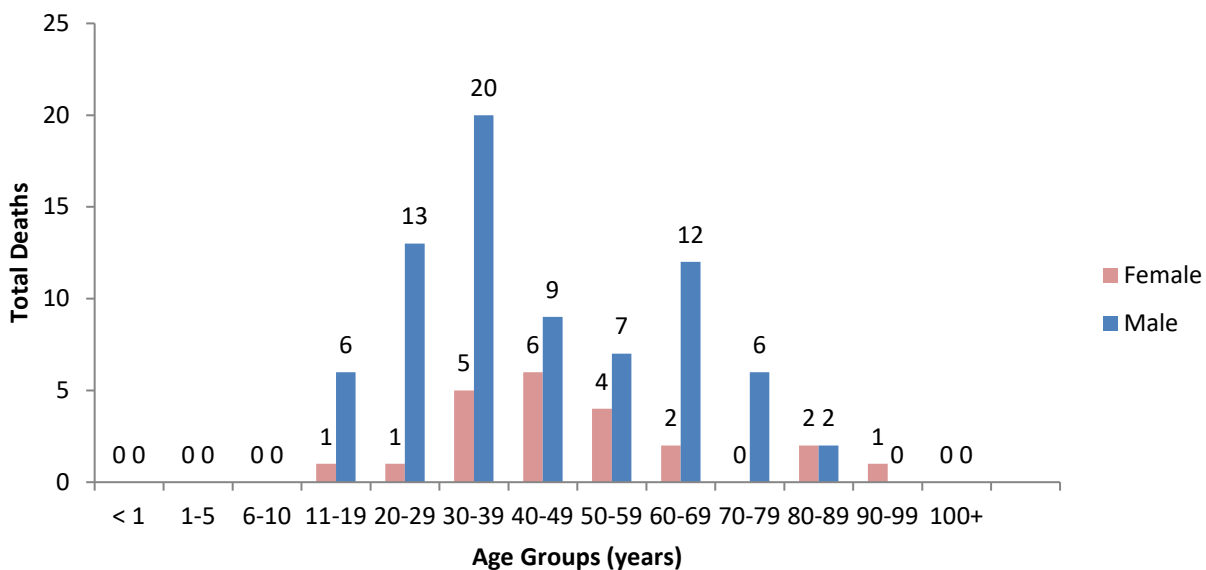
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019

Figure 3.20: N=97, represents all suicide deaths by place of injury zip code.



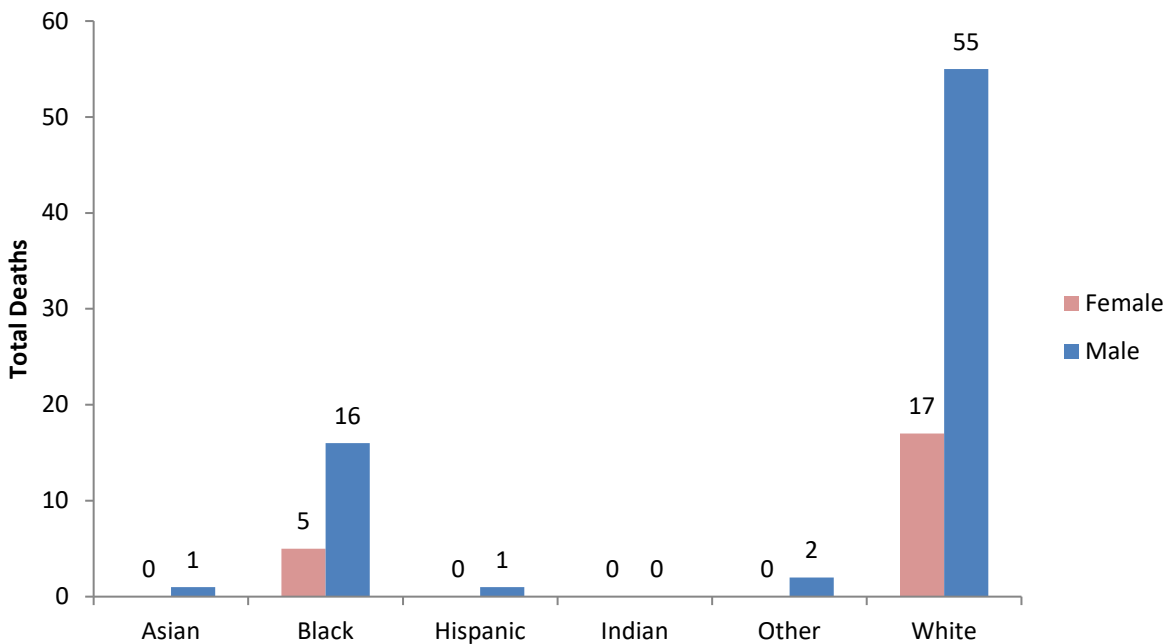
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2019

Figure 3.21: N=97, represents all suicide deaths by gender and age group.



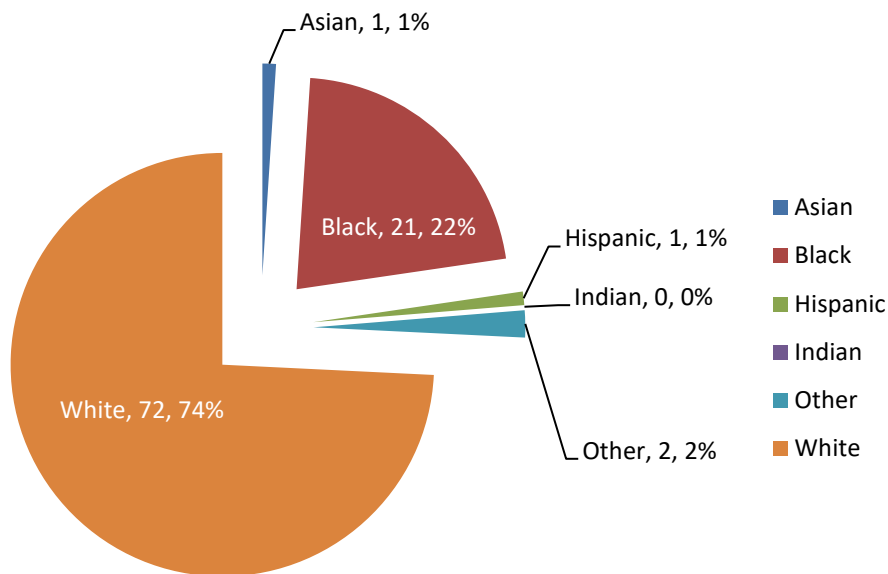
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019

Figure 3.22: N=97, represents all suicide deaths by gender and race.



Percentage of Suicide Deaths by Race, 2019

Figure 3.23: N=97, represents all suicide deaths by race.



Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Month of Death, 2019

Figure 3.24: N=97, represents all suicide deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Means of Death, 2019

Table 3.4: N=97, represents all suicide deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Carbon Monoxide: Generator	1
Drug:	
Drug (opioid)	1
Drug (other)	5
Fall:	
Balcony	1
Parking deck	2
Firearm:	
Handgun	59
Rifle	4
Shotgun	3
Hanging:	
Belt	2
Cloth material	1
Electrical cord	4
Nylon cord	1
Nylon strap	2
Rope	3
Sheet	3
Motor Vehicle: Pedestrian	1
Sharp:	
Chainsaw	1
Knife	3
Total	97

Undetermined

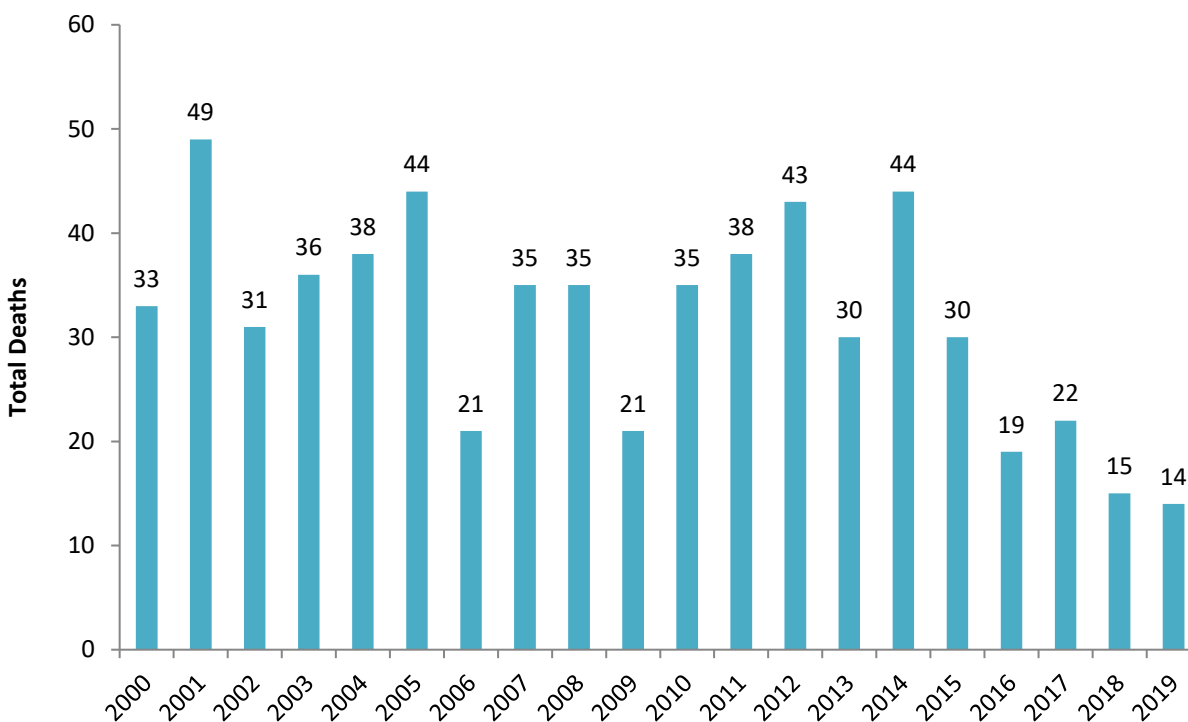
Undetermined deaths accounted for 1.5% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2019.

There was a 6.7% decrease in the total number of undetermined deaths, from 15 deaths in 2018 to 14 deaths in 2019.

Undetermined was the most common means of Undetermined death, accounting for 71.4% of the deaths.

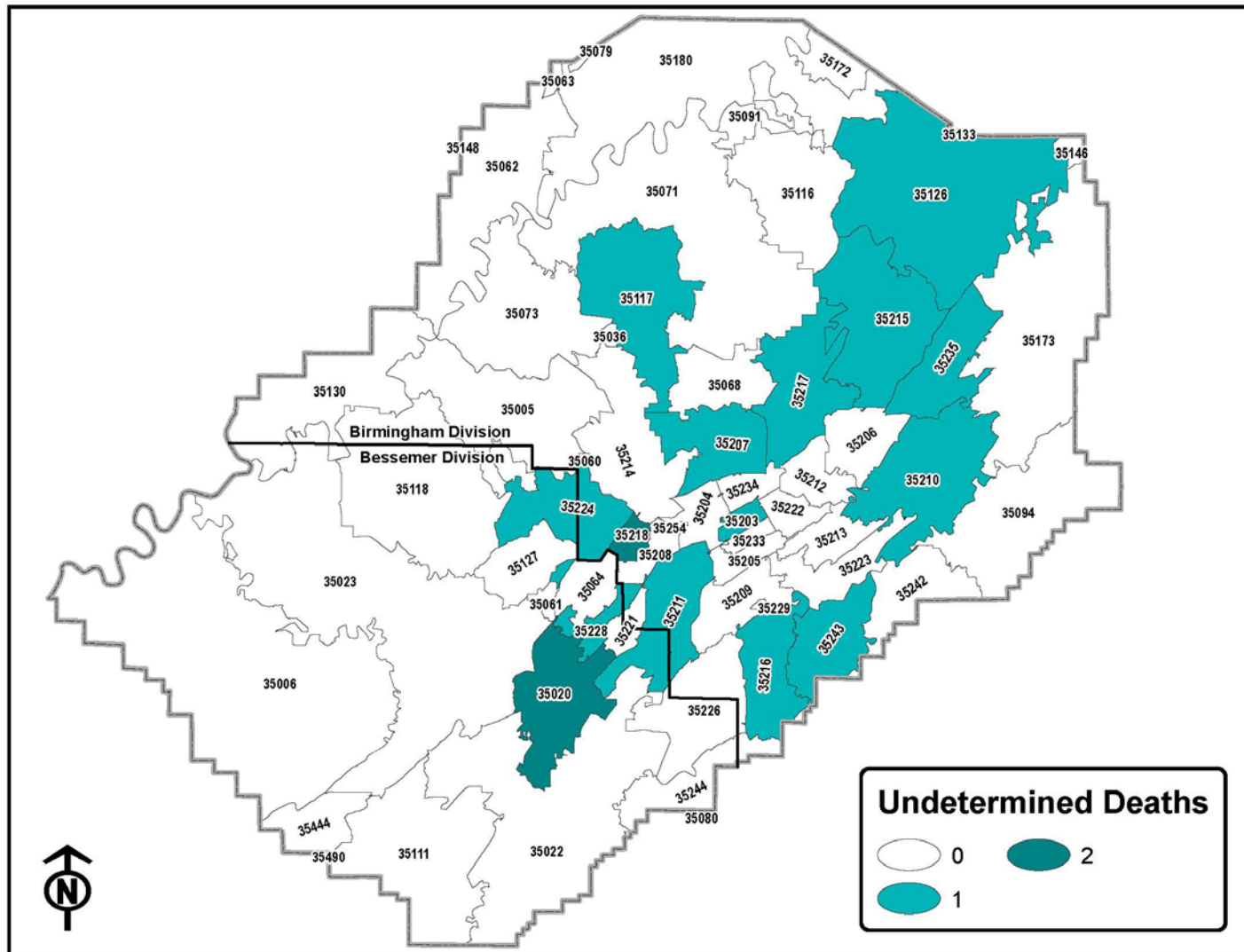
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019

