



The Franklin County Forensic Science Center
Office of the Coroner

ANNUAL
REPORT

2021-2022



FRANKLIN COUNTY CORONER'S OFFICE

The Franklin County Coroner's Office serves a community of 1.3 million people, including the city of Columbus. There were approximately 11,800 deaths in 2021. The Coroner's Office investigates all deaths by violence, criminal means, suicide, infant deaths, and prisoner deaths or any unattended death whatever the cause. The Coroner's Office provides identification, performs autopsies or medical examinations, and carries out any other requirements in regard to deaths which fall in the categories mentioned above.



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Franklin County Coroner's Office is to serve and protect the interest of the community by maintaining the highest standard of professionalism and integrity in determining the cause and manner of death.

We are a dedicated team that is committed to providing excellence, compassion and respect to every family and community member.

DEDICATION

We recognize that each case within this report represents the death of a person whose absence is grieved by beloved family, friends, and our community. To those individuals, their loved ones, and to all the citizens of Franklin County who share in the loss, this report is dedicated.



WELCOME TO THE 2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE FRANKLIN COUNTY CORONER'S OFFICE

Our goal for this report is to provide our partners and the residents of Franklin County with up-to-date information on the services we provided to the county in 2021. I dedicate this report to those families and friends who have suffered a loss and had their loved ones come to our office. This report, although full of statistics and numbers, signifies the countless times when many of our residents have suffered through the worst and last day of their lives. We are here to not only investigate their deaths but to provide some semblance of closure and peace to their loved ones. Below are some highlights of the report that represent key areas for 2021.



In general, the mortality count for our county remained the same from 2020 to 2021: approximately 11,800. Our office, however, accepted jurisdiction on approximately 9% more cases in 2021 than in 2020. This increase translated to 11% more homicides, roughly the same % of accidental deaths and a 10% increase in suicides. Through this report you will get a sense of how our office functions. What I hope you will also discern is the amount of data our office collects and its importance to the county, the state, and the nation. Our data is used to evaluate child and infant deaths, suicides, motor vehicle accidents, occupational accidents, and overdose deaths. We partner with various agencies to work on preventive measures against addiction, violence, and mental health issues.

An effort many in our county are unaware of is mass fatality planning. If we had a situation like the Las Vegas mass shooting or the Parkland school shooting, how would our county respond? The Franklin County Emergency Management Agency would be in charge of coordinating a mass critical event and our agency would be the lead on a mass fatality response along with situational related partners. I am proud to assure the residents of Franklin County that we have a comprehensive plan in place and have had frequent staff trainings and exercises to review the plan.

In 2019 we applied for and were granted a subgrant from Franklin County Public Health and CDC to bring onboard a statistician and an overdose investigations specialist. Both came on board in 2020 and in 2021 continued to work on outreach events, fatality reviews, and providing the community with information on overdose fatalities. In 2021 we were also awarded a grant from Ohio Suicide Prevention Coalition to hire a suicide investigations specialist. Our specialist helped to get the Suicide Fatality Review running and has provided the Franklin County Suicide Prevention Coalition with much needed information.

In 2021 we had our full in person inspection by the National Association of Medical Examiners. This involved a full inspection of our facility, standard operating procedures and observation of autopsies. I am proud to announce that we have been once more fully certified.

My charge as Coroner of Franklin County is to continue to provide the residents of our county excellence in service through integrity, transparency, accountability, and communication. We are here to not only care for those who have died, but to also save lives. Again, please welcome to the 2021 Annual Report for the Franklin County Coroner's Office.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Anahi Ortiz M.D." with a small "MD" at the end.

Anahi Ortiz M.D.
Franklin County Coroner

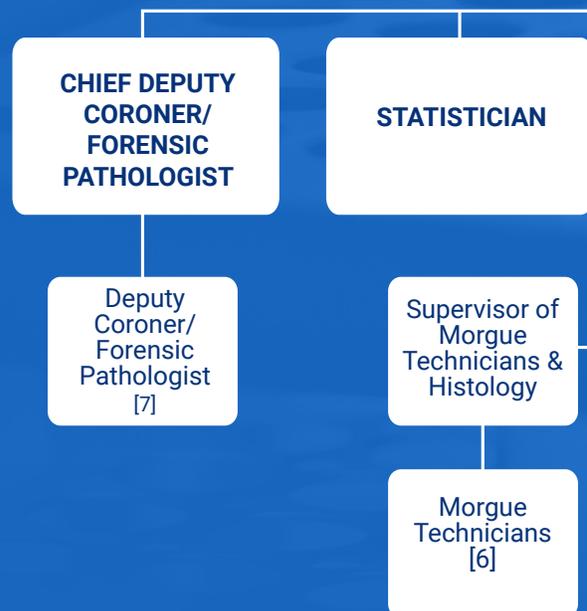
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

ROLE OF THE CORONER'S OFFICE

- Generates the unbiased, independent, and formal report and verdict on all deaths that fall under the coroner's jurisdiction
- Obtains information surrounding the death and determines if it falls under the jurisdiction of the Coroner
- Investigates only deaths defined in the "Coroner's Statute", Ohio Revised Code 313.12 that are mandated to be investigated by the Coroner
- In Ohio, the Coroner is the only physician who may certify deaths that are not due to natural cause(s)

DEPARTMENTS OF THE FRANKLIN COUNTY CORONER'S OFFICE

- Administration
- Case Management
- Morgue/Histology/Radiology
- Pathology
- Toxicology
- Investigations



**CITIZENS OF
FRANKLIN COUNTY**

CORONER

**HUMAN
RESOURCES
SPECIALIST**

**DIRECTOR
OF
OPERATIONS**

**CHIEF
FISCAL
OFFICER**

**CHIEF
TOXICOLOGIST**

Supervisor of
Investigations

Supervisor of
Morgue
Attendants &
Property/Evidence

Administrative
Office
Manager

Deputy Chief
Toxicologist

Supervisor of
Investigations

Morgue
Attendants
[2]

Receptionist

Toxicologists
[2]

Forensic
Investigators
[12]

Front
Office
Assistant

Assistant
Toxicologists
[3]

Suicide
Investigations
& Postvention
Specialist

Public
Records
Clerk

Toxicology
Technician

OD
Investigation &
Intervention
Specialist

Case
Secretary
[4]

Investigative
Secretary
Temporary



ABOUT DR. ANAHI ORTIZ

Dr. Anahi Ortiz was born in New York, New York. She graduated from the Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education, a six-year BS/MD program, at City College of New York. She then received her medical degree from Downstate Medical College in Brooklyn. Dr. Ortiz decided on pediatrics as her focus and did her residency at St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital in Manhattan.

After residency, her career has focused on providing care to the underserved communities of New York City and eventually those in Columbus, Ohio. Dr. Ortiz moved to the central Ohio area in 1996 where she has worked as a pediatrician at Nationwide Children's Hospital, Westside Community Health Center, and North Community Counseling. She has always been a proponent of volunteering in the community. She currently volunteers for several local non-profits.

