

Sanilac County Medical Examiner Snapshot Report

2019–2024





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Medical Examiner Personnel

William J. Starbird, M.D., FAAFP
Medical Examiner

Russell L. Bush M.D.
Deputy Medical Examiner

Bryant Wilke R.S. MPH, Health Officer
Medical Examiner Administrator

Heather Kohn
Medical Examiner Secretary

Medical Examiner Scene Investigators

Andrew Cubitt
Jeff Dawson
Matthew Gezequel
Tammy Katt
Robert Major
Shelly Park
Chad Schmidt
Kristal Schulz
Nathan Smith
Rob Wendling
Kurtis Zimmerman

Medical Examiner Scene Investigators (In Training)

Rece Essenmacher
Rikki Hostetler
Sean Murray
Sarah Nichols

Autopsies are performed at the Genesee County Medical Examiner office by
Brian Hunter, M.D.
John Bechinski, D.O.

Genesee County Medical Examiner
4800 S. Saginaw St.
Flint, MI 48507



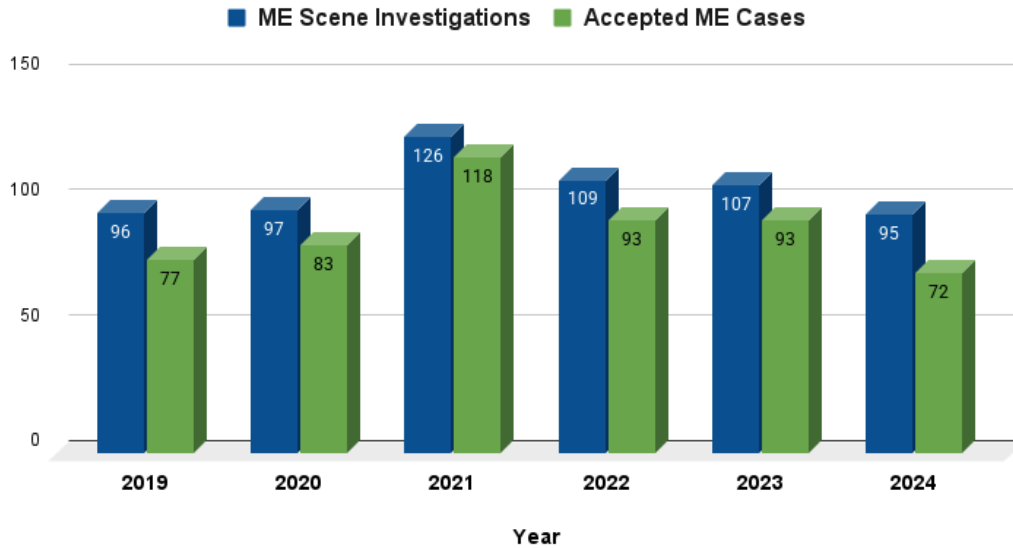
Sanilac County Medical Examiner

One of our long outstanding desires in the Medical Examiner's Office has been to implement an Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system. An EMR offers a consistent reporting format for our Medical Examiner Scene Investigators (MESI) including access to medical records, permanent record keeping and securing documents. As a cloud based platform, the MESI can access the reporting system by cellular phone at the scene during their investigating. It also allows our Medical Examiner to evaluate medical records in determining the cause of death.

The department was able to accomplish this through our continuous partnership with Genesee County Medical Examiner's Office. Genesee County continues to provide our pathology and consultative services as necessary. EMR training as well as training specific to MESI scene investigation report writing was provided to all our MESI staff.

