

Annual
Report

2020

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

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
2019-2020 Comparison.....	9
Historical Summary: Year of Death, 2000-2020.....	10
Historical Summary: Manner of Death, 2000-2020.....	10
Section 2: 2020 Total Case Data	11
General Statistics and Notable Trends.....	11
Total Assumed Cases by Place of Death, 2020.....	11
Total Deaths Reported by Law Enforcement Agency and Jurisdiction, 2020.....	12
Total Assumed Cases by Law Enforcement Agency and Manner of Death, 2020.....	13
Percentage of Assumed Cases by Manner of Death, 2020.....	14
Total Assumed Cases by Manner of Death and Type of Examination, 2020.....	14
Total Assumed Cases by Race, 2020.....	15
Total Assumed Cases by Race and Manner of Death, 2020.....	15
Total Assumed Cases by Gender and Age Group, 2020.....	16
Total Assumed Cases by Gender and Manner of Death, 2020.....	16
Total Assumed Cases by Month of Death, 2020.....	17
Death Certificate Reviews of Declined Cases, 2020.....	17
Section 3: Manner of Death: Assumed Jurisdiction.....	18
Accident.....	18
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2020.....	18
Total Number of Accidental Deaths Place of Injury, 2020.....	19
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2020.....	20

Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020..... 20
Percentage of Accidental Deaths by Race, 2020 21
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Month of Death, 2020..... 21
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Means of Death, 2020..... 22
Homicide 23
Total Number of Homicides by Year of Death 2000-2020..... 23
Total Number of Homicides by Place of Injury, 2020 24
Total Number of Homicides by Gender and Age Group, 2020 25
Total Number of Homicides by Gender and Race, 2020 25
Percentage of Homicides by Race, 2020..... 26
Total Number of Homicides by Month of Death, 2020 26
Total Number of Homicides by Means of Death, 2020 27
Natural..... 28
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2020 28
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Place of Death, 2020 29
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2020 30
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020..... 30
Percentage of Natural Deaths by Race, 2020 31
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Month of Death, 2020..... 31
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Means of Death, 2020..... 32
Suicide 33
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2020 33
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Place of Injury, 2020..... 34
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2020..... 35
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020..... 35
Percentage of Suicide Deaths by Race, 2020 36
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Month of Death, 2020 36
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Means of Death, 2020..... 37
Undetermined 38
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2020 38
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Place of Death, 2020 39
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2020..... 40

Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020.....	40
Percentage of Undetermined Deaths by Race, 2020	41
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Month of Death, 2020	41
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Means of Death, 2020	42
Section 4: Infant/Juvenile Deaths	43
Historical Summary	43
Total Number of Infant and Juvenile Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2020	43
Infant Deaths	44
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Place of Injury, 2020	44
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Gender and Age, 2020	45
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020	45
Percentage of Infant Deaths by Race, 2020.....	46
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Month of Death, 2020	46
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Means of Death, 2020	47
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Manner of Death and Race, 2020.....	47
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Manner of Death and Gender, 2020.....	48
Juvenile Deaths	49
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Place of Injury, 2020.....	49
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Gender and Age, 2020.....	50
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020.....	50
Percentage of Juvenile Deaths by Race, 2020	51
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Month of Death, 2020.....	51
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Means of Death, 2020.....	52
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Manner of Death and Race, 2020	52
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Manner of Death and Gender, 2020	53
Section 5: Motor Vehicle Deaths	54
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2020	54
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Place of Injury, 2020.....	55
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2020.....	56
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020	56
Percentage of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Race, 2020	57
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Month of Death, 2020	57

Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Means of Death, 2020 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 2000-2020 60

 Historical Summary: Illicit Drugs/Poisons, 2010-2020..... 62

 2020 Overdose Deaths 63

 Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Place of Injury, 2020 63

 Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2020 64

 Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020..... 64

 Percentage of Overdose Deaths by Race, 2020 65

 Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Month of Death, 2020..... 65

 Most Common Prescription medications Causing Death: 2010-2020..... 66

References 67

End of Report 67

Introduction

The Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office (JCCMEO) was notified by law enforcement agencies and medical facilities of approximately 86% of the deaths that occurred 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.

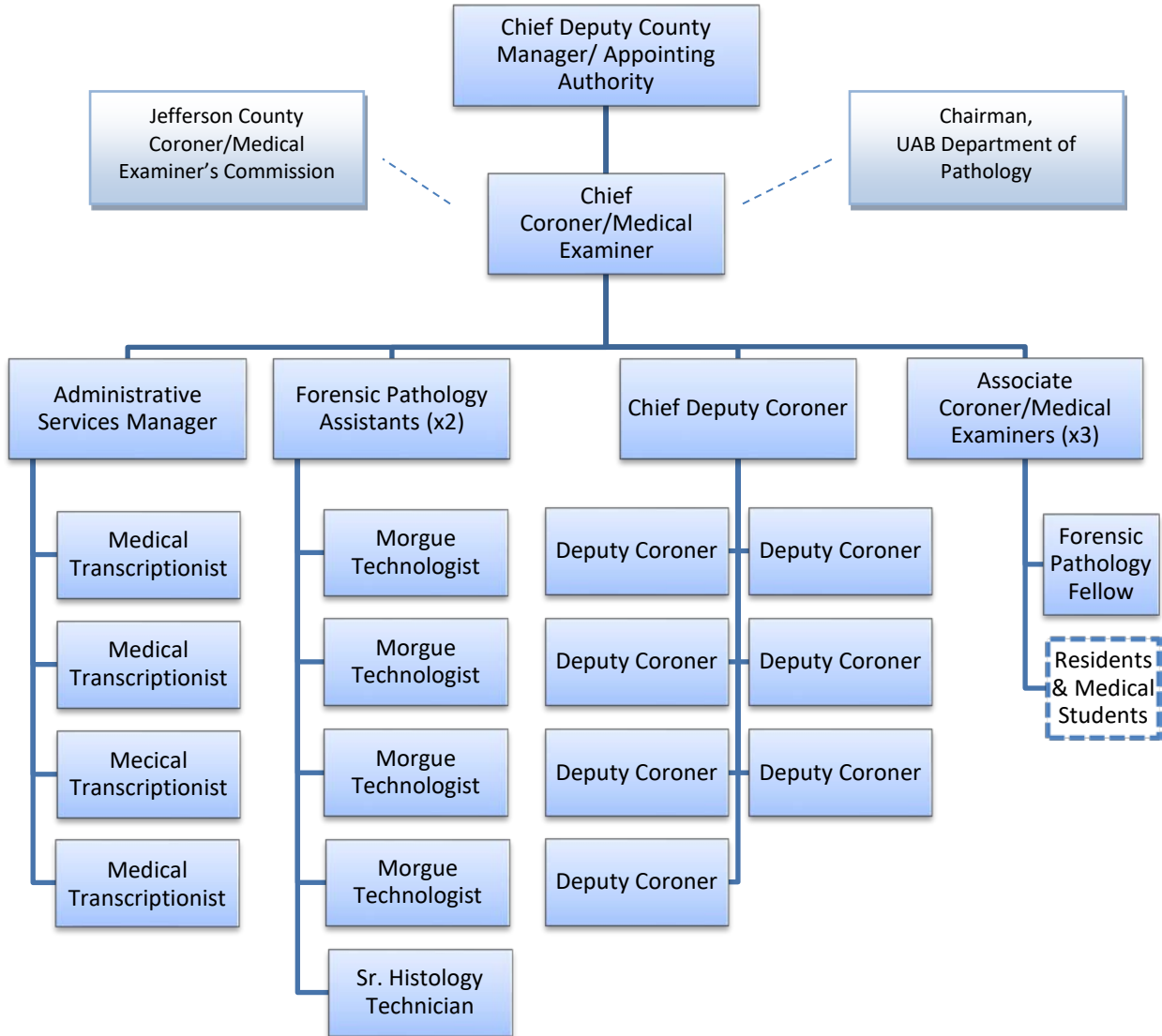
At the JCCMEO these investigations are begun by deputy coroners who are formally trained MDIs. When a death is reported to the JCCMEO it is the responsibility of the deputy coroner to determine if the death falls under the statutory jurisdiction of the JCCMEO and if so, will jurisdiction be assumed or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

2019-2020 Comparison

Table 1.1: Previous year comparison data and percentage of change.

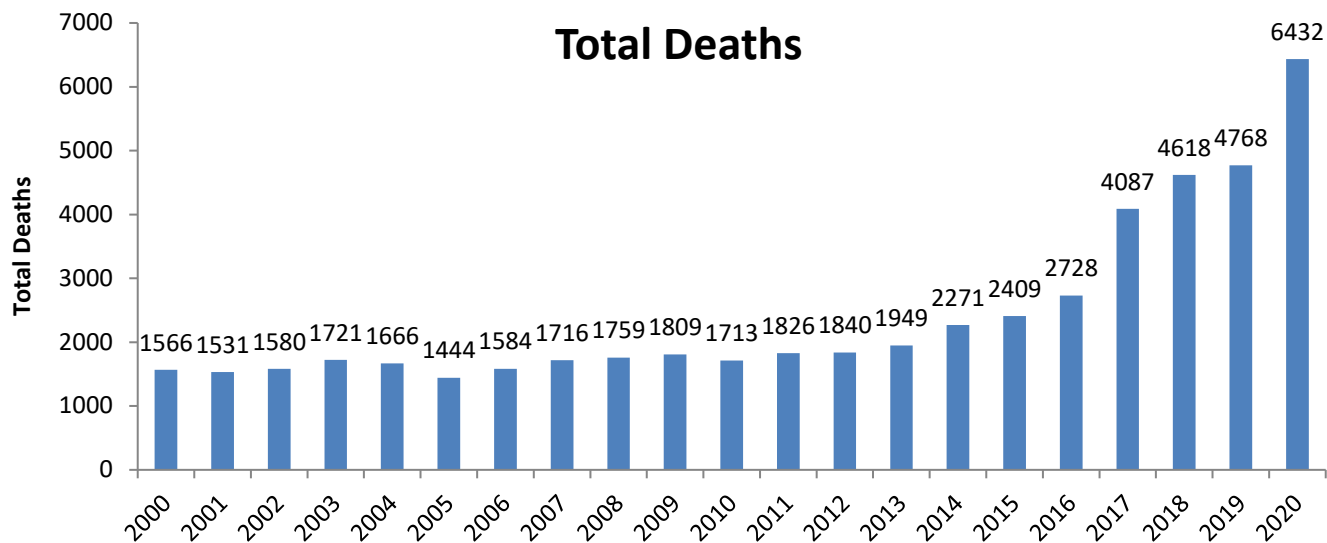
	2019	2020	%
Total deaths reported to the JCCMEO:	4,768	6,432	+34.9
Jurisdiction Assumed:	956	1,142	+19.5
Accident	401	490	+22.2
Homicide	171	187	+9.4
Natural	270	349	+29.3
Suicide	97	94	-3.1
Undetermined	14	22	+57.1
Pending	0	0	0
Stillborn ¹	3	0	-100
Human tissue ²	0	0	0
Jurisdiction Declined:	2,609	3,969	+52.1
Natural Causes	774	1,770	+128.7
Hospice	1,699	1,968	+15.8
Safekeeping	130	226	+73.8
Non-human	6	5	-16.7
Cremation Permits	1,900	2,392	+25.9
Death Certificate Reviews of Declined Cases:	170	229	+34.7
Total bodies transported by JCCMEO:	1,086	1,368	+27.6
Examination	956	1,142	+19.5
Safekeeping	130	226	+73.8
Total Examinations:	956	1,142	+19.5
Autopsies	666	725	+8.9
External Examination	290	417	+43.8
No examination performed	0	0	0
Organ/Tissue procurements:			
Organ/Tissue	20	19	-5
Corneas	26	25	-3.8
Toxicology performed:			
Yes	899	1,078	+19.9
No	57	64	+12.2
Total scenes visited by investigators:	610	605	-0.8
Unclaimed bodies (county burials):	50	97	+94
Unidentified remains (cumulative total):	51	55	+7.8

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

² Tissue of no forensic value.

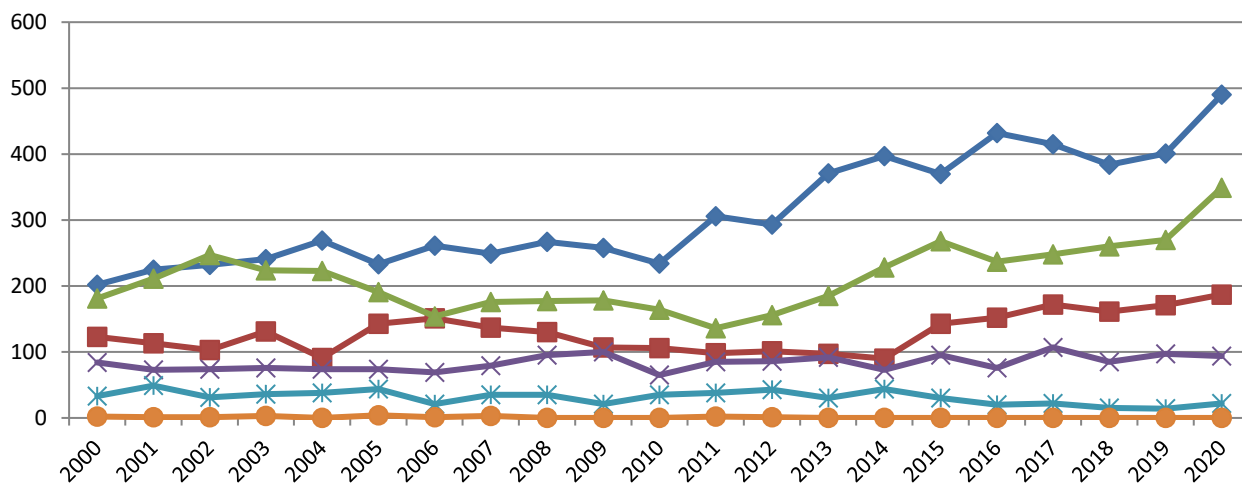
Historical Summary: Year of Death, 2000-2020

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



Historical Summary: Manner of Death, 2000-2020

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	2020
Accident	202	225	232	241	269	233	261	249	267	258	234	306	293	371	397	370	432	415	384	401	490
Homicide	123	113	103	131	91	143	151	137	130	107	106	98	101	97	90	143	152	172	161	171	187
Natural	181	211	247	224	223	191	154	176	177	178	164	136	156	185	228	268	237	248	260	270	349
Suicide	84	73	74	76	74	74	69	79	95	100	65	85	86	92	73	95	76	107	85	97	94
Undetermined	33	49	31	36	38	44	21	35	35	21	35	38	43	30	44	30	20	22	15	14	22
Pending	2	1	1	3	0	4	1	3	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Section 2: 2020 Total Case Data

General Statistics and Notable Trends

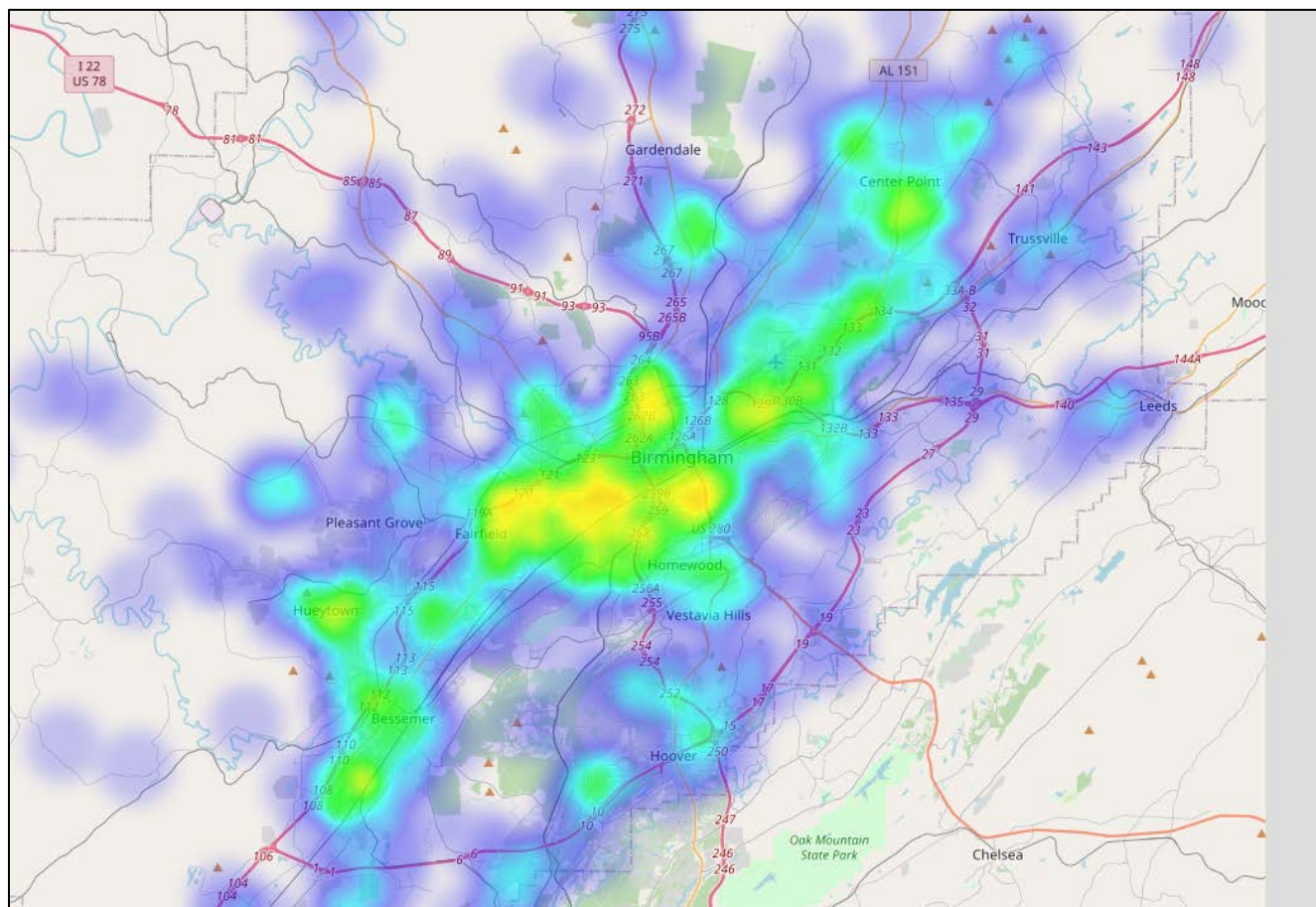
There was a 34.89% increase in the total number of deaths reported to the JCCMEO this past year, from 4,768 deaths in 2019 to 6,432 deaths in 2020. This increase was primarily seen in Declined natural deaths, where there was a 52.12% increase from 2,609 cases in 2019 to 3,969 cases in 2020,

There was a 19.45% increase in the total number of deaths where jurisdiction was assumed, from 956 cases in 2019 to 1,142 cases in 2020.

The total number of accident, homicide, natural, and undetermined deaths examined by the JCCMEO increased in 2020 compared to 2019; while suicide deaths decreased in 2020.

Total Assumed Cases by Place of Death, 2020

Figure 2.1: N=1,142, represents total Assumed cases reported by place of death.



Total Deaths Reported by Law Enforcement Agency and Jurisdiction, 2020

Table 2.1: N=3,384, represents the total deaths reported to the JCCMEO. Table includes Assumed, Declined, Safekeeping, and Non-human cases. It excludes Cremations which are reported by mortuaries and Hospice deaths which are typically reported by 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	5	0	0	0	5
Alabama Dept. of Public Safety	16	0	0	0	16
Alabama Dept. of Corrections	21	0	0	0	21
Adamsville Police Department	6	8	1	0	15
Argo Police Department	0	0	0	0	0
Bessemer Police Department	77	131	15	0	223
Birmingham Police Department	534	1,200	133	3	1,870
Brighton Police Department	6	9	1	0	16
Brookside Police Department	3	3	0	0	6
Fairfield Police Department	0	2	0	0	2
Fultondale Police Department	23	15	0	0	38
Gardendale Police Department	12	40	2	0	54
Graysville Police Department	1	5	1	0	7
Helena Police Department	3	0	0	0	3
Homewood Police Department	20	42	5	0	67
Hoover Police Department	45	43	8	1	97
Hueytown Police Department	24	42	3	0	69
Irondale Police Department	18	21	1	0	40
Jefferson County Sheriff's Office	222	307	30	1	560
Kimberly Police Department	1	1	0	0	2
Leeds Police Department	11	15	0	0	26
Lipscomb Police Department	2	1	1	0	4
Midfield Police Department	16	2	1	0	19
Morris Police Department	2	4	0	0	6
Mountain Brook Police Department	8	8	1	0	17
Pleasant Grove Police Department	7	11	8	0	26
Tarrant Police Department	12	7	1	0	20
Trafford Police Department	0	0	0	0	0
Trussville Police Department	18	24	4	0	46
UAB Police Department	1	0	1	0	2
Vestavia Hills Police Department	23	58	7	0	88
Warrior Police Department	6	12	1	0	19
Totals:	1,143	2,011	225	5	3,384

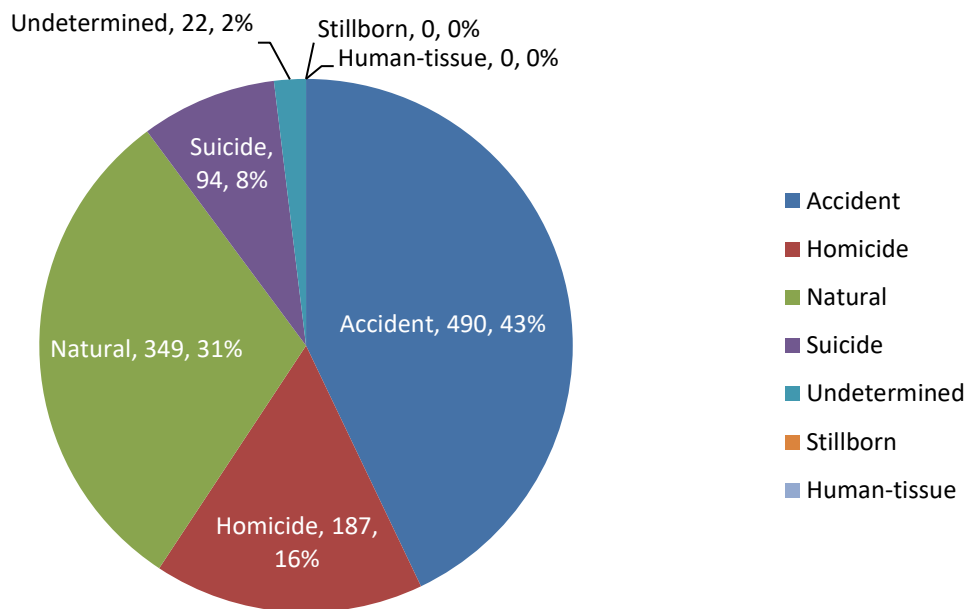
Total Assumed Cases by Law Enforcement Agency and Manner of Death, 2020

Table 2.2: N=1,142, 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	1	0	0	0	5
Alabama Dept. of Public Safety	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
Alabama Dept. of Corrections	1	0	17	1	2	0	0	21
Adamsville Police Department	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	6
Argo Police Department	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bessemer Police Department	33	19	20	4	1	0	0	77
Birmingham Police Department	219	126	154	25	10	0	0	534
Brighton Police Department	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Brookside Police Department	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	3
Fairfield Police Department	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fultondale Police Department	7	0	10	5	1	0	0	23
Gardendale Police Department	3	0	6	3	0	0	0	12
Graysville Police Department	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Helena Police Department	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
Homewood Police Department	12	0	6	1	1	0	0	20
Hoover Police Department	22	2	15	6	0	0	0	45
Hueytown Police Department	8	1	13	2	0	0	0	24
Irondale Police Department	7	2	5	4	0	0	0	18
Jefferson County Sheriff's Office	101	26	68	23	4	0	0	222
Kimberly Police Department	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Leeds Police Department	5	1	3	2	0	0	0	11
Lipscomb Police Department	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Midfield Police Department	6	4	5	0	1	0	0	16
Morris Police Department	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Mountain Brook Police Department	5	0	1	2	0	0	0	8
Pleasant Grove Police Department	2	0	2	2	1	0	0	7
Tarrant Police Department	3	0	7	2	0	0	0	12
Trafford Police Department	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trussville Police Department	9	1	5	2	1	0	0	18
UAB Police Department	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Vestavia Hills Police Department	11	0	7	5	0	0	0	23
Warrior Police Department	2	0	3	1	0	0	0	6
Totals:	490	187	349	94	22	0	0	1,142

Percentage of Assumed Cases by Manner of Death, 2020

Figure 2.2: N=1,142, represents number and percentage of cases by manner of death, includes only Assumed jurisdiction.^{1,2}



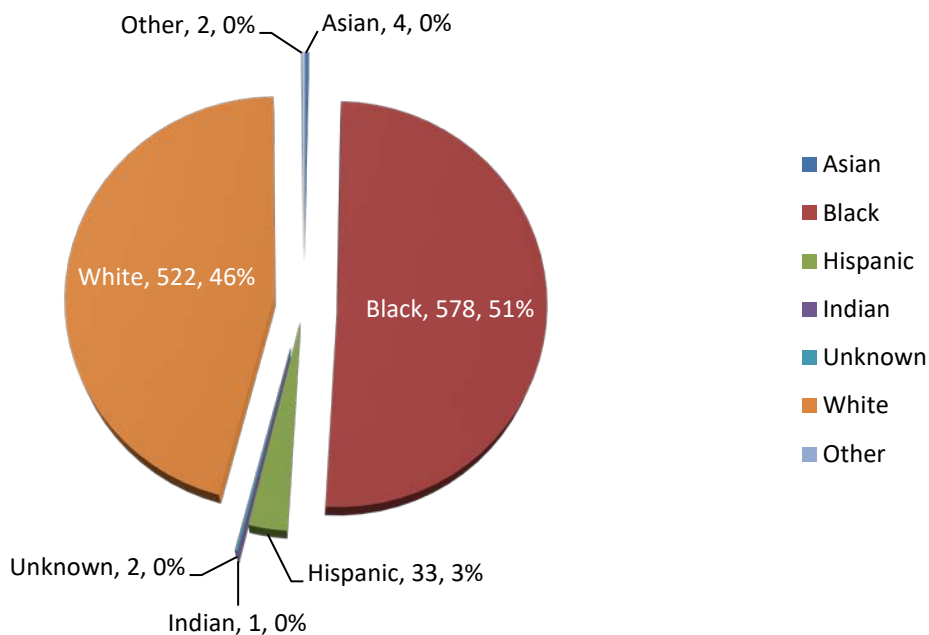
Total Assumed Cases by Manner of Death and Type of Examination, 2020

Table 2.3: N=1,142, 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	338 / 69%	185 / 99%	171 / 49%	12 / 13%	19 / 86%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	725
External	152 / 31%	2 / 1%	178 / 51%	82 / 87%	3 / 14%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	417
No Exam	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0
Total	490	187	349	94	22	0	0	1,142

Total Assumed Cases by Race, 2020

Figure 2.3: N=1,142, represents all Assumed cases by race, with totals and percentages.