She was appointed to the Office of Franklin County Coroner in November of 2014. Since then, she has worked towards streamlining the process for more timely production of death certificates, professionally interpreting several forms for families of decedents whose primary language is not English and educating the medical community on completing death certificates. She has highlighted cultural sensitivity as a priority of the Coroner's Office and brought in several educational sessions on cultural sensitivity for the staff. As of April of 2018, she has added a paid FMLA program for employees. Since 2014, Dr. Ortiz has strived to improve staffing levels and the professional quality of her employees in order to give our residents more timely coroner reports. Trauma informed care is important to any organization that works with trauma including coroner/medical examiner offices. This has also been a focus of Dr. Ortiz for her employees. Currently we work with EAP to bring services to the office on a regular basis and offer training in mental health first aid.



In March of 2015, Dr. Ortiz convened the Franklin County Drug Overdose Death Initiative (DODI). This group currently meets regularly to look at the rising rate of drug use and deaths in our county and how we can intervene. Since then, she has hosted the Franklin County Opiate Crisis Summit in March of 2016 and again in 2017. She has also worked on a Community Action Plan towards the opiate crisis and launched the Franklin County Opiate Crisis Task Force in August of 2016.

Dr. Ortiz is on the Board of Netcare, Proyecto Mariposa, Ohio Federation for Health Equity and Social Justice and the Board of the National Violent Death Reporting System. She is a member of the Franklin County Suicide Prevention Coalition and the Medical Advisory Board of YMCA Head Start. She has also

spoken to numerous community groups, as well as professional organizations on suicide, infant mortality, cultural sensitivity, and the addiction/opiate crisis.

Dr. Anahi Ortiz has almost 30 years of experience in working with high-risk communities in the medical field. She has brought this experience and knowledge to the Office of Coroner where she has been a voice for those who die of violent means and has helped to improve the lives of our community.

STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2020, a team was put together to create a strategic business plan for the Franklin County Forensic Science Center (FCFSC). The goal of this was to better understand “who we are” and “what is our purpose”. The FCFSC brought to light a lot of dreams and visions that were not able to be thought of at the old facility. With new resources and space, the staff knew that there was great potential to provide better resources to the community. With that, the team started a new and refreshed strategic business plan. Creating new values, a mission statement and reinforcing the foundation of this agency provided staff some light during some of the hardest times in the agency history due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Below you will find information on what the team has created and what is used today in the FCFSC.

During this process, internal and external stakeholders were identified and interviewed to provide information on where the office had strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. By identifying these four areas the team was able to set a strategy on where to focus the work of the FCFSC to better support the community. From this, four key focus areas were identified which include leadership and staff development, communications, education, and excellence. With this, goals and objectives were created to maintain accountability for all staff so that resources could continue to be provided to the community.

MISSION

The mission of the Franklin County Coroner's Office is to serve and protect the interest of the community by maintaining the highest standard of professionalism and integrity in determining the cause and manner of death. We are a dedicated team that is committed to providing excellence, compassion and respect to every family and community member.

VISION

Our vision is to be a national leader in forensic science and investigation as we seek the truth on behalf of the families and community members we serve. We are committed to collaboration, excellence and compassion.

VALUES

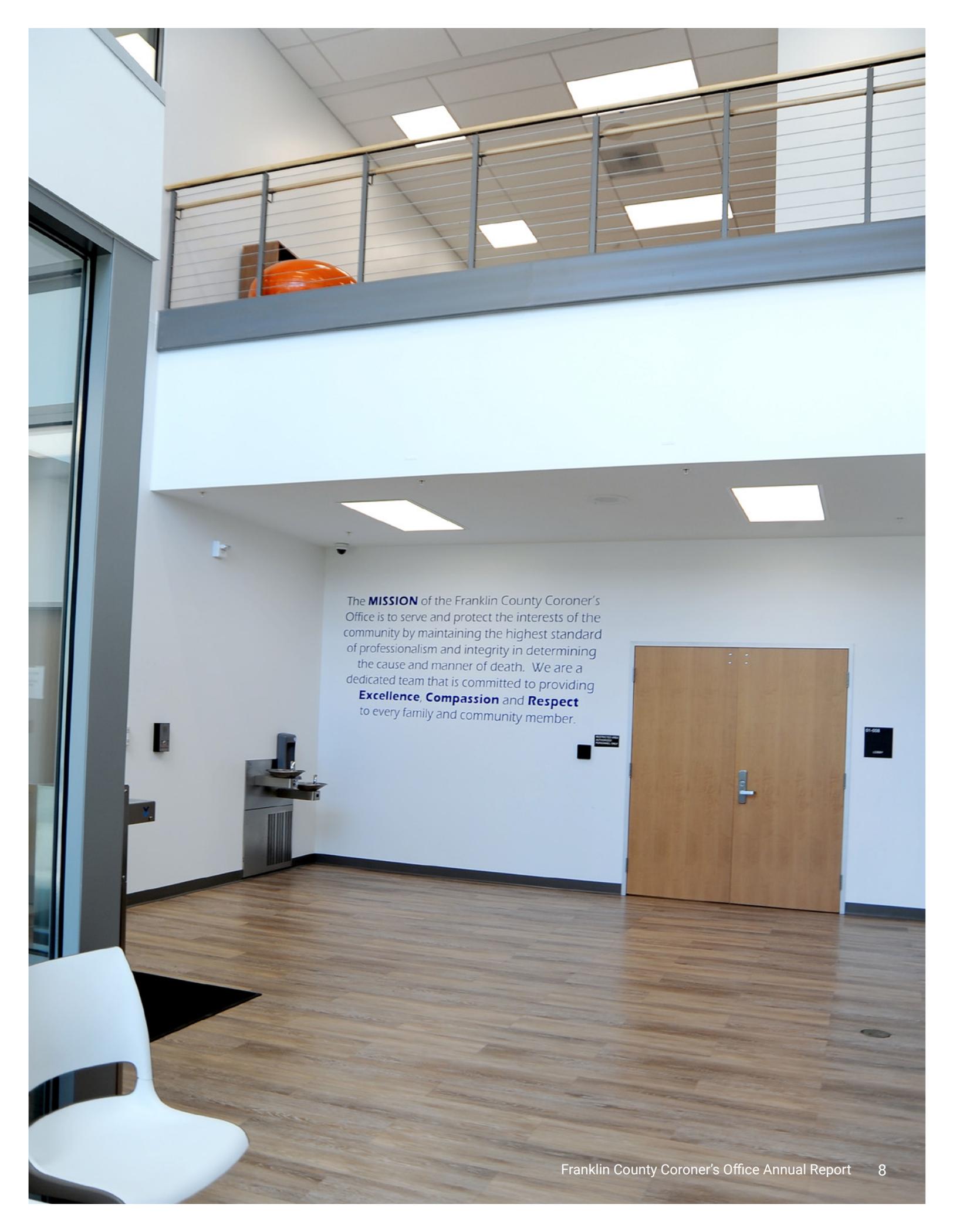
Service – We are passionate about serving families and community members who may be at their most vulnerable.

Integrity – All our work is done with integrity and transparency.

Excellence – We are committed to constant improvement to achieve excellence.