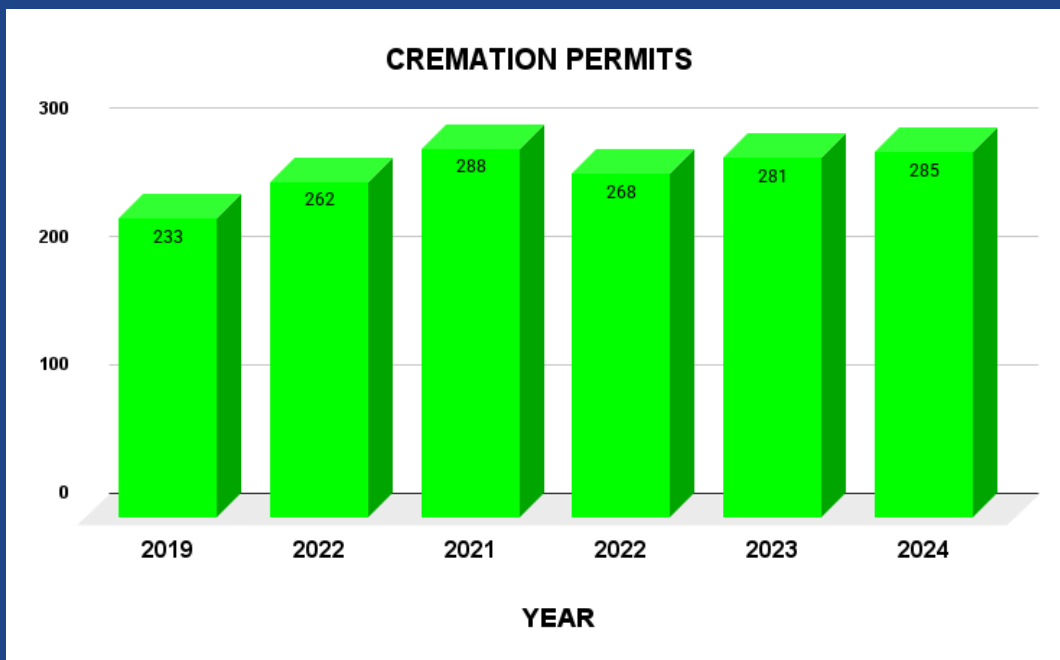
The Sanilac County Sheriff's Office, MESI's, provide the majority of MESI investigations with independent providers rounding up the list of available staff. This is a key area the Medical Examiner would like to strengthen over the next year.

MEDICAL EXAMINER CASELOAD

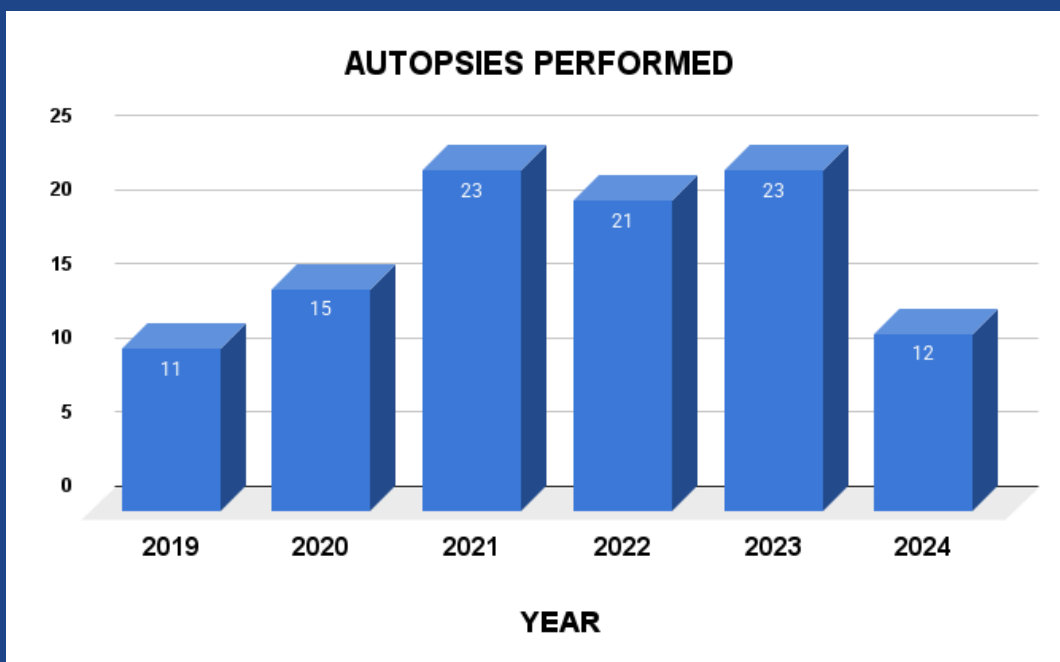


YEAR	ME SCENE INVESTIGATIONS	ACCEPTED ME CASES
2019	96	77
2020	97	83
2021	126	118
2022	109	93
2023	107	93
2024	95	72

Medical Examiner Scene Investigators are trained by the medical examiner to perform death investigations. Investigators are either contractually employed by the county, sheriffs department or they may be employed by local city police departments. The medical examiner investigators shall have the primary responsibility of death scene investigation. After investigation, some cases do not fall within the requirements of a medical examiner case and are not accepted as such. Not accepted cases are referred to a primary care physician or emergency room physician to complete the death certificate.