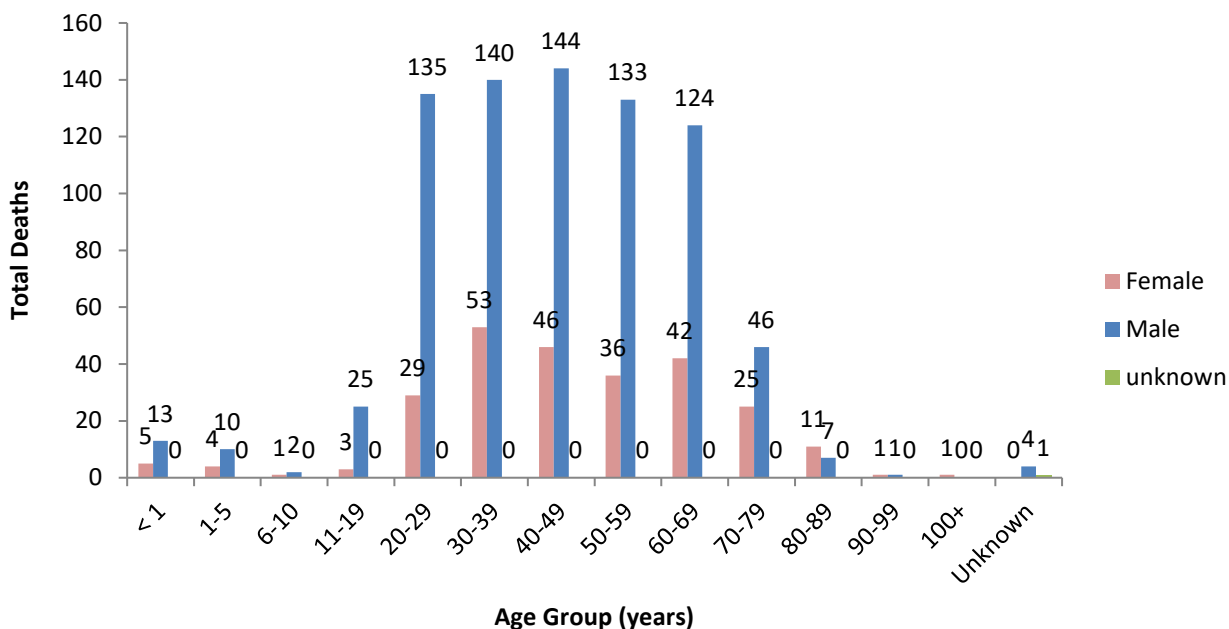
Total Assumed Cases by Race and Manner of Death, 2020

Table 2.4: N=1,142, represents all Assumed cases by race and manner of death.

Race	Accident	Homicide	Natural	Suicide	Undetermined	Stillborn ¹	Human-tissue ²	Total
Asian	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	4
Black	199	158	187	25	9	0	0	578
Hispanic	19	4	6	4	0	0	0	33
Indian	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Other	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Unknown	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
White	271	23	153	65	10	0	0	522
Total	490	187	349	94	22	0	0	1,142

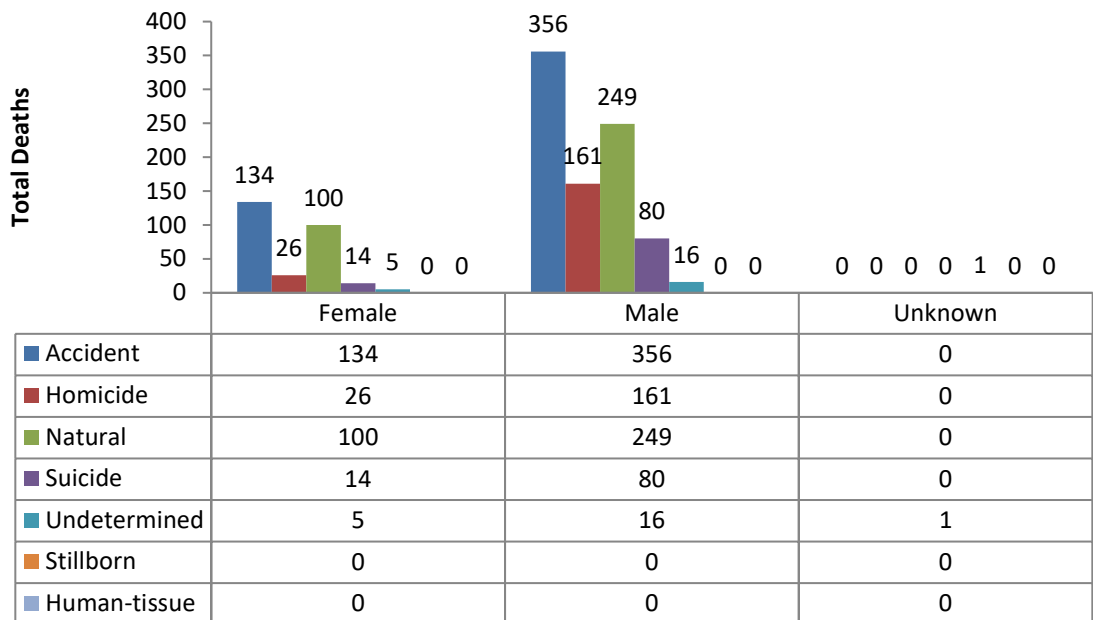
Total Assumed Cases by Gender and Age Group, 2020

Figure 2.4: N=1,142, represents all Assumed cases by gender and age group.



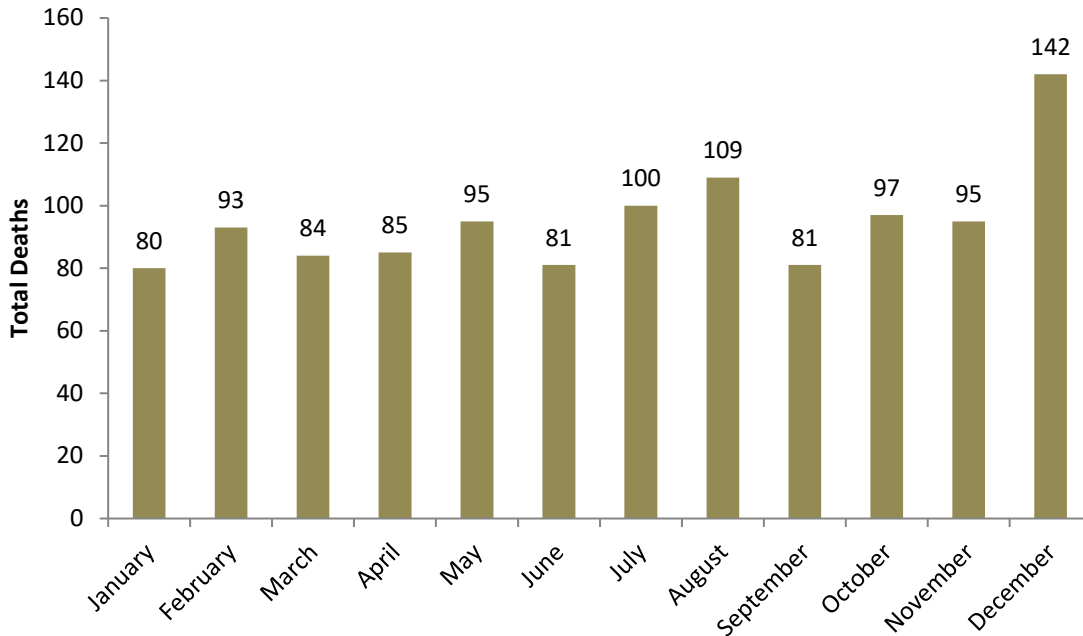
Total Assumed Cases by Gender and Manner of Death, 2020

Figure 2.5: N=1,142, represents all Assumed cases by gender and manner of death.^{1, 2}



Total Assumed Cases by Month of Death, 2020

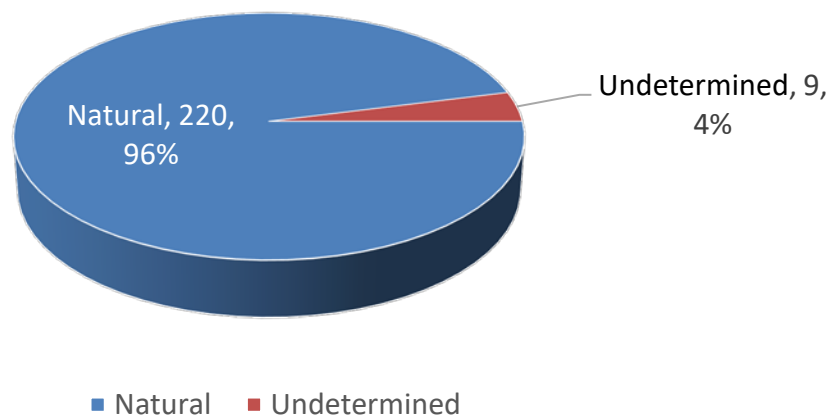
Figure 2.6: N=1,142, represents all Assumed cases by month of death.



Death Certificate Reviews of Declined Cases, 2020

Figure 2.7: N=229, 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 Assumed cases investigated by the JCCMEO in 2020 and represents the largest percentage of all manners of death.

There was a 22.2% increase in the total number of accidental deaths, from 401 deaths in 2019 to 490 deaths in 2020.

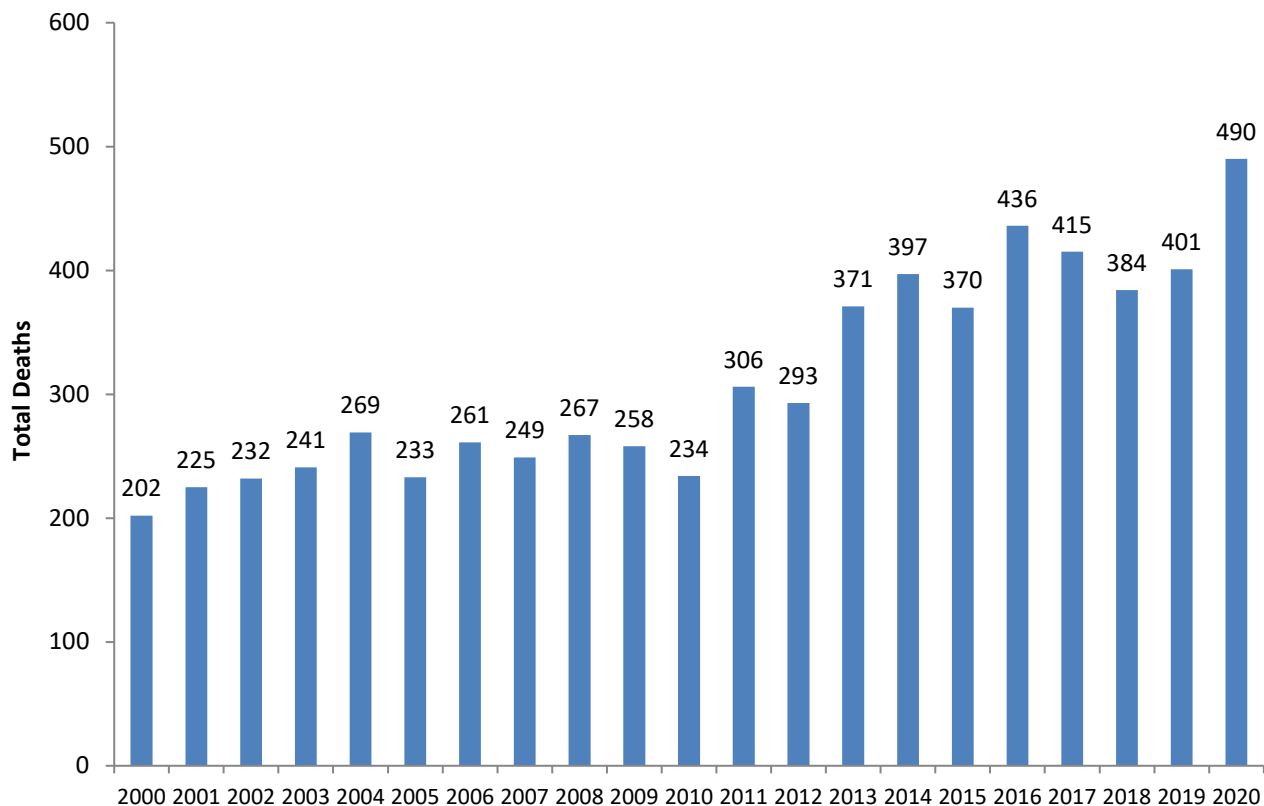
Drug deaths were the most common cause of accidental death in 2020 accounting for 59.5% of the deaths, followed by motor vehicle deaths at 25.5% of the deaths.

There was a 65% increase in pedestrians struck, from 20 deaths in 2019 to 33 deaths in 2020.

The most common race was white representing 38.3% of the accidental deaths, while male was the most common gender representing 72.6% of the accidental deaths.

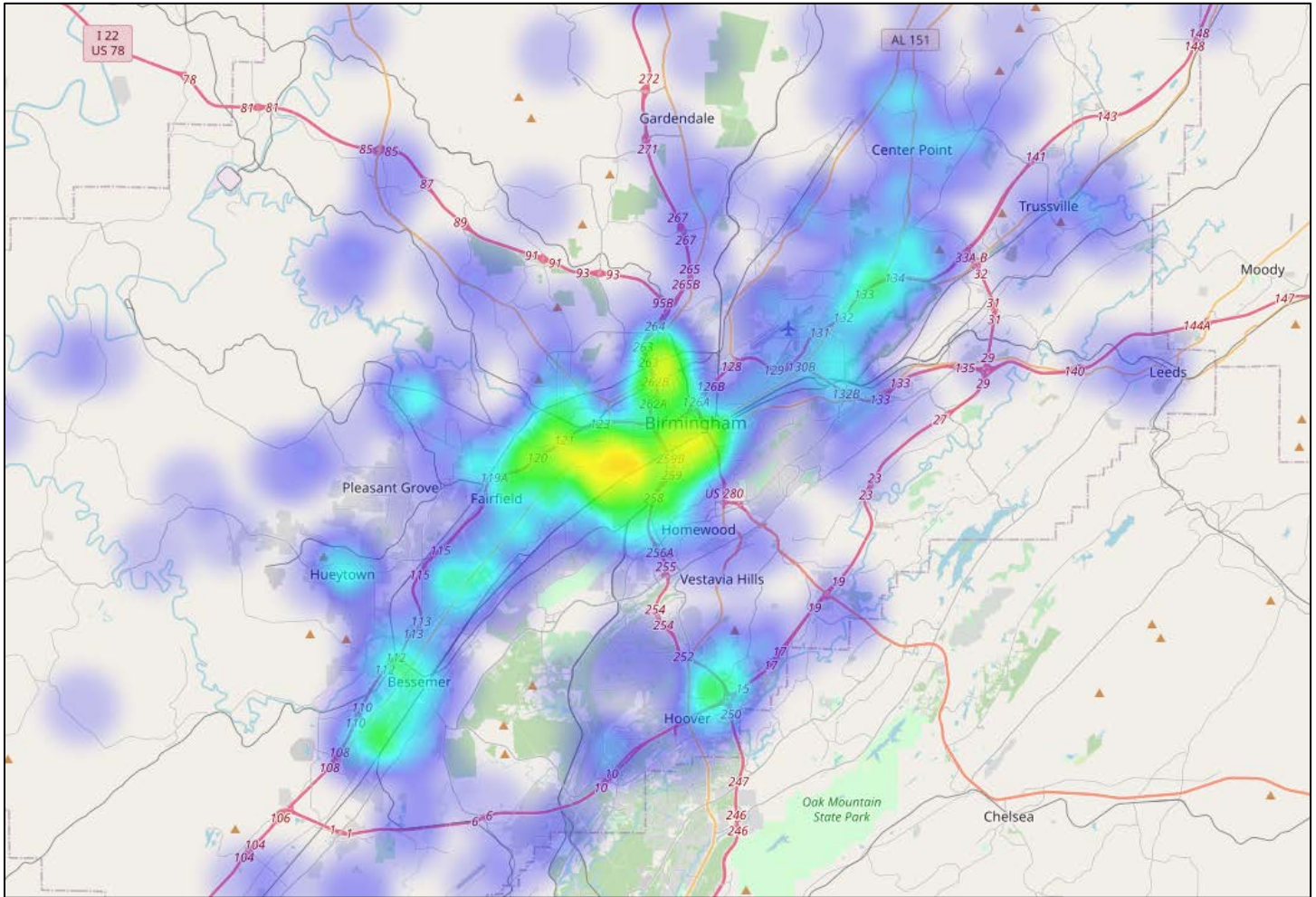
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2020

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



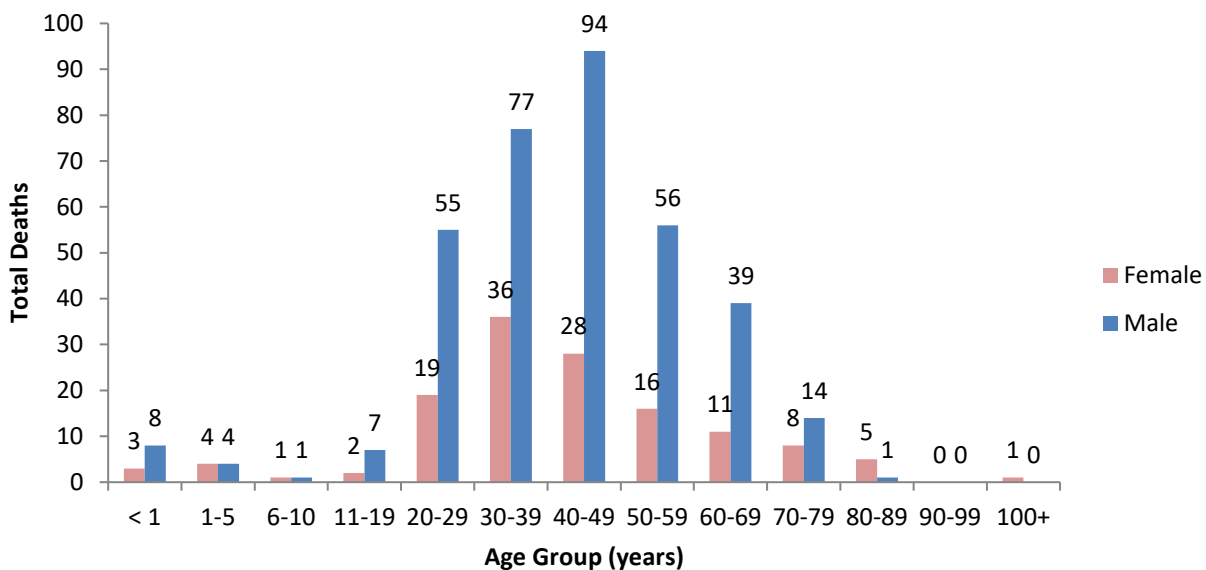
Total Number of Accidental Deaths Place of Injury, 2020

Figure 3.2: N=490, represents all accidental deaths by place of injury.



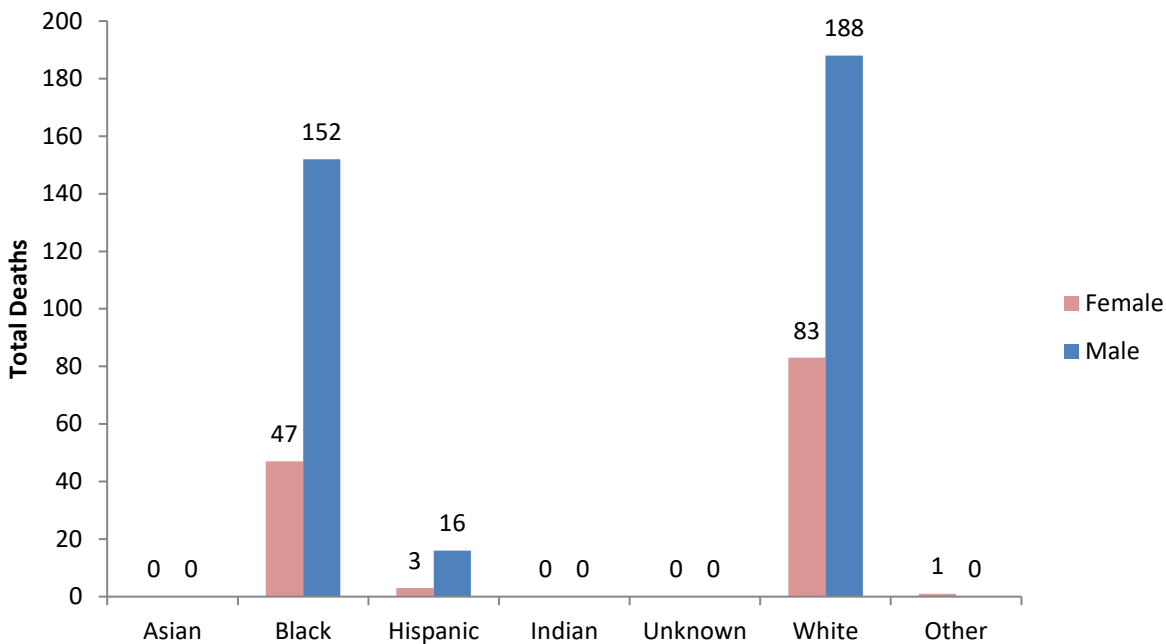
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2020

Figure 3.3: N=490, represents all accidental deaths by gender and age group.