Respectful – We treat everyone with respect. We provide dignity for the decedents; we are compassionate and respectful to the families and community members we serve; we respect our community partners, and we respect one another.

Collaboration – We value the contribution of our community partners and each other and know that collaboration is essential to obtaining outcomes.



The **MISSION** of the Franklin County Coroner's Office is to serve and protect the interests of the community by maintaining the highest standard of professionalism and integrity in determining the cause and manner of death. We are a dedicated team that is committed to providing **Excellence, Compassion and Respect** to every family and community member.



CASE MANAGEMENT

The Case Management Department is responsible for processing case files and death certificates, assuring quality of data, as well as fulfilling requests for public records. This department also provides ancillary support, such as coordinating with transcription services for the pathology staff and technical support of the agency. The Case Management Department is comprised of one Office Administrator and three Case Secretaries, working closely with the Receptionist, an Office Assistant, and the Public Records Clerk. The main purpose is to serve the community through quality assurance and excellent customer service.

In 2021, the Case Management Department processed over 3000 cases, many of which required more than one death certificate to be processed by the time the case was completed. The goal in 2021, was to refine newly created measures for quality assurance from 2020. Those refinements started in early 2020, helped carry the department through yet another eventful year. The changes helped with the increased case load from the year before. While COVID still presented challenges to our operations and others, we have adapted to new routines and processes to meet those challenges. In our second year at the new facility, the space continues to allow for easier collaboration, communication, and comradery. In 2022, the Case Management Department is looking to streamline our quality assurance processes for more efficient, yet still accurate, final report production.

PATHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Forensic pathology is how injury and/or disease affect a person resulting in death. An autopsy is a detailed medical examination of the body, performed by a Forensic Pathologist, to determine the presence, nature, and extent of any disease or injury in order to ascertain the cause and manner of death.

At the Franklin County Forensic Science Center there are Forensic Pathologists who, as Deputy Coroners, analyze the circumstances surrounding the death and determine whether an autopsy is indicated. Autopsies are performed at the discretion of the team of pathologists. For cases in which an autopsy is not indicated, an external examination is performed.

An autopsy consists of the gross external and internal examination of a body with documentation of injuries and natural disease. Additional studies such as microscopic examination, immunohistochemistry, special tissue staining, toxicology, bacterial and viral cultures, molecular testing, sexual assault examinations, and analyses for inborn errors of metabolism are utilized as needed.

If the manner of death is certified as a homicide, the Forensic Pathologist may be asked to provide unbiased expert testimony utilizing the autopsy findings at the Grand Jury or in the Court of Common Pleas. Regardless of the manner of death, the Forensic Pathologist may be required to give expert testimony in civil trials and proceedings as to the specific cause of death, for example, auto accidents or work-related accidents. Investigations of deaths in childhood help to

confirm or allay any suspicions of abuse in cases of Sudden Unexpected Infant Deaths (SUID).

Not all autopsies reveal the cause of death even after thorough medical and police investigations are concluded. These cases are certified “undetermined” and can occur for a variety of reasons. Some causes of natural deaths, such as abnormal heartbeat, do not leave anatomical clues and may be difficult or impossible to document after death.

The Forensic Pathologists or their designee participate in meetings hosted by Columbus Department of Public Health where they present specific case findings during the Traffic Fatality Review, Child Fatality Review, and Sudden Unexplained Infant Death (SUID) Review. These reviews occur quarterly to monthly and help to look for patterns that may be used to decrease mortality in our community.

The Franklin County Forensic Science Center has formal agreements with Nationwide Children’s Hospital, The Ohio State University, and Ohio University for teaching purposes. The Forensic Pathologists play a vital role in teaching future pathologists, medical students, nurses, various other medical professionals, and law enforcement officers.

PATHOLOGY PRESENTATIONS

In October 2021 several of our forensic pathologists gave talks at the Ohio State Coroner’s Association. These included talks on Forensic Imaging and Forensic Identification.



MORGUE DEPARTMENT

The Morgue Technicians are responsible for assisting the Forensic Pathologists in postmortem examinations, forensic processing, evidence collection, postmortem radiology, and facilitating communication between law enforcement, funeral directors, and families. The postmortem examination is of vital importance in helping the pathologists determine cause and manner of death. Forensic processing allows for the detailed photographic documentation of evidence as well as proper collection of evidence that can be important to a death investigation. Careful examination of the decedent is performed, and samples for toxicological and microscopic analysis are obtained. The department is staffed seven (7) days a week, with six (6) full-time technicians, and one (1) working supervisor. In 2021, the morgue department performed more than 2,330 postmortem examinations and 91.7% of examinations were completed in less than 48 hours after arrival.

At the start of 2021 the morgue department was seeing a large amount of COVID positive cases ranging from homicides to suicides to overdoses. At the time we were examining these cases with full personal protective equipment (PPE) to include full body tyvek suits, N95 masks and powered air purifying respirator (PAPR) units. The workflow for COVID cases was vastly different than regular cases causing exam time management

to be difficult to plan for. During the third quarter we reassessed where we were as an agency with COVID response and the CDC's standpoint for COVID positive postmortem examinations. We chose to mirror the CDC's guidelines and all employees within the morgue were fit tested for N95 mask and updated our COVID protocol for triaging cases. We adhered to a standard in which we treat every decedent as if they could have COVID while taking all the proper precautions and test those decedents in which could have passed away as a result of COVID. This allowed our department to better triage cases and manage our time and efficiency better.

In the morgue we have benefitted greatly from the new facility. With the addition of the radiology department including the full body LODOX and the CT machine we are able to use the information produced from the images to triage cases. Utilizing this new technology allows us to fully image a decedent in significantly less time than we previously could. We are now able to use the CT to assist with postmortem findings on cases in which a family might want to object to an autopsy. The increase in space has also allowed us to be able to work more comfortably and efficiently. We have the room to complete cases and get decedents back to their families in a timely manner.

MORGUE DEPARTMENT CONTINUED

The Morgue Attendants are responsible for the intake and release of every decedent that is brought in to the FCFSC for an examination or further investigation. The addition of the position has allowed for a more efficient process for intake and release. The Morgue Attendants process body release forms, contact funeral homes or next of kin to obtain their funeral home

choice. The Morgue Attendants have significantly decreased the amount of time it takes to release a decedent to the funeral home allowing families to have services and begin the grieving and healing process. The Morgue Attendants report to the Supervisor of Morgue Attendants, Property and Evidence.

APPOINTMENTS

Erika Wrigley, B.S., Supervisor of Morgue Technicians & Histology – Chief Administrative Officer of the National Association of Forensic Morgue Technicians (2021)





RADIOLOGY DEPARTMENT

In October of 2020 the Franklin County Forensic Science Center added new radiology equipment to the office – a LODOX eXero-dr X-ray scanning system and a Siemens SOMATOM go. NOW CT Scanner. Both devices have had a positive impact on the autopsy workflow, both in terms of the information and time efficiency they provide. The LODOX system is a low dose, high speed and high-resolution digital X-ray scanning system that can produce a full body X-ray image in 13 seconds. A CT scanner combines a series of X-ray images taken from different angles around the body, which can then be processed by the computer to provide cross-section images (which will include views of the internal organs) and even 3D reconstructions of the bone anatomy.