The medical examiner's office is required to sign cremation permit authorizations before a body is cremated. In order for a cremation permit to be issued, the death certificate is reviewed and in some instances, more investigation is necessary prior to the authorization.



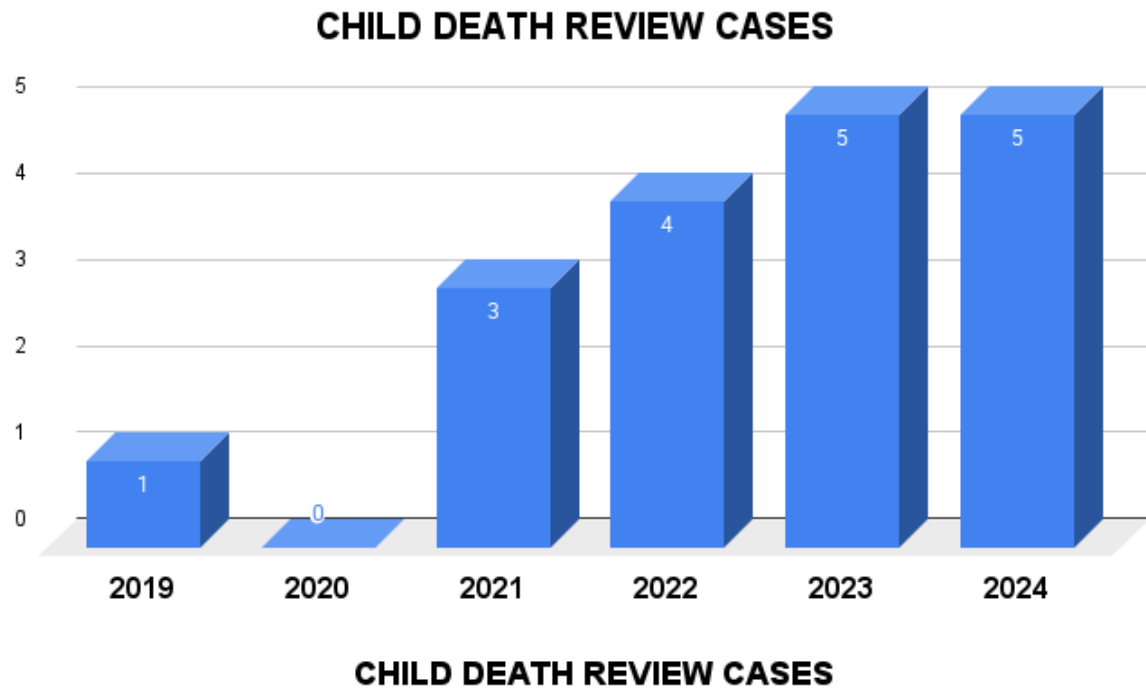
An autopsy can only be ordered by the medical examiner based on the information from the investigation.