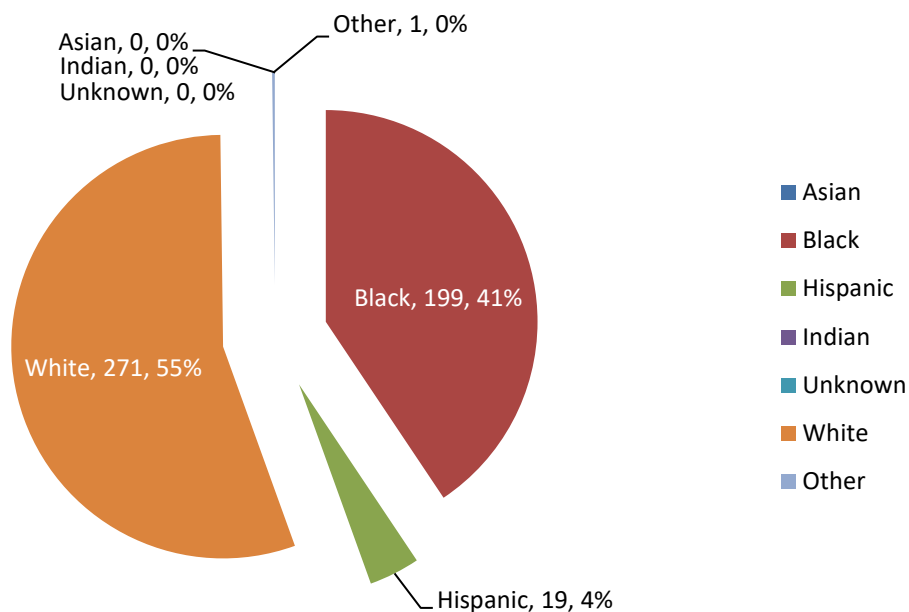
Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020

Figure 3.4: N=490, represents all accidental deaths by gender and race.



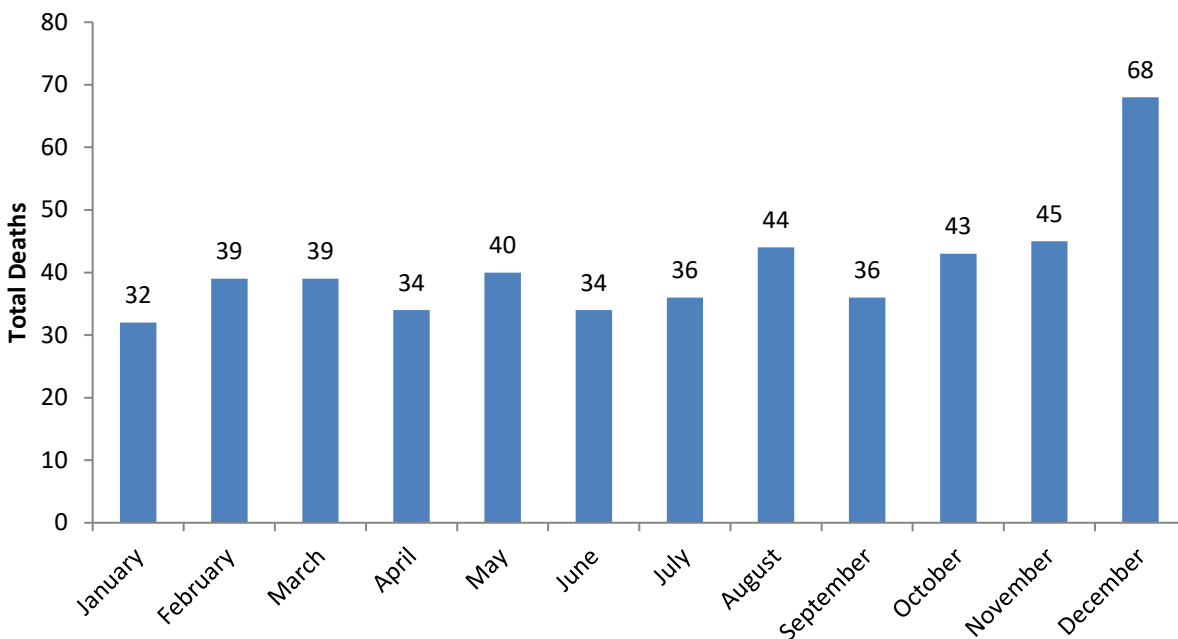
Percentage of Accidental Deaths by Race, 2020

Figure 3.5: N=490, represents all accidental deaths by race.



Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Month of Death, 2020

Figure 3.6: N=490, represents all Accidental deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Accidental Deaths by Means of Death, 2020

Table 3.1: N=490, represents all Accidental deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total	Means of Death	Total
Asphyxia:		Fire:	
Blister packs	1	Apartment	2
Industrial machine	1	House	14
Motor vehicle	1	Other	3
Pillow	1	Firearm: Handgun	2
Tracheostomy	1	Foreign Body: Food	1
Blunt: Unknown	1	Iatrogenic: Dialysis port	1
Carbon Monoxide: Fire	1	Motor vehicle:	
Co-sleeping:		Bicycle	3
Bed	6	Pedestrian	32
Chair	1	Multiple vehicles	50
Couch	1	Single vehicle	40
Drowning:		Train: Pedestrian	1
Bathtub	2	Total	490
River	1		
Drug:			
Opioid	236		
Other drugs –Rx and illicit drugs	56		
Ethanol (alcohol) – acute toxicity	6		
Environmental Exposure:			
Hypothermia (cold)	2		
Hyperthermia (heat)	1		
Fall:			
Bed	1		
Bridge	1		
Curb	1		
Floor	5		
Motor vehicle	1		
Parking lot	1		
Rock	1		
Stairs	4		
Tree	1		
Unknown	3		
Falling Object:			
Steel coil	1		
Tree	1		

Homicide

Homicides accounted for 16.3% of the Assumed cases investigated by the JCCMEO in 2020.

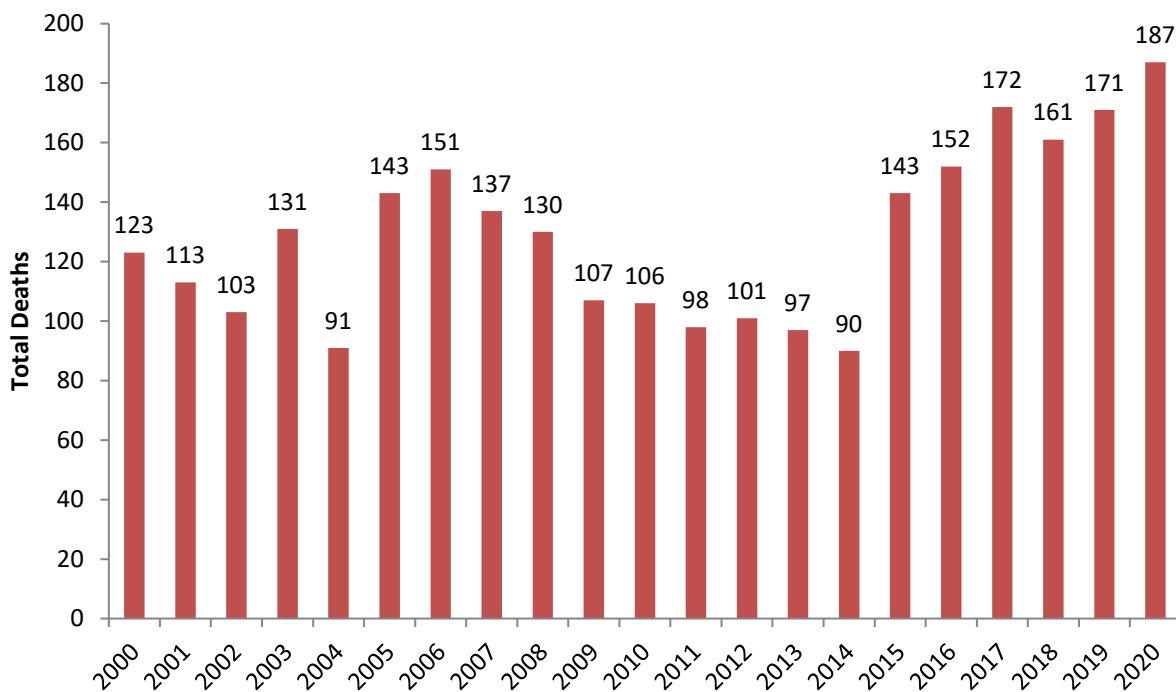
There was a 9.3% increase in the total number of homicides, from 171 deaths in 2019 to 187 deaths in 2020; and represents the highest year since the year 2000.

Death due to firearms was the most common cause of homicide in 2020 accounting for 86.6% of the deaths.

The most common race was Black representing 84.4% of the homicides, while males were the most common gender representing 74.8% of homicide deaths.

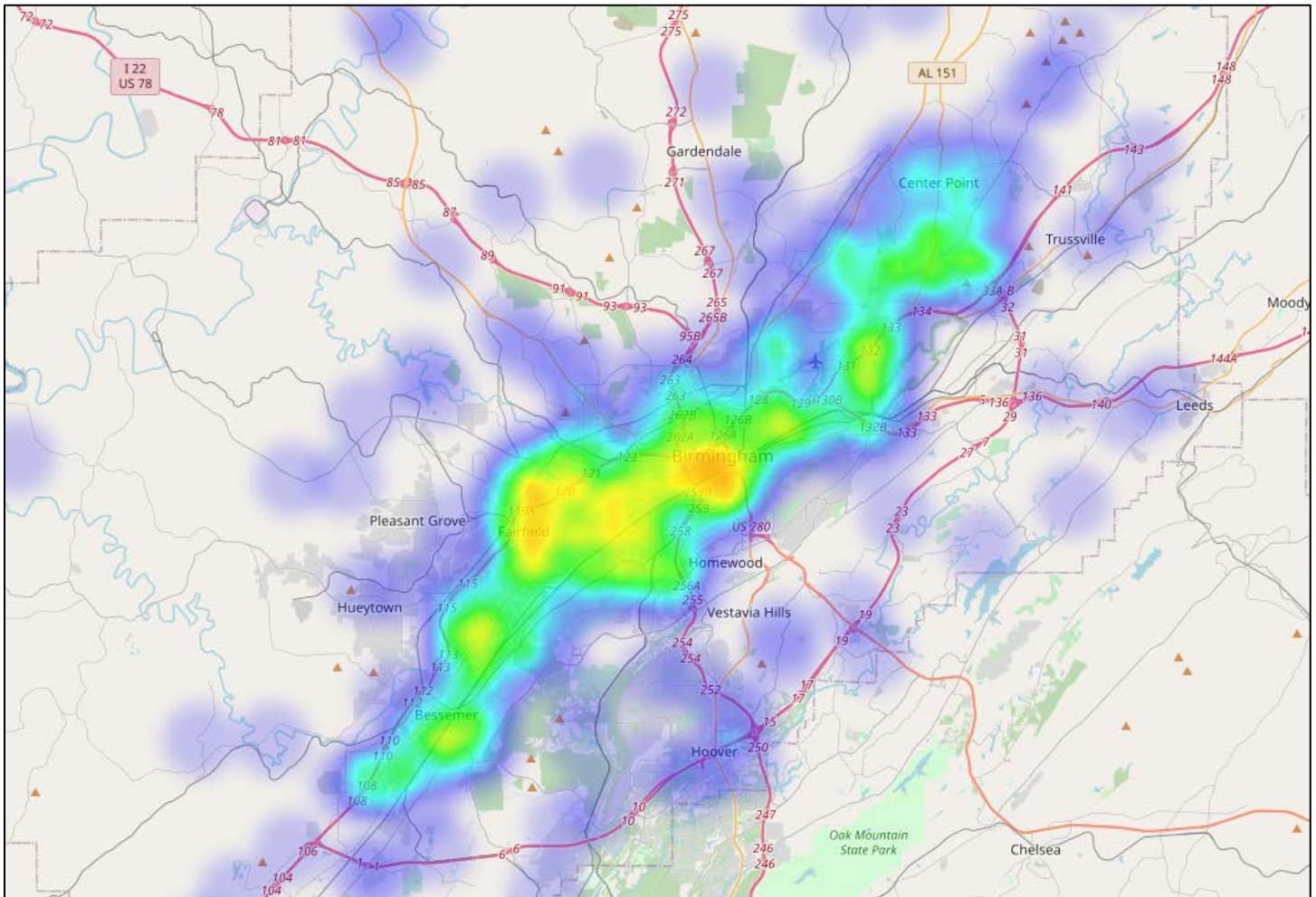
Total Number of Homicides by Year of Death 2000-2020

Figure 3.7: represents all homicides investigated by the JCCMEO.



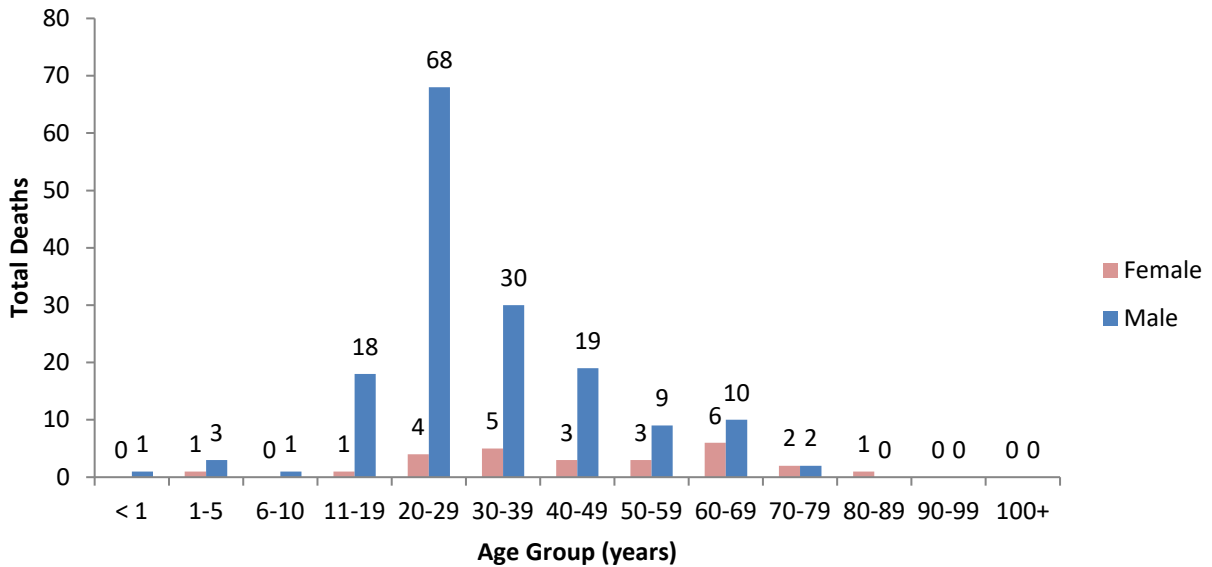
Total Number of Homicides by Place of Injury, 2020

Figure 3.8: N=187, represents all homicide deaths by place of injury.



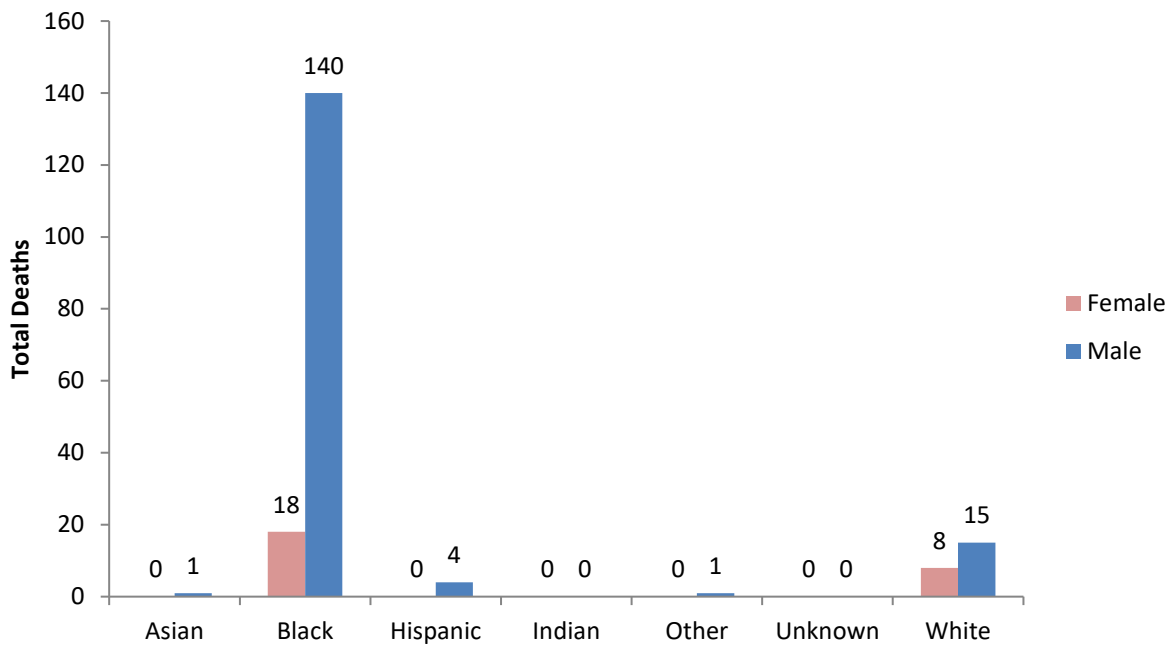
Total Number of Homicides by Gender and Age Group, 2020

Figure 3.9: N=187, represents all homicides by gender and age group.



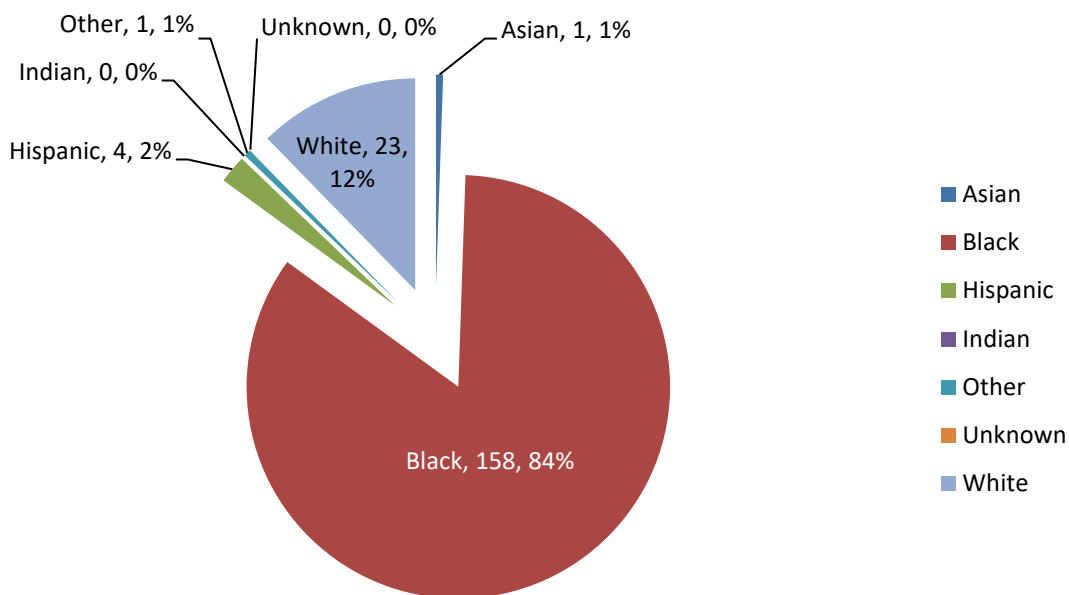
Total Number of Homicides by Gender and Race, 2020

Figure 3.10: N=187, represents all homicides by gender and race.



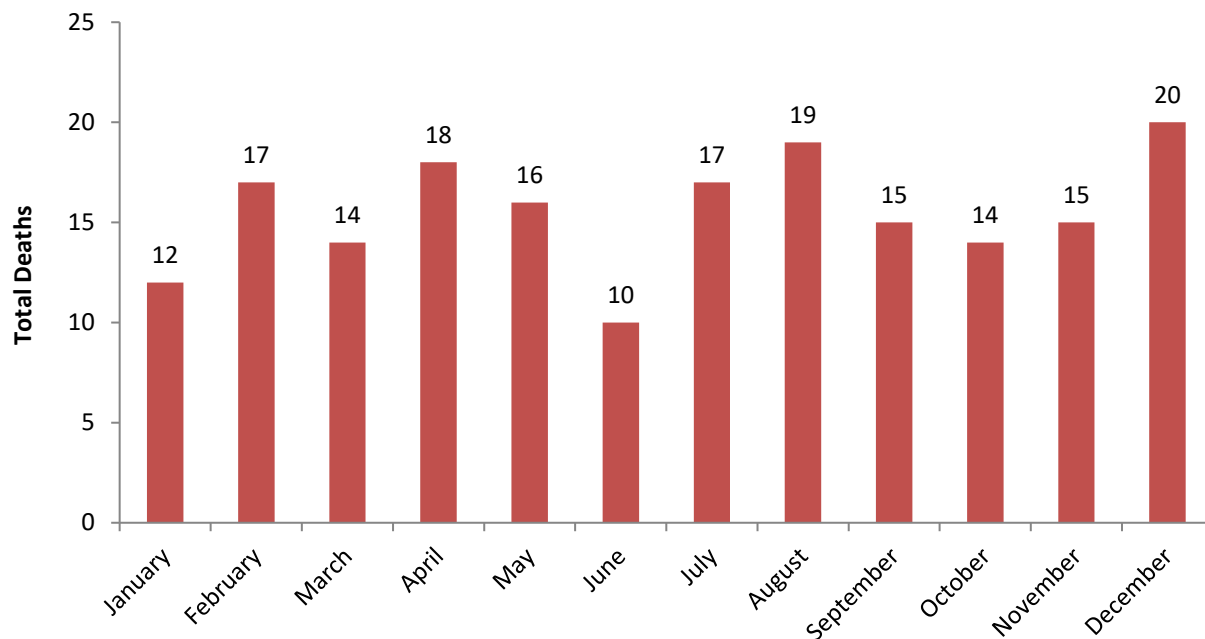
Percentage of Homicides by Race, 2020

Figure 3.11: N=187, represents all homicides by race.



Total Number of Homicides by Month of Death, 2020

Figure 3.12: N=187, represents all homicides by month of death.



Total Number of Homicides by Means of Death, 2020

Table 3.2: N=187, represents all Homicides by means of death and weapon type.

Means of Death	Total
Asphyxia:	
Unknown	2
Blunt:	
Hands/belt	1
Foot	1
Unknown	7
Exertion	1
Fire: House	1
Firearm:	
Handgun	86
Handgun/Rifle	5
Rifle	16
Shotgun	2
Unknown	53
Motor vehicle	3
Sharp:	
Knife	8
Unknown	1
Total	187

Natural

Natural deaths accounted for 30.6% of the Assumed cases investigated by the JCCMEO in 2020.

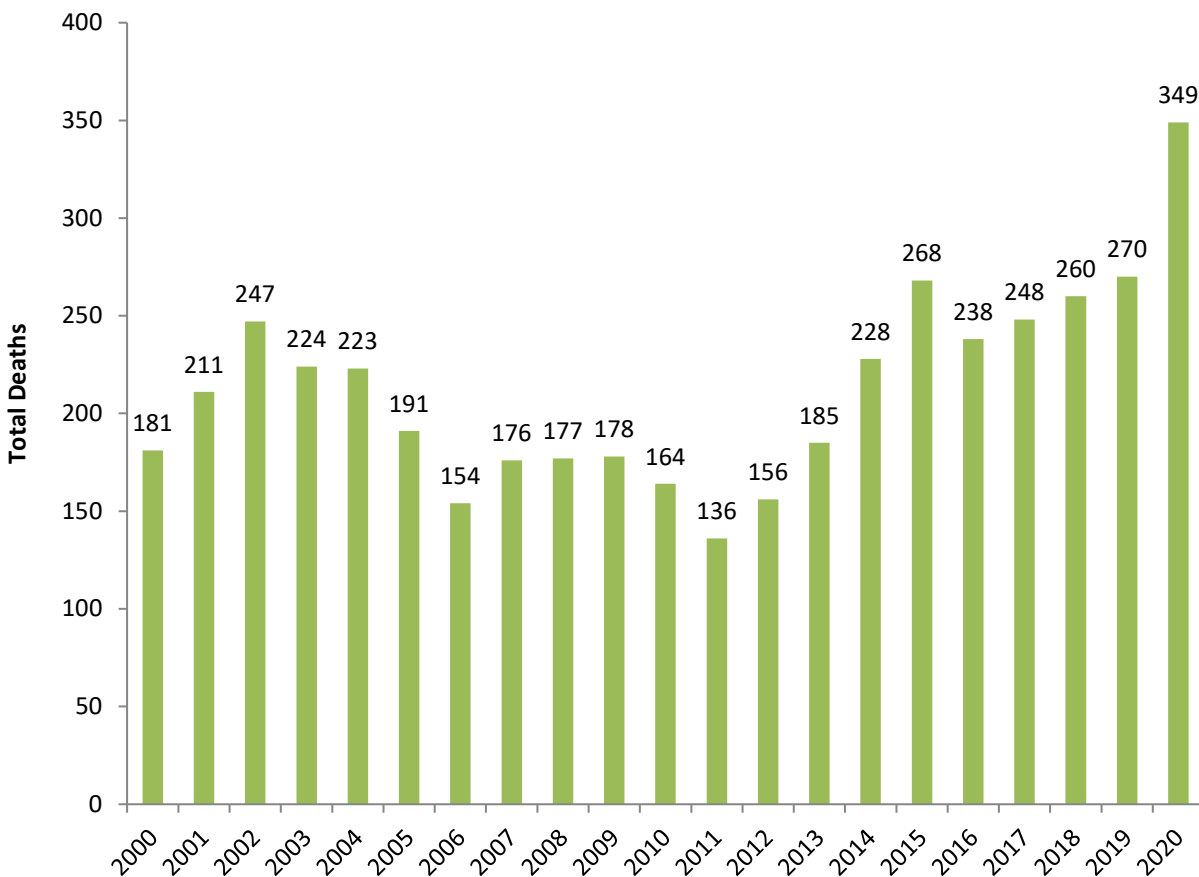
There was a 29.3% increase in the total number of natural deaths, from 270 deaths in 2019 to 349 deaths in 2020 and, is the highest year since year 2000.

