

2021

LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED DEATHS IN TENNESSEE

- *DEADLY USE OF FORCE*
- *ARREST-RELATED NON-FORCIBLE DEATHS (ARNFD)*
- *DEATHS IN CUSTODY (DCRA)*



A PUBLICATION OF THE TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTER | CRIME STATISTICS UNIT



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DAVID B. RAUSCH
Director

March 30, 2022

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation would like to present the 2021 Law Enforcement-Related Deaths report. This publication which satisfies the requirements set forth in Tennessee Code Annotated, § 38-10-102, has been produced by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation's CJIS Support Center, and provides information on qualifying incidents as submitted by the state's law enforcement agencies to the TBI through the CrimInsight Portal.

I am very proud of the efforts of all participating law enforcement agencies in the state to provide the data necessary to produce this report. Our combined efforts have resulted in a successful reporting program and the relationships necessary to produce a report of this nature.

Sincerely,

David B. Rausch
Director



INTERNATIONALLY ACCREDITED SINCE 1994

INTRODUCTION

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

According to T.C.A. § 38-10-102, Law Enforcement-Related Death is defined as “the death of an individual in custody, whether in prison, in a jail or otherwise in the custody of law enforcement pursuant to an arrest or a transfer between institutions of any kind; or the death of an individual potentially resulting from an interaction with law enforcement, while the law enforcement officer is on duty or while the law enforcement officer is off duty but performing activities that are within the scope of the officer's law enforcement duties without regard to whether the individual was in custody or whether a weapon was involved.”

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

SCOPE OF STUDY

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

Data presented in this study only represents numbers for calendar year 2021 and only contains information pertaining to deaths which occurred in the presence of law enforcement or deaths that occurred while in custody, such as in a local jail or prison.

Data in this study does not include occurrences where an officer fired his/her weapon in a situation not resulting in a death or when a subject sustained a serious bodily injury directly related to use of force by a law enforcement officer. Additionally, this study does not include deaths occurring in non-residential community-based programs run by jails, such as house arrest, work programs, community service, day reporting, or electronic monitoring.

METHODOLOGY

Each employing agency is responsible for submitting a report for its own officers connected to incidents meeting the criteria of the data collection. Jails and prisons are responsible for submitting a CJ-9 form to the TBI for deaths which occurred in their facility. The data in the publication is sent to us by their respective agencies, TBI does not edit or alter this data in any way, all data is present as it was received.

LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED DEATHS BY AGENCY TYPE

In 2021, 56 agencies reported a Law Enforcement-Related Death. Some agencies reported more than one event during the reporting period, while only one death was reported by a state agency, and none by law-enforcement colleges, or drug task forces.

Reporting Agencies by Type:

32 Jails/Prisons

13 Police Departments

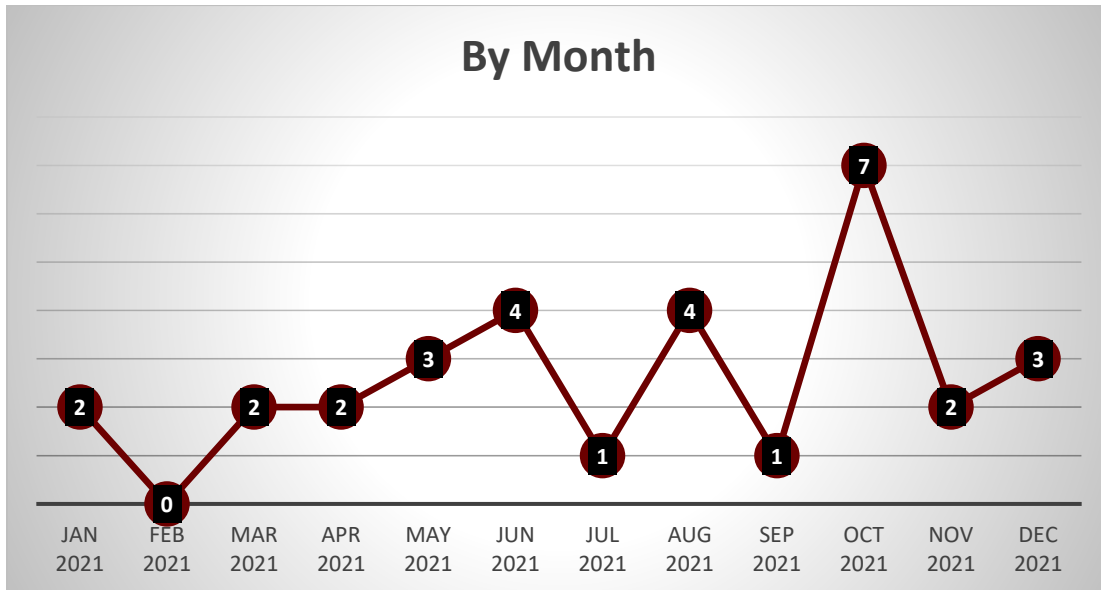
10 Sheriffs' Offices

1 State Agency

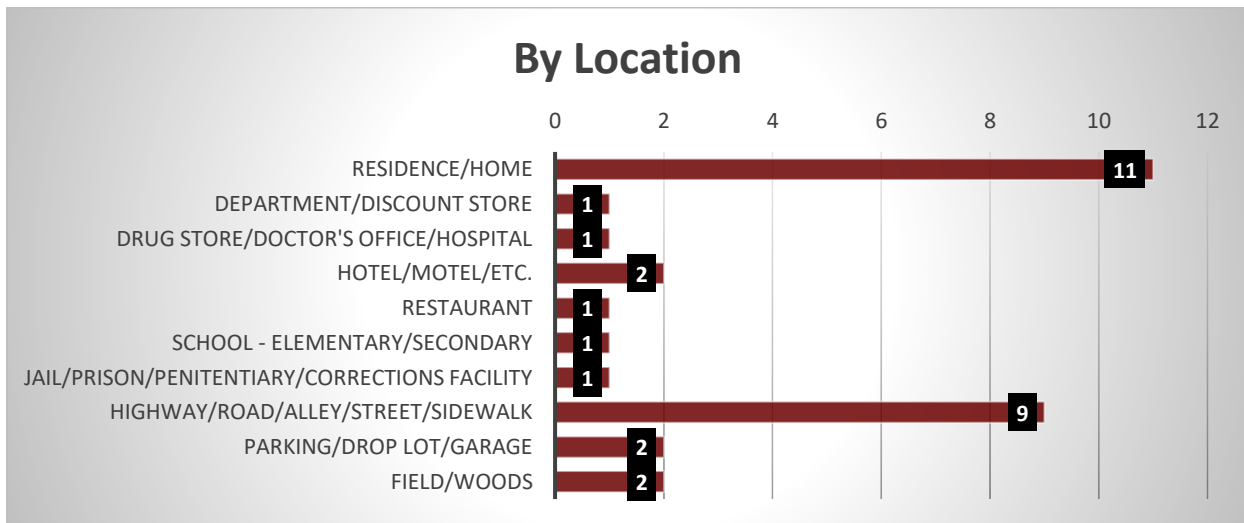
All data used in this publication was retrieved on 3/14/2022. As agencies continue to update their records, there is the possibility that numbers may change. Throughout the report several data points are categorized as "Pending Further Investigation." At the time this data was retrieved these points were still under review by the relevant agency,

and as the investigations are completed those agencies are able to amend their reports with more accurate information. Although the data may change, the report will not be updated.