Child Death Review

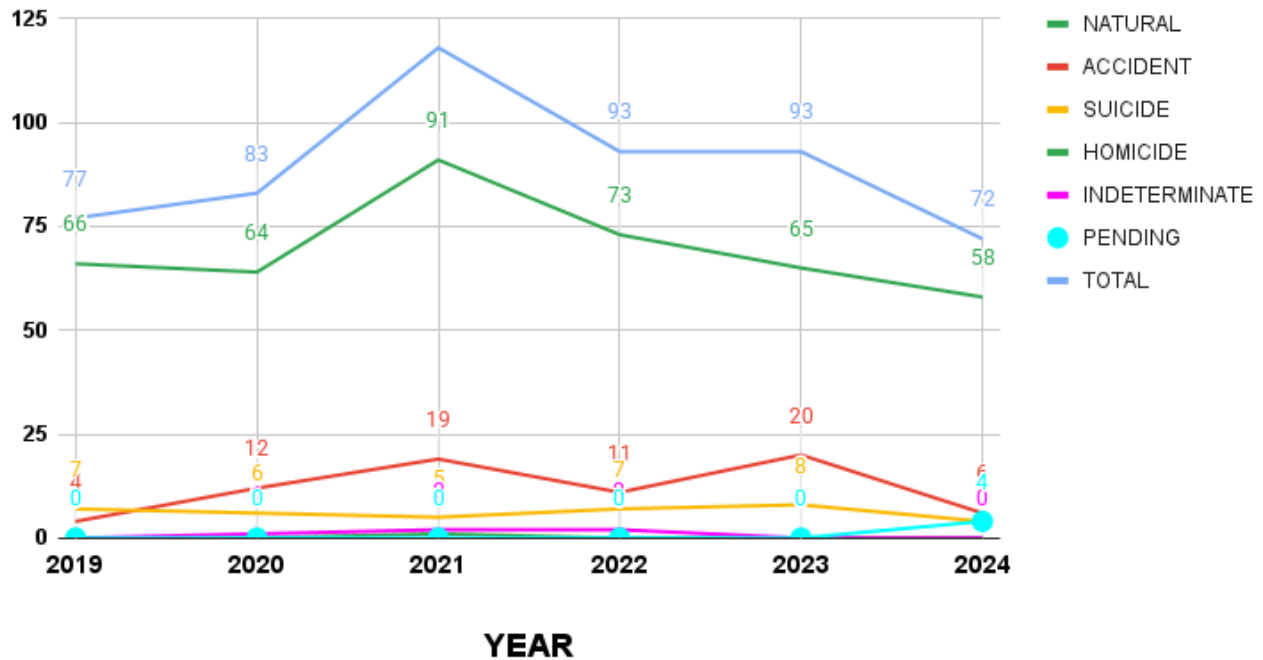


Child death review meetings are scheduled quarterly. The child death review team consists of many different representatives within the county, including nurses, social workers, law enforcement etc.

Until 2020 only cases in which the child passed away in that county were reviewed. For example, if a child that lived in Sanilac County passed away in a hospital outside of Sanilac County, that case was not reviewed. Beginning in 2021 all cases for children that reside in county are reviewed, no matter in which county the death occurred. The goal of the Child Death Review is to set up prevention within the community or awareness.



MANNER OF DEATH



YEAR	NATURAL	ACCIDENT	SUICIDE	HOMICIDE	INDETERMINATE	PENDING	TOTAL
2019	66	4	7	0	0	0	77
2020	64	12	6	0	1	0	83
2021	91	19	5	1	2	0	118
2022	73	11	7	0	2	0	93
2023	65	20	8	0	0	0	93
2024	58	6	4	0	0	4	72

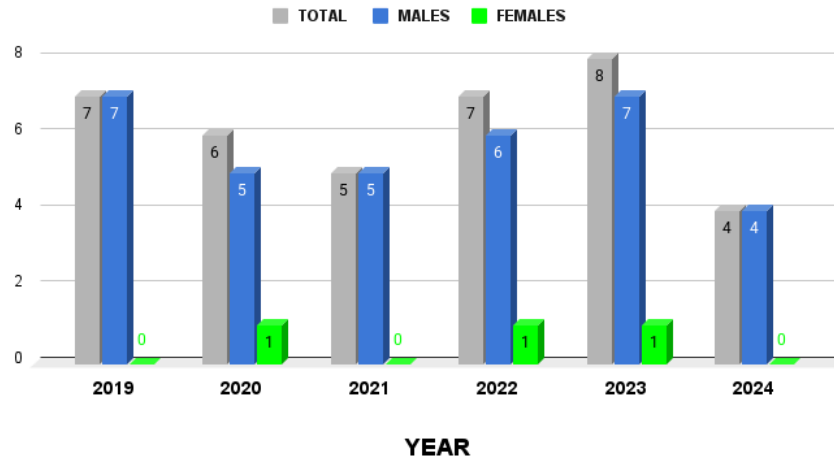
The manner of death is reported on the death certificate and is based on all death investigation findings including the autopsy and toxicology report if ordered. The different manner of death classifications are:

- **Natural** due to disease and/or the aging process
- **Accident** due to injury or poisoning without intent to cause death
- **Suicide** due to injury or poisoning with intent to self-inflict death
- **Homicide** due to volitional act committed by another person
- **Indeterminate** used when one manner is no more compelling than another is

All death certificates with manner of death besides natural must be investigated by a medical examiner or medical examiner investigator and completed by the medical examiner.