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



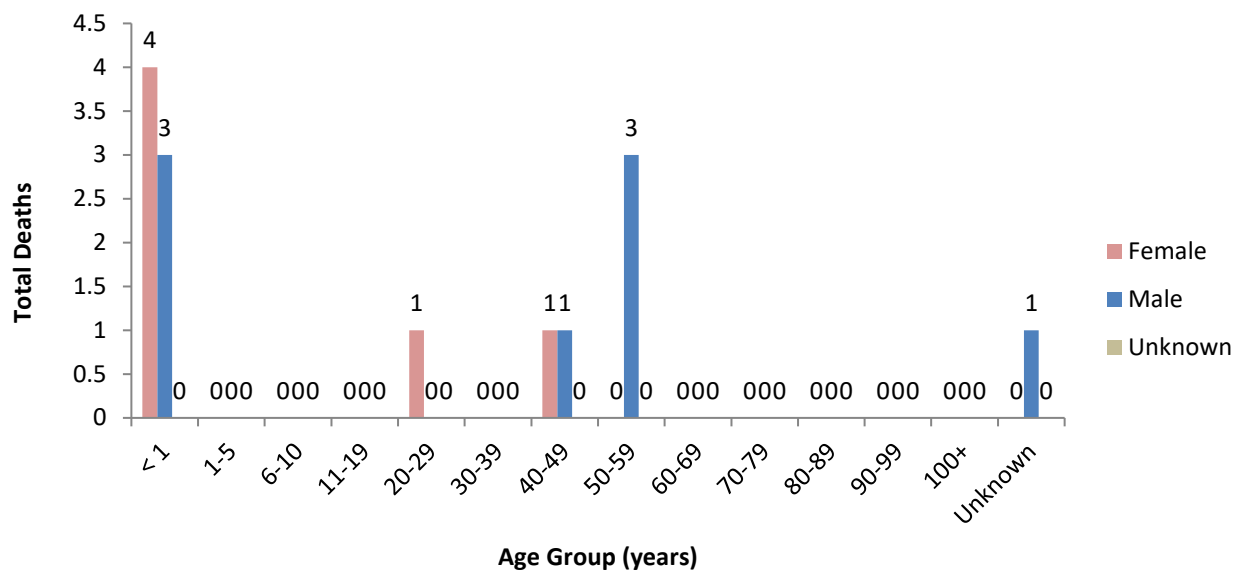
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Place of Death Zip Code, 2019

Figure 3.26: N=14, represents all undetermined deaths by place of death zip code.



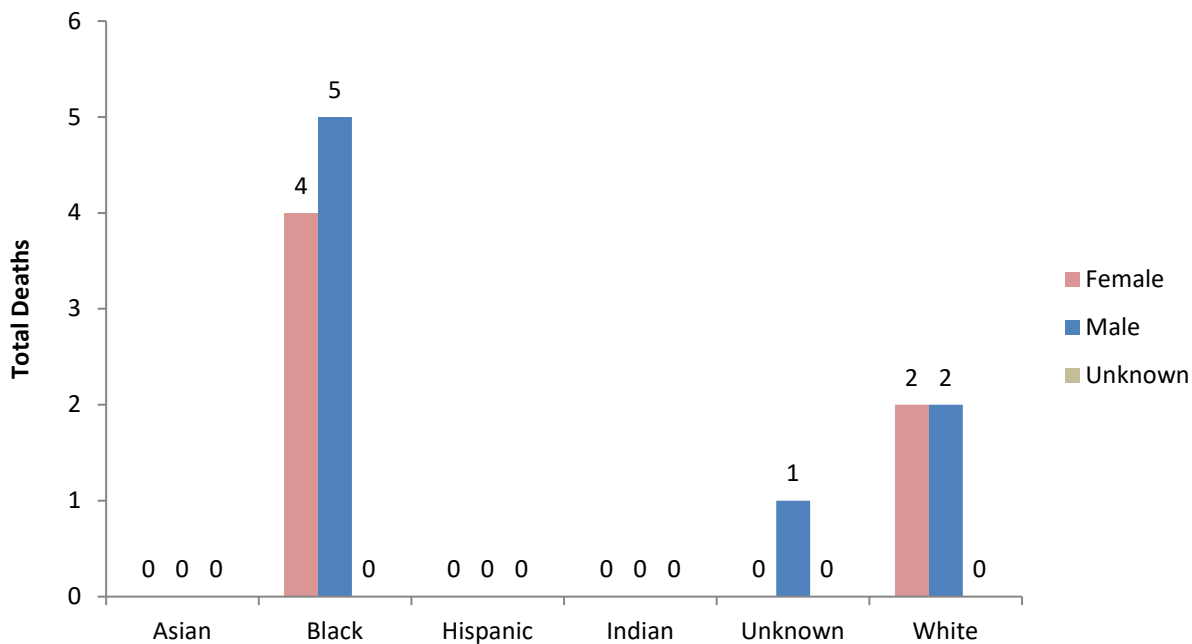
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2019

Figure 3.27: N=14, represents all undetermined deaths by gender and age group.



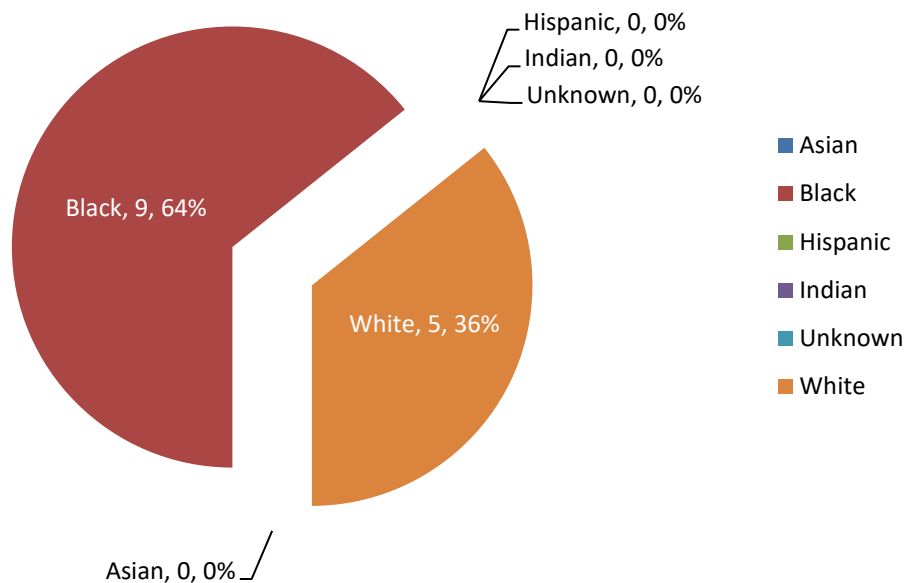
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019

Figure 3.28: N=14, represents all undetermined deaths by gender and race.



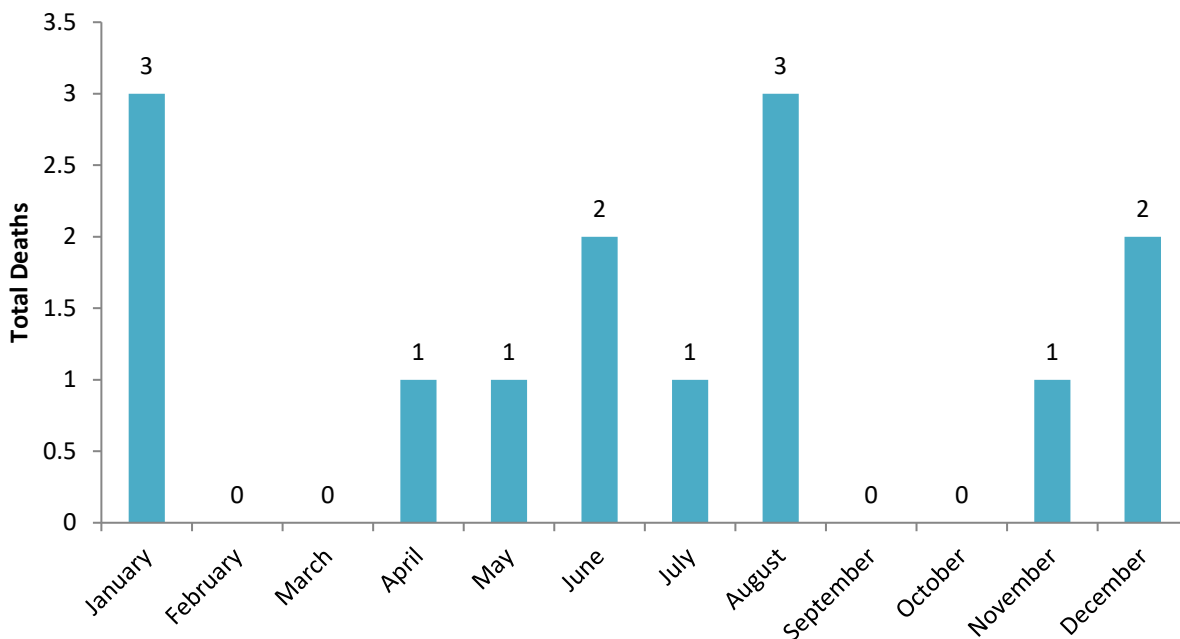
Percentage of Undetermined Deaths by Race, 2019

Figure 3.29: N=14, represents all undetermined deaths by race.



Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Month of Death, 2019

Figure 3.30: N=14, represents all undetermined deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Means of Death, 2019

Table 3.5: N=14, represents all undetermined deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Co-sleeping:	
Bed	2
Chair	1
Drug: Opioid	1
Undetermined:	
Bed	1
Bobby Pillow	1
Crib	2
Undetermined	6
Total	14

Section 4: Infant/Juvenile Deaths

Infant/Juvenile deaths accounted for 5.4% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2019. There was a 44.4% increase in the total number of infant/juvenile deaths, from 36 deaths in 2018 to 52 deaths in 2019. Infant deaths increased 26.7%, from 15 deaths in 2018 to 19 deaths in 2019 and, juvenile deaths increased 57.1%, from 21 deaths in 2018 to 33 deaths in 2019.

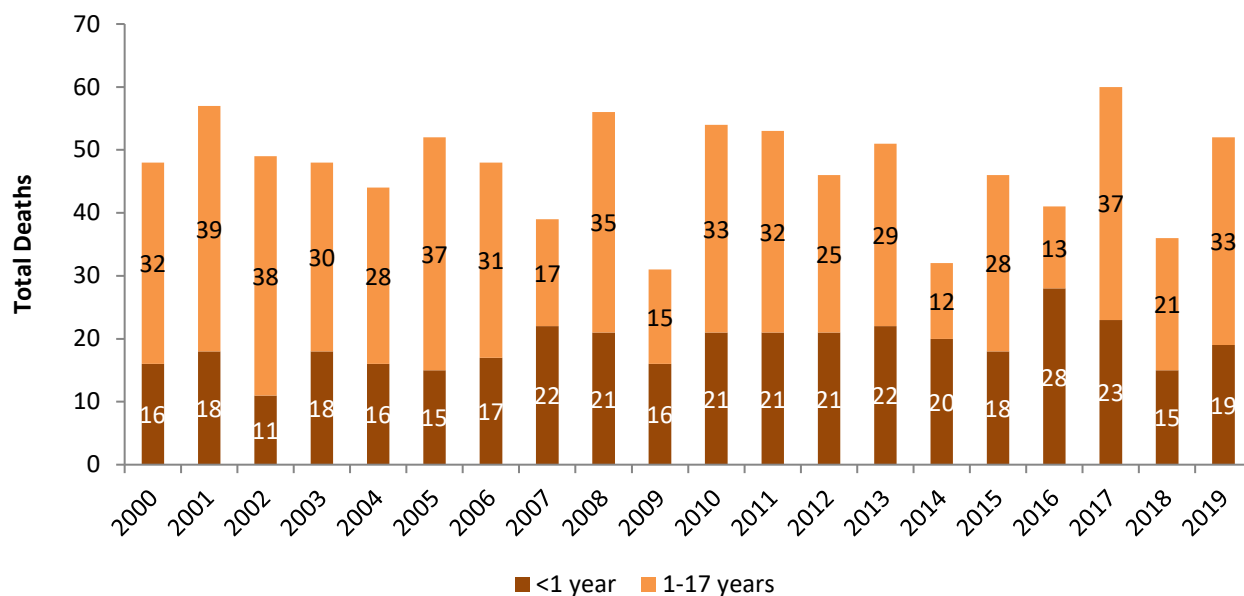
Infants (<1 year of age): Deaths due to co-sleeping was the most common means of infant death in 2019, accounting for 10 of the 19 or 52.6% of the infant deaths. Accidental death was the most common manner of infant death, accounting for 47.4% of the deaths. The most common race was black representing 63.2% of the infant deaths, with white accounting for only 26.3% of the infant deaths.