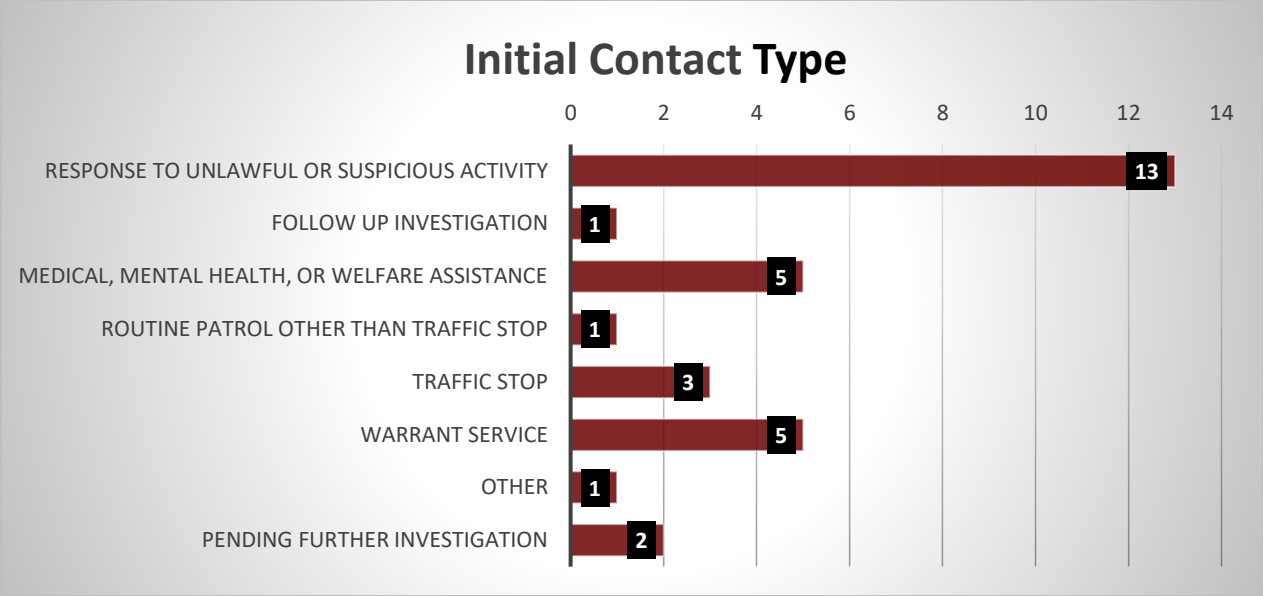
SECTION 1: DEADLY USE OF FORCE



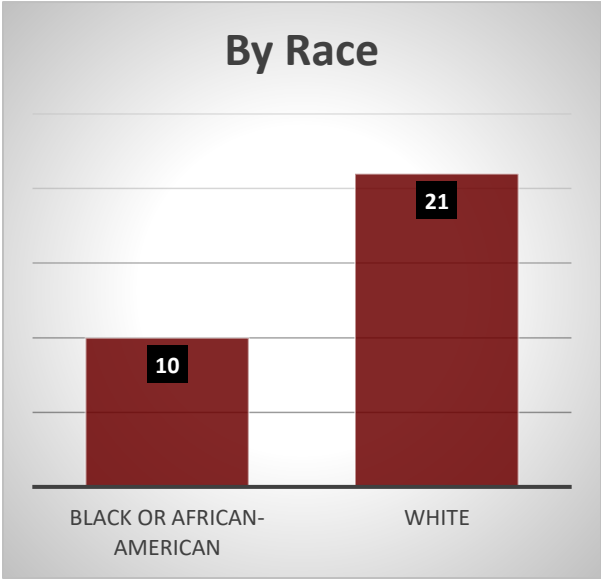
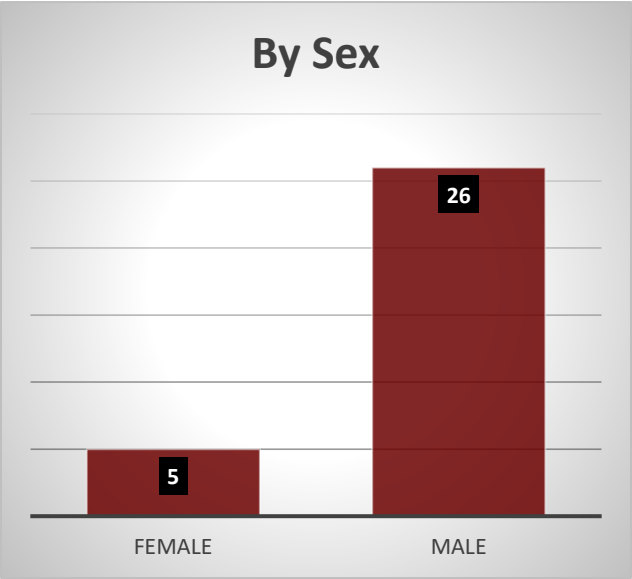
In 2021, there were 31 incidents involving a deadly use of force. By breaking this down to incidents per month, October accounted for the highest number of incidents at 7, or 22.58% of the yearly total. The second highest rate of incidents was in June and August at 4, accounting for 12.9% of incidents each. However, in the month of February, no deaths were reported.



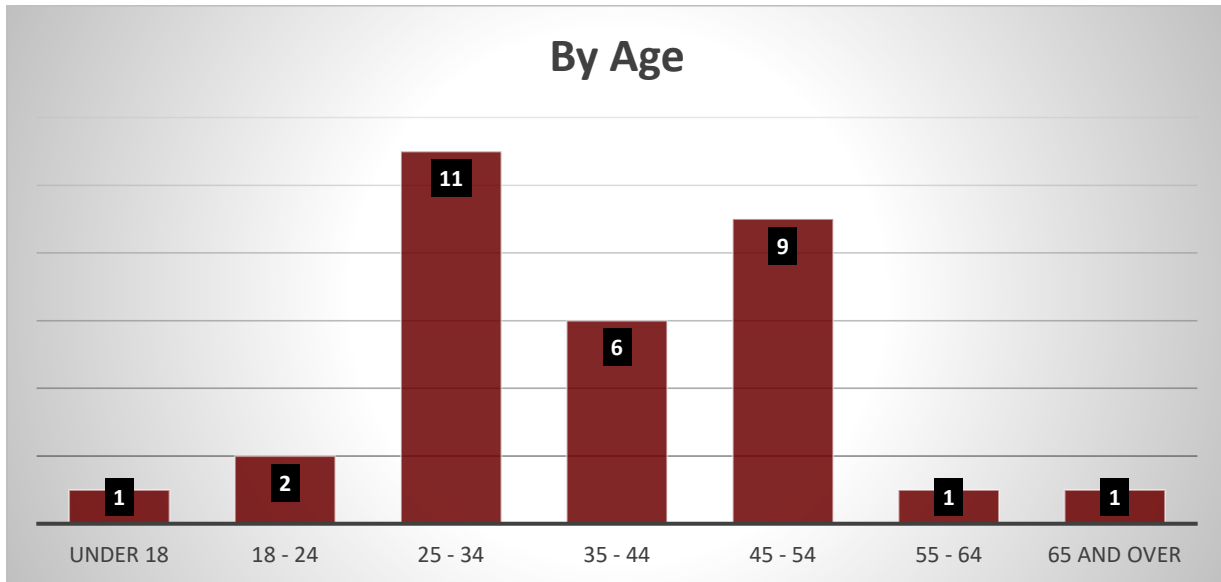
When looking into where deadly use of force incidents occur, major locales are Residence/Home and Highway/Road/Alley/Street/Sidewalk accounting for 35.48% and 29.03%, respectively.