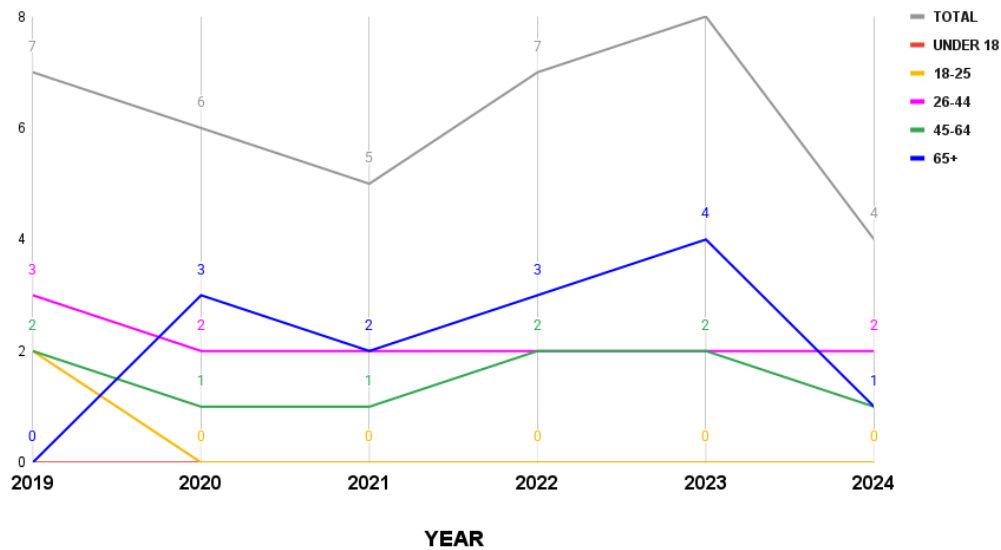
SUICIDE DEATHS BY GENDER



YEAR	TOTAL	MALES	FEMALES
2019	7	7	0
2020	6	5	1
2021	5	5	0
2022	7	6	1
2023	8	7	1
2024	4	4	0

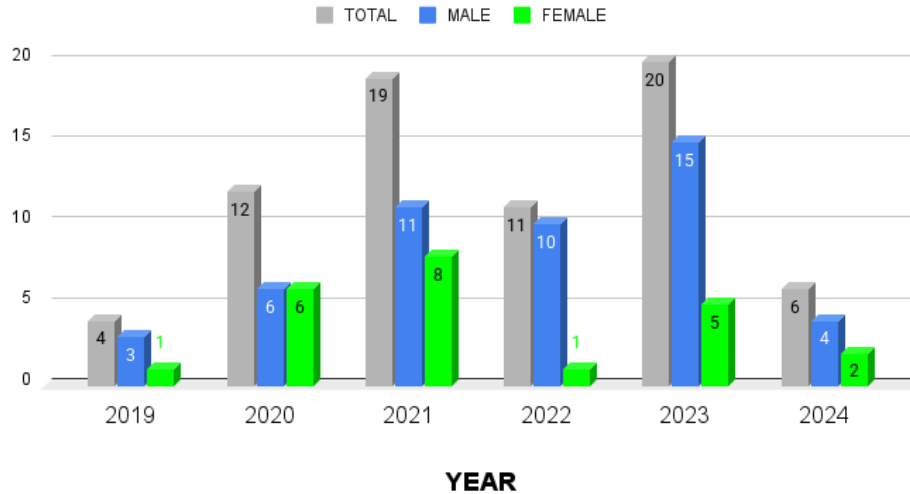
Suicide deaths are tracked continuously, and cases are alerted to suicide prevention monthly or as cases occur.