Deaths due to heart disease were the most common cause of natural death in 2020 accounting for 56.2% of the deaths, followed by other natural disease accounting for 13.5% of the deaths.

The most common race was white representing 53.6% of the natural deaths, while males were the most common gender representing 71.3% of natural deaths.

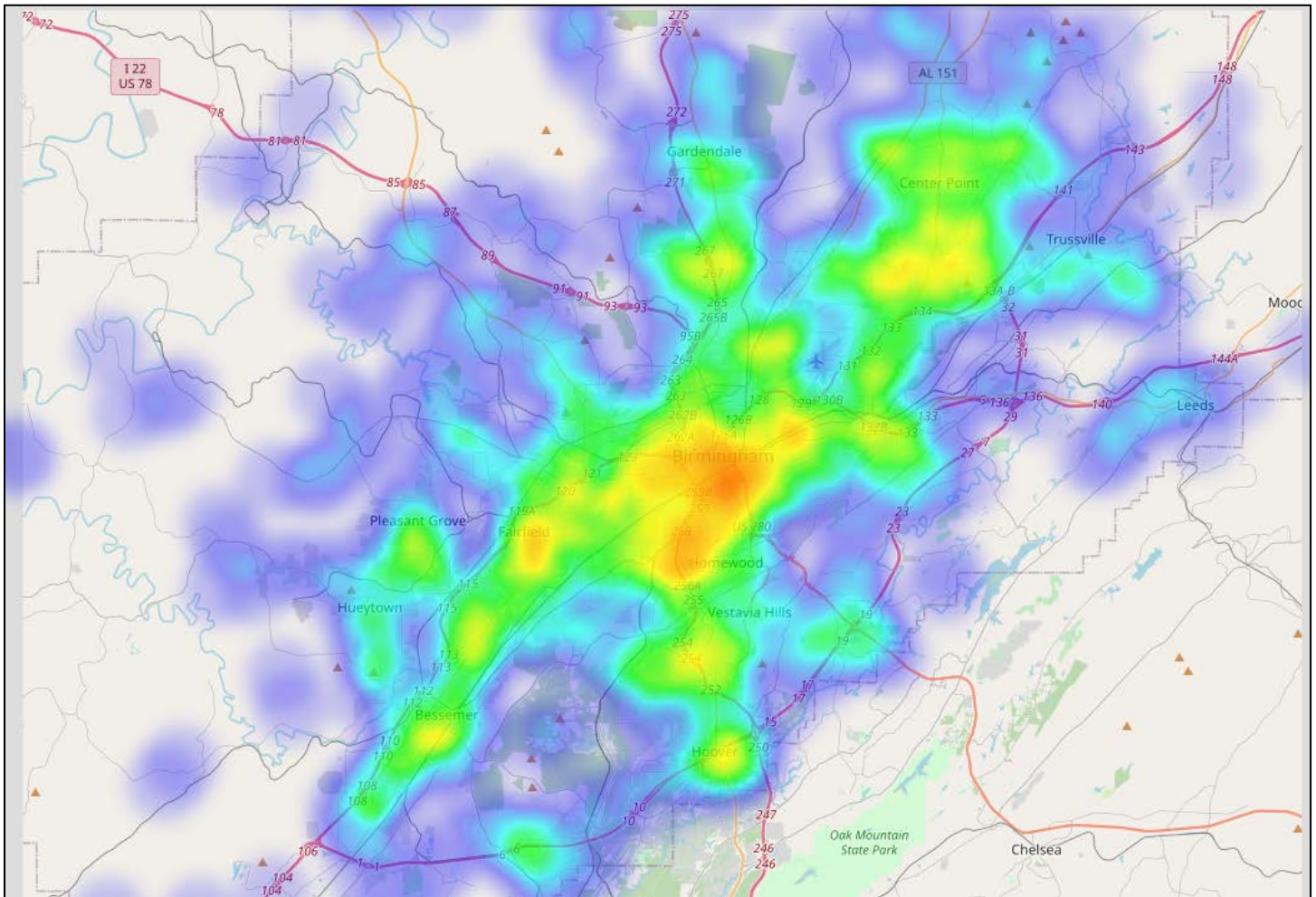
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2020

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



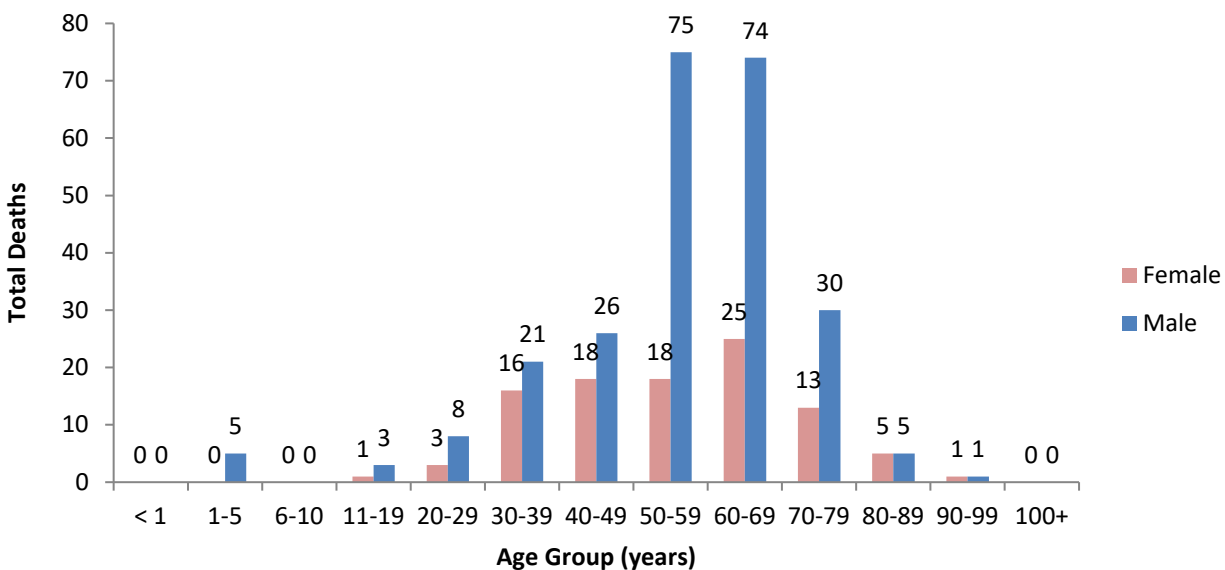
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Place of Death, 2020

Figure 3.14: N=349, represents all natural deaths by place of death.



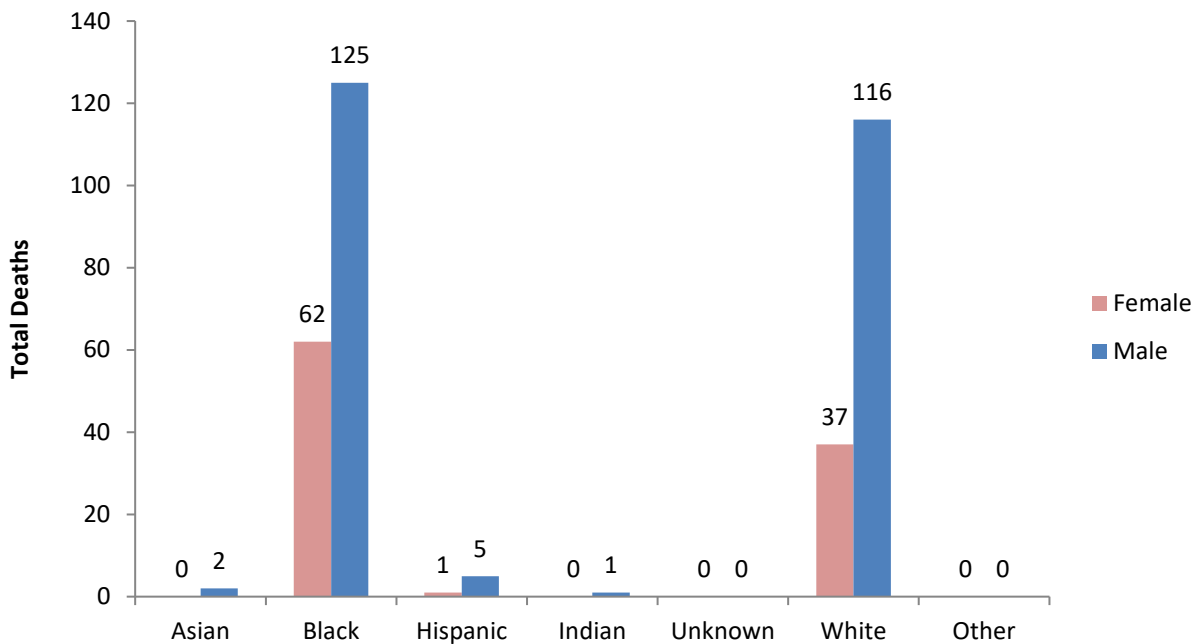
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2020

Figure 3.15: N=349, represents all natural deaths by gender and age group.



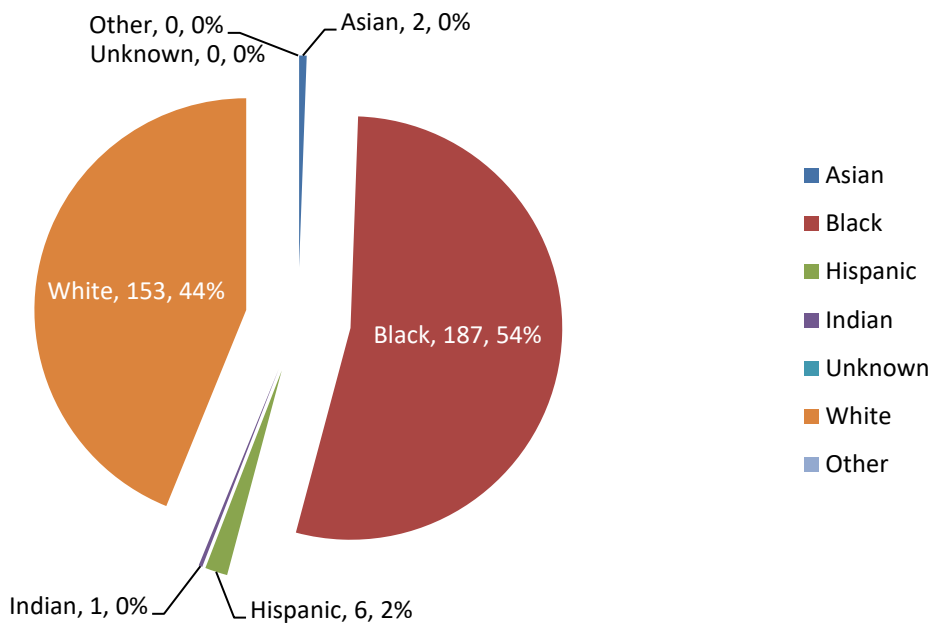
Total Number of Natural Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020

Figure 3.16: N=349, represents all natural deaths by gender and race.



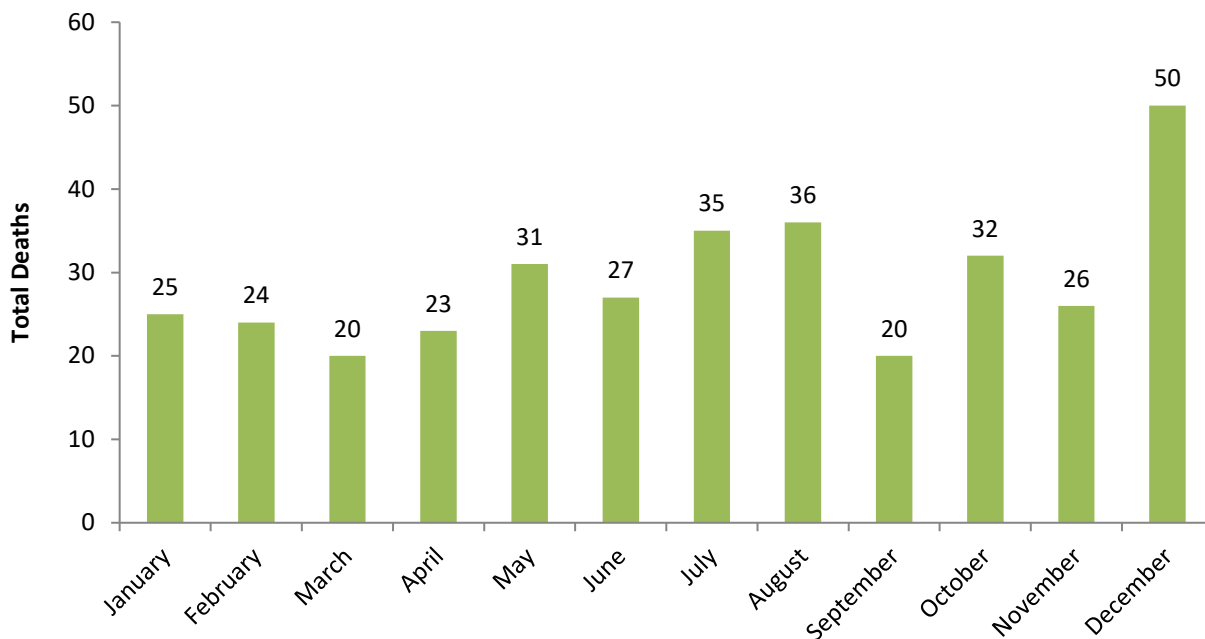
Percentage of Natural Deaths by Race, 2020

Figure 3.17: N=349, represents all natural deaths by race.



Total Number of Natural Deaths by Month of Death, 2020

Figure 3.18: N=349, represents all natural deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Natural Deaths by Means of Death, 2020

Table 3.3: N=349, represents all natural deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Heart:	
Coronary artery atherosclerosis	22
Hypertensive heart disease	94
Arteriosclerotic cardiovascular disease	55
Other heart disease	25
Lungs:	
Pneumonia	12
COPD / asthma	9
Pulmonary thromboembolism	10
Liver: Cirrhosis	0
Brain:	
Seizure disorder (epilepsy)	6
Meningitis	0
Nontraumatic intracranial hemorrhage	2
Malignancy NOS (includes all organ systems)	12
Chronic substance (ethanol/drug) use	41
Diabetes	12
Gastrointestinal bleeding	2
Other	47
Total	349

Suicide

Suicide deaths accounted for 8.2% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2020.

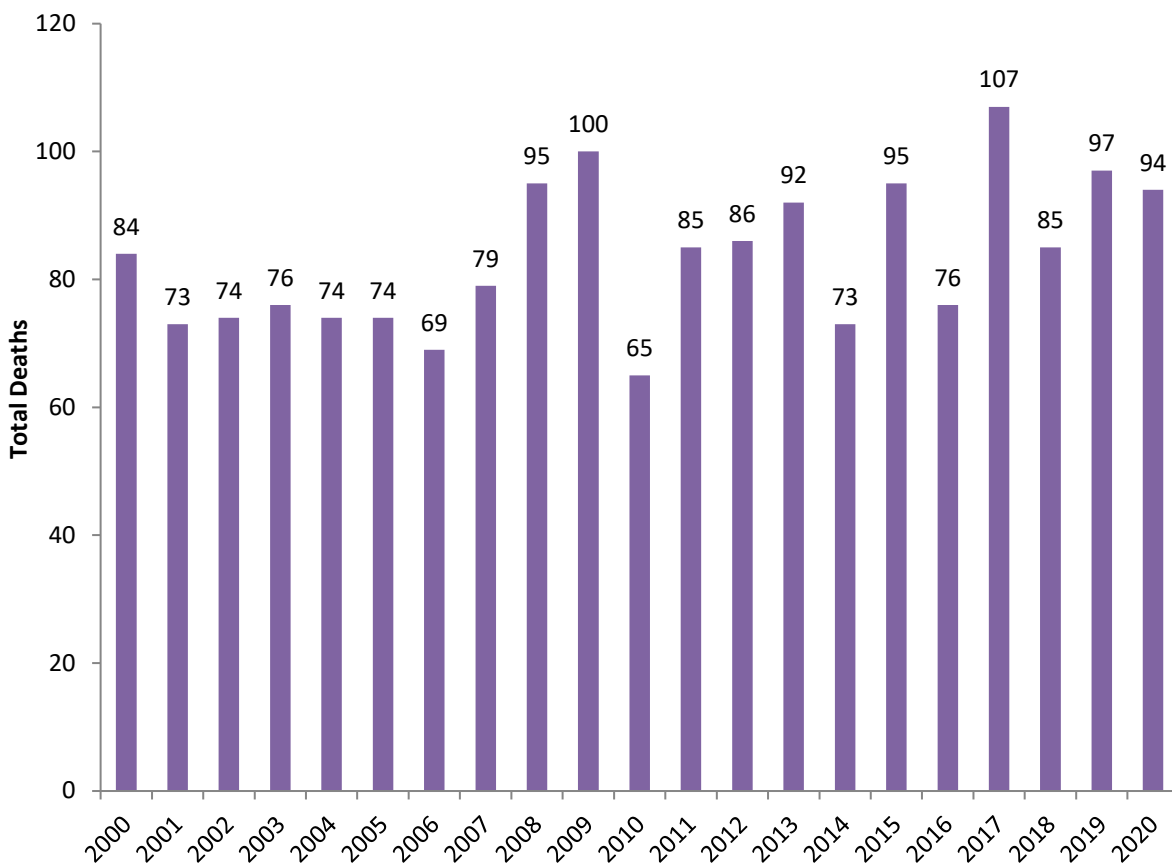
There was a 3.1% decrease in the total number of suicide deaths, from 97 deaths in 2019 to 94 deaths in 2020.

Deaths due to gunshot wounds were the most common cause of suicide death in 2020 accounting for 72.3% of the deaths and, followed by deaths due to hanging accounting for 21.3% of the suicide deaths.

The most common race was white representing 69.1% of the suicide deaths, while males were the most common gender representing 82% of suicide deaths.

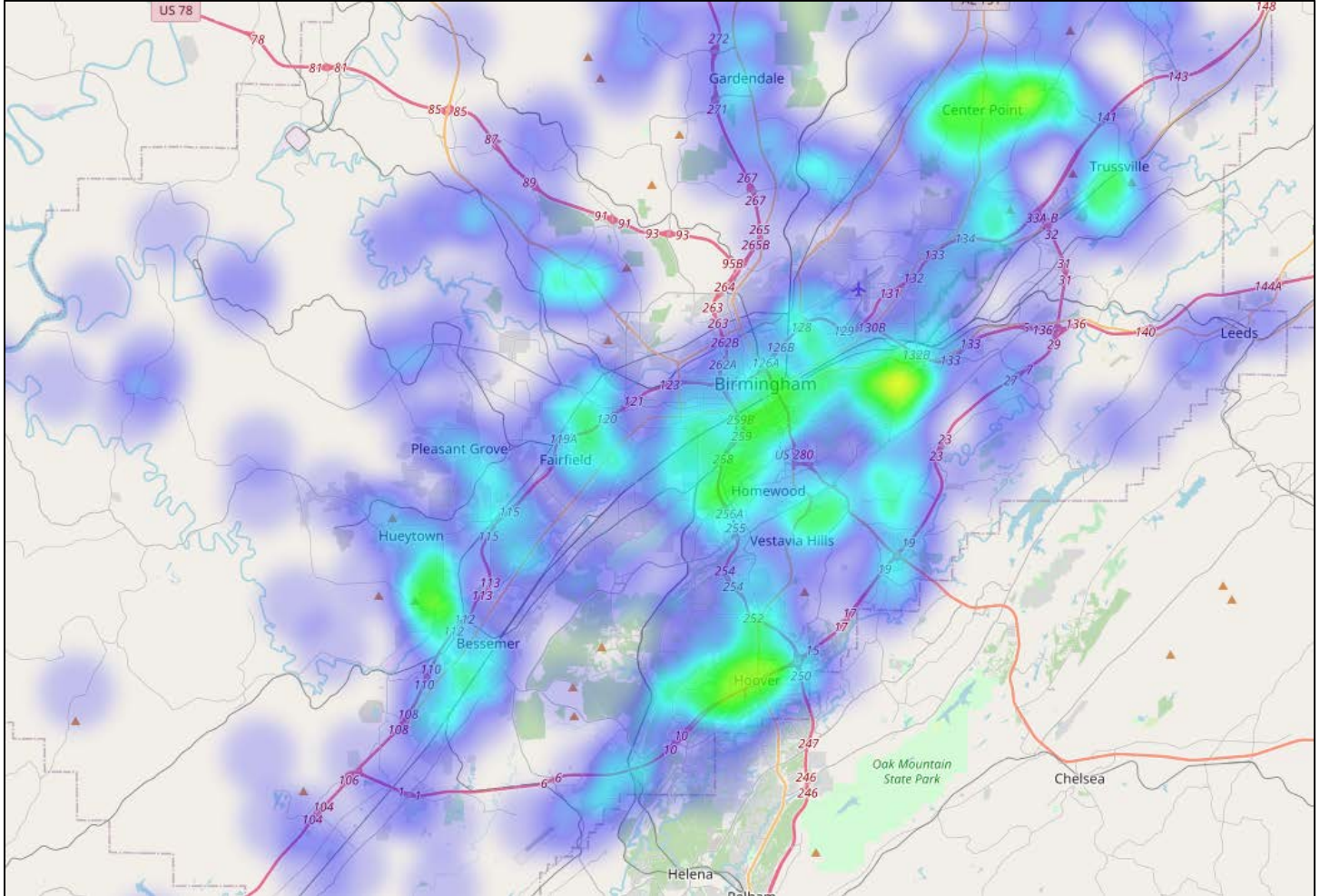
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2020

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



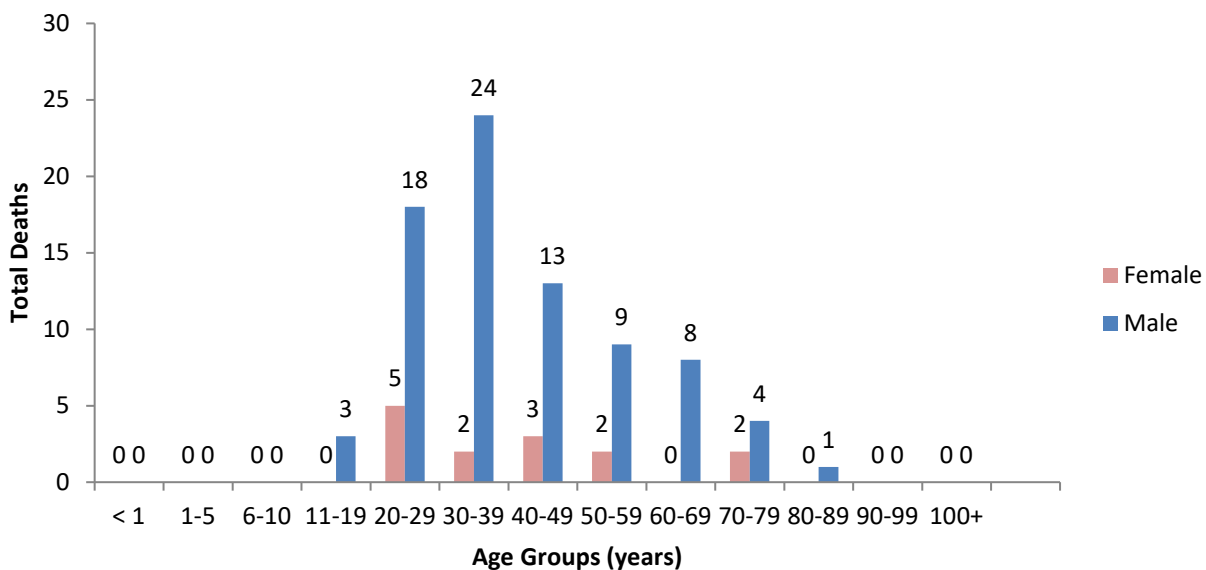
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Place of Injury, 2020

Figure 3.20: N=94, represents all suicide deaths by place of injury.