Juveniles (1–17 years of age): Deaths due to firearms was the most common means of juvenile death in 2019, accounting for 27.3% of the deaths. Accidental was the most common manner of death, accounting for 42.4% of the juvenile deaths. The most common race was black representing 48.5% of the juvenile deaths, with white accounting for remaining 36.4% of the juvenile deaths.

Historical Summary

Total Number of Infant and Juvenile Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019

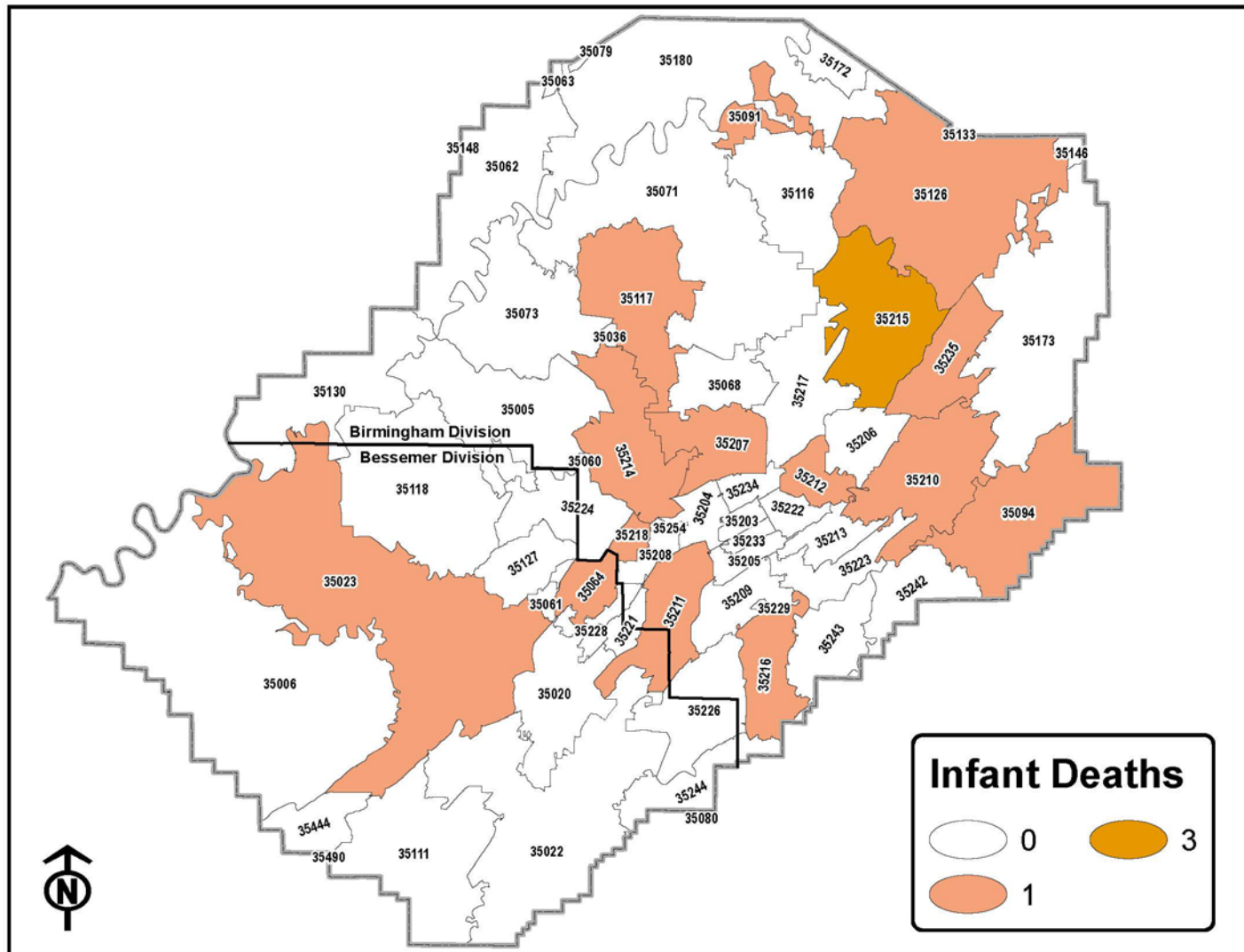
Figure 4.1: represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) and juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) investigated by the JCCMEO.



Infant Deaths

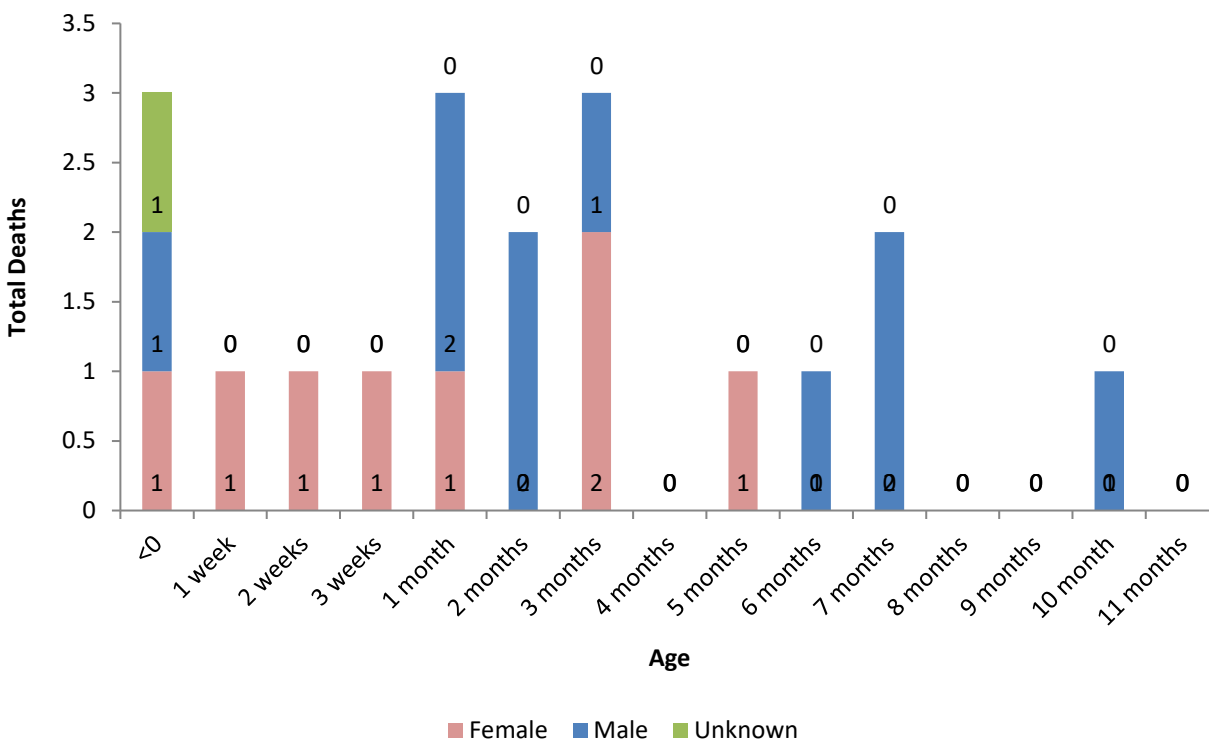
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019

Figure 4.2: N=19, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by place of injury zip code.



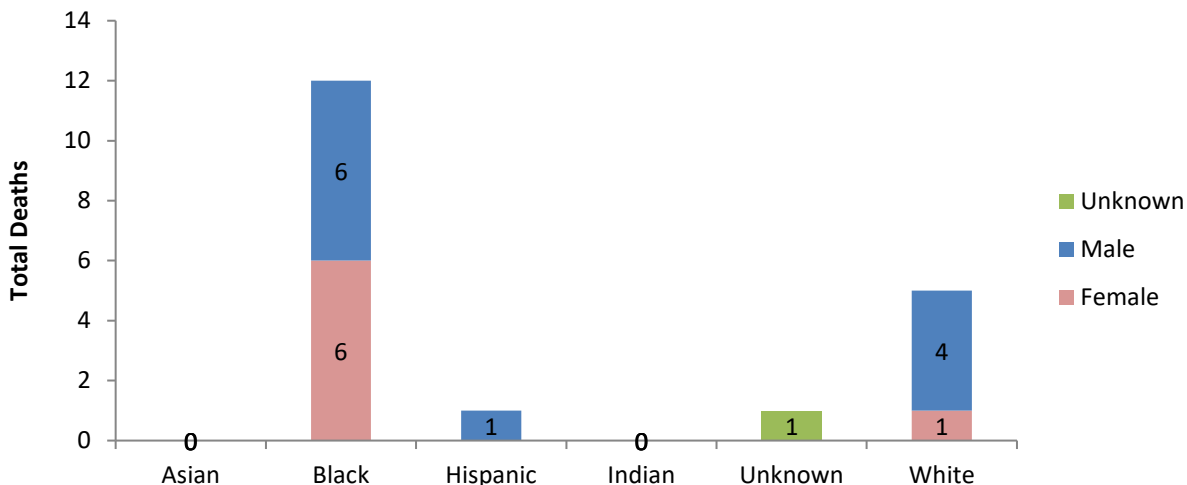
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Gender and Age, 2019

Figure 4.3: N=19, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by gender and age.



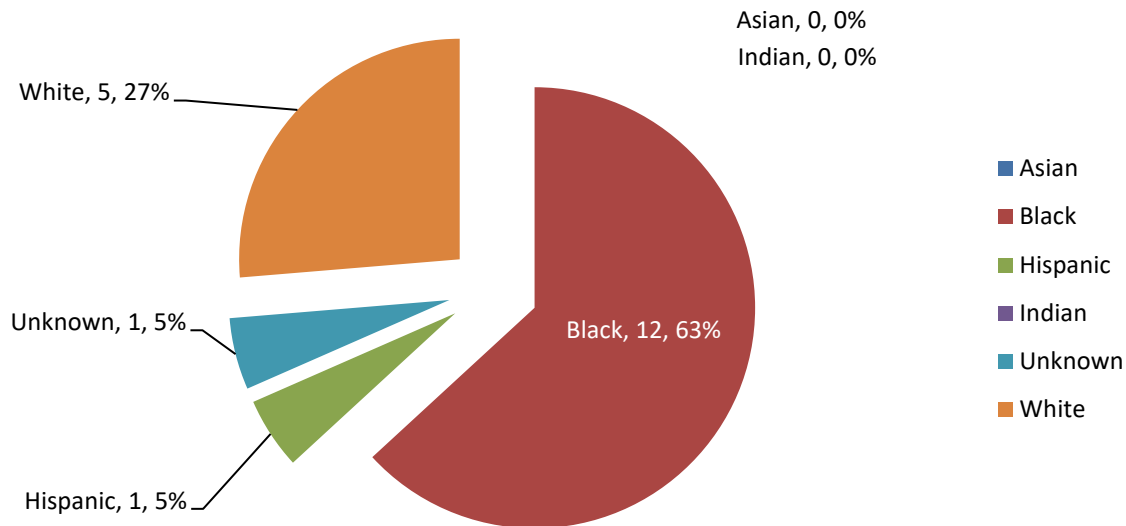
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019

Figure 4.4: N=19, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by gender and race.



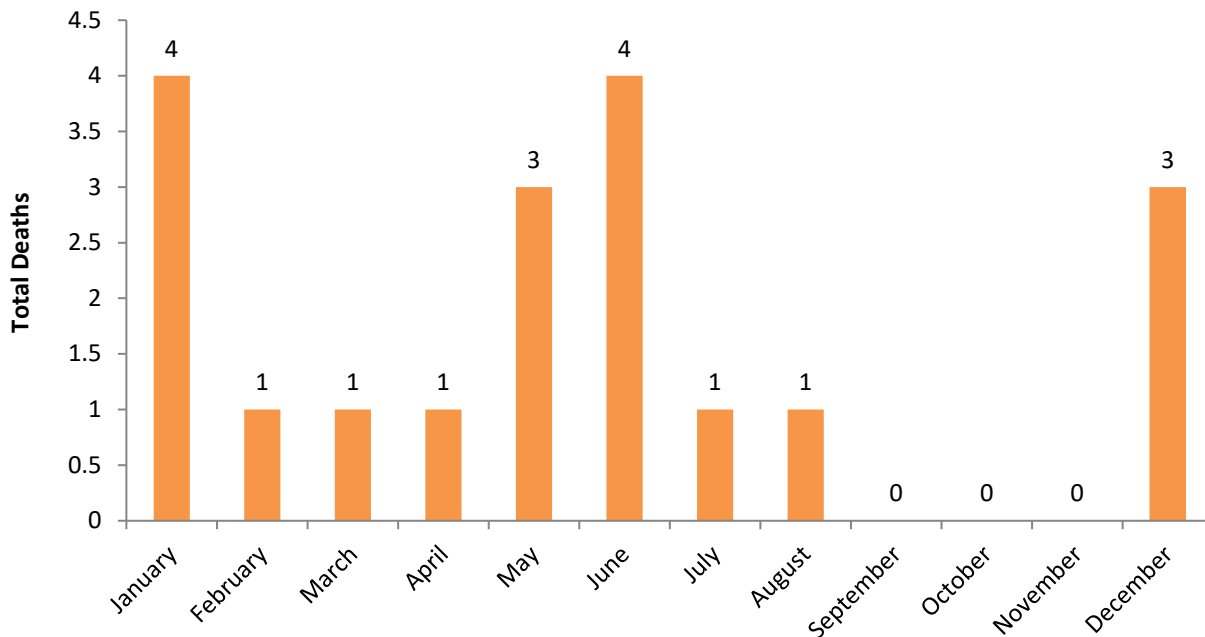
Percentage of Infant Deaths by Race, 2019

Figure 4.5: N=19, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by race.