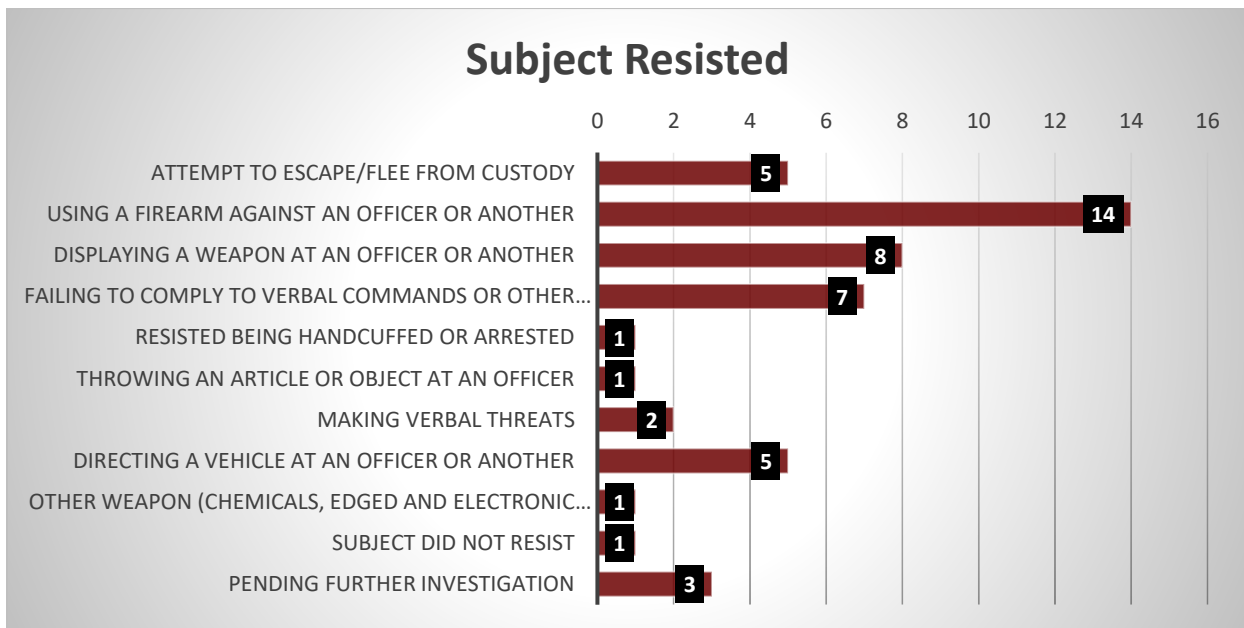
Initial Contact Type presents another view of Deadly Use of Force, with Response to Unlawful or Suspicious Activity being the most reported type of initial contact between the subject and law enforcement, occurring in 41.94% of the 31 incidents. Despite incidents occurring on Highway/Road/Alley/Street/Sidewalk locations amounting to 29.03%, Traffic Stops were only listed as the initial contact type in 9.68% of cases.



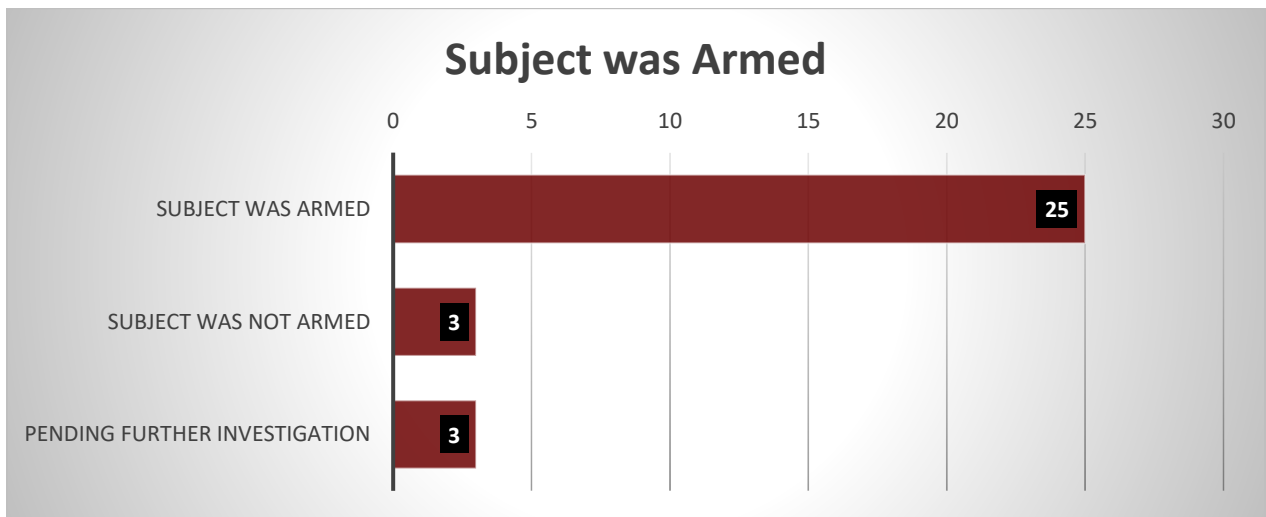
When looking at the demographics of subjects involved in a Deadly Use of Force incident, reported data shows that Males make up 83.87% of reported deaths. While breaking down the data by Race, White subjects comprised 67.74% of all deaths reported.