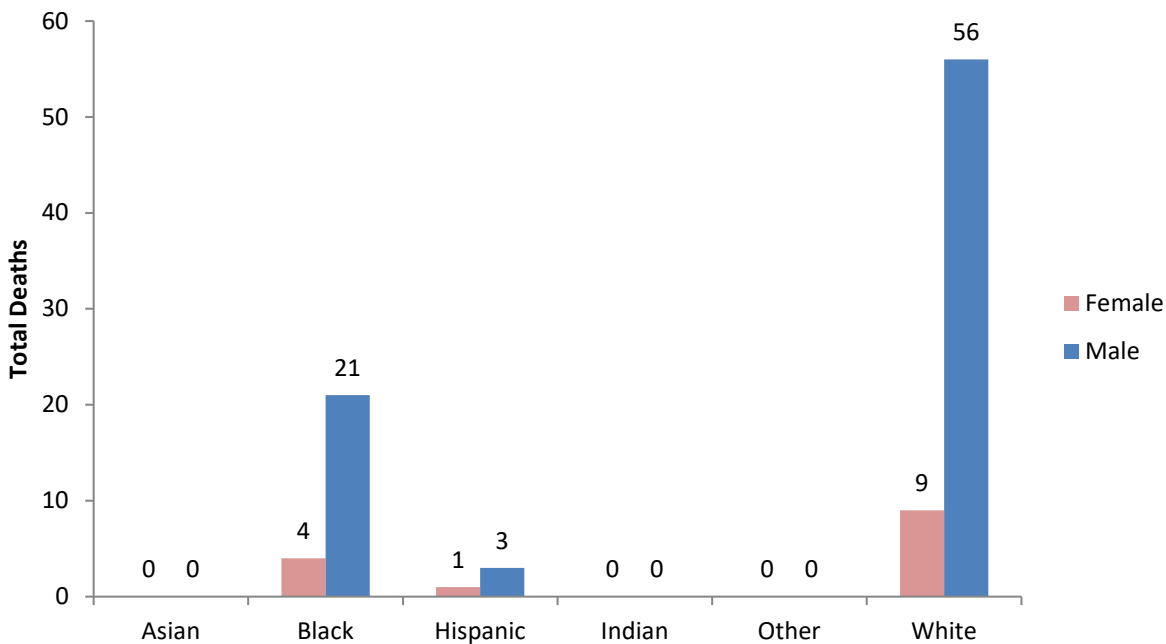
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2020

Figure 3.21: N=94, represents all suicide deaths by gender and age group.



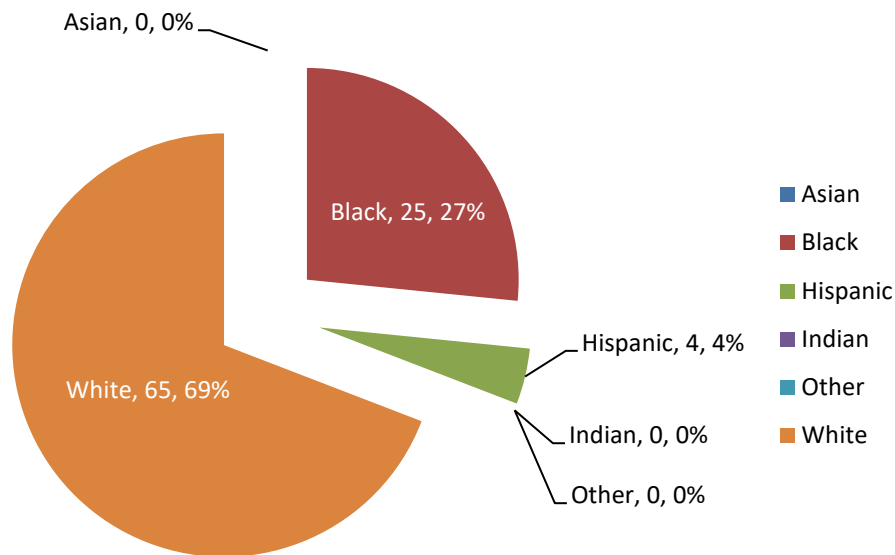
Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020

Figure 3.22: N=94, represents all suicide deaths by gender and race.



Percentage of Suicide Deaths by Race, 2020

Figure 3.23: N=94, represents all suicide deaths by race.



Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Month of Death, 2020

Figure 3.24: N=94, represents all suicide deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Suicide Deaths by Means of Death, 2020

Table 3.4: N=94, represents all suicide deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Asphyxia: Garbage bag	1
Carbon Monoxide: Generator	1
Drug	2
Fall: Balcony	1
Firearm:	
Handgun	57
Rifle	2
Shotgun	8
Unknown	1
Hanging:	
Belt	2
Bed sheet	1
Cable	1
Electrical cord	4
Rope	6
Scarf	2
Sheet	1
Shoelace	2
Towel	1
Sharp: Knife	1
Total	94

Undetermined

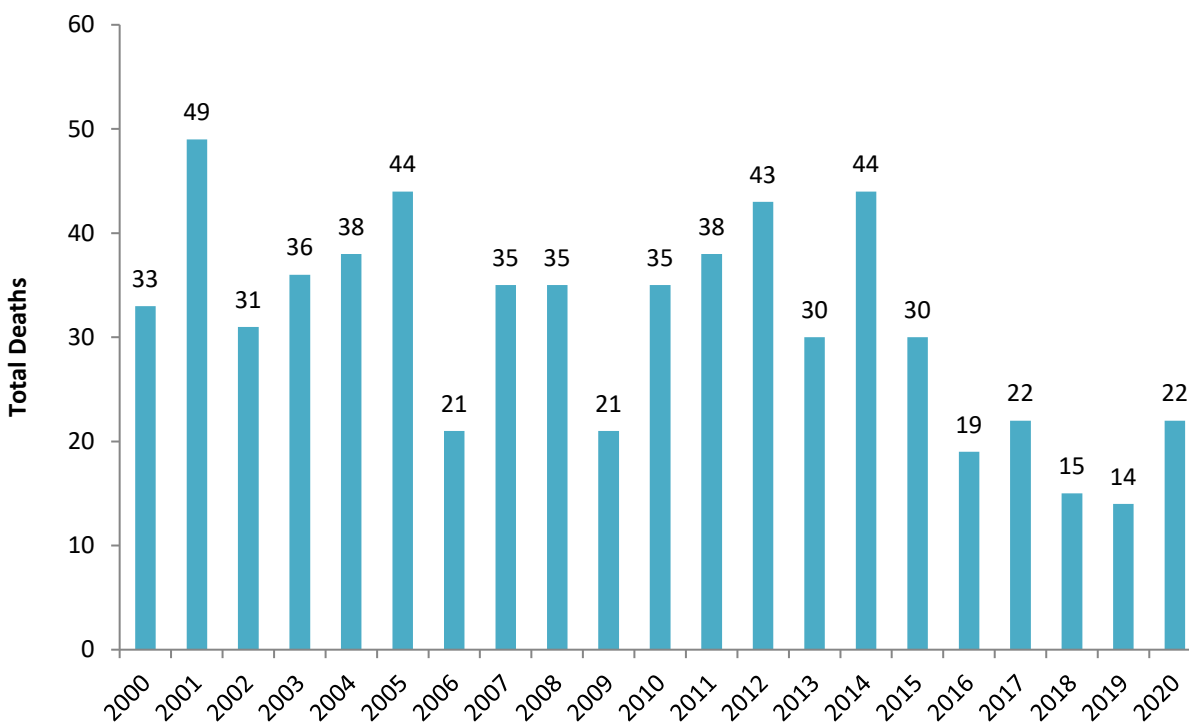
Undetermined deaths accounted for 1.9% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2020.

There was a 57.1% increase in the total number of undetermined deaths, from 14 deaths in 2019 to 22 deaths in 2020.

Undetermined was the most common means of Undetermined death, accounting for 54.5% of the deaths.

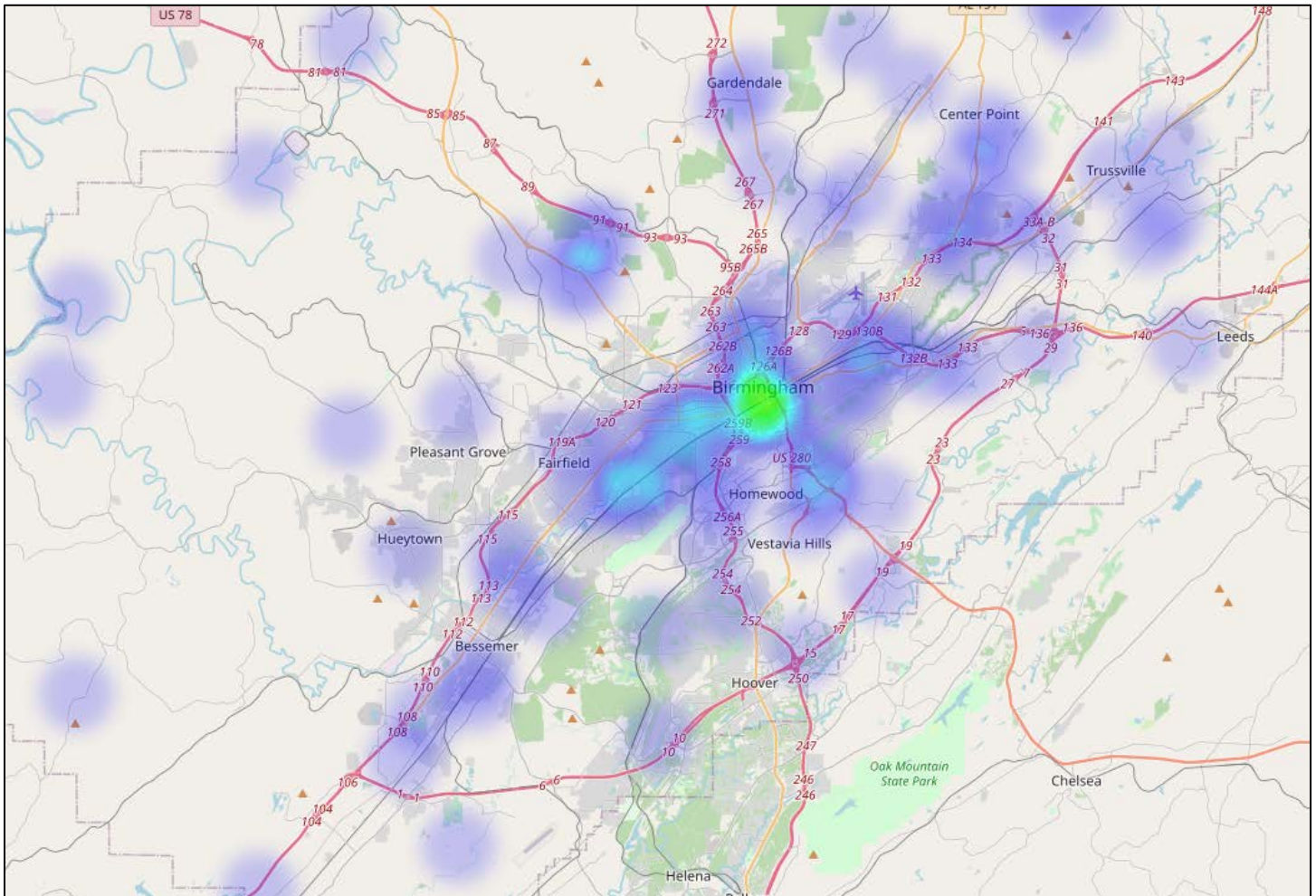
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2020

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



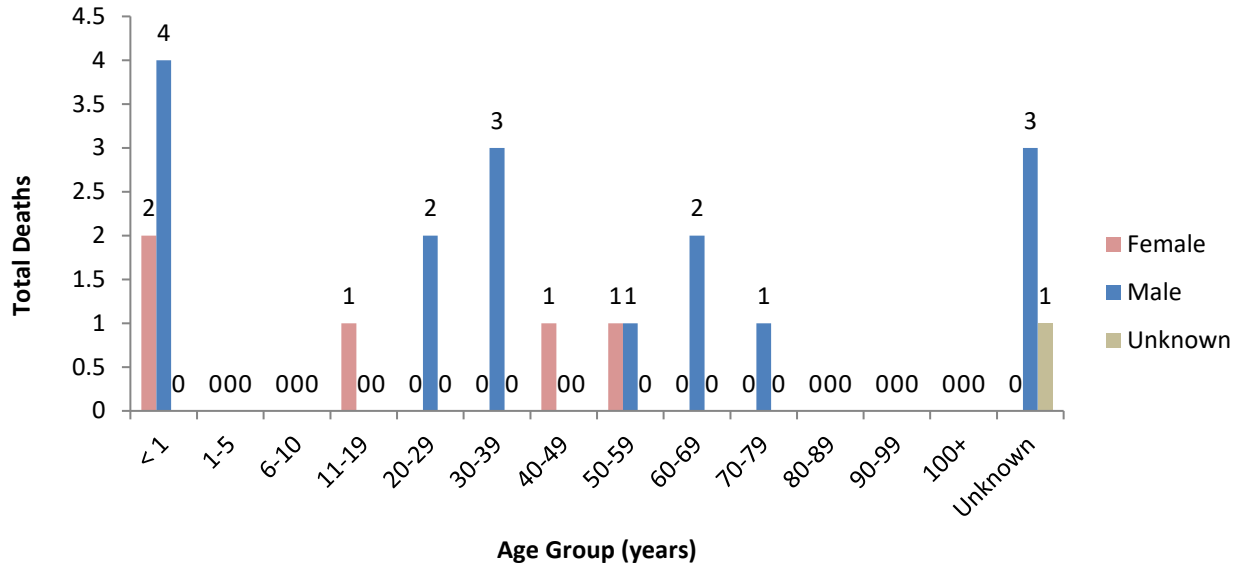
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Place of Death, 2020

Figure 3.26: N=22, represents all undetermined deaths by place of death.



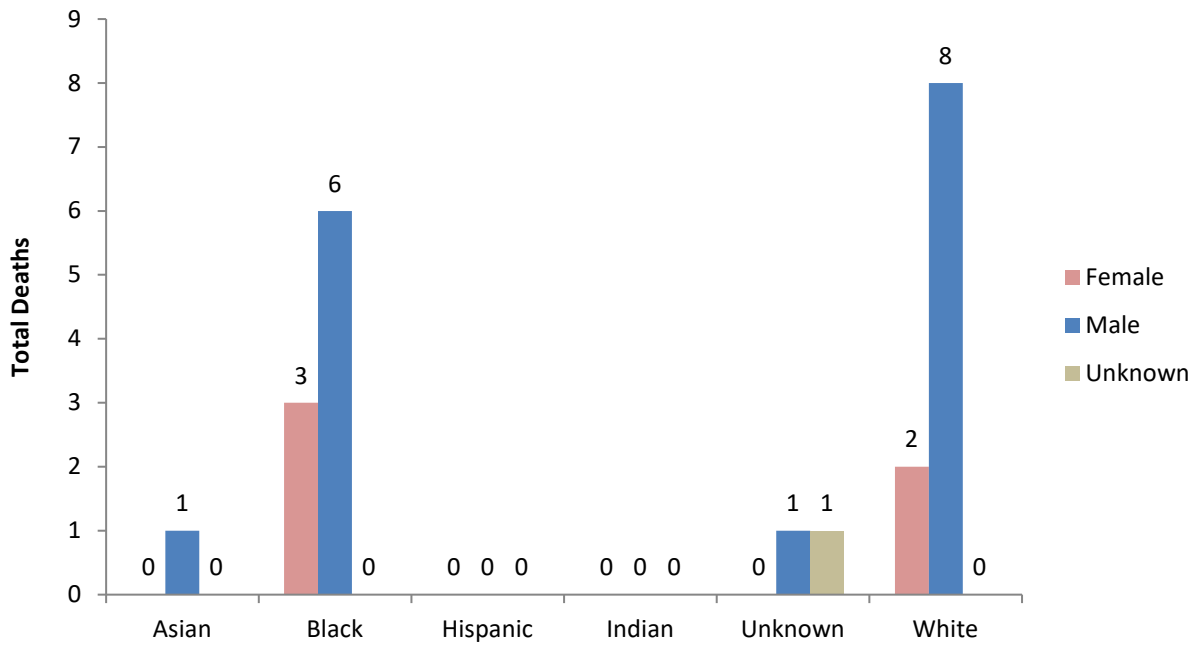
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2020

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



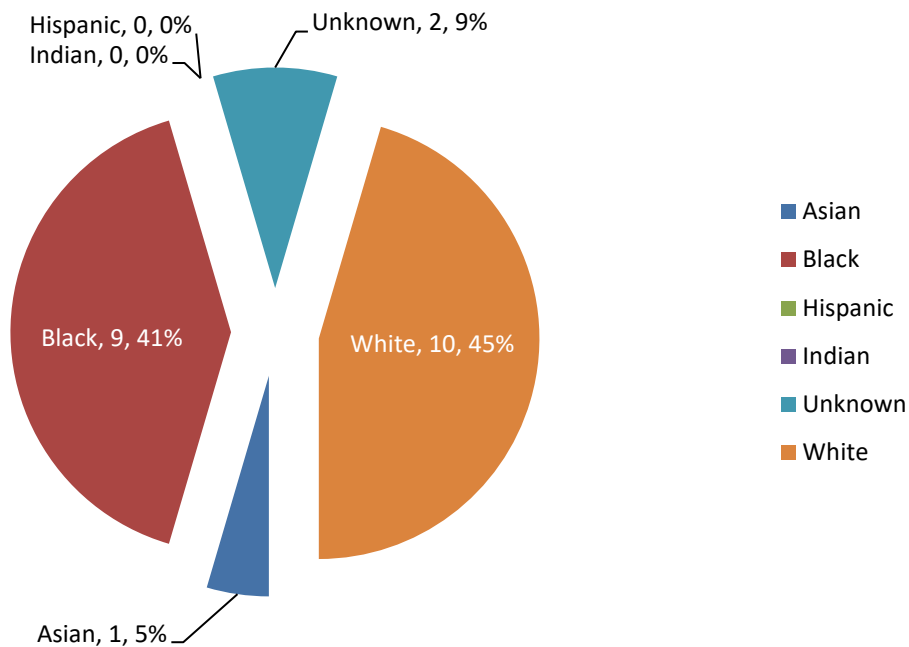
Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020

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



Percentage of Undetermined Deaths by Race, 2020

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



Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Month of Death, 2020

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



Total Number of Undetermined Deaths by Means of Death, 2020

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

Means of Death	Total
Co-sleeping:	
Bed	2
Drug:	
Drug-opioid	1
Drug-other	1
Fall: Cliff	1
Fire: House	1
Undetermined:	
Bed	2
Crib	2
Undetermined	12
Total	22

Section 4: Infant/Juvenile Deaths

Infant/Juvenile deaths accounted for 4.9% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2020. There was a 7.7% increase in the total number of infant/juvenile deaths, from 52 deaths in 2019 to 56 deaths in 2020. Infant deaths decreased 5.3%, from 19 deaths in 2019 to 18 deaths in 2020 and, juvenile deaths increased 15.2%, from 33 deaths in 2019 to 38 deaths in 2020.

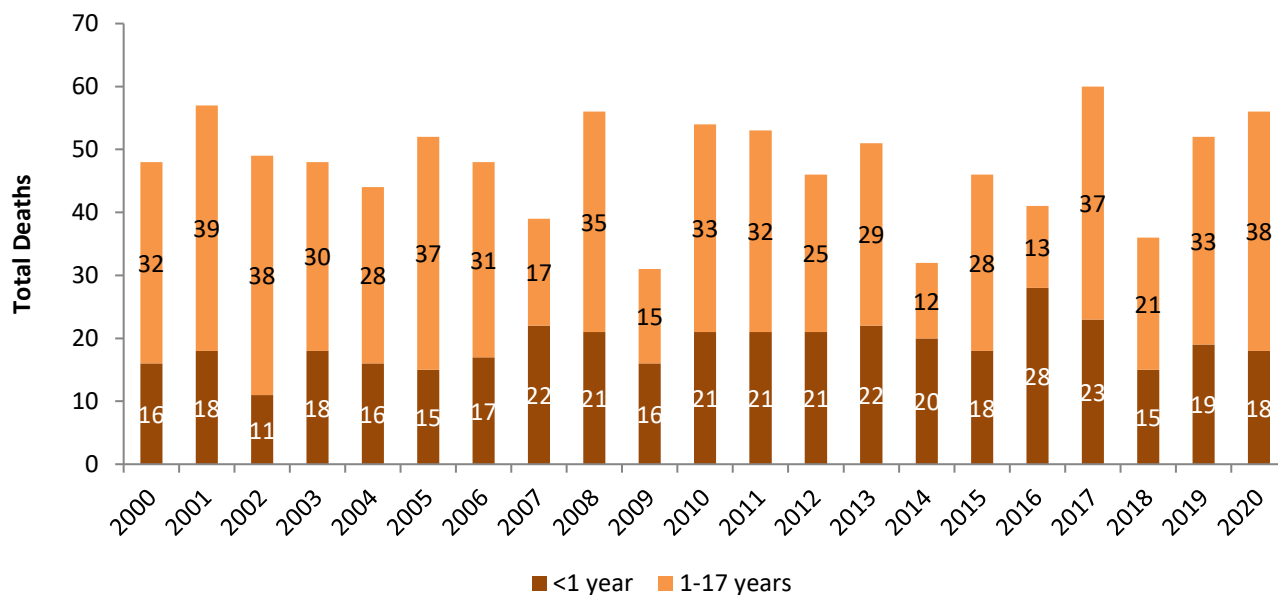
Infants (<1 year of age): Deaths due to co-sleeping was the most common means of infant death in 2020, accounting for 10 of the 18 or 55.5% of the infant deaths. Accidental death was the most common manner of infant death, accounting for 61.1% of the deaths. The most common race was Black representing 83.3% of the infant deaths, while males were the most common gender representing 72.2% of the infant deaths.

Juveniles (1–17 years of age): Deaths due to motor vehicle collisions was the most common means of juvenile death in 2020, accounting for 28.9% of the deaths and firearms accounting for 23.6% of the juvenile deaths. Accidental was the most common manner of death, accounting for 42.1% of the deaths and firearms accounting for 28.9% of the juvenile deaths. The most common race was Black representing 84.2% of the juvenile deaths, while males were the most common gender representing 81.6% of the juvenile deaths.