SUICIDE BY AGE



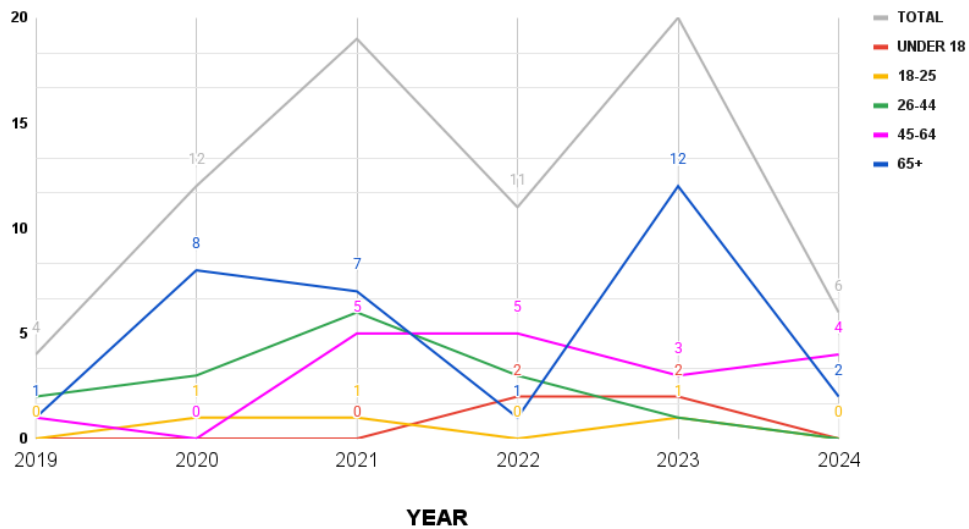
YEAR	TOTAL	UNDER 18	18-25	26-44	45-64	65+
2019	7	0	2	3	2	0
2020	6	0	0	2	1	3
2021	5	0	0	2	1	2
2022	7	0	0	2	2	3
2023	8	0	0	2	2	4
2024	4	0	0	2	1	1

ACCIDENTAL DEATHS BY GENDER



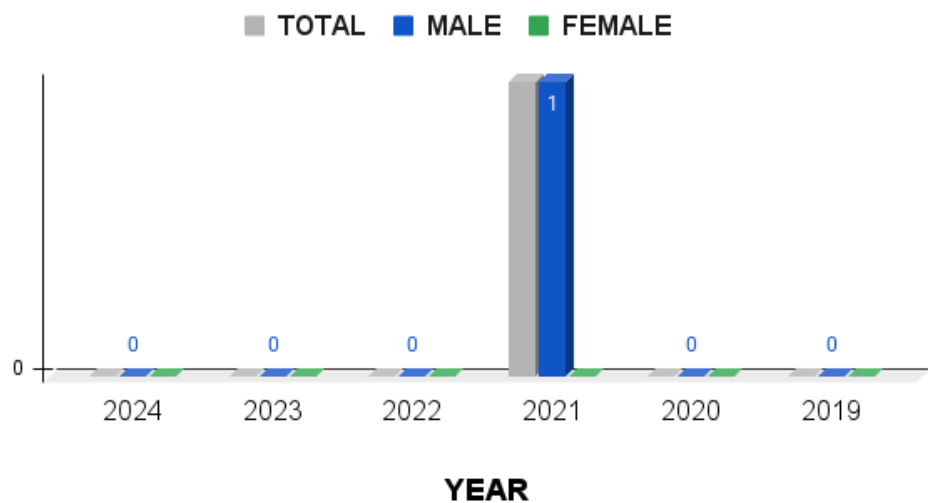
YEAR	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
2019	4	3	1
2020	12	6	6
2021	19	11	8
2022	11	10	1
2023	20	15	5
2024	6	4	2

ACCIDENTAL DEATHS BY AGE



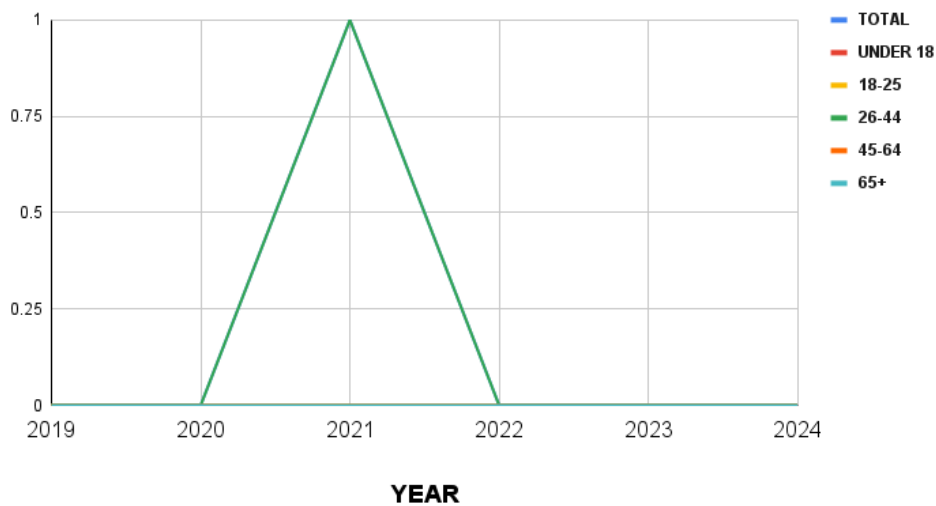
YEAR	TOTAL	UNDER 18	18-25	26-44	45-64	65+
2019	4	0	0	2	1	1
2020	12	0	1	3	0	8
2021	19	0	1	6	5	7
2022	11	2	0	3	5	1
2023	20	2	1	1	3	12
2024	6	0	0	0	4	2