A review of ages shows the majority of subjects involved in a Deadly Use of Force incident were between the ages 25-54, accounting for 83.87% of incidents. Across all age groups, eleven persons between the ages of 25-34 accounted for 35.48% of all reported deaths.



Incidents are flagged as “Subject Resisted” to denote whether a subject demonstrated resistance toward an officer during an incident. Actions which could be categorized as resistance include attempting to escape/flee from custody, verbal threats, or using a firearm against an officer or other person. Using a Firearm Against an Officer or Another was the most commonly reported resistance type as noted in 14 incidents, or 29.16% of occurrences in 2021. Please note that multiple resistance types can be chosen for a given incident thus leading to a higher number than amount of deaths.



Tying into the “Resisted” flag is the data element denoting if the subject was armed. Of reported 2021 incidents, 80.65% (25) of them noted that the deceased was armed during initial contact with the officer.

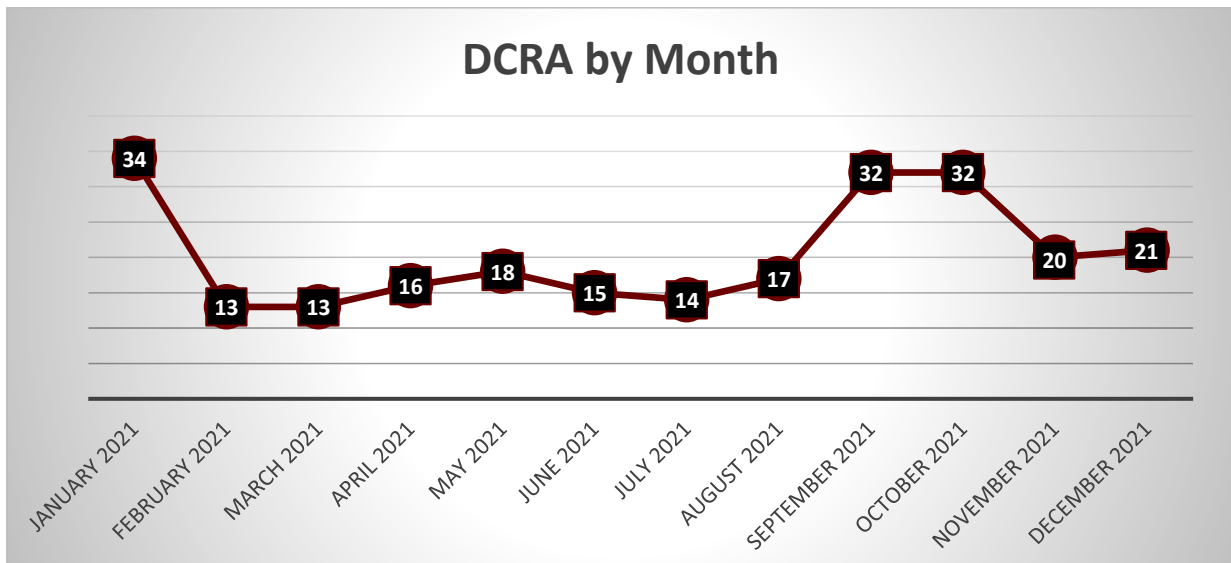
SECTION 2: ARREST RELATED NON-FORCIBLE DEATHS (ARNFD)

This section analyzes deaths which occurred in the presence of police but were not directly related to the use of force by a law enforcement official. As mentioned in the introduction, an Arrest-Related Non-Forcible Death (ARNFD) is any death attributed to suicide, alcohol, drug intoxication, or medical conditions (i.e., cardiac arrest, etc.) occurring during the process of an arrest by, or in the custody of, state or local law enforcement personnel.

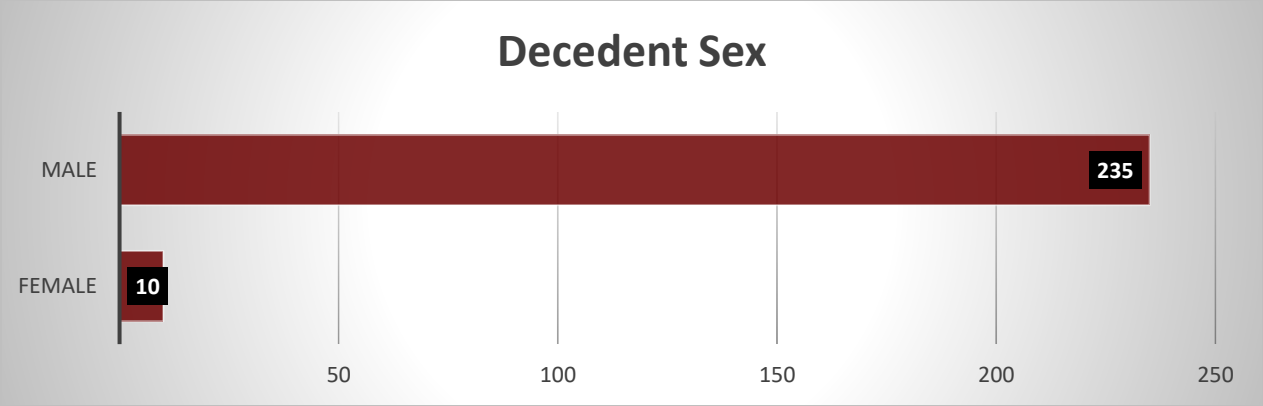
Of the Law Enforcement-Related Deaths reported in 2021, no deaths met the Arrest-Related Non-Forcible Death (ARNFD) reporting criteria.