For autopsies, postmortem radiology is essential for many of the cases, predominantly those that involve trauma or require bullet recovery. Each radiology device has its own strengths and one or both devices may be used depending on the case. For example, for a decedent with a history of a fall, the LODOX can provide a high-resolution image to allow for quick easy assessment of bone fractures. In more complicated trauma cases, such as in a motor vehicle collision, the CT scanner can provide more detailed images through its 3D bone reconstruction program. The 2D images that the LODOX system provides allows for better visualization of fractures in parts of the body that may be more difficult to recognize. For homicides that involve gunshot wounds, all cases must be X-rayed using the LODOX system so that the determination of the number and location of retained bullets or bullet fragments can be made. This information is necessary to ensure all bullets and fragments are removed from the body to provide as evidence to law enforcement. Prior to these machines, the office only had a portable x-ray device that typically required the morgue technicians to take multiple x-rays.



Each x-ray only provided an image that could capture a small part of the body. With the increase in homicide cases (and total cases in general) over the last year, the LODOX system has been invaluable in reducing the amount of time spent performing X-rays. With the efficiency of the LODOX system, this has allowed for the staff to complete more autopsies on daily basis so that the decedents can be released to the funeral homes in a timely fashion.

Postmortem radiology is also useful for identification of decedents. Decedents often arrive at The Coroner's Office before they have been scientifically identified. Strict guidelines are utilized for how a decedent can be positively identified, with one method being comparison of antemortem X-rays (those that the decedent had taken while still alive at a hospital) to postmortem X-rays. These can involve any part of the body, including a dental comparison. Many times, decedents will have unique surgical hardware present that we can use for comparison. Other cases require comparing specific parts of the spine and other unique features of the bones. Our goal is to always identify decedents as quickly as possible, and our radiology machines have helped us accomplish this for many of our cases.

TOXICOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Toxicology is the scientific study of the adverse effects of drugs and chemicals on living things. Forensic toxicology is that application where the adverse toxicological effects have medicolegal consequences, and the findings are likely to be used in a court of law. The Franklin County Coroner's Office Forensic Toxicology Laboratory determines the presence or absence of drugs and chemicals in human tissues and fluids. Such investigations assist the Forensic Pathologist in the evaluation of toxicological implications regarding the death of an individual.

The Forensic Toxicology Laboratory's mission is "To provide thorough, accurate and timely toxicology testing results for the Forensic Pathologist of the Franklin County Coroner's Office, as well as regional coroners, law enforcement agencies, and to apply our collective resources and abilities to assist in the solution or interpretation of forensic toxicology problems and issues."

The Franklin County Coroner's Office Forensic Toxicology Laboratory is an industry leader in testing scope ensuring thorough and comprehensive results.

The Franklin County Coroner's Office Forensic Toxicology Laboratory is accredited by the American Board of Forensic Toxicology that is based upon compliance with professional standards as assessed by peer review, including onsite inspections and successful achievement in proficiency testing programs. The Franklin County Coroner's Office

Forensic Toxicology Laboratory provides timely results by exceeding the National Association of Medical Examiner's toxicology completion time guidelines.

The Franklin County Coroner's Office Forensic Toxicology Laboratory is equipped with an enzyme linked immunosorbent assay system, a dual-column headspace gas chromatograph equipped with flame ionization detection, two liquid chromatograph tandem mass spectrometers, a liquid chromatograph time-of-flight mass spectrometer, and four gas chromatograph mass spectrometers, which allow the laboratory to accomplish its mission. Attesting to the toxicology staff's ability, four of the laboratory's scientists have earned Board Certification in Forensic Toxicology by the American Board of Forensic Toxicology, based upon their personal and professional record of education and training, experience, achievement, and a formal written examination.

In 2021, the Franklin County Coroner's Office Forensic Toxicology lab was awarded The Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grant. The Coverdell Program awards grants to states and units of local government to help improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services.

Toxicologists at the Franklin County Coroner's Office Forensic Toxicology Laboratory are available full time for consultation with Forensic Pathologists for interpretation of results, ordering additional tests, and ultimately documenting the scientific truth.

TOXICOLOGY PUBLICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

Presentations

J. Hobbs, R. DeRienz, D. Baker, R. Barnett, A. Raines, M. Shuttleworth, B. O'Linn, M. Pandey, and A. Ortiz. "Case Report: Identification of the Hidden Killer 4-fluoro-3-methyl- α -PVP" Presented at The Society of Forensic Toxicologists Annual Meeting, Nashville, TN on September 29, 2021.

A. Raines, R. DeRienz, D. Baker, R. Barnett, J. Hobbs, M. Shuttleworth, B. O'Linn, E. Amoresano, and A. Ortiz. "What "R-" You Huffing? A Fatal Mixed Refrigerant Exposure" Presented at The Society of Forensic Toxicologists Annual Meeting, Nashville, TN on September 29, 2021.

D. Baker. "Introduction to Forensic Toxicology" Anthropology 3211 – Introduction to Forensic Science, The Ohio State University. Two 1.25 hour virtual lectures presented Nov. 5th and Nov. 10th, 2021.

Appointments

Amber Raines, M.S., Assistant Toxicologist – Retained as Secretary of the Midwestern Association of Toxicology and Therapeutic Drug Monitoring

Daniel Baker, M.S., F-ABFT, Chief Toxicologist – Appointed to the Society of Forensic Toxicologists Postmortem Toxicology Committee July 21, 2021.



INVESTIGATIONS DEPARTMENT AND INTERVENTION SPECIALISTS

The Investigations Department is responsible for conducting death scene investigations for unnatural and unexplained deaths in Franklin County as well as taking calls regarding jurisdiction in hospital-reported deaths. Members of this department serve the community and are a part of the process to determine cause and manner of death. In addition to death investigation, the investigators process bodies, and communicate with law enforcement, medical professionals, and families. There are twelve (12) Investigators with one (1) working supervisor along with a part-time Investigative Secretary. The Coroner's office is staffed with investigators 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Investigators are required to complete a certification process with the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators (ABMDI).

In 2022, the Investigations Department will be adding an additional member to the team, which allow the office to begin to pioneer innovative investigative work for the county while also handling an ever-increasing case load. Two additional team members - an Overdose Investigations & Intervention Specialist and a Suicide Investigations & Postvention Specialist - work alongside the investigative division to delve further into the histories of the county's decedents in order to validate

the injury incident. This information, in partnership with local agencies, will allow for the possibility of policy and intervention methods to prevent similar deaths in the future. The specialists also work to further assist the families of the decedents under the care of the Coroner's office in order to ensure access to postvention resources.

In the past year, COVID-19 has continued to evolve and affect operations. As the medical communities' knowledge of the pandemic has increased, our investigative process continued to evolve. Over the course of the past two years our questioning and medical records requests have become more directed and efficient. We have continued to provide up to date information on testing to The Infectious Disease Reporting System to improve public health information to help combat the pandemic.