HOMICIDE DEATHS BY GENDER



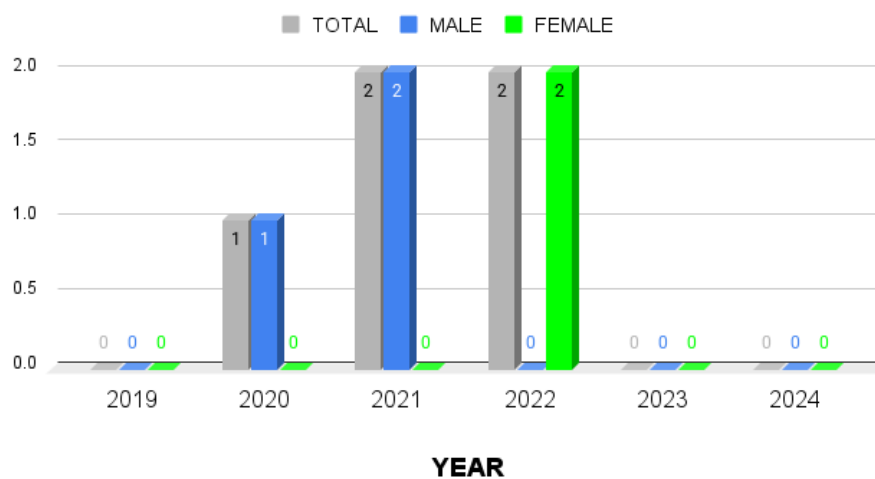
YEAR	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
2019	0	0	0
2020	0	0	0
2021	1	1	0
2022	0	0	0
2023	0	0	0
2024	0	0	0

HOMICIDE DEATHS BY AGE



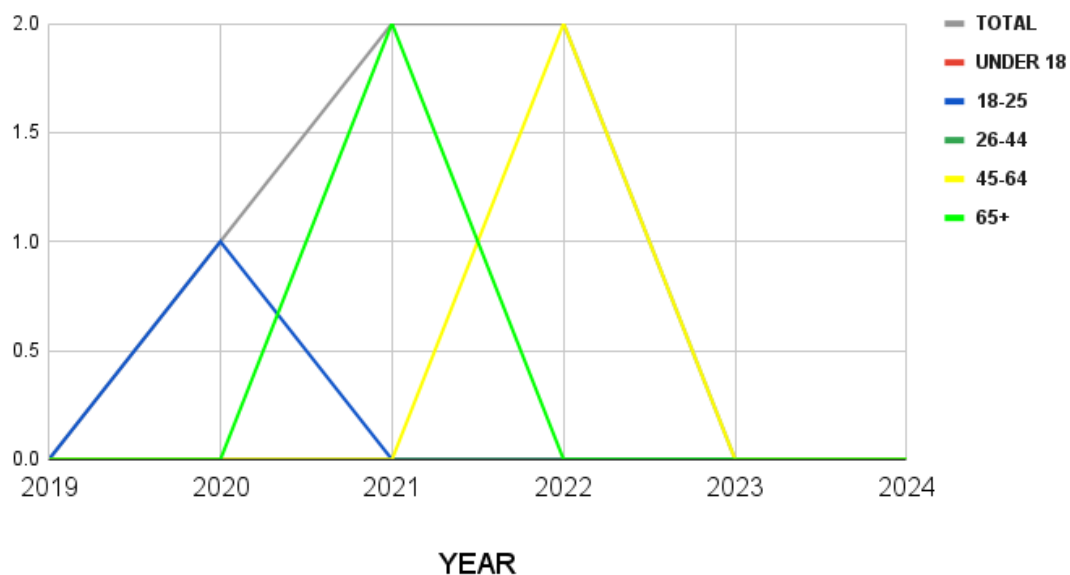
YEAR	TOTAL	UNDER 18	18-25	26-44	45-64	65+
2019	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	1	0	0	1	0	0
2022	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023	0	0	0	0	0	0
2024	0	0	0	0	0	0