SECTION 3: DEATHS IN CUSTODY REPORTING ACT (DCRA)

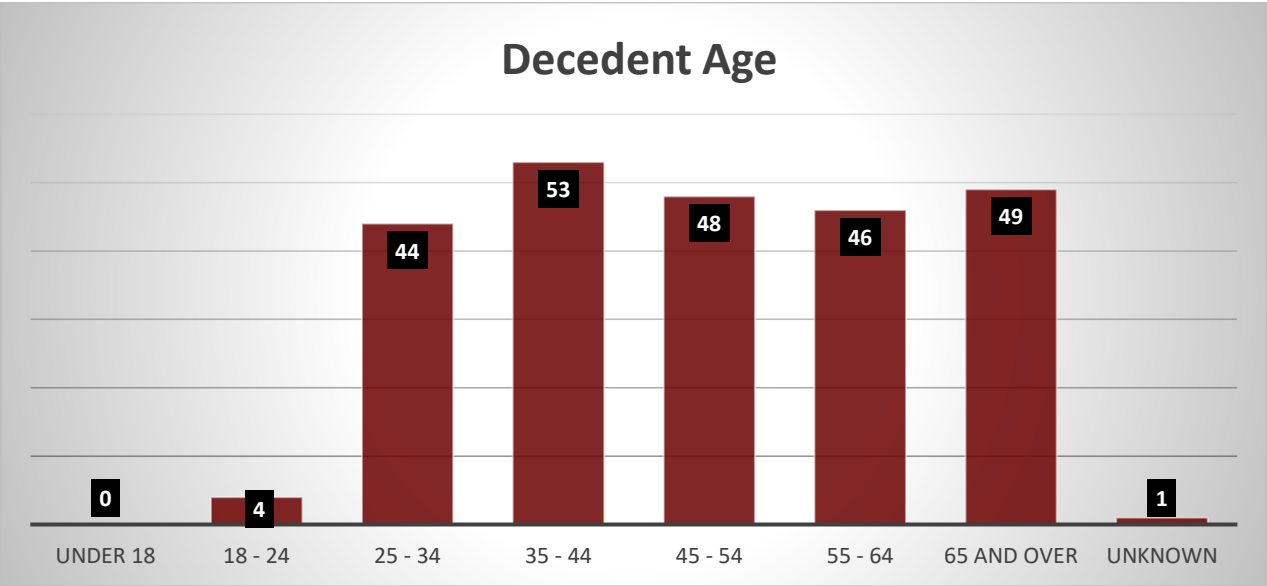
The Deaths in Custody Reporting Act collects data on deaths occurring in jails or state prisons. Please note, private prison companies are under no obligation to submit data, and as such their data may not be reflected.



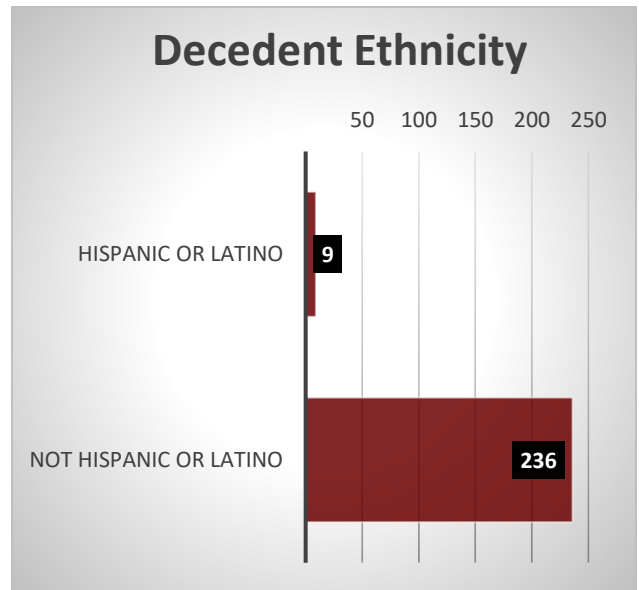
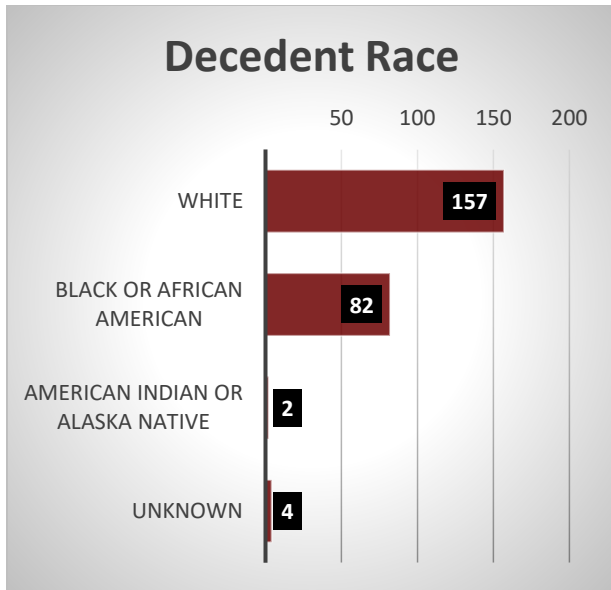
In 2021, 245 deaths were reported across 31 correctional facilities. The highest number of deaths in custody occurred in January at 34 (13.88%), followed by September and October at 32 (13.06%) each.