The new Franklin County Forensic Science Center has allowed the Investigations Department to increase its total staffing and provide modern tools to perform death investigations. The recent population growth in Franklin County and subsequent case load increase will continue to present many challenges which we are well-positioned to meet and overcome.

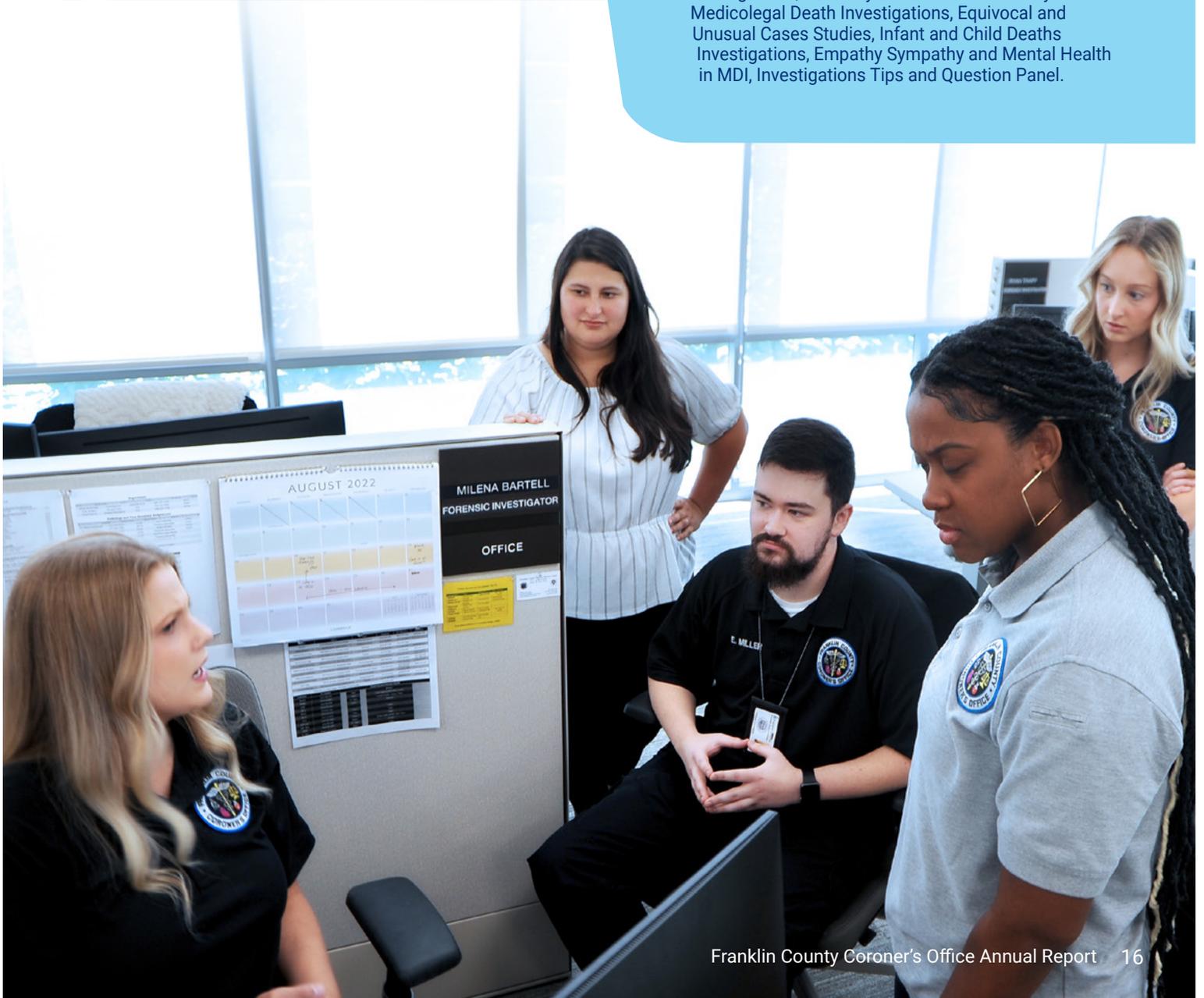


INVESTIGATIONS PRESENTATIONS

In May 2021, investigation leadership team presented at Ohio Peace Officers Training Academy (OPOTA) on Medicolegal Death Investigations for law enforcement officers.

In October 2021 two of our Supervisors and Investigator Specialists gave talks at the Ohio State Coroner's Association. These included talks on Forensic Identification and the Unique Perspective in Death Investigations using Intervention and Postvention Specialists for Prevention regarding overdose and suicide deaths.

In November 2021, we hosted a Medicolegal Death Investigator (MDI) Conference where the Forensic Investigations Department presented on various topics covering: Criminal vs Medicolegal Death Investigations, Sexuality and Gender Sensitivity in Medicolegal Death Investigations, Equivocal and Unusual Cases Studies, Infant and Child Deaths Investigations, Empathy Sympathy and Mental Health in MDI, Investigations Tips and Question Panel.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In addition to investigating unnatural deaths, the Franklin County Coroner's Office engages in several community outreach initiatives. These include educational opportunities, Interagency Informational Sessions, Drug Overdose Death Initiative, and conferences. In addition, the Coroner, if requested, will give presentations on a variety of topics to organizations in the community.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The purpose of the 'Professional Development Series' is to broaden and develop our team members through information and education, self-awareness and development, professionalism, and networking. The presenters are local community members and professionals that live, work or support the community of Franklin County. This series is held monthly for one hour at the Franklin County Coroner's Office. Additionally, the Franklin County Coroner's Office has not only presented to colleges and universities but also presented to and participated in job fairs for high school and tweens through the Columbus Public Library branches. Internships and shadowing opportunities are offered year-round to college and university students with emphases in forensic science or the medical field. The Franklin County Coroner's Office also participates in different family and adult educational events through various programs within the county.

ADDICTION CRISIS

In March of 2015, the Franklin County Coroner's Office initiated a poison death review of decedents who had died of overdoses. This was due to the increase in deaths observed since 2014. The review became known as the Drug Overdose Death Initiative or DODI. Members of the review are from multiple disciplines and work on providing information on decedents to look for patterns. In addition to DODI, the Franklin County Coroner's Office hosted the Opiate Crisis Summit in 2016 and 2017. The Summit provided people from multiple disciplines information on the opiate crisis, especially on a local level. The 2017 Summit had over 600 attendees. In 2018, the City of Columbus and the Franklin County Commissioners created the Franklin County and City of Columbus Addiction Action Plan. The Franklin County Coroner's Office supports the plan through the overdose death initiative.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In March of 2020, Franklin County Coroner's Office partnered with the Center for Family Healing to initiate a Domestic Violence Fatality Review. DVFR occurs quarterly and has a number of county agencies and organizations that work on domestic violence, as members. The goal is to look at gaps in the system and provide recommendations on how to close these gaps or on preventive measures. In 2020, Center for Family Healing and the Coroner's office began working with Rep. Kristin Boggs on legislation to create domestic violence fatality reviews throughout Ohio.