Total Number of Infant Deaths by Month of Death, 2019

Figure 4.6: N=19, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by month of death.



Total Number of Infant Deaths by Means of Death, 2019

Table 4.1: N=19, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Asphyxia: Bed	2
Co-sleeping:	
Bed	7
Chair	1
Couch	1
Pack-N-Play	1
Natural:	3
Undetermined:	
Bed	1
Bobby pillow	1
Crib	2
Total	15

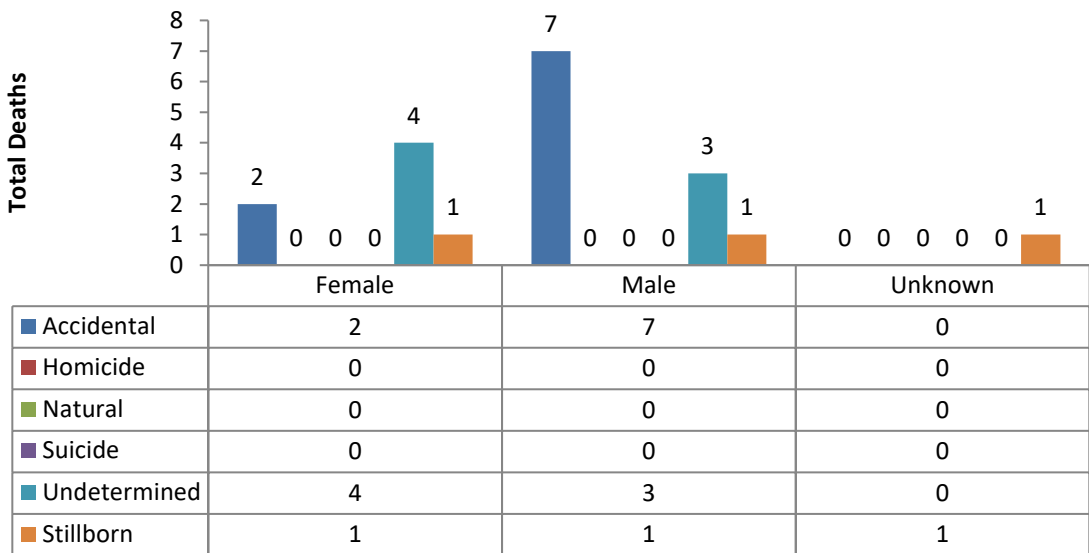
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Manner of Death and Race, 2019

Table 4.2: N=19, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by manner of death and race.¹

Race	Accident	Homicide	Natural	Suicide	Undetermined	Stillborn ¹	Total
Asian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black	4	0	0	0	6	2	12
Hispanic	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
White	4	0	0	0	1	0	5
Total	9	0	0	0	7	3	19

Total Number of Infant Deaths by Manner of Death and Gender, 2019

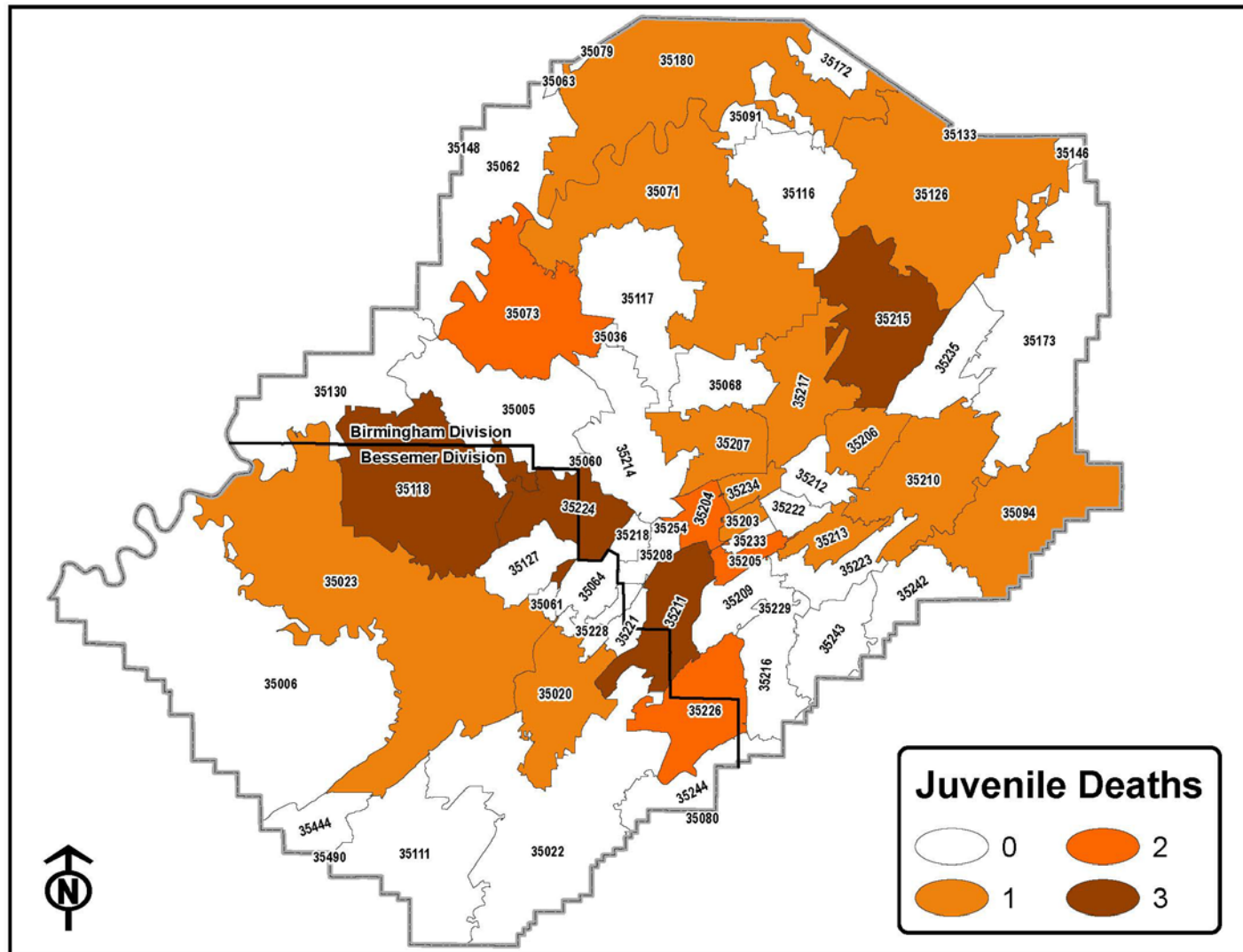
Figure 4.7: N=19, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by manner of death and gender.¹



Juvenile Deaths

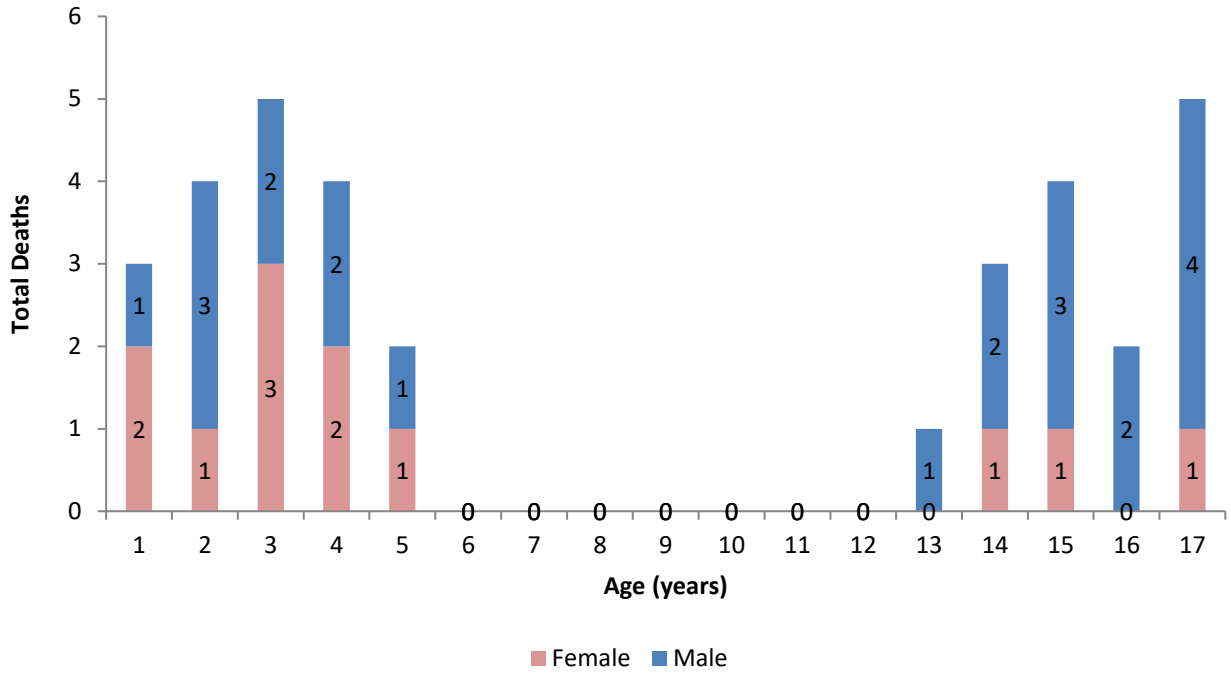
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019

Figure 4.8: N=33, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by place of injury zip code.



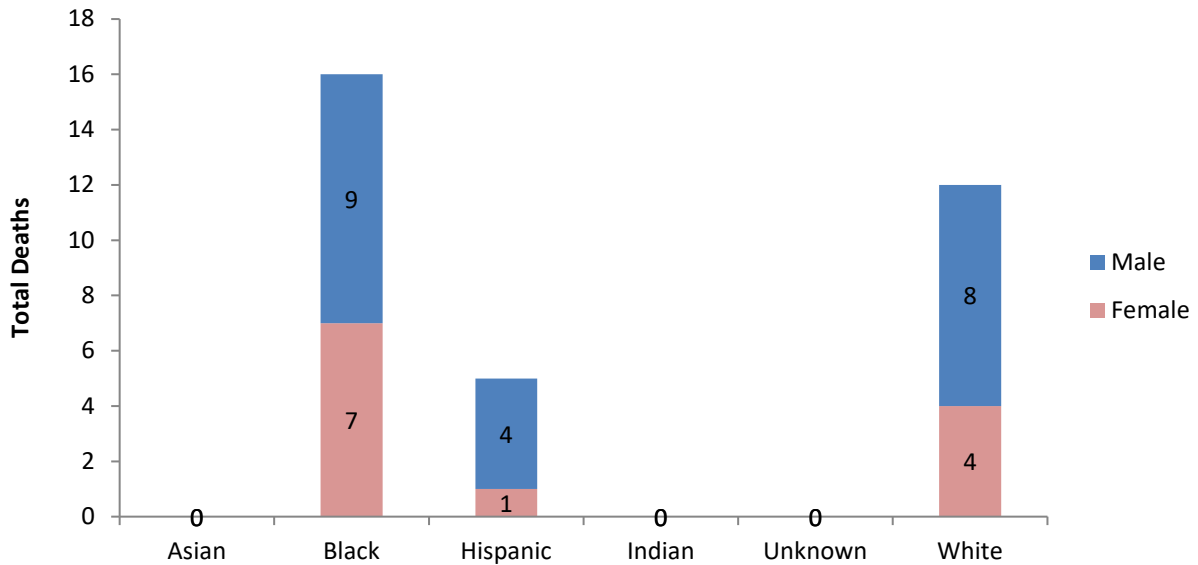
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Gender and Age, 2019

Figure 4.9: N=33, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by gender and age.