Historical Summary

Total Number of Infant and Juvenile Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2020

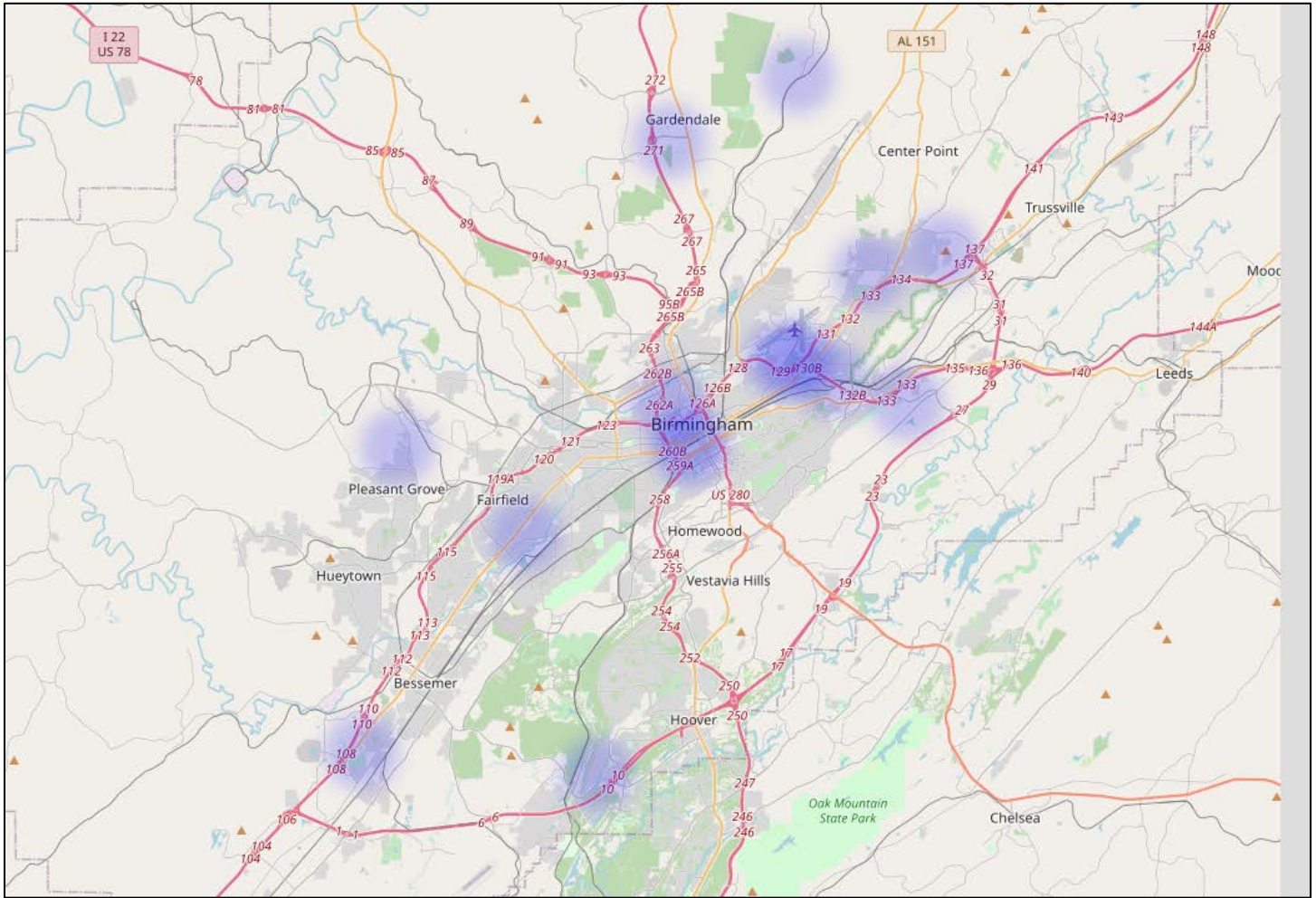
Figure 4.1: represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) and juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) investigated by the JCCMEO.



Infant Deaths

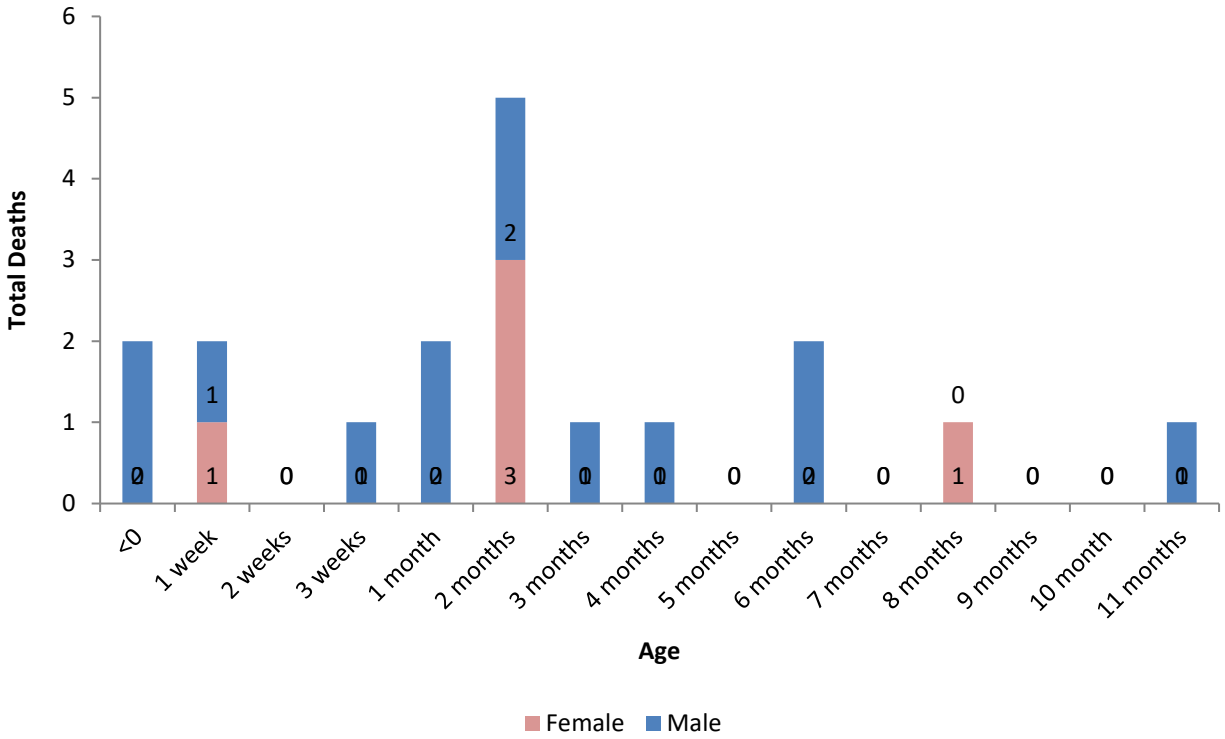
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Place of Injury, 2020

Figure 4.2: N=18, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by place of death.



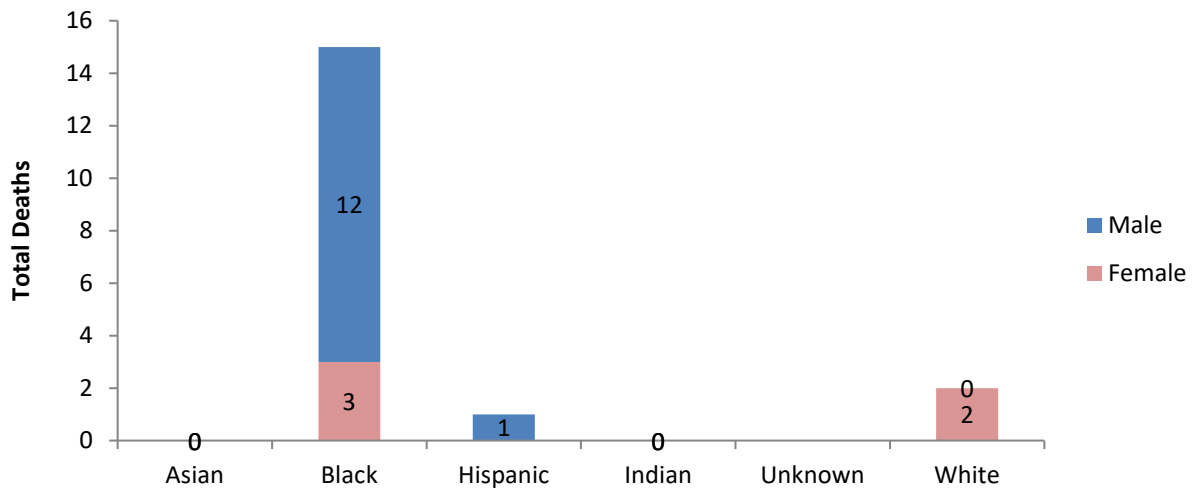
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Gender and Age, 2020

Figure 4.3: N=18, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by gender and age.



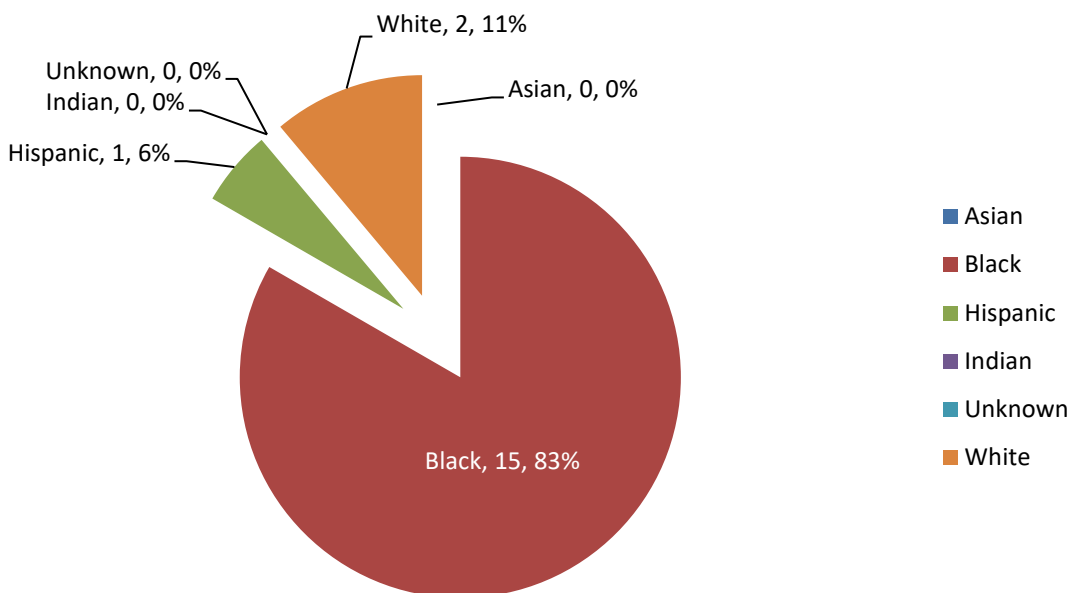
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020

Figure 4.4: N=18, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by gender and race.



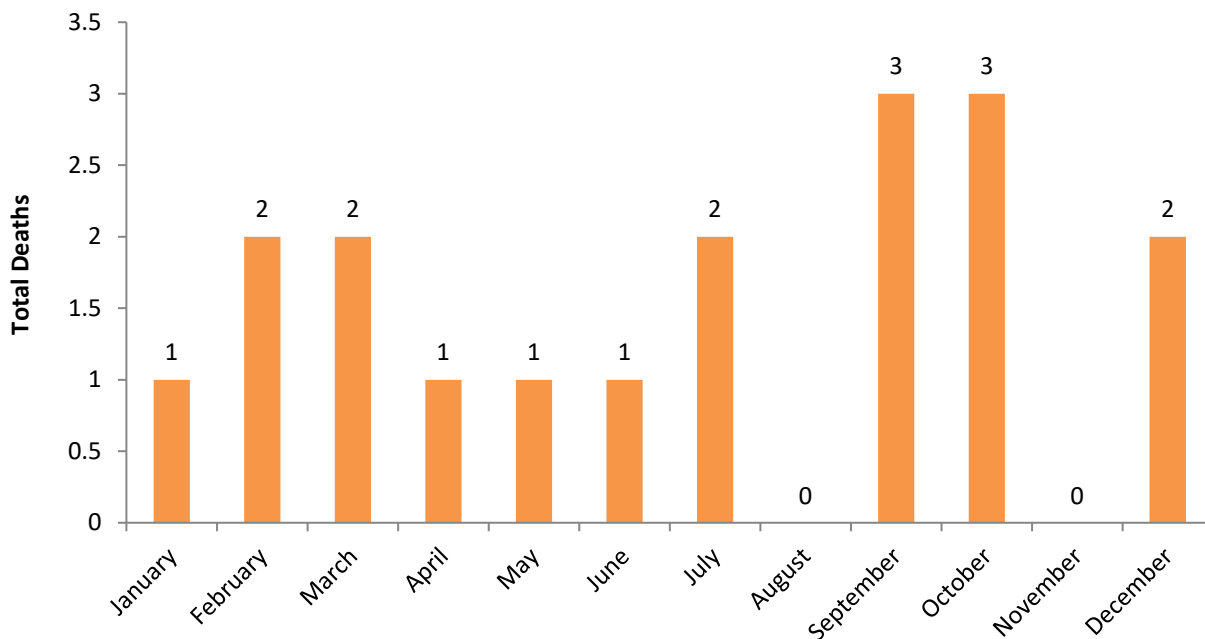
Percentage of Infant Deaths by Race, 2020

Figure 4.5: N=18, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by race.



Total Number of Infant Deaths by Month of Death, 2020

Figure 4.6: N=18, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by month of death.



Total Number of Infant Deaths by Means of Death, 2020

Table 4.1: N=18, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Asphyxia: Pillow	1
Blunt: Unknown	1
Co-sleeping:	
Bed	8
Chair	1
Couch	1
Fall: Bed	1
Motor Vehicle Collision	1
Undetermined:	
Bed	2
Crib	2
Total	18

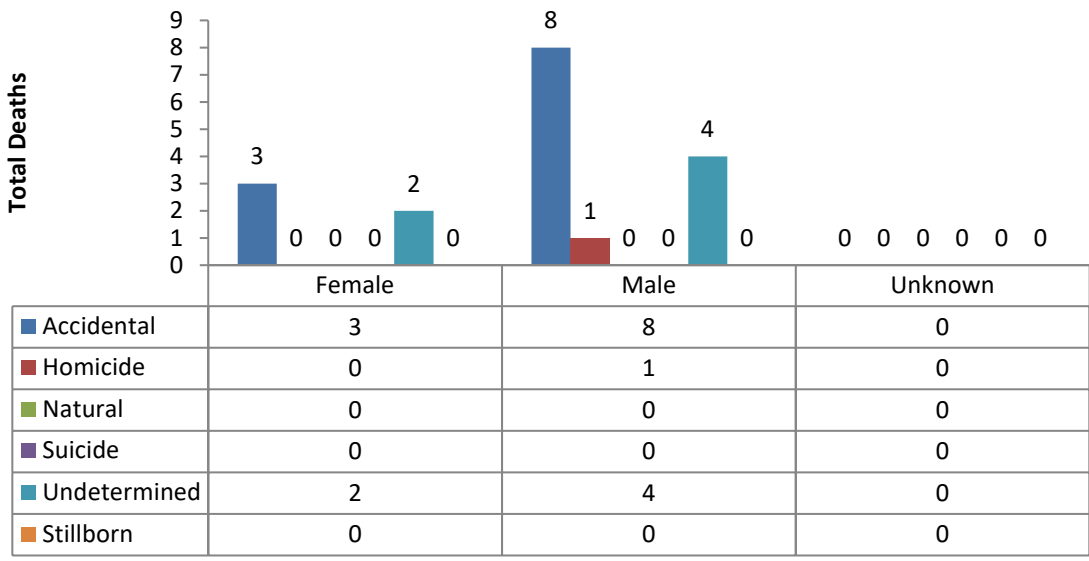
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Manner of Death and Race, 2020

Table 4.2: N=18, 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	9	1	0	0	5	0	15
Hispanic	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Total	11	1	0	0	6	0	18

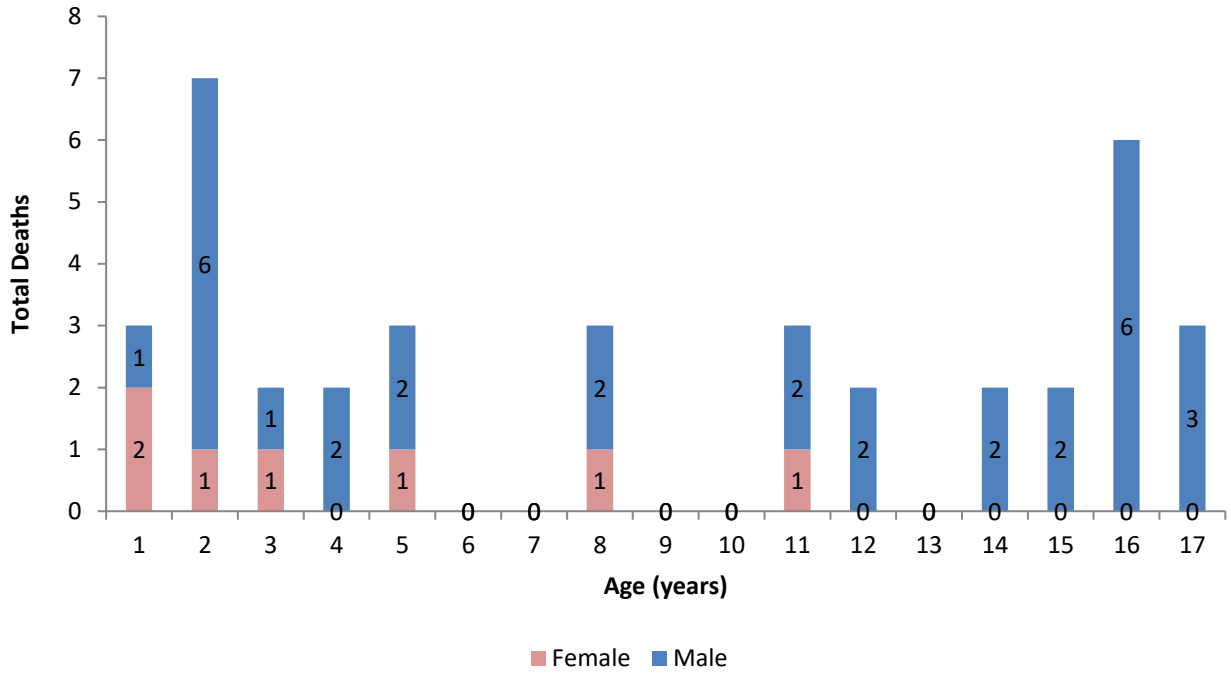
Total Number of Infant Deaths by Manner of Death and Gender, 2020

Figure 4.7: N=18, represents all infant deaths (<1 year of age) by manner of death and gender.¹



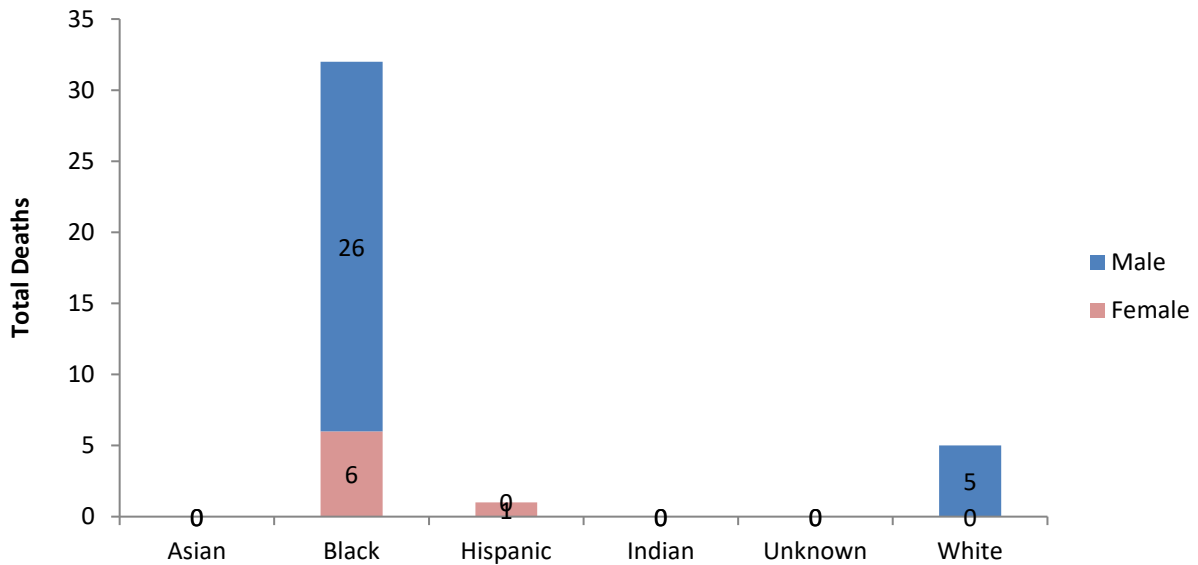
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Gender and Age, 2020

Figure 4.9: N=38, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by gender and age.



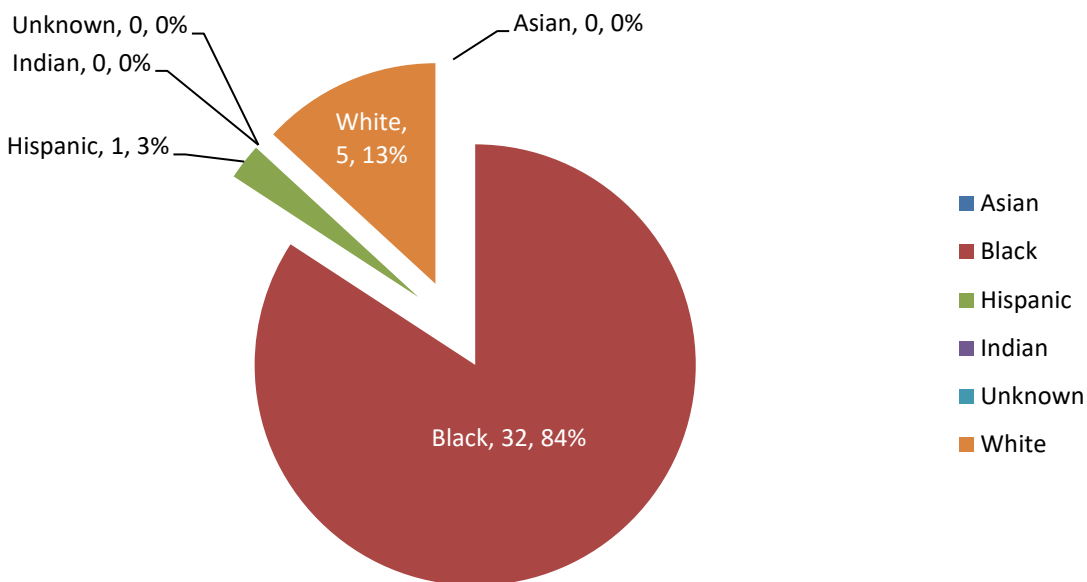
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020

Figure 4.10: N=38, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by gender and race.



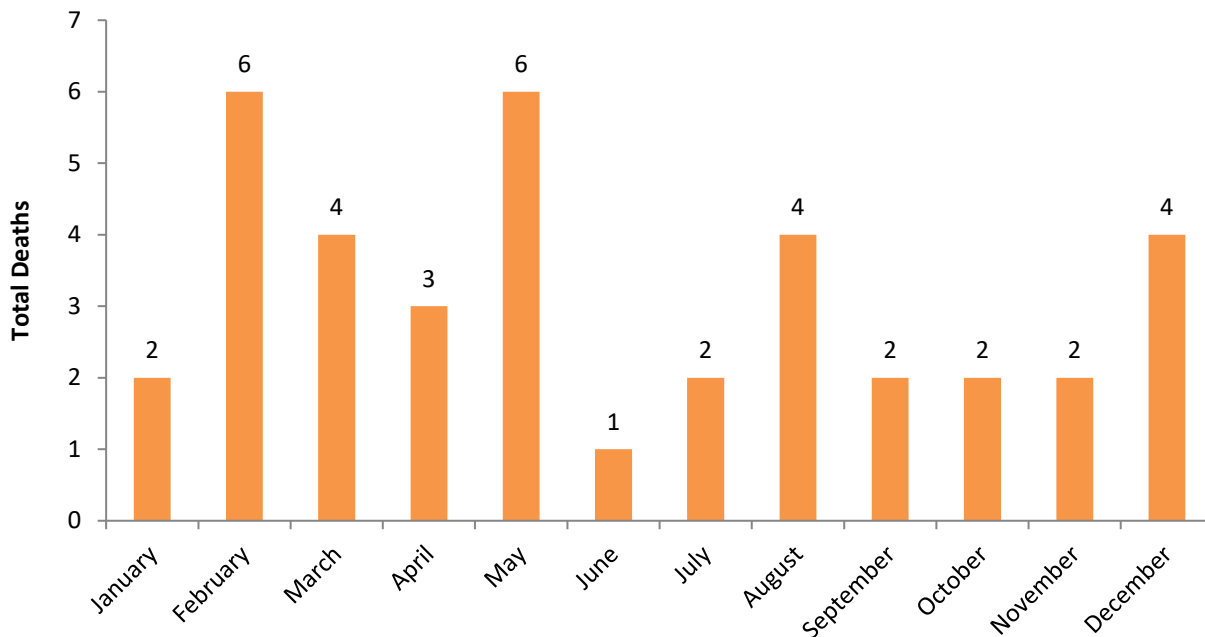
Percentage of Juvenile Deaths by Race, 2020

Figure 4.11: N=38, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by race.



Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Month of Death, 2020

Figure 4.12: N=38, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by month of death.



Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Means of Death, 2020

Table 4.3: N=38, represents all juvenile deaths (1-17 years of age) by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Blunt:	
Hands/belt	1
Unknown	3
COPD/asthma	1
Diabetes	2
Drug: Opioid	1
Fire: House	3
Gastrointestinal bleeding	1
Gun:	
Handgun	6
Handgun/rifle	1
Shotgun	1
Unknown	1
Hanging: Towel	1
Motor vehicle:	
Single vehicle	2
Multiple vehicles	6
Pedestrian	3
Natural:	
Heart disease	1
Other natural	1
Seizure disorder (epilepsy)	2
Undetermined	1
Total	38

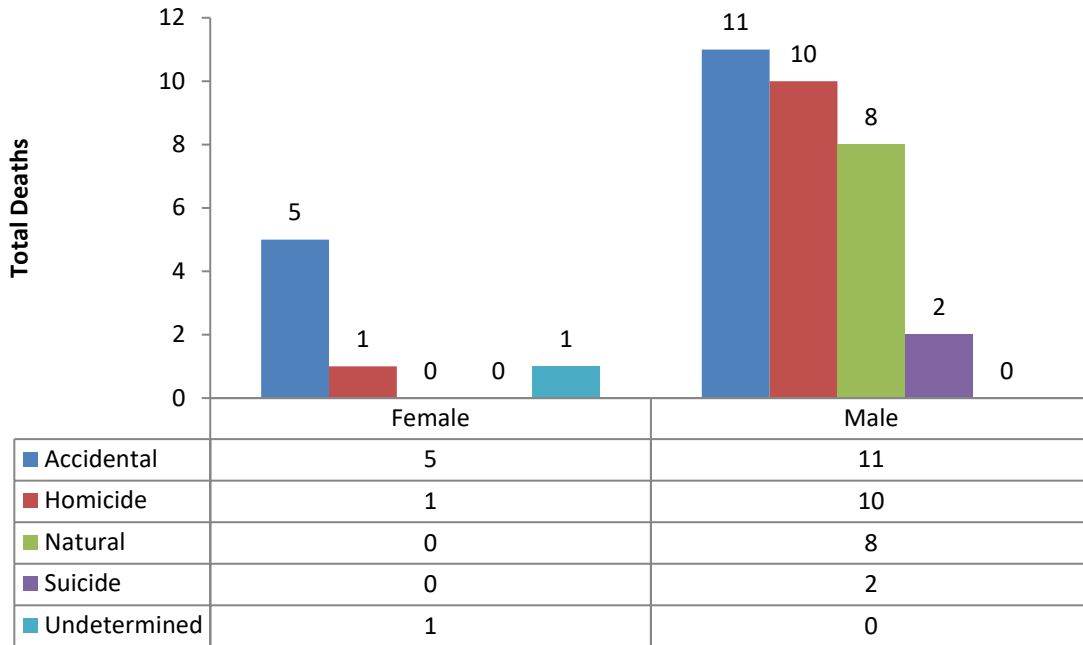
Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Manner of Death and Race, 2020

Table 4.4: N=38, 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	13	10	7	1	1	32
Hispanic	1	0	0	0	0	1
Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	2	1	1	1	0	5
Total	16	11	8	2	1	38

Total Number of Juvenile Deaths by Manner of Death and Gender, 2020

Figure 4.13: N=38, 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.

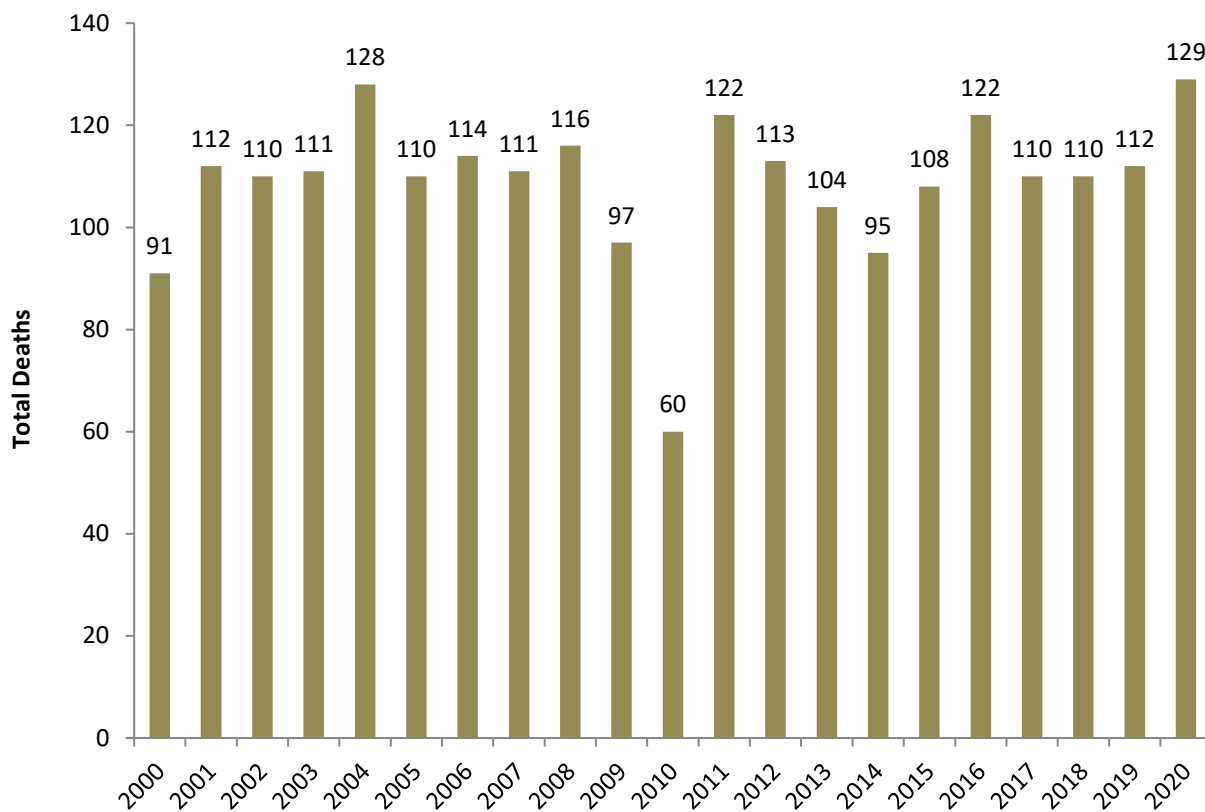
Motor vehicle deaths accounted for 11.3% of the deaths investigated by the JCCMEO in 2020. There was a 15.2 % increase in the total number of motor vehicle deaths, from 112 deaths in 2019 to 129 deaths in 2020 and is the highest year in the last 20 years.

Multiple-vehicle collisions was the most common means of motor vehicle death accounting for 38.8% of the deaths, followed by single vehicle collisions accounting for 31.8% of the deaths and motor vehicle-pedestrian collisions accounting for 26.4% of the deaths.

Of note, there was a 70% increase in motor vehicle-pedestrian deaths, from 20 deaths in 2019 to 34 deaths in 2020.

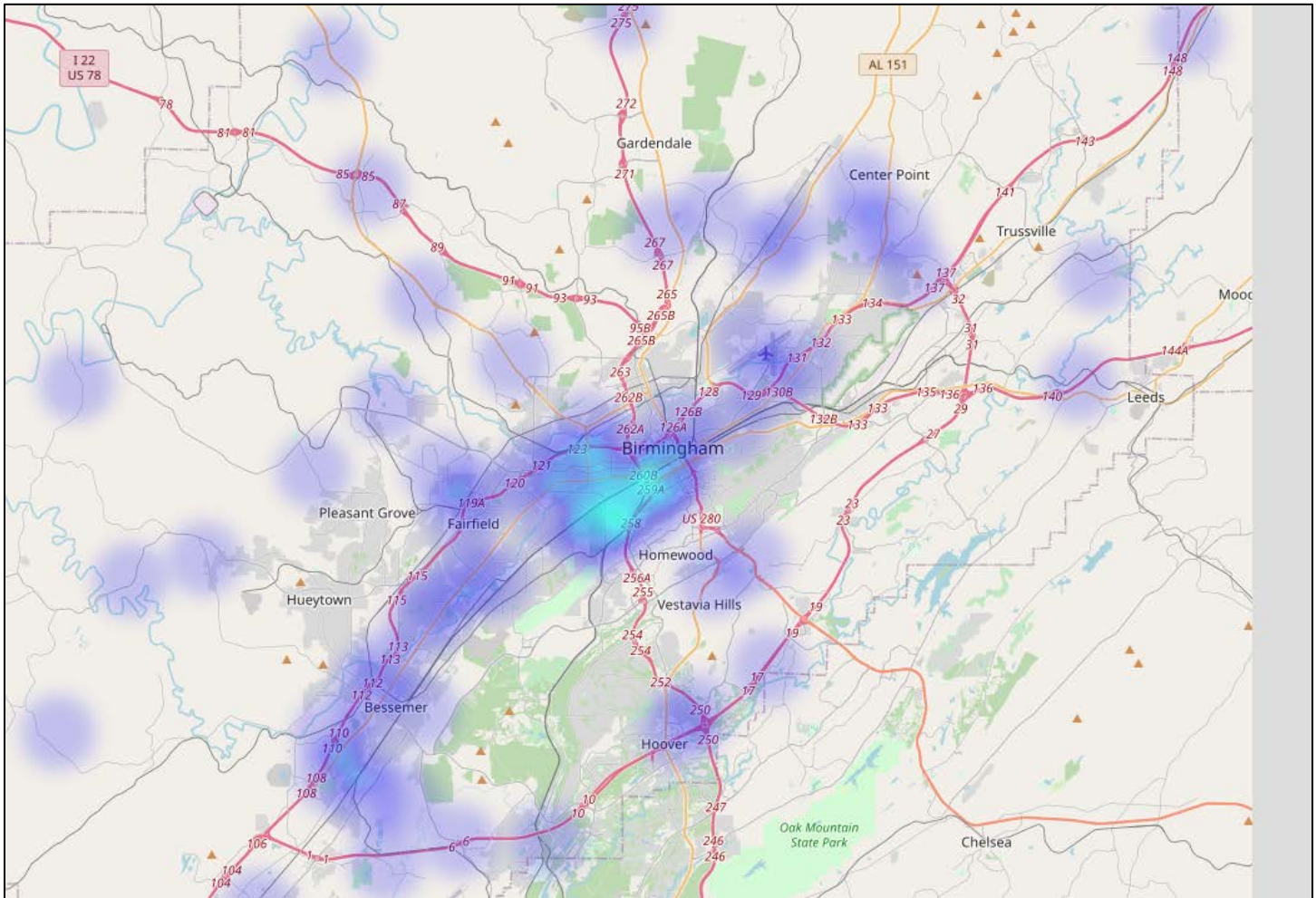
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2020

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



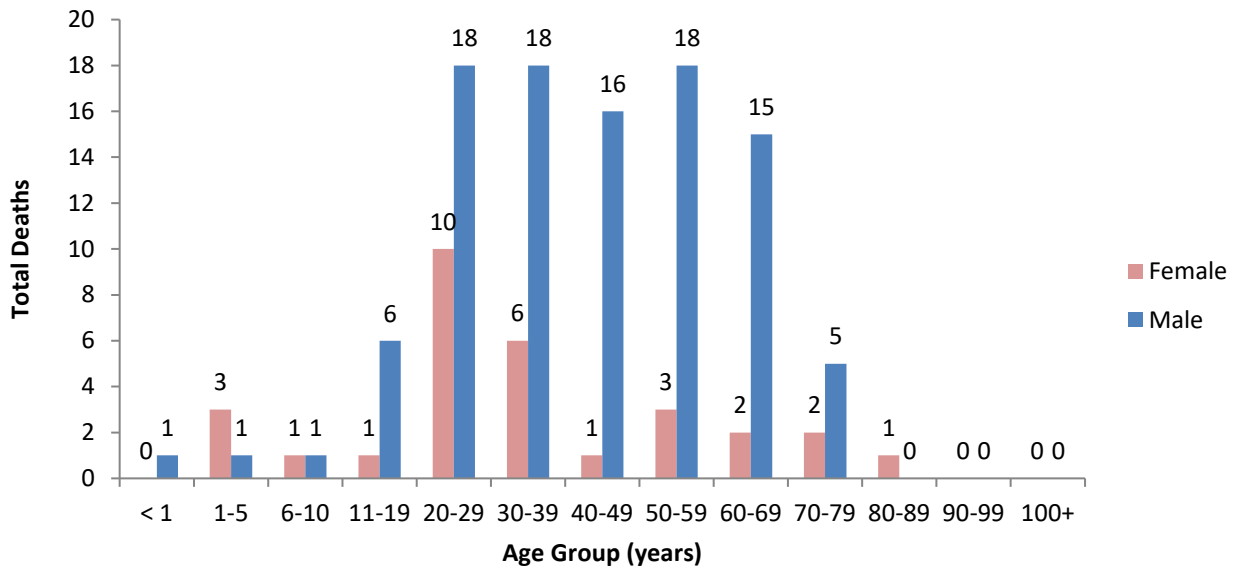
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Place of Injury, 2020

Figure 5.2: N=129, represents all motor vehicle deaths by place of death.



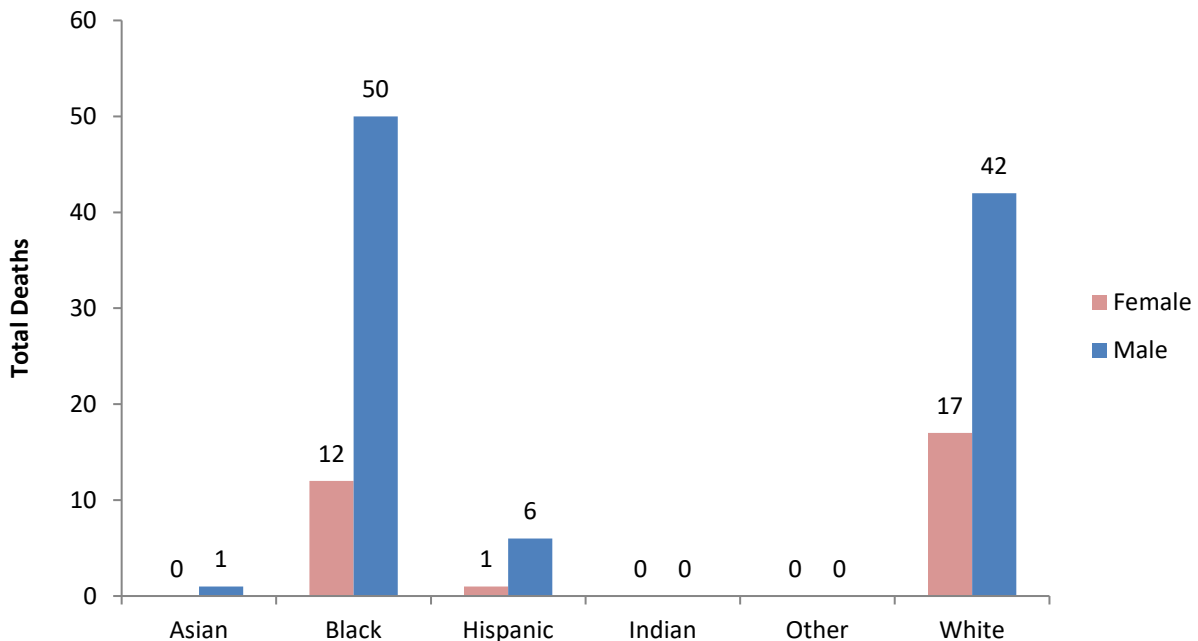
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2020

Figure 5.3: N=129, represents all motor vehicle deaths by gender and age group.



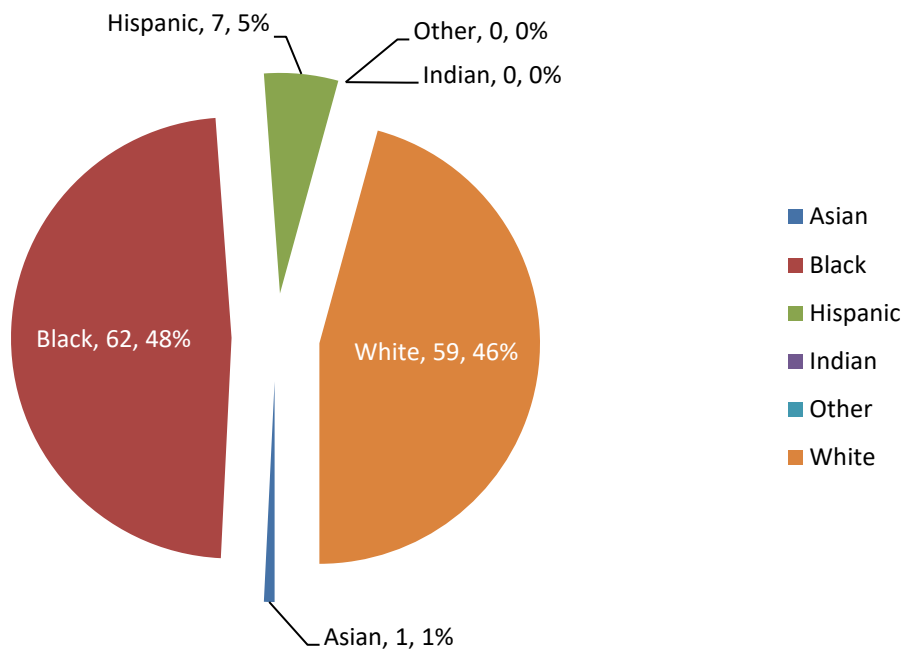
Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020

Figure 5.4: N=129, represents all motor vehicle deaths by gender and race.



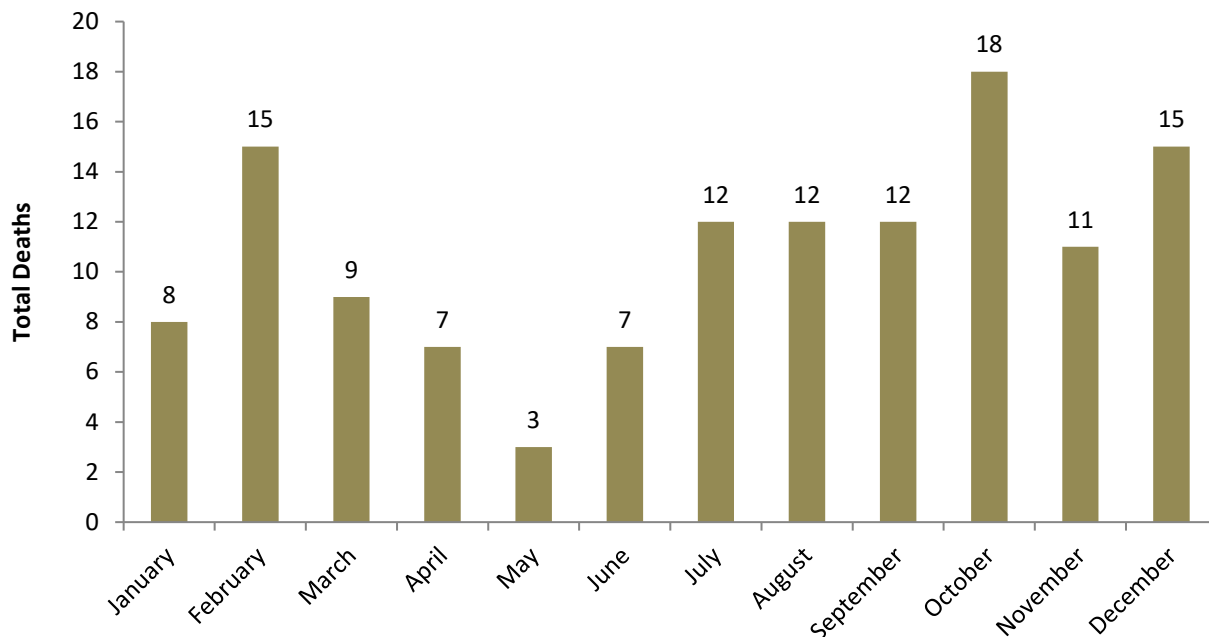
Percentage of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Race, 2020

Figure 5.5: N=129, represents all motor vehicle deaths by race.



Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Month of Death, 2020

Figure 5.6: N=129, represents all motor vehicle deaths by month of death.



Total Number of Motor Vehicle Deaths by Means of Death, 2020

Table 5.1: N=129, represents all motor vehicle deaths by means of death.

Means of Death	Total
Motor-vehicle:	
Bicycle	3
Single vehicle	41
Multiple vehicles	50
Train	0
Pedestrian:	
Motor vehicle	34
Train	1
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 2020 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 other drug(s) that combined was the cause of death.

General Statistics and Notable Trends

There was a 27.9% increase in the total overdose deaths this past year, from 236 deaths in 2019 to 302 deaths in 2020.

There was a 35.4% increase in opioid deaths, from 175 deaths in 2019 to 237 deaths in 2020.

There was a 100% increase in fentanyl deaths, from 95 deaths in 2019 to 190 deaths in 2020.

There was a 25% increase in cocaine deaths, from 56 deaths in 2019 to 70 deaths in 2020.

There was a 16.8% decrease in heroin deaths, from 89 deaths in 2019 to 74 deaths in 2020.

Methamphetamine deaths have continued to rise for the fifth straight year, from 69 deaths in 2019 to 82 deaths in 2020.

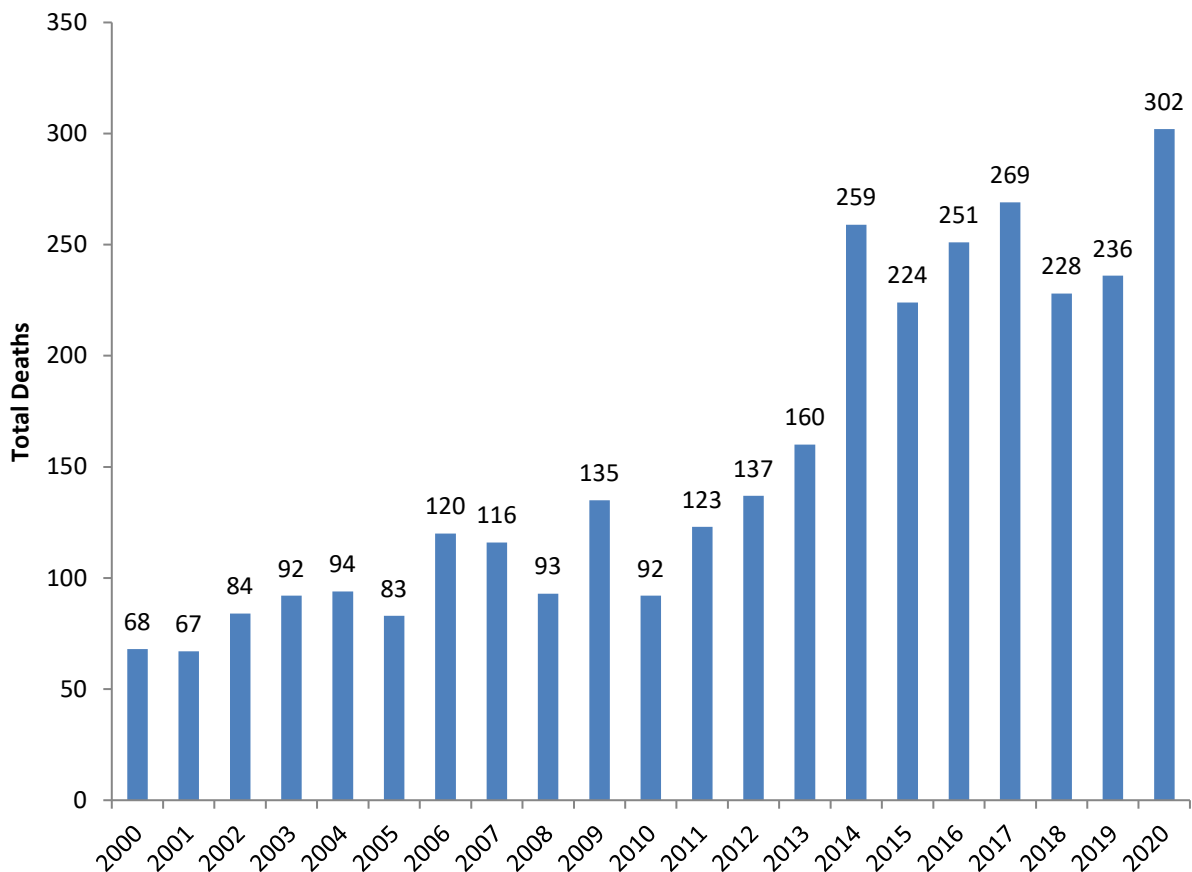
Overdose deaths increased 93.1%, from 58 deaths in 2019 to 112 deaths in 2020, in individuals who identified as Black.