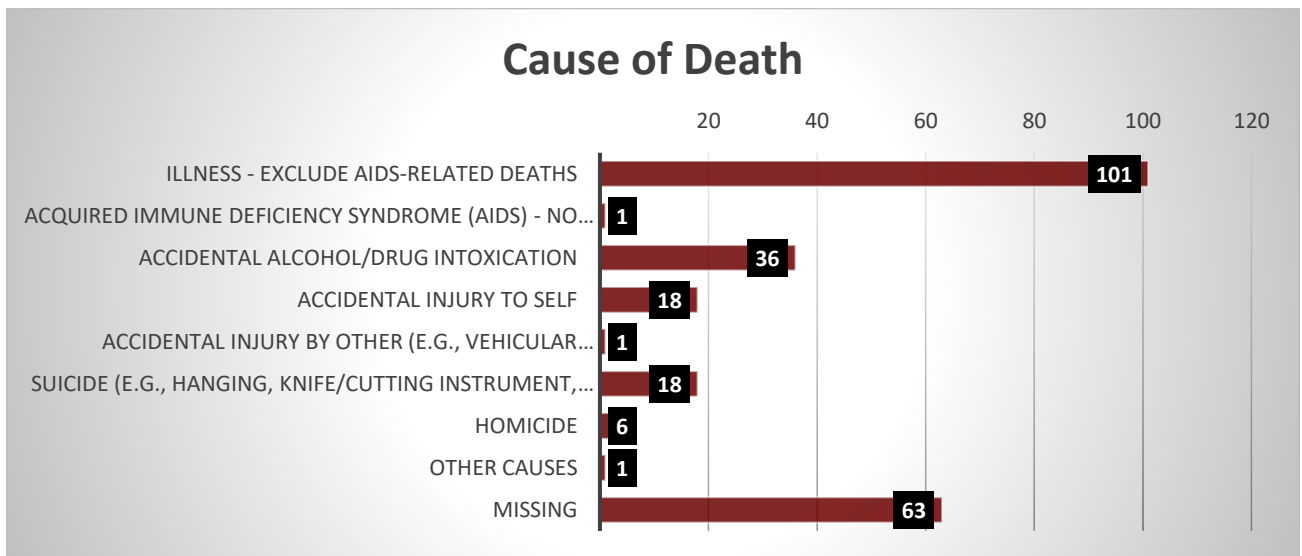
By breaking decedents down by sex, it can be seen that men make up an overwhelming percentage of the deceased at 95.92%, with women making up the remaining 4.08%.



In reviewing the data from 2021, age groups from 25-34 to 65 and over made up for 97.96% of all decedents.