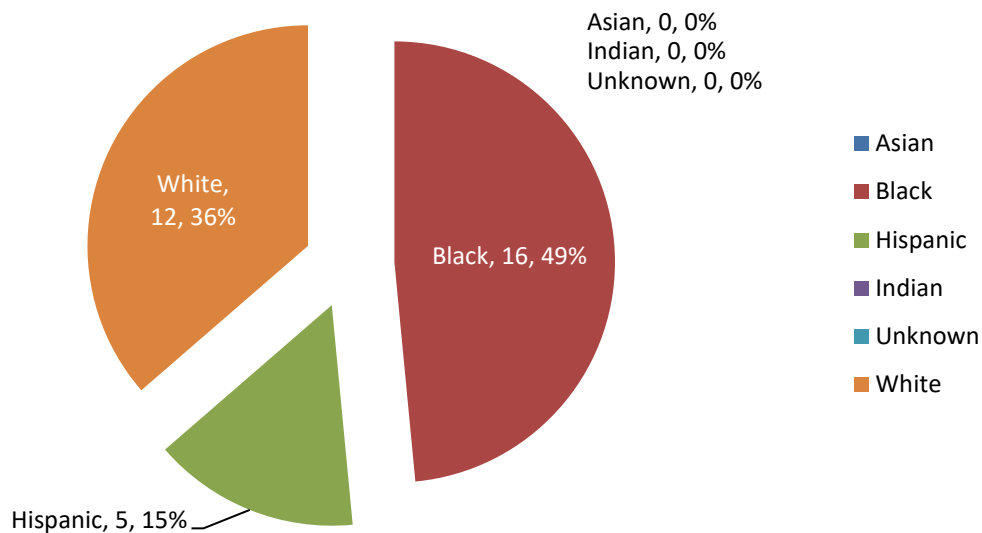
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019

Figure 4.10: N=33, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by gender and race.



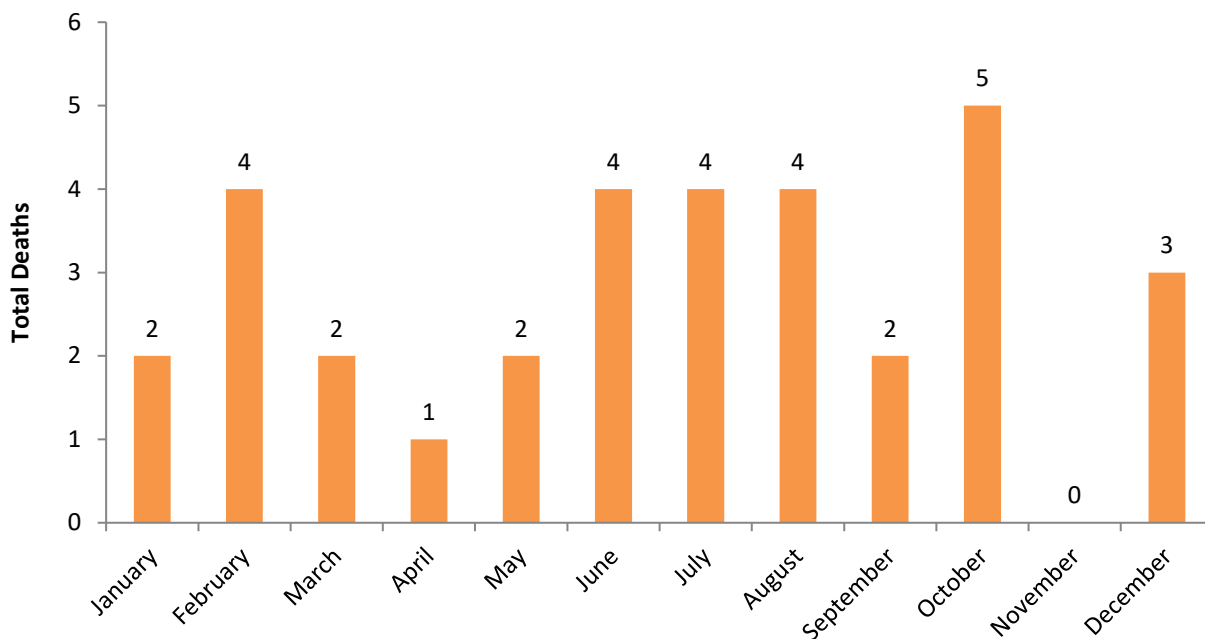
Percentage of Juvenile Deaths by Race, 2019

Figure 4.11: N=33, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by race.



Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Month of Death, 2019

Figure 4.12: N=33, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by month of death.



Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Means of Death, 2019

Table 4.3: N=33, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Asphyxia: Hands	1
Blunt: Unknown	1
Drowning:	
Bathtub	1
Pool	4
Falling Object: Deck	1
Fire:	
House	2
Trailer	2
Gun:	
Handgun	8
Rifle	1
Hanging: Belt	1
Motor vehicle:	
Single vehicle	4
Multiple vehicles	2
Natural:	
Meningitis	1
Heart disease	2
Other natural	1
Seizure disorder	1
Total	33

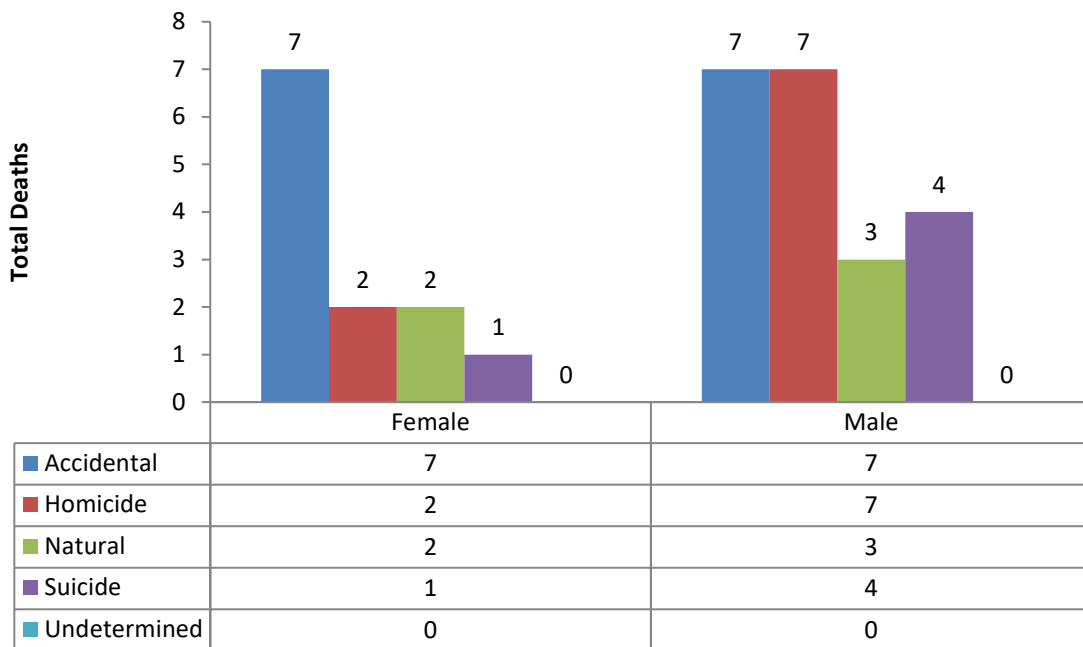
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Manner of Death and Race, 2019

Table 4.4: N=33, 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	4	8	2	2	0	16
Hispanic	4	0	1	0	0	5
Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	6	1	2	3	0	12
Total	14	9	5	5	0	33

Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Manner of Death and Gender, 2019

Figure 4.13: N=33, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by manner of death and gender.



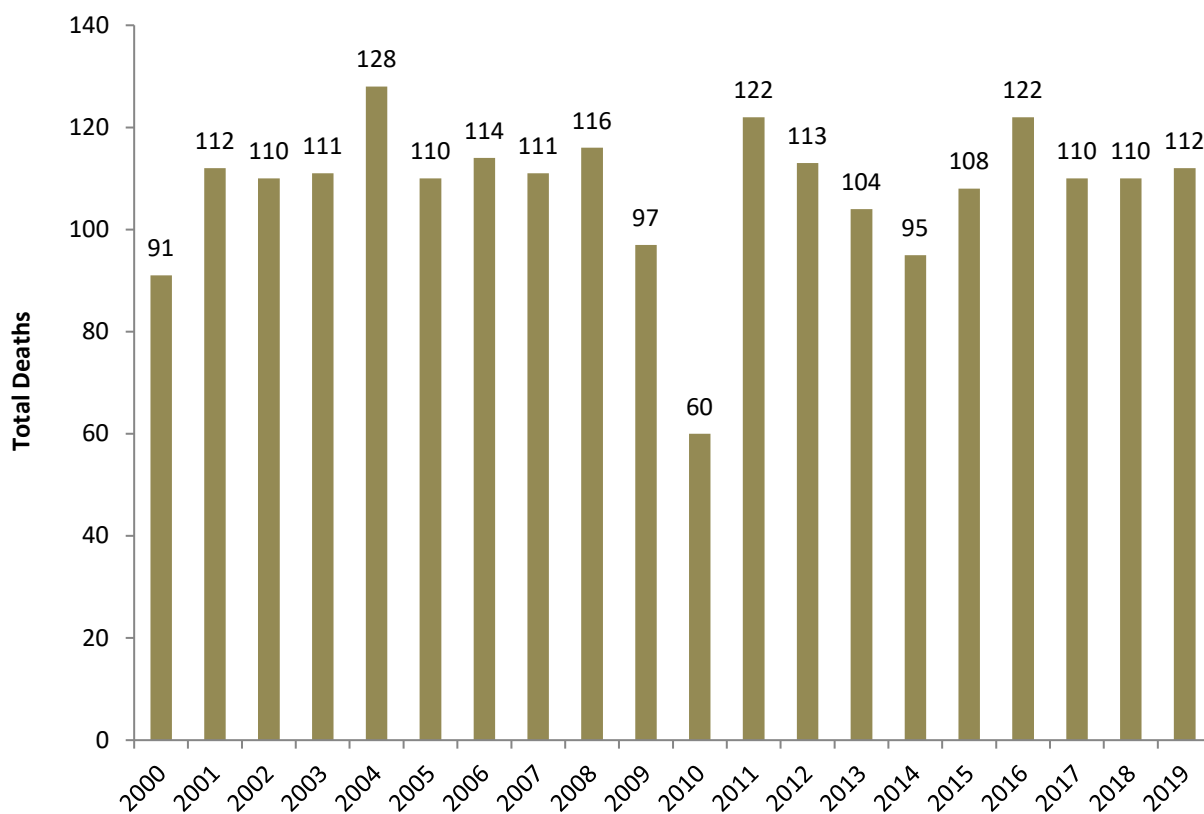
Section 5: Motor Vehicle Deaths

For the purpose of this report motor vehicle deaths include airplane, all-terrain vehicle, automobile, motorcycle, train, and pedestrian deaths. Motor vehicle deaths accounted for 11.7% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2019. There was a 1.8 % increase in the total number of motor vehicle deaths, from 110 deaths in 2018 to 112 deaths in 2019.

Multiple-vehicle collisions were the most common means of motor vehicle death, accounting for 39.3% of the deaths, followed by single vehicle collisions accounting for 38.4% of the deaths and motor vehicle-pedestrian collisions accounting for 20.5% of the deaths.