ORGAN, TISSUE, AND EYE DONATION

Once every 48 hours, an Ohioan dies waiting for a life-saving organ transplant. Right now, there are more than 108,000 men, women and children on the national transplant waiting list for a lifesaving organ. In the last ten years, more than 2,000 Ohioans have died waiting. In Ohio, there are more than 3,100 people, approximately 700 in Central Ohio waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant. As transplantation of hearts, kidneys, lungs, pancreas and livers has emerged as the preferred and most successful treatment of many life-threatening diseases, the need for these life-saving gifts has increased. Franklin County Coroner's Office continues to support organ, tissue and eye donation with its partners, the Central Ohio Lion's Eye Bank and Lifeline of Ohio.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Suicide is a major public health concern. Suicide is among the leading causes of death in the United States. Based on recent nationwide surveys, suicide in some populations especially in youth is on the rise. A report, released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), showed that rates of death by suicide in the United States have risen by roughly 25% in the last couple decades. Franklin County Coroner's Office continues to support Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors (LOSS) in providing grief support for those impacted by suicide. In addition, the Coroner is a member of the Franklin County Suicide Prevention Coalition.



Fiscal Department

The Franklin County Coroner's Fiscal Department strives to assure that tax dollars are spent prudently and judiciously while assuring that all identified needs are met as cost effectively as possible. It oversees all financial and purchasing matters of the Coroner's Office including annual performance-based budgets, payroll, expenditures, and revenue.

2021 BUDGET OVERVIEW

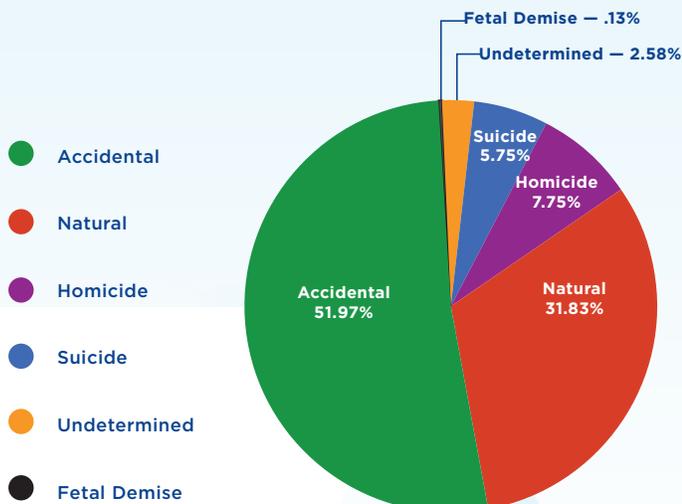
Franklin County Coroner's Office	2021 Original Budget	2021 Revised Budget
Staffing Services	\$3,782,388.00	\$4,398,461.00
Benefits	\$1,392,559.00	\$1,475,847.00
Materials and Services	\$1,065,153.00	\$1,346,603.00
Capital Outlays Total	\$21,663.00	\$21,663.00
Total	\$6,261,763.00	\$7,242,574.00

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resource Specialist is responsible for maintaining personnel records, FMLA leave, and payroll for the staff of the Coroner's Office. Employees are encouraged to get involved with the healthy Thrive On program through the Benefits Department. This year (2021) we scheduled regular visits with Michelle Crow-Yeatts our EAP Consultant. One of the goals this year is to encourage more employees to get involved with the ThriveOn program.

Statistics

Manners of Death (2021)



Total Reported Cases	5,863
Accepted as Coroner's Cases	3,098
Not Assigned As Coroner's Cases	2,765

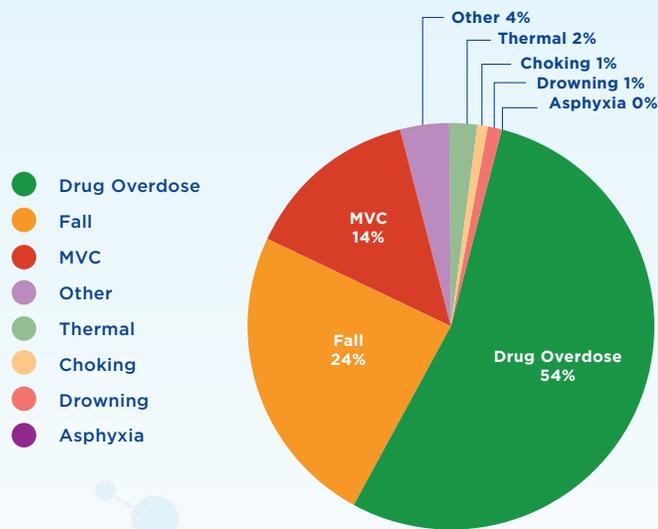
Manner Of Death After Investigation	
Accidental	1,610
Homicide	240
Natural	986
Suicide	178
Undetermined	80
Fetal Demise*	4

Autopsies	
Total Autopsies Performed	1,750
Franklin County Autopsy Cases	1,719
Out of County Autopsy Cases	31
Total External Examinations	1,078
Franklin County External Examinations	1,074
Out of County External Examinations	4
Partial Examinations	36
Death Certificate Only	538

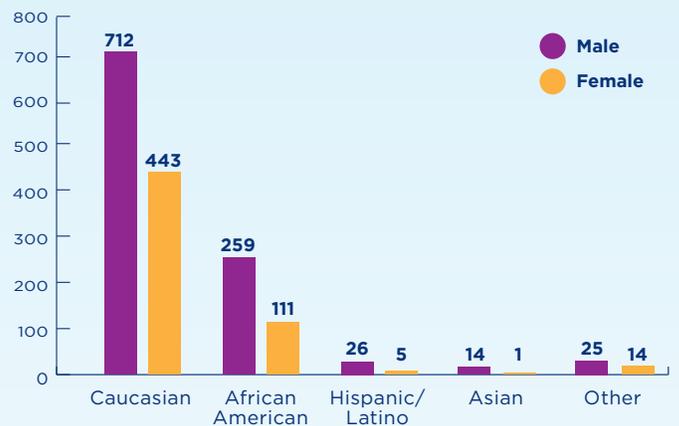
Additional Figures	
Bodies Transported	2,995
Storage Cases	99
Scene Investigations	1,754
Toxicology Investigations	2,893
Sudden Infant Deaths were reported in compliance with the Ohio Revised Code 313.121. SID total is also reflected in the Manner of Death categories; Natural, Accidental, & Undetermined. Present language also identifies this cause of death as Sudden Unexplained Infant Death (SUID)	25
Non-Human Bones Found	12

Manners of Death: Accidental

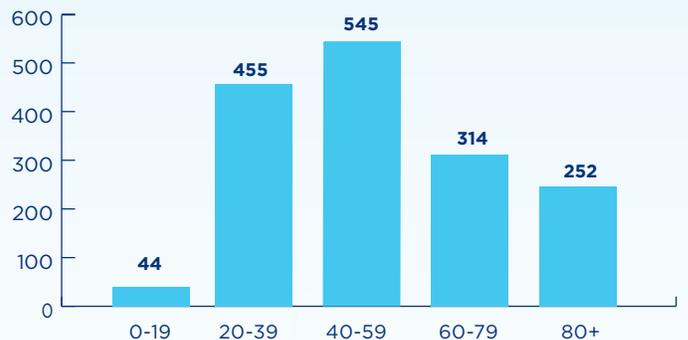
An accidental death is a result of an unnatural cause where there is no evidence of intent to cause harm and the fatal outcome was unintentional.