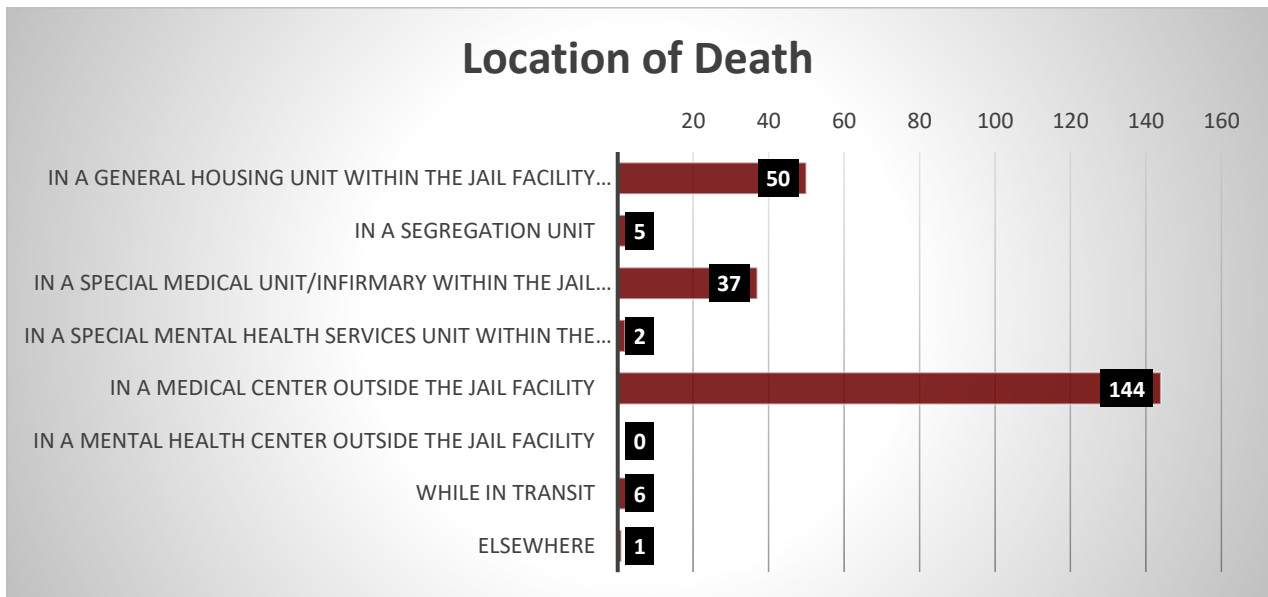


Race and ethnicity breakdowns show that the majority of decedents are White with 157 deaths (64.08%), followed by a total of 92 Black or African American decedents at 33.47%. Ethnically, 96.33% of decedents were categorized as Non-Hispanic or Latino.

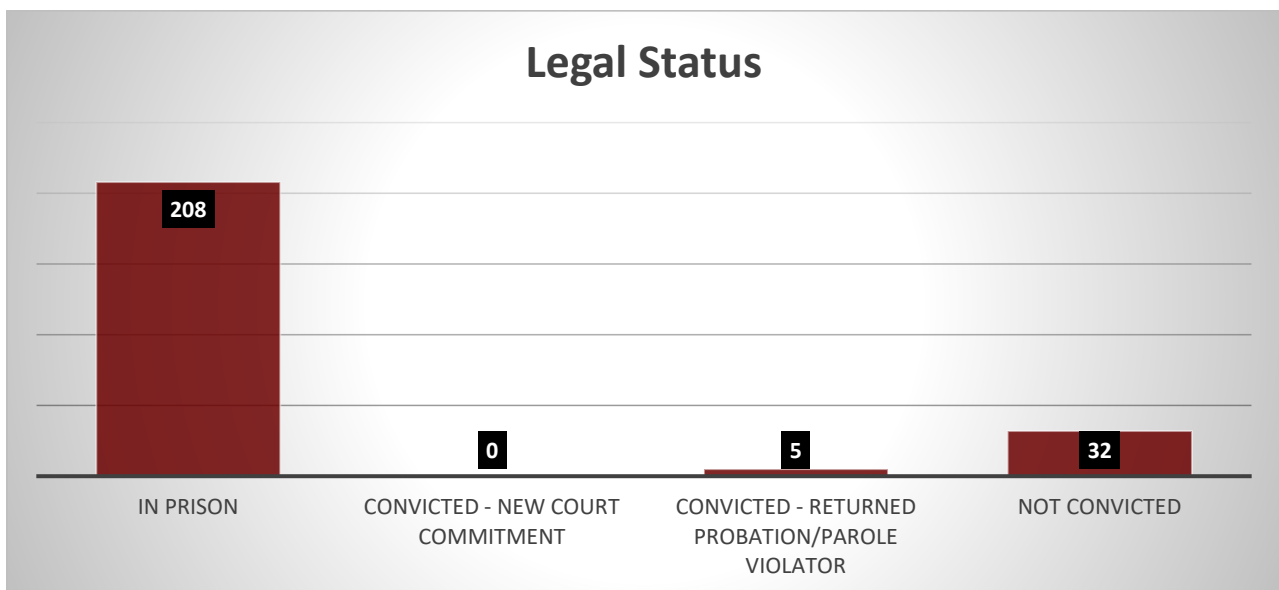


As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, it is to be expected that the leading cause of death in correctional facilities would be Illness-Excluding AIDS Related Deaths. In 2021, that Cause of Death type accounted for 41.22% (101) of all reported causes, followed by 36 deaths reported as being caused by Accidental Alcohol/Drug Intoxication. An additional 63 deaths were reported with Missing listed under cause of death. In the case the cause of death is listed as

Missing it generally means that an agency input the incident while medical results were still pending and the agency can update them as information becomes available.



From the high volume of illness related deaths, it is little surprise that 58.78% of deaths occurred at a Medical Center Outside of the Jail Facility with a further 15.1% happening in an Special Medical Unit/Infirmary Within the Jail Facility. The most significant other location of death was in a General Housing Unit Within the Jail Facility or on Jail Grounds, making up the location of 20.41% of reported deaths.



Lastly, we reviewed the Legal Status of decedents reported under DCRA. 84.9% were

categorized as In Prison. The second highest amount, at 13.06% are those listed as Not Convicted.



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