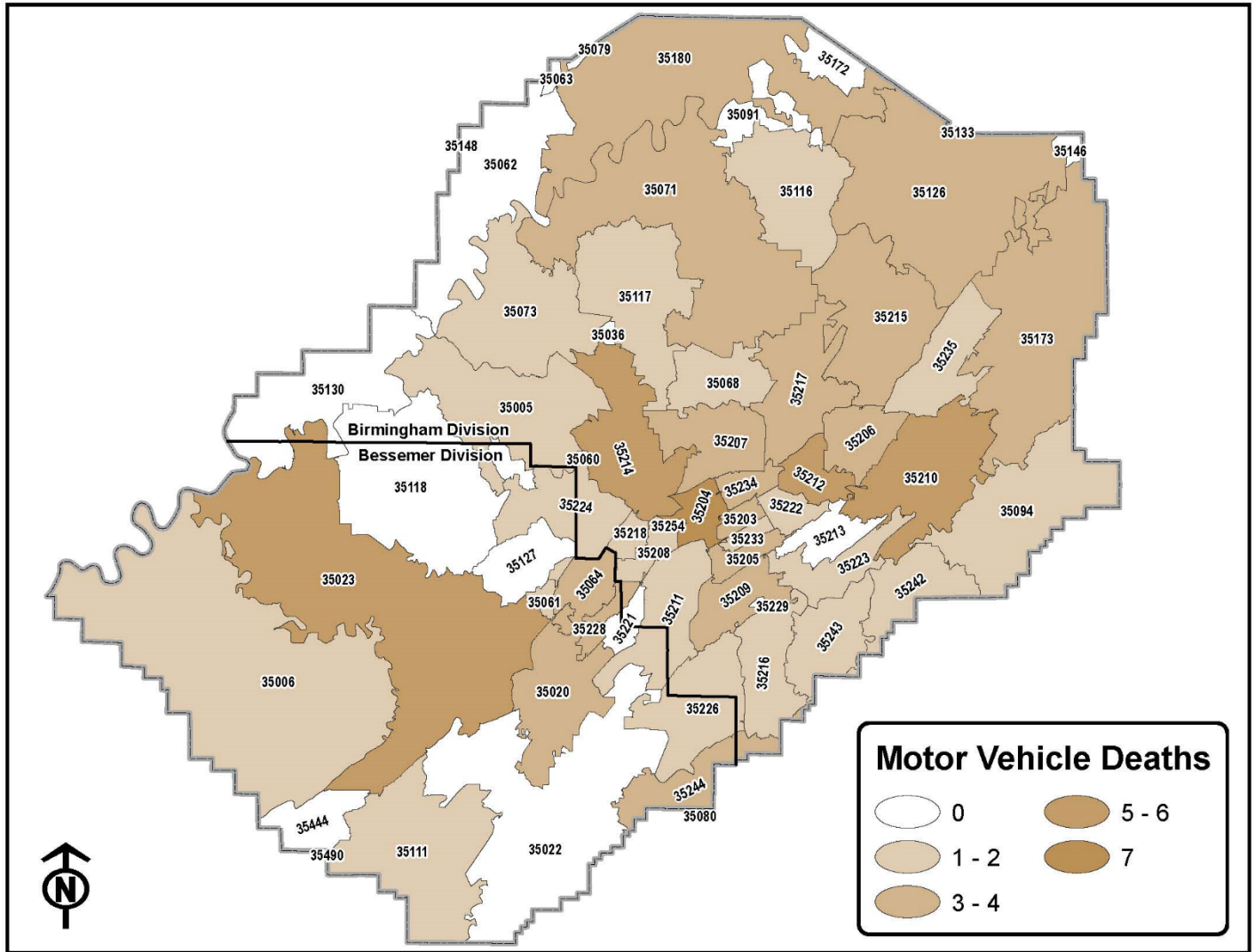
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019

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



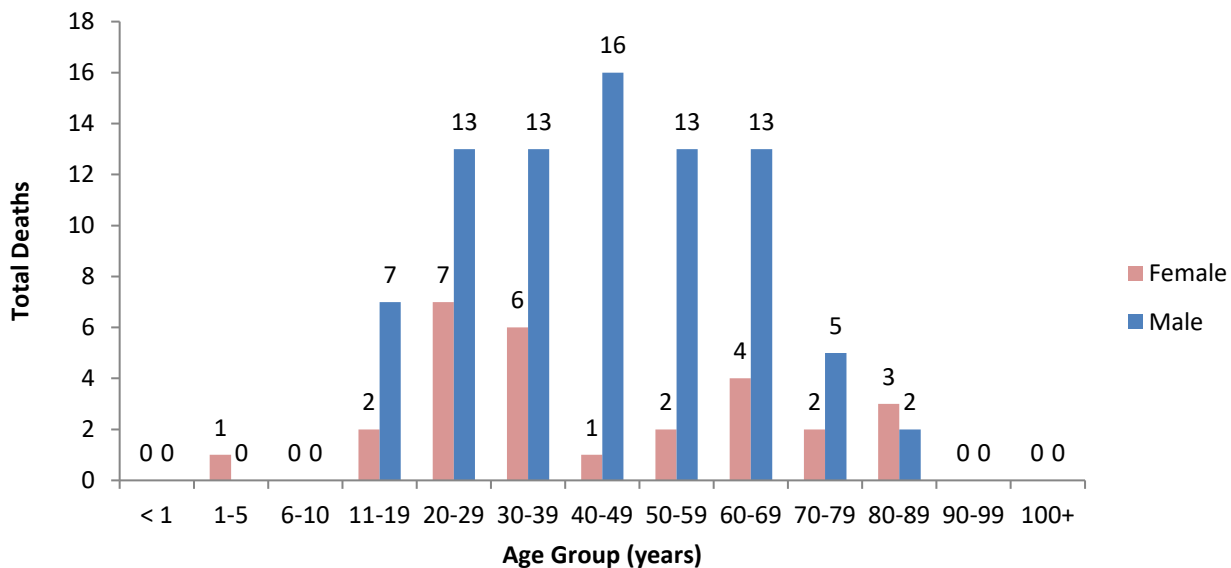
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019

Figure 5.2: N=112, represents all motor vehicle deaths by place of injury zip code.



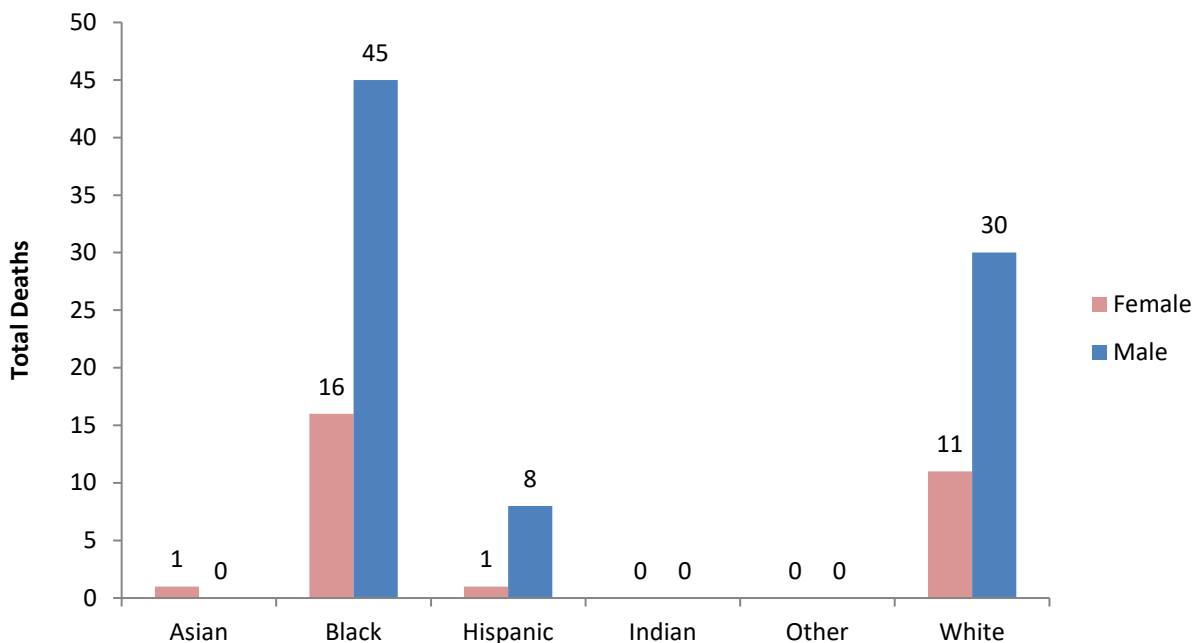
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2019

Figure 5.3: N=112, represents all motor vehicle deaths by gender and age group.



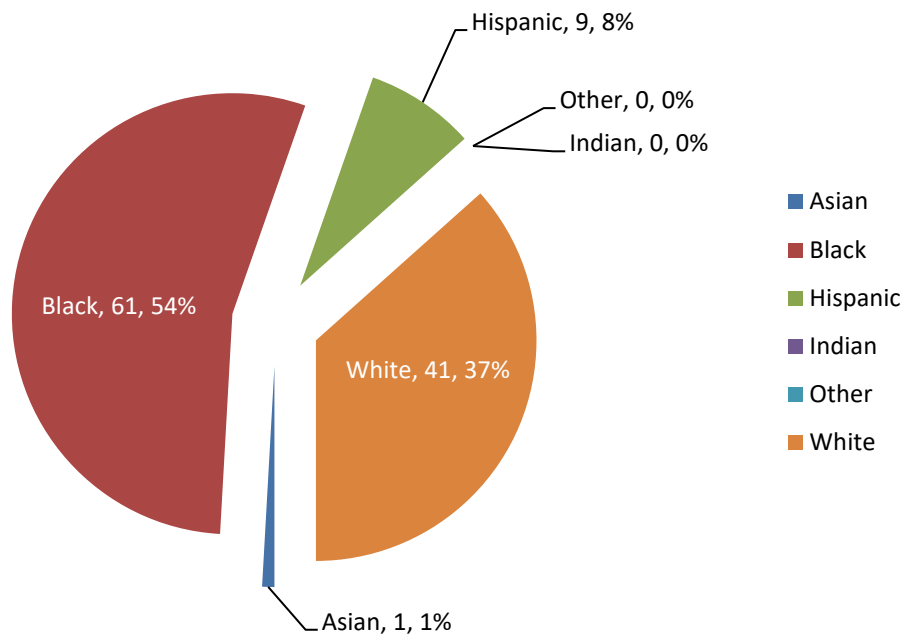
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019

Figure 5.4: N=112, represents all motor vehicle deaths by gender and race.



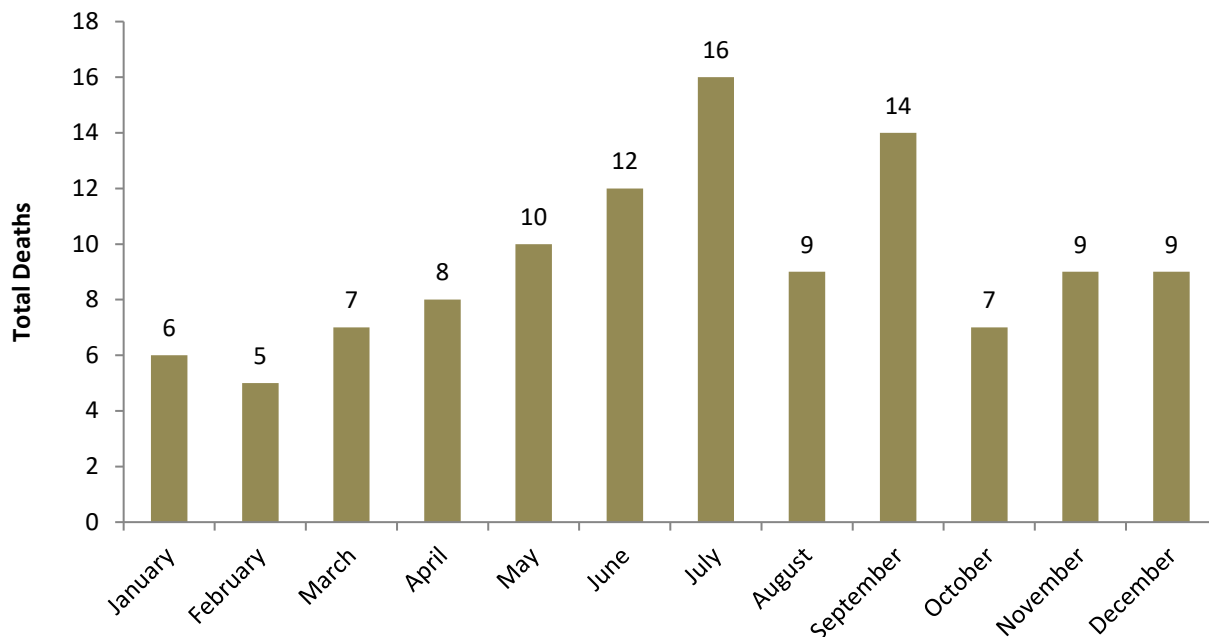
Percentage of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Race, 2019

Figure 5.5: N=112, represents all motor vehicle deaths by race.



Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Month of Death, 2019

Figure 5.6: N=112, represents all motor vehicle deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Means of Death, 2019

Table 5.1: N=112, represents all motor vehicle deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Motor-vehicle:	
Bicycle	2
Single vehicle	43
Multiple vehicles	44
Train	0
Pedestrian:	
Motor vehicle	20
Train	3
Total	112

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 2019 calendar year where the direct cause of death was due to an overdose/toxic level of illicit drug(s), prescription medication(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 three 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) in combination with illicit drug(s). This category of overdoses does not include illicit or prescription opioids. For the purpose of this report "illicit drugs" refers to illegal street type drugs (i.e. cocaine, methamphetamine, etc.).
- Drug-Opioid – refers to all overdose deaths where the direct cause of death included either illicit opioid(s) (i.e. heroin, non-pharmaceutical fentanyl, etc.) and/or 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 3.5% increase in the total overdose deaths this past year, from 228 deaths in 2018 to 236 deaths in 2019.

There was a 1.7% increase in opioid deaths, from 172 deaths in 2018 to 175 deaths in 2019.

There was a 39.7% increase in fentanyl deaths, from 68 deaths in 2018 to 95 deaths in 2019.