Accidental Deaths by Race And Gender (2021)

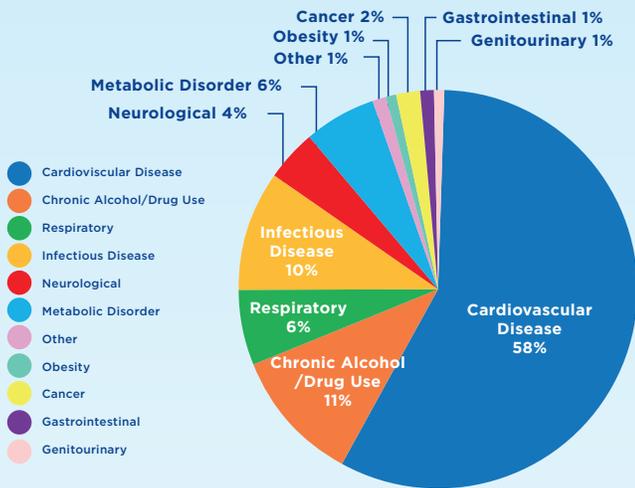


Accidental Deaths by Age (2021)



Manners of Death: Natural

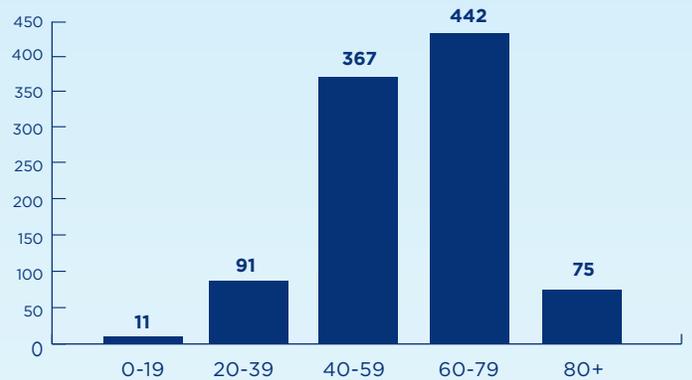
A natural death is one due to a spontaneous or naturally occurring disease or degenerative process. A death so classified can fall under the jurisdiction of the Coroner because of the sudden or unexpected nature of the death, because there was no physician with knowledge or awareness of the decedent's condition, or when circumstances surrounding the death arouse suspicion.



Natural Deaths By Race And Gender (2021)

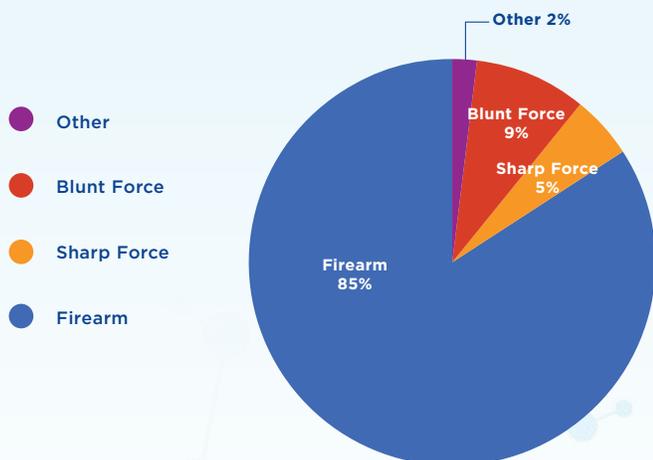


Natural Deaths By Age (2021)

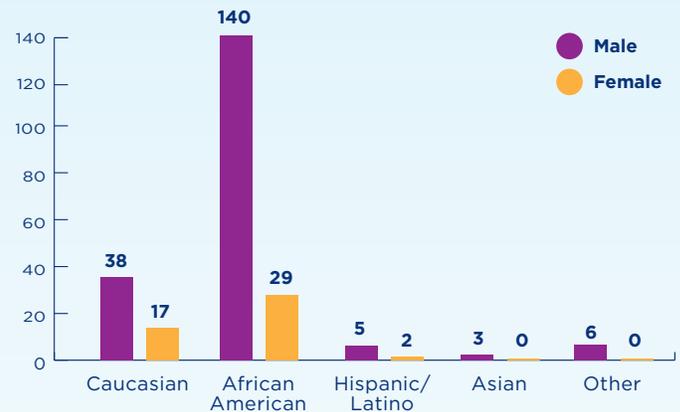


Manners of Death: Homicide

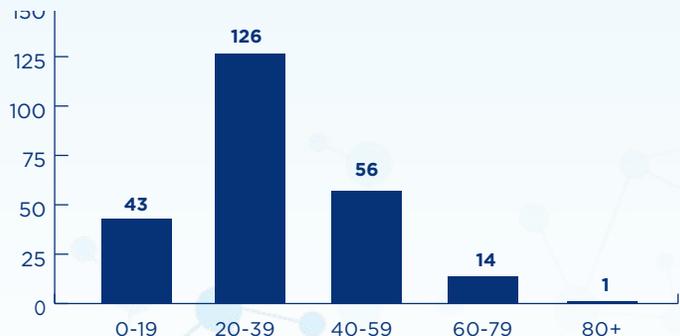
A homicide death is a death resulting from a voluntary action committed by another person. A homicide is not necessarily a murder. This classification does not necessarily indicate criminal intent, which is determined by the legal process.



Homicide Deaths By Race And Gender (2021)

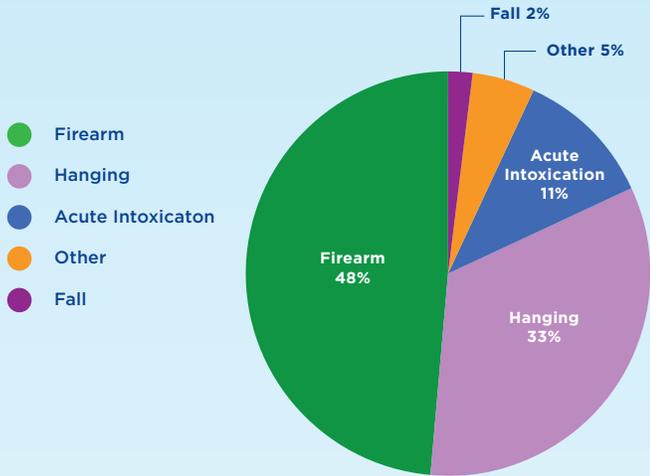


Homicide Deaths By Age (2021)