INDETERMINATE DEATHS BY GENDER



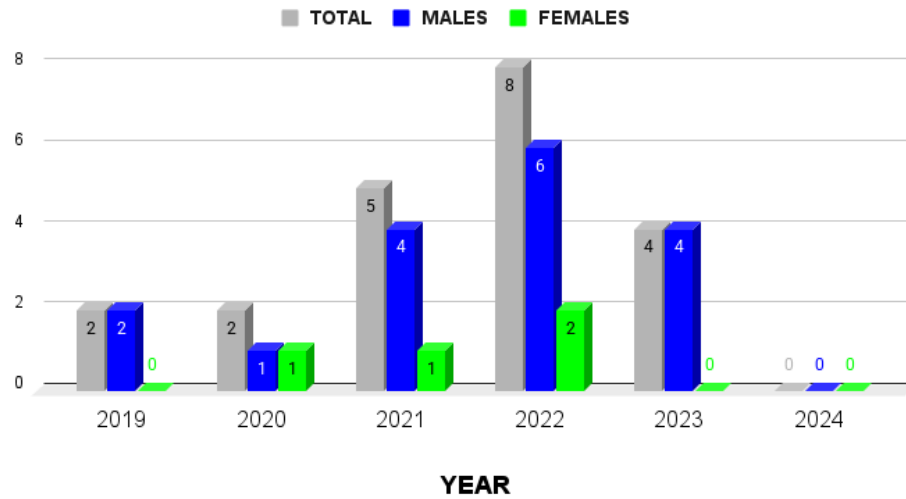
YEAR	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
2019	0	0	0
2020	1	1	0
2021	2	2	0
2022	2	0	2
2023	0	0	0
2024	0	0	0

INDETERMINATE DEATHS BY AGE



YEAR	TOTAL	UNDER 18	18-25	26-44	45-64	65+
2019	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	1	0	1	0	0	0
2021	2	0	0	0	0	2
2022	2	0	0	0	2	0
2023	0	0	0	0	0	0
2024	0	0	0	0	0	0

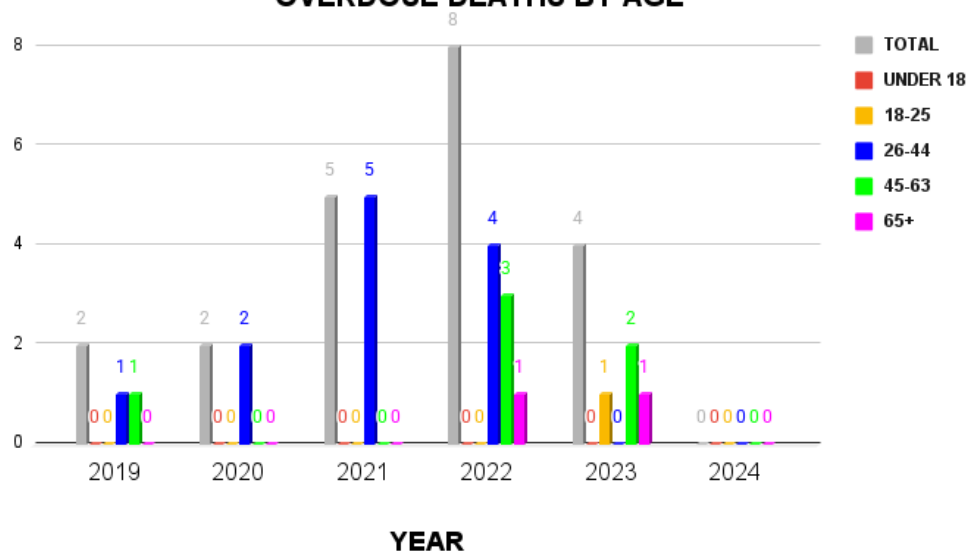
OVERDOSE DEATHS BY GENDER



YEAR	TOTAL	MALES	FEMALES
2019	2	2	0
2020	2	1	1
2021	5	4	1
2022	8	6	2
2023	4	4	0
2024	0	0	0

The overdose deaths are incorporated within all manners of deaths but are of growing concern to track separately.

OVERDOSE DEATHS BY AGE



YEAR	TOTAL	UNDER 18	18-25	26-44	45-63	65+
2019	2	0	0	1	1	0
2020	2	0	0	2	0	0
2021	5	0	0	5	0	0
2022	8	0	0	4	3	1
2023	4	0	1	0	2	1
2024	0	0	0	0	0	0



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