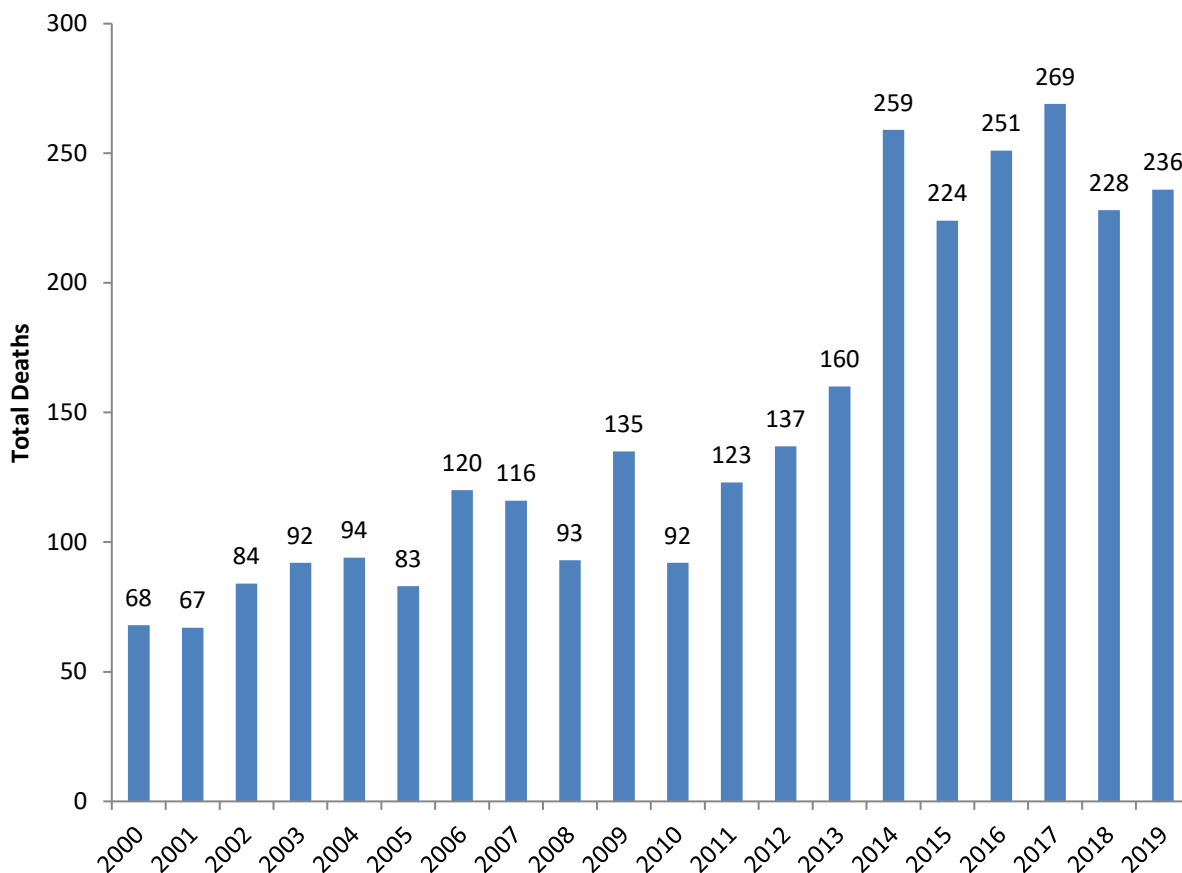
There was a 13.6% decrease in heroin deaths, from 103 deaths in 2018 to 89 deaths in 2019.

Methamphetamine deaths have continued to rise for the fourth straight year, from 44 deaths in 2018 to 69 deaths in 2019.

Historical Summary

Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2019

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

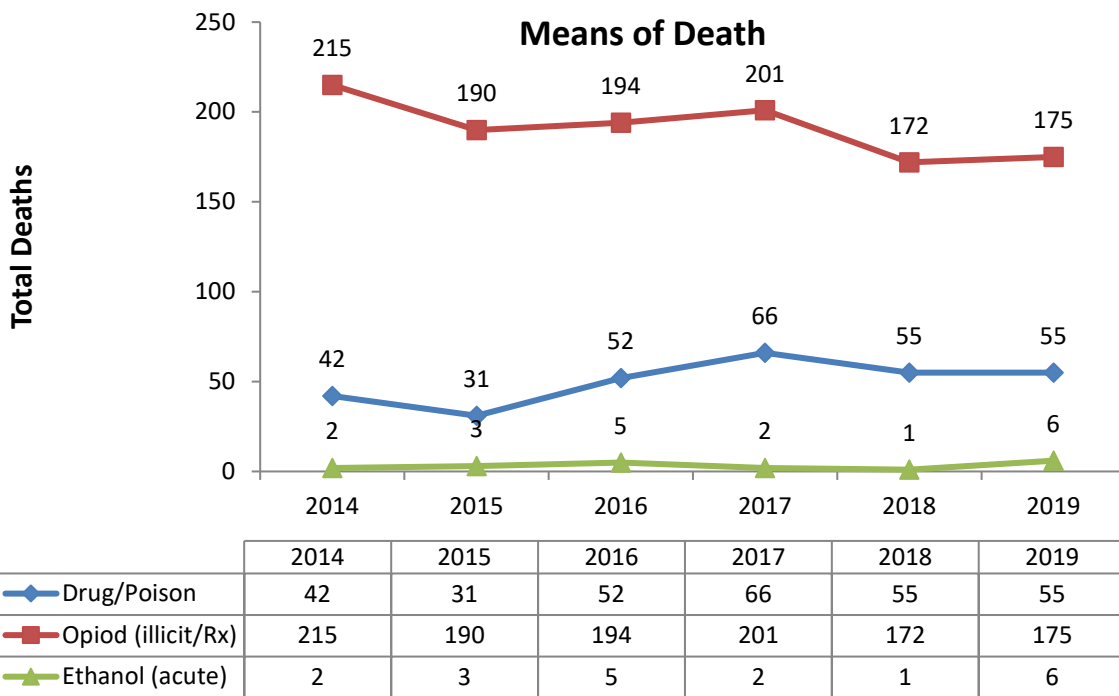


Historical Summary: Means of Death, 2014-2019

Table 6.1: represents all overdoses by means of death, 2014-2019.

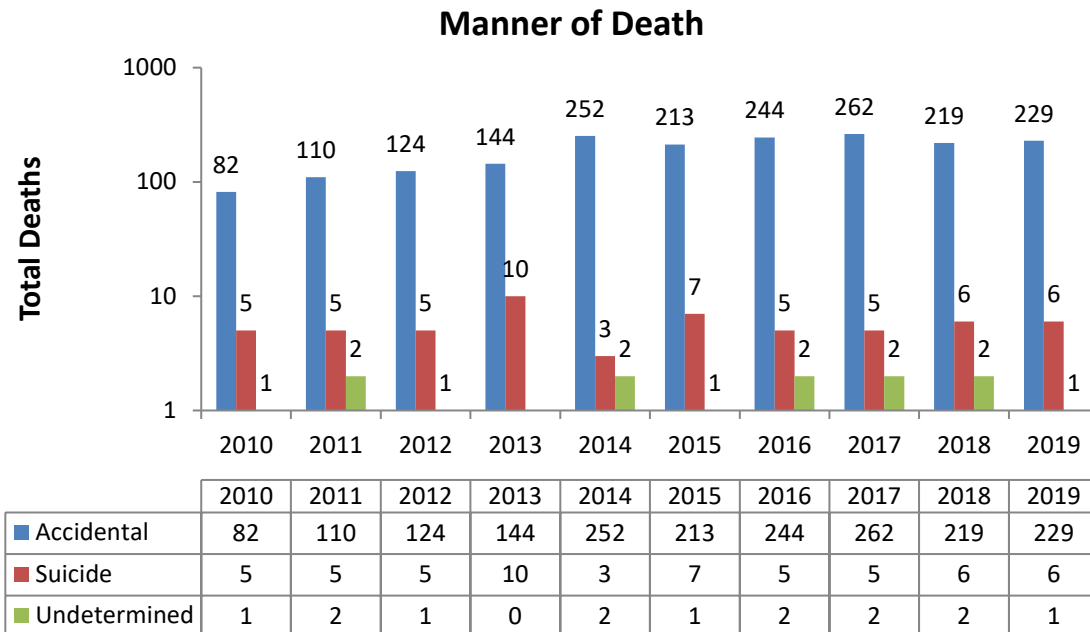
Year	Drug/ Poison	Opioid (illicit/Rx)	Ethanol (acute)	=	Total Overdose Deaths
2014	42	215	2	=	259
2015	31	190	3	=	224
2016	52	194	5	=	251
2017	66	201	2	=	269
2018	55	172	1	=	228
2019	55	175	6	=	236

Figure 6.2: represent all overdoses by means of death, 2014-2019.



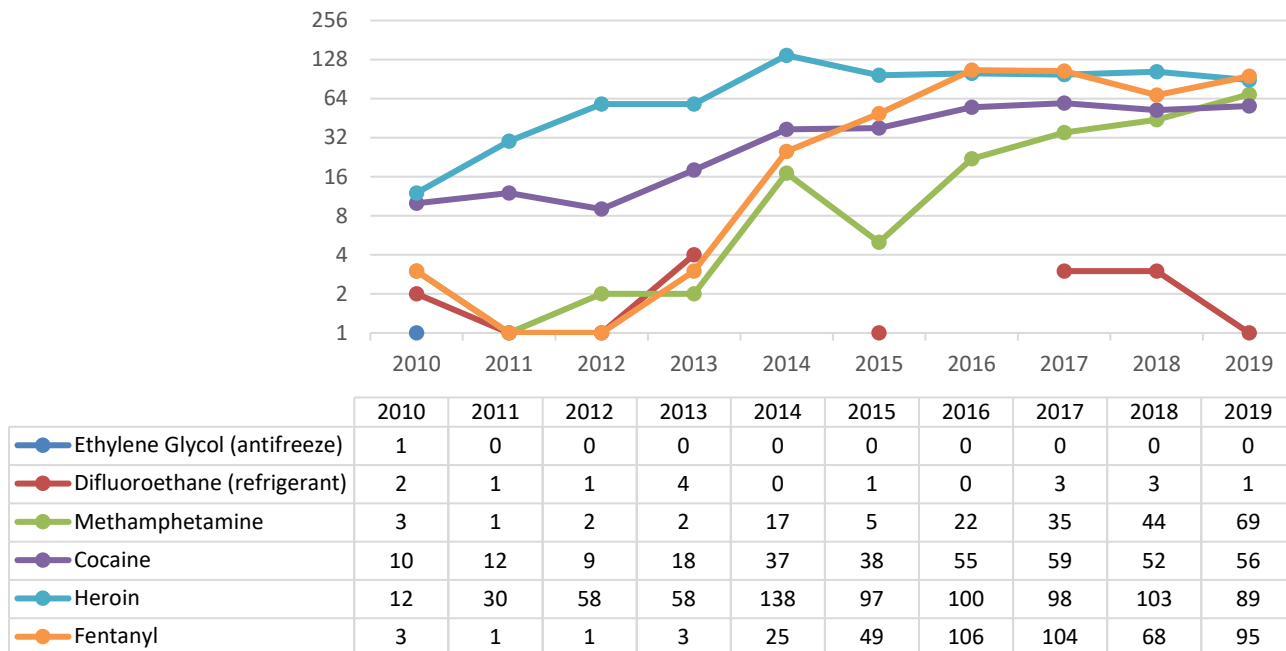
Historical Summary: Manner of Death, 2010-2019

Figure 6.3: represents all overdoses by manner of death.



Historical Summary: Illicit Drugs/Poisons, 2010-2019

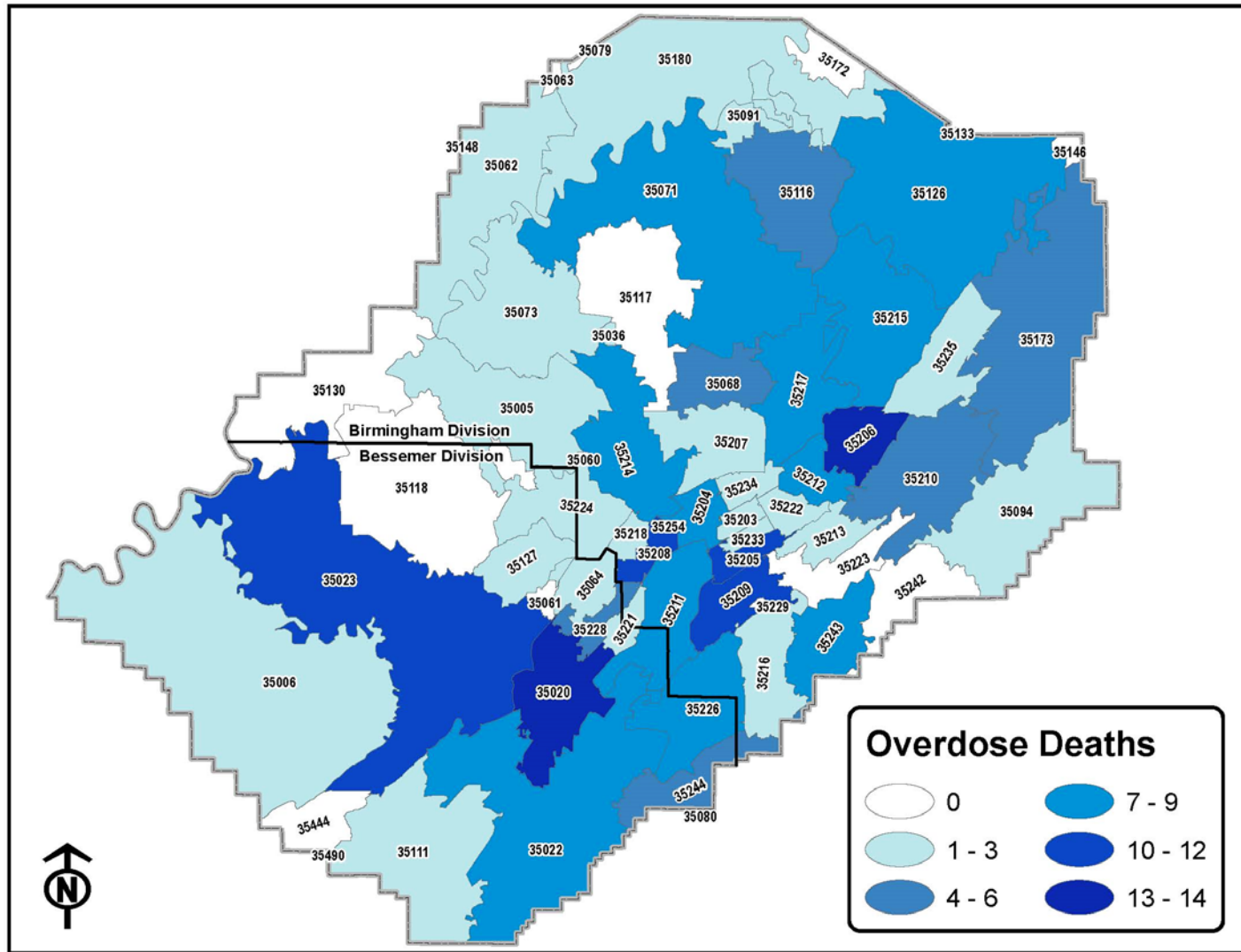
Figure 6.4: represents illicit drugs and poisons.