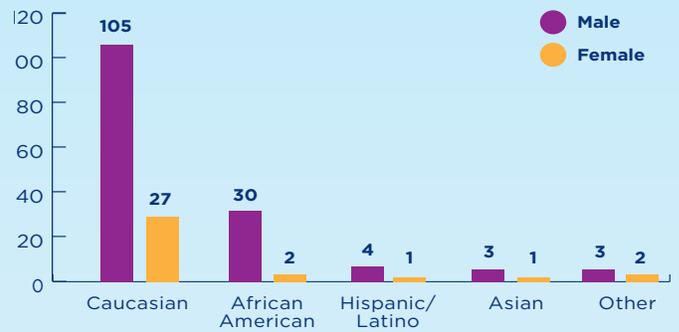


Manners of Death: Suicide

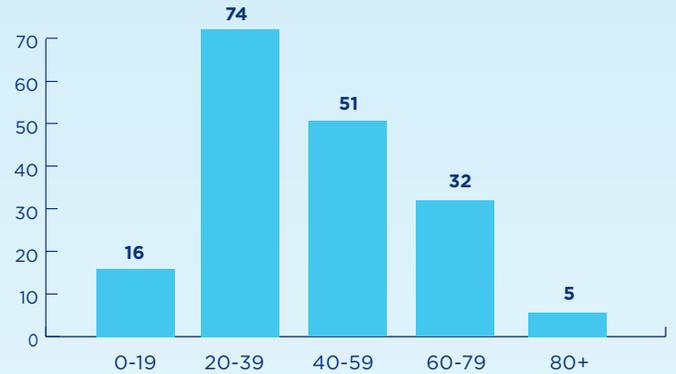
A suicide is a death resulting from a self-inflicted injury which ends one's life.



Suicide Deaths By Race And Gender (2021)

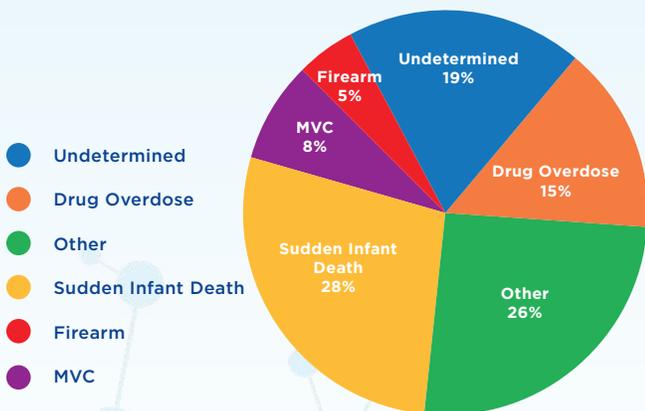


Suicide Deaths By Age (2021)

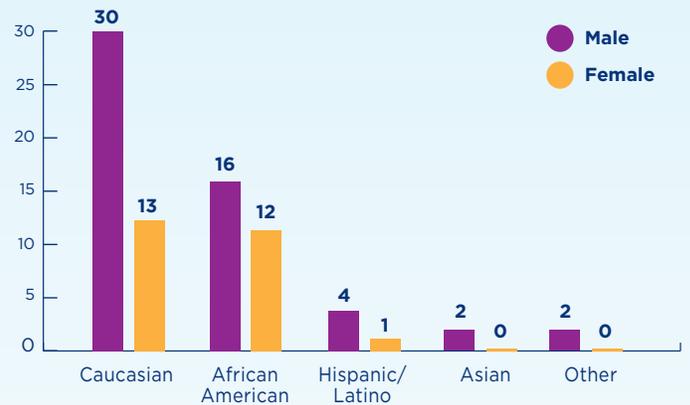


Manners of Death: Undetermined

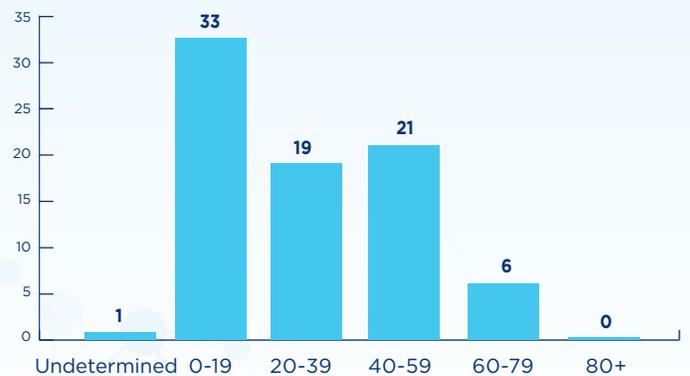
"Undetermined" is a classification used when the information pointing to one manner of death is no more compelling than one or more other competing manners of death in thorough consideration of all available information.



Undetermined Deaths By Race And Gender (2021)



Undetermined Deaths By Age (2021)



Unidentified Individuals

Unidentified The staff of the Franklin County Forensic Science Center are responsible for identifying any persons under the jurisdiction of the Coroner. Initial presumptive information may lead to the identity of the decedent. When visual identification is not possible, the process for scientific identification continues, utilizing available fingerprints, dental comparisons, medical documentation and/or radiology. Within these processes, the subject matter experts are identifying unique anatomical features that have beneficial characteristics for a positive identification to be made. The chart below, demonstrates the number of positive identifications that were completed in 2021 on decedents that were initially unidentified.

Criminal Investigation (BCI) to submit available samples including DNA to the lab. The unidentified individual's known information is entered into a shared database known as the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs).

Returning unidentified individuals to their loved ones is a priority and is a continuous process. For additional information on these cases, please visit our website at www.coroner.franklincountyohio.gov.

The following cases are people that remain unidentified despite the continuous efforts of multiple agencies to identify them and return them to their loved ones. If you have any information regarding any of these individuals, please contact the Franklin County Forensic Science center.

FCCO Case #	Date Located	John or Jane Doe?	BCI Unidentified #	NamUs #	Notes
89-2994	11/3/1989	John Doe	2005	14619	Body of a white male located on Walcutt Road
92-2730	9/20/1992	John Doe	202	17871	Possible Asian male found near the 7000 block of Lockbourne Rd. with a gunshot
93-2908	10/11/1993	John Doe	203	19869	Black male found between Alum Creek and Rt. 31
97-2573	8/9/1997	Jane Doe	187	17868	Black female found near 675 West London-Groveport Rd along the bank of the Scioto River
98-0402	2/1/1998	John Doe	184	4751	Remains of an elderly white male discovered along Winkler Hill Rd., Dover OH. about 2 miles northeast of I-77.
06-1082	3/26/2006	John Doe	192	263	White male found in the Scioto River
07-1801	5/30/2007	John Doe	1959	616	Hispanic male found in the Scioto River
21-5442	12/8/2021	John Doe		88076	Unknown male found under I-670 bridge near Vine St

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
Fingerprints	1	5	4	3	8	3	18	2	2	7	14	8	73
Visual	51	32	40	43	47	31	59	42	54	57	54	62	563
Radiology	11	5	6	8	7	2	2	4	2	2	0	0	49
Dental	3	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	1	3	4	7	31
DNA	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	6
Totally of Circumstances	1	2	0	1	0	4							
Totals	62	68	71	75	54	90	70	79	79	68	83	75	874



The Franklin County Forensic Science Center

OFFICE OF THE CORONER

2090 Frank Road
Columbus, Ohio 43223
614-525-5290
coroner.franklincountyohio.gov