Overdose deaths of males in the 40-49 age group increased 125%, from 32 deaths in 2019 to 72 deaths in 2020.

Historical Summary

Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Year of Death 2000-2020

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

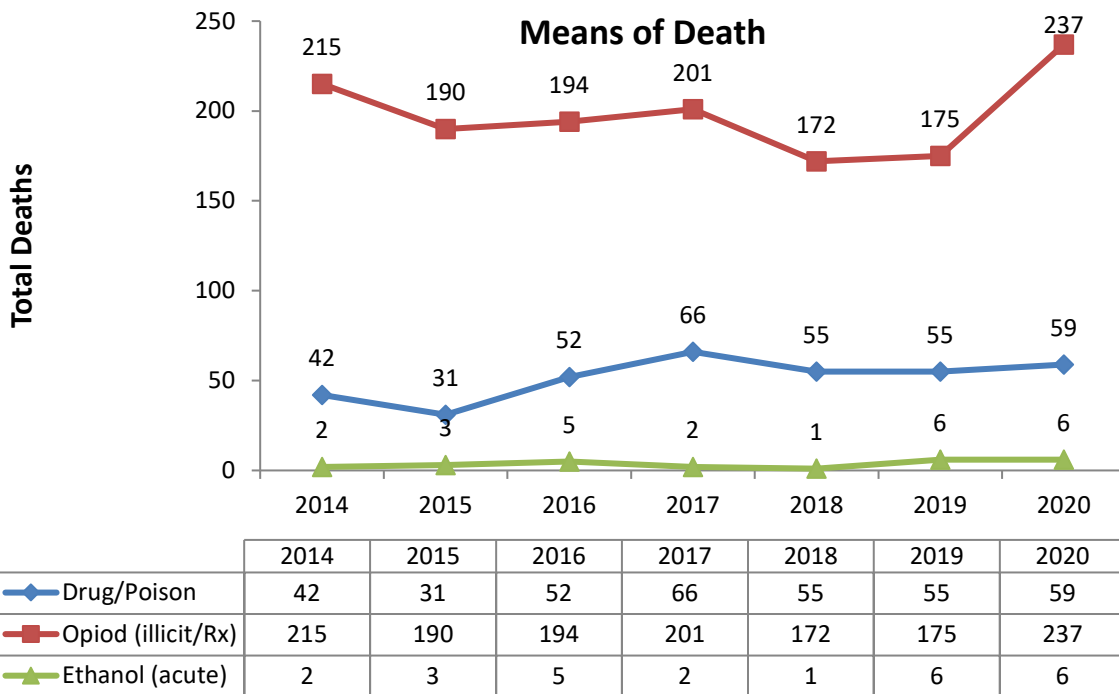


Historical Summary: Means of Death, 2014-2020

Table 6.1: represents all overdoses by means of death, 2014-2020.

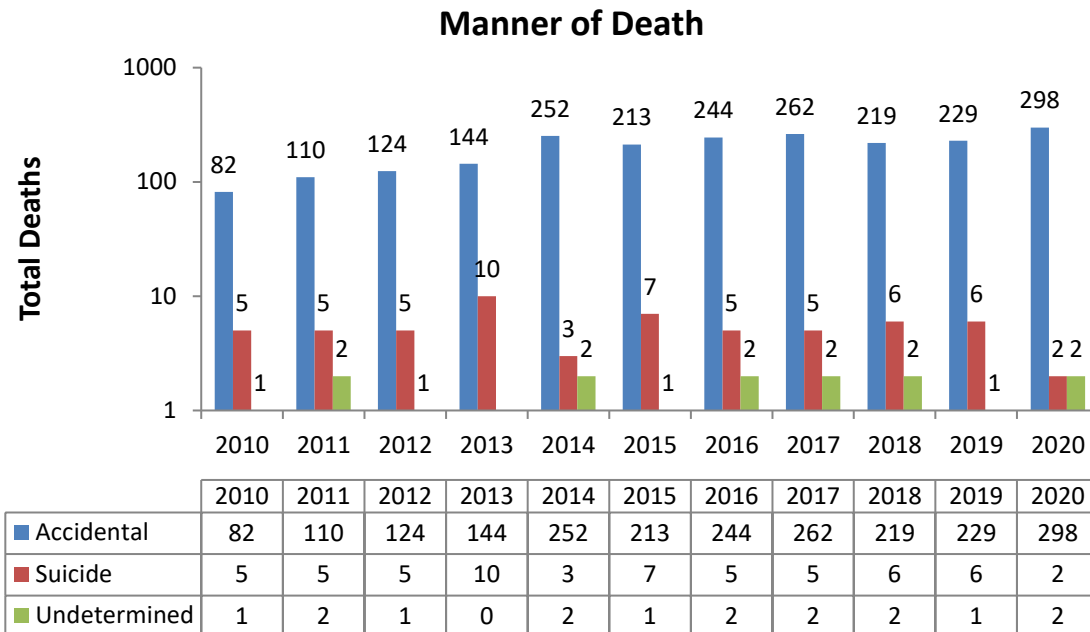
Year	Drug/ Poison	Opioid (illicit/Rx)	Ethanol (acute)	=	Total Overdose Deaths
2014	42	215	2	=	259
2015	31	190	3	=	224
2016	52	194	5	=	251
2017	66	201	2	=	269
2018	55	172	1	=	228
2019	55	175	6	=	236
2020	59	237	6	=	302

Figure 6.2: represent all overdoses by means of death, 2014-2020.



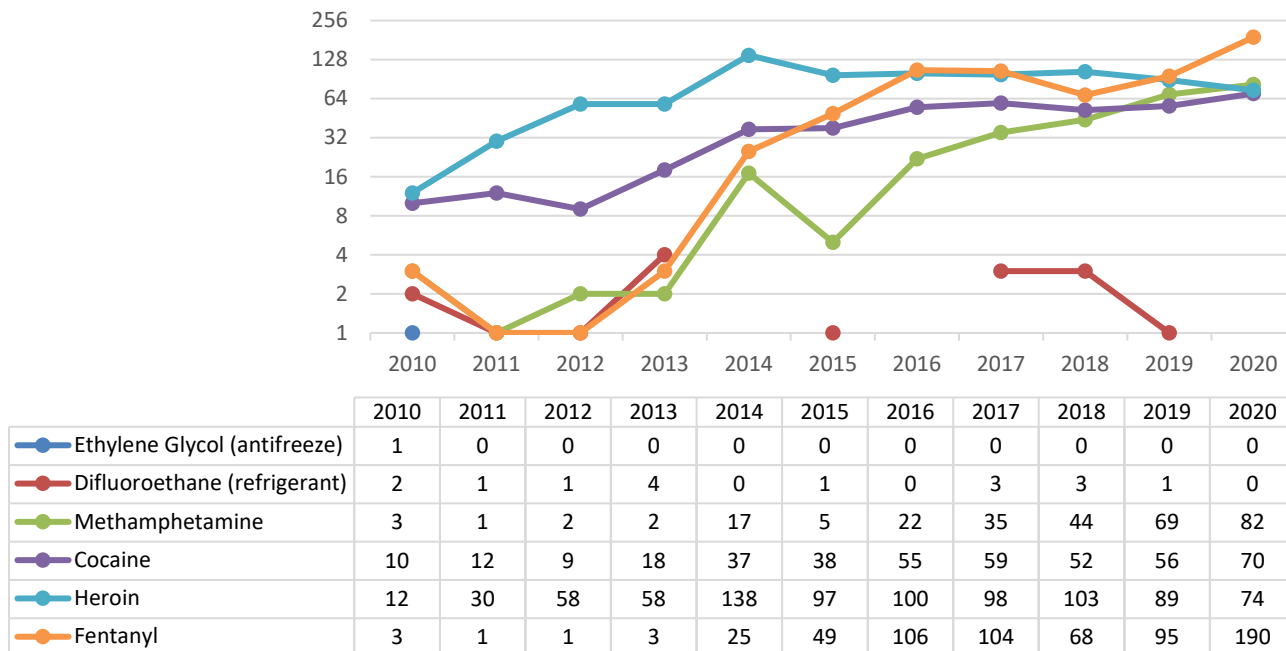
Historical Summary: Manner of Death, 2010-2020

Figure 6.3: represents all overdoses by manner of death.



Historical Summary: Illicit Drugs/Poisons, 2010-2020

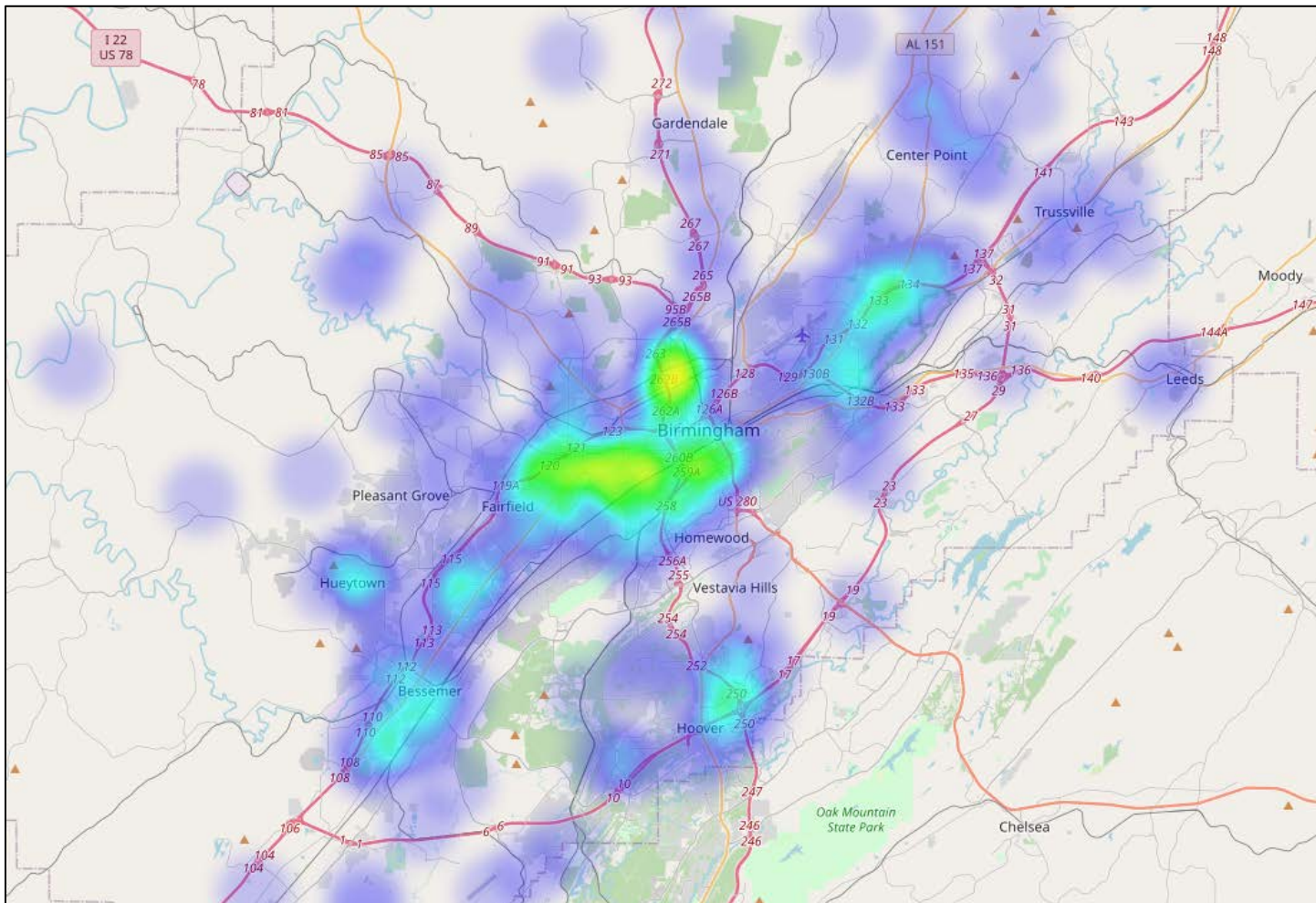
Figure 6.4: represents illicit drugs and poisons.



2020 Overdose Deaths

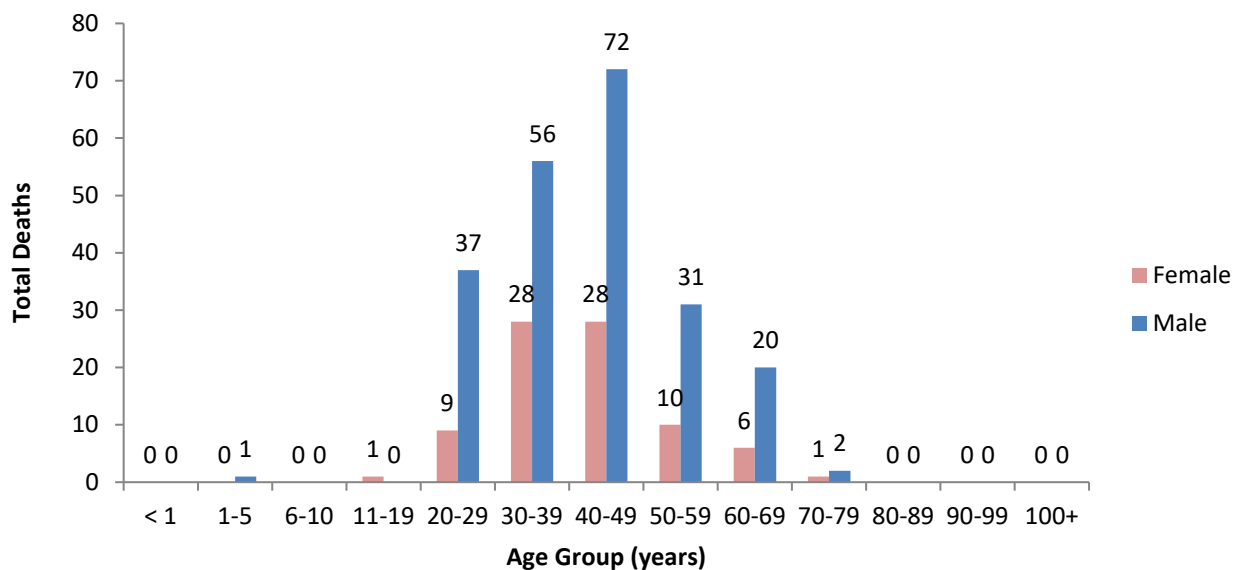
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Place of Injury, 2020

Figure 6.5: N=302, represents all overdose deaths by place of death.



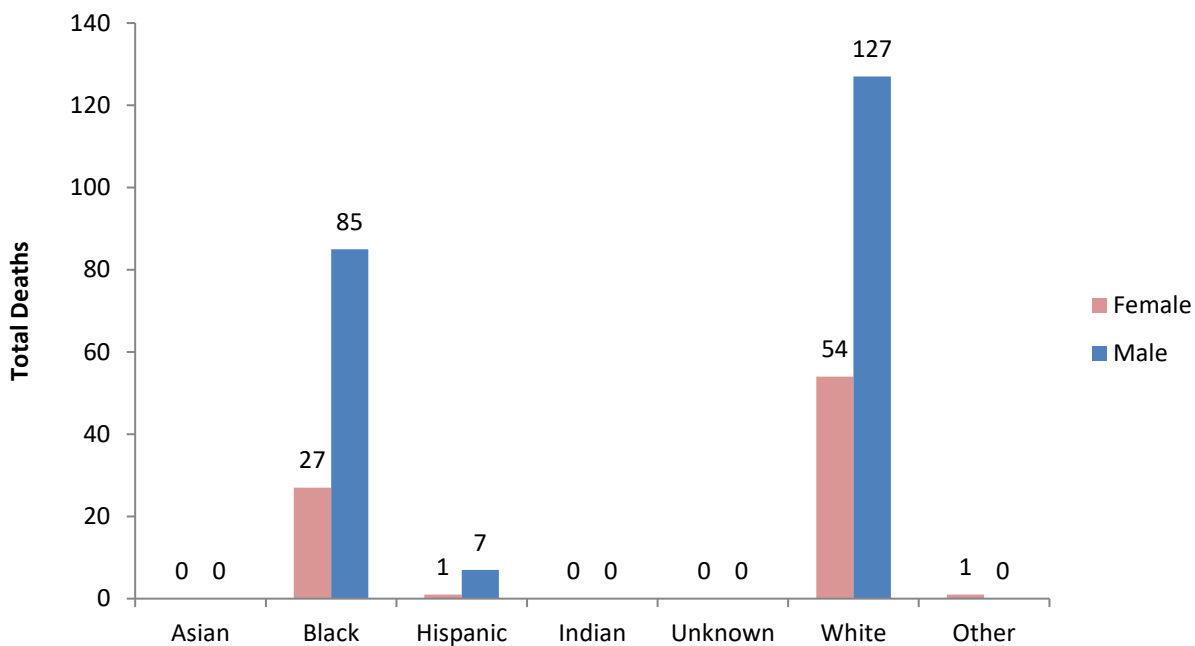
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Gender and Age Group, 2020

Figure 6.6: N=302, represents all overdose deaths by gender and age group.



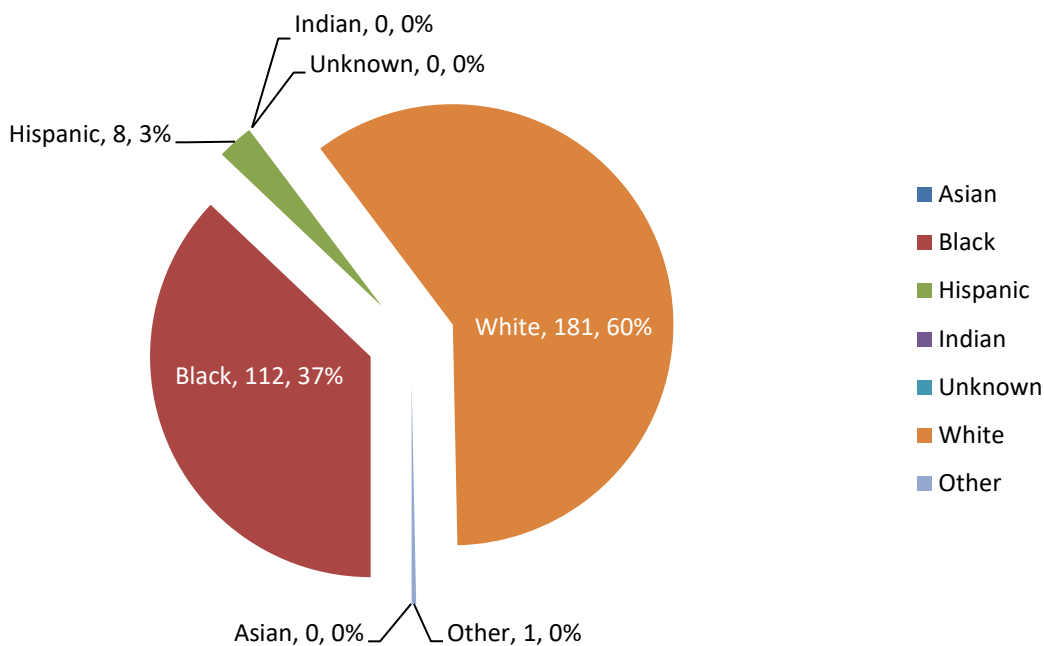
Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Gender and Race, 2020

Figure 6.7: N=302, represents all overdose deaths by gender and race.



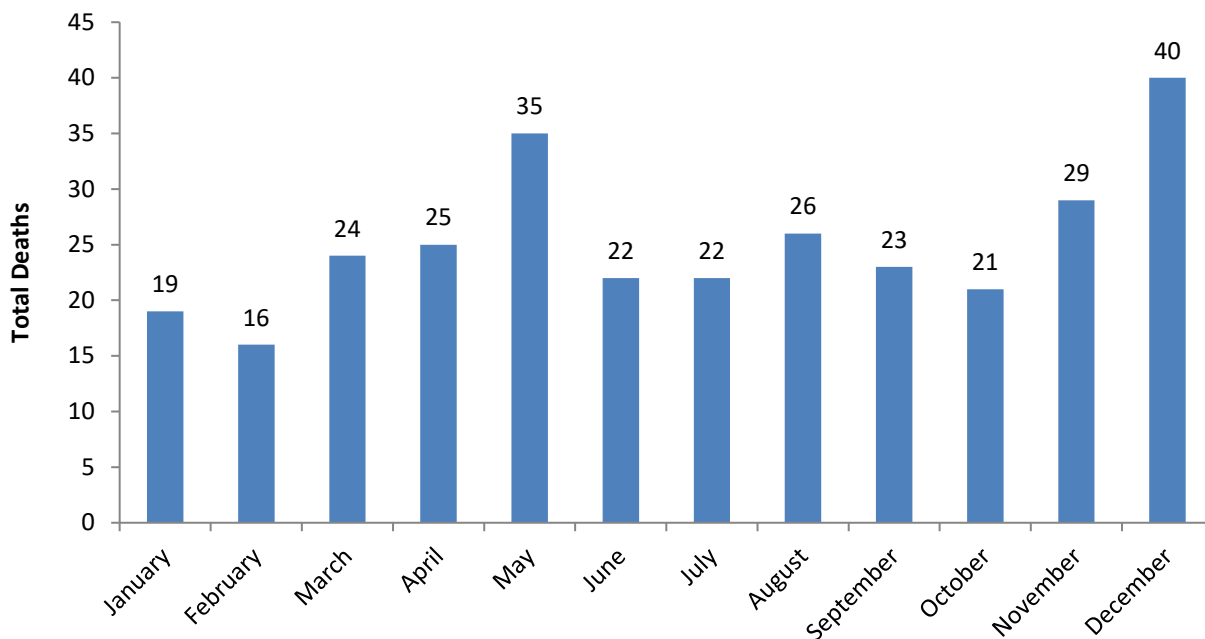
Percentage of Overdose Deaths by Race, 2020

Figure 6.8: N=302, represents all overdose deaths by race.



Total Number of Overdose Deaths by Month of Death, 2020

Figure 6.9: N=302, represents all overdose deaths by month of death.



Most Common Prescription Medications Causing Death: 2010-2020

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 specific drug was found to be either the single cause of death or a component in conjunction with other 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	2020
Opioids:											
Hydrocodone	8	7	8	12	28	11	13	15	12	11	11
Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	1	2
Fentanyl	3	1	1	3	25	49	106	104	68	95	190
Methadone	22	13	11	21	21	17	16	7	9	8	5
Morphine	10	17	12	5	7	3	5	3	0	2	8
Oxycodone	4	8	4	13	21	11	12	11	8	13	12
Tramadol	2	0	1	6	5	3	3	9	5	5	3
Benzodiazepines:											
Alprazolam (Xanax)	5	3	7	12	32	8	31	28	15	16	19
Clonazepam (Klonopin)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Diazepam (Valium)	3	1	2	7	11	5	3	6	4	2	4
Barbiturates:											
Butalbital	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Phenobarbital	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Antidepressants:											
Citalopram (Celexa)	4	2	1	1	2	0	1	5	1	2	2
Nortriptyline (Pamelor)	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Velafaxine (Effexor)	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other:											
Acetaminophen (Tylenol)	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Amphetamine	3	0	1	0	2	1	2	0	2	1	6
Carisoprodol (Soma)	1	3	0	2	4	0	0	0	1	0	0
Fluoxetine (Prozac)	3	2	1	1	1	4	1	3	0	1	0
Gabapentin	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	0
Promethazine (Phenergan)	0	0	1	3	4	1	0	2	1	1	0
Quetiapine (Seroquel)	1	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	2	7	1

Prescription Medications	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Sertraline (Zoloft)	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	1	1	0	0
Trazodone (Oleptro)	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	0
Gamma-Hydroxybutyrate (GHB)	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1

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