2019 Overdose Deaths

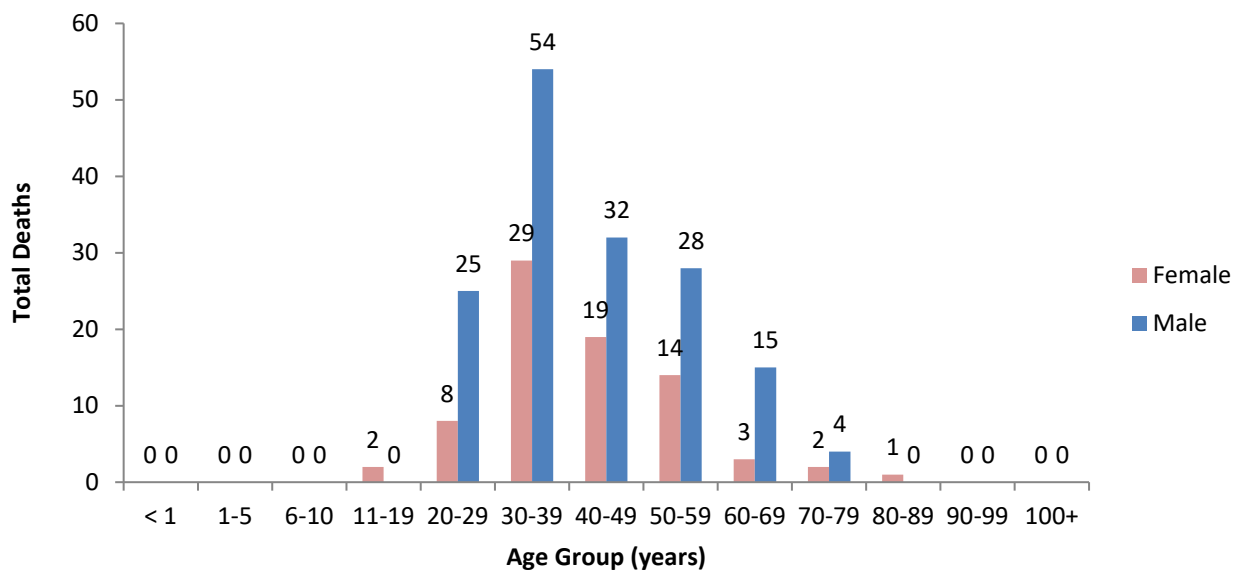
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Place of Injury Zip Code, 2019

Figure 6.5: N=236, represents all overdose deaths by place of injury zip code.



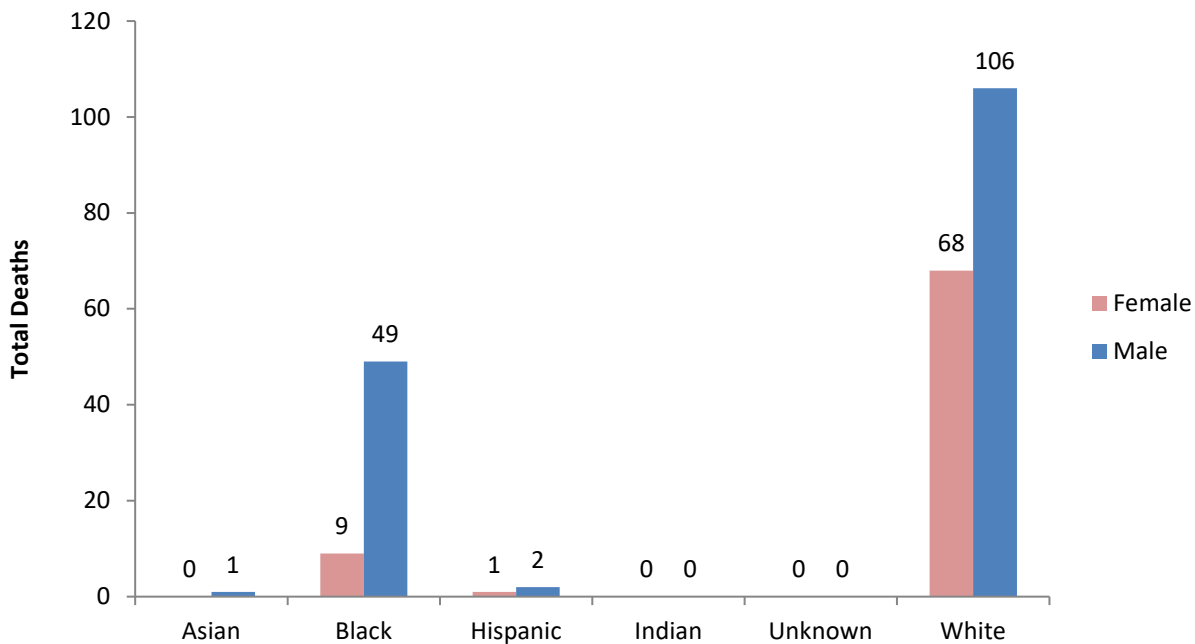
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2019

Figure 6.6: N=236, represents all overdose deaths by gender and age group.



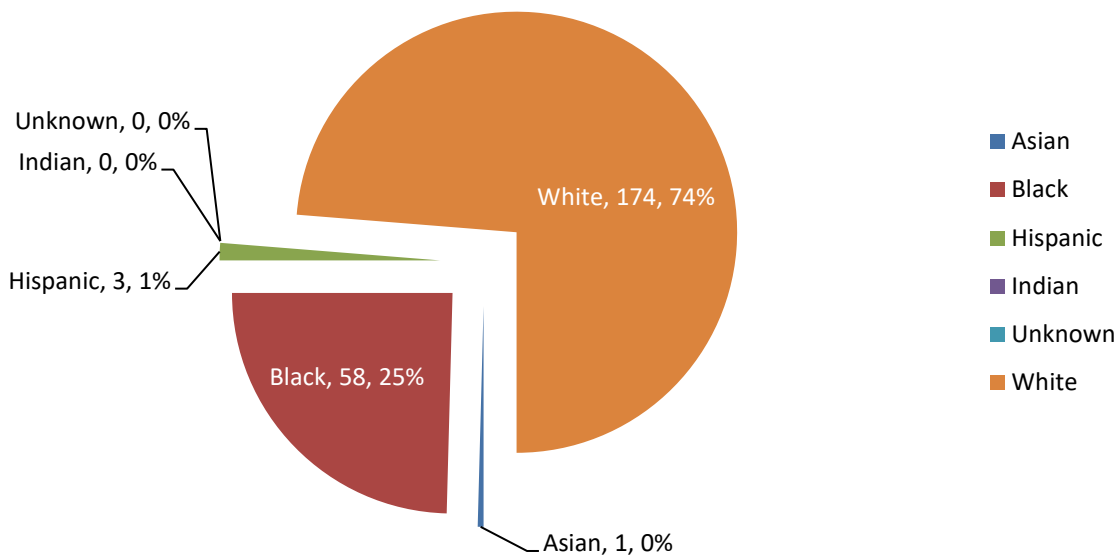
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Gender and Race, 2019

Figure 6.7: N=236, represents all overdose deaths by gender and race.



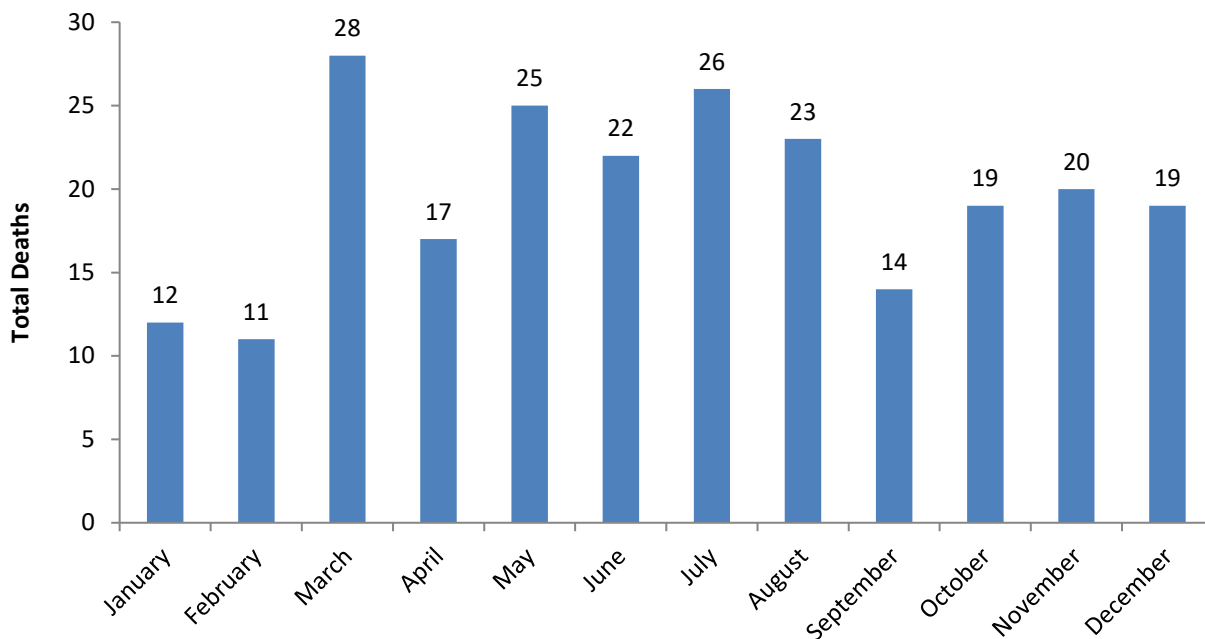
Percentage of Overdose Deaths by Race, 2019

Figure 6.8: N=236, represents all overdose deaths by race.



Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Month of Death, 2019

Figure 6.9: N=236, represents all overdose deaths by month of death.



Most Common Prescription Medications Causing Death: 2010-2019

Table 6.2: 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	2018	2019
Opioids:										
Hydrocodone	8	7	8	12	28	11	13	15	12	11
Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	1
Fentanyl	3	1	1	3	25	49	106	104	68	95
Methadone	22	13	11	21	21	17	16	7	9	8
Morphine	10	17	12	5	7	3	5	3	0	2
Oxycodone	4	8	4	13	21	11	12	11	8	13
Tramadol	2	0	1	6	5	3	3	9	5	5
Benzodiazepines:										
Alprazolam (Xanax)	5	3	7	12	32	8	31	28	15	16
Clonazepam (Klonopin)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Diazepam (Valium)	3	1	2	7	11	5	3	6	4	2
Barbiturates:										
Butalbital	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Phenobarbital	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Antidepressants:										
Citalopram (Celexa)	4	2	1	1	2	0	1	5	1	2
Nortriptyline (Palmelor)	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Velafaxine (Effexor)	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other:										
Acetaminophen (Tylenol)	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Amphetamine	3	0	1	0	2	1	2	0	2	1
Carisoprodol (Soma)	1	3	0	2	4	0	0	0	1	0
Fluoxetine (Prozac)	3	2	1	1	1	4	1	3	0	1
Gabapentin	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
Promethazine (Phenergan)	0	0	1	3	4	1	0	2	1	1
Quetiapine (Seroquel)	1	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	2	7
Sertraline (Zoloft)	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	1	1	0
Trazodone (Oleptro)	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2
Gamma-Hydroxybutyrate (GHB)	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0

References

1. Pursuant to State of Alabama Vital Records rules, stillborn deaths are not assigned a manner of death.
2. Tissue of no forensic value.

End of Report