

# 2025

## 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 | CJIS SUPPORT CENTER



**BILL LEE**  
Governor

## TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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**DAVID B. RAUSCH**  
Director

March 30, 2026

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation would like to present the 2025 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 CrimeInsight 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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "DR", representing David B. Rausch.

David B. Rausch  
Director



## **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, therefore, are 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; 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 REPORT**

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 represents numbers for calendar year 2025 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 their 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.

The data in this publication is based solely on the raw data provided to the TBI by law enforcement agencies. Any statistical analysis does not account for representational Tennessee demographics, and as such, rates of occurrence may be different when those factors are considered.

## **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 presented as it was received.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED DEATHS BY AGENCY TYPE**

In 2025, 69 agencies reported a Law Enforcement-Related Death. Some agencies reported multiple events during the reporting period, while no deaths were reported by college/university law enforcement agencies.

### Reporting Agencies by Type:

34 Jails/Prisons

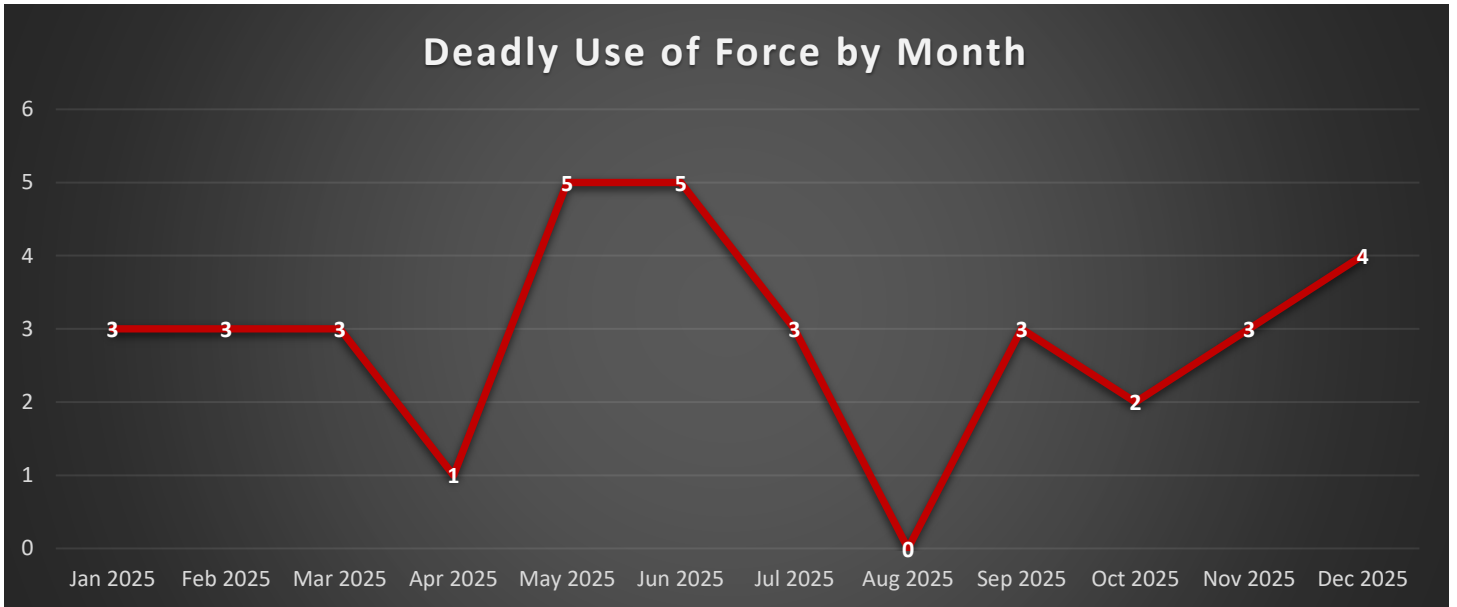
17 Police Departments

15 Sheriff's Offices

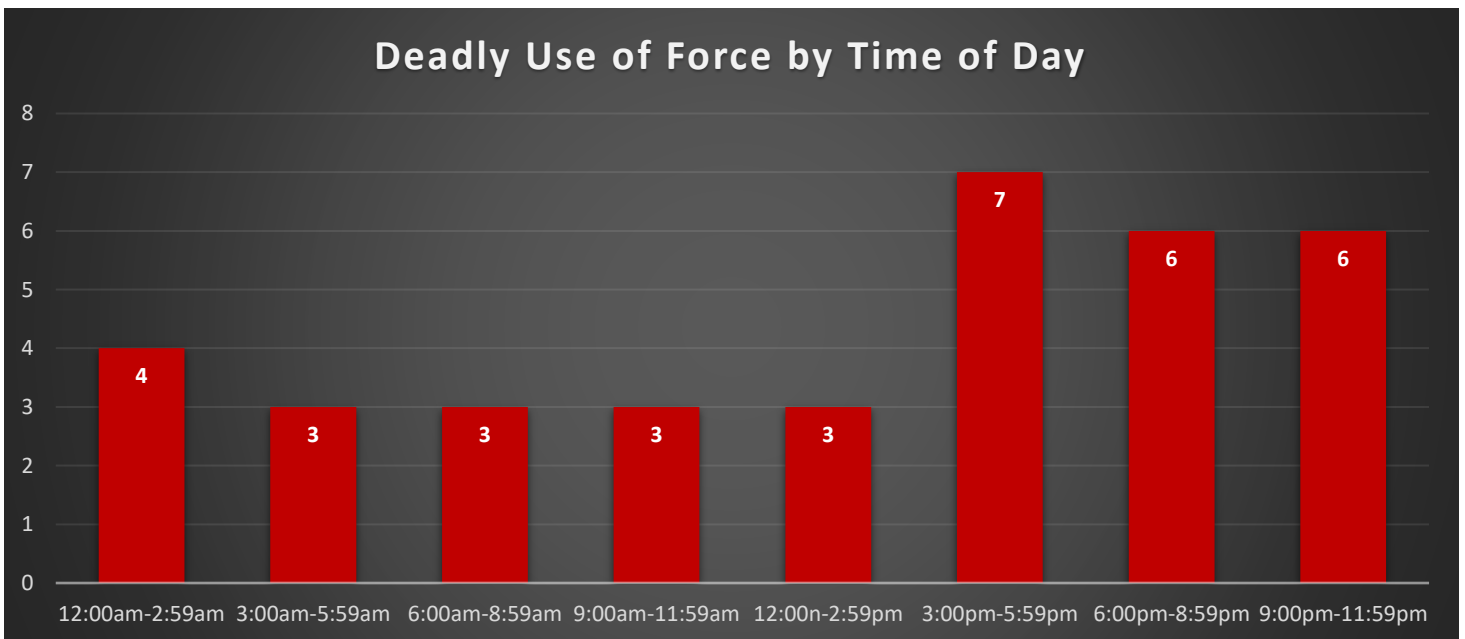
3 State Law Enforcement Agencies

All data used in this publication was retrieved on 2/18/2026. 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 those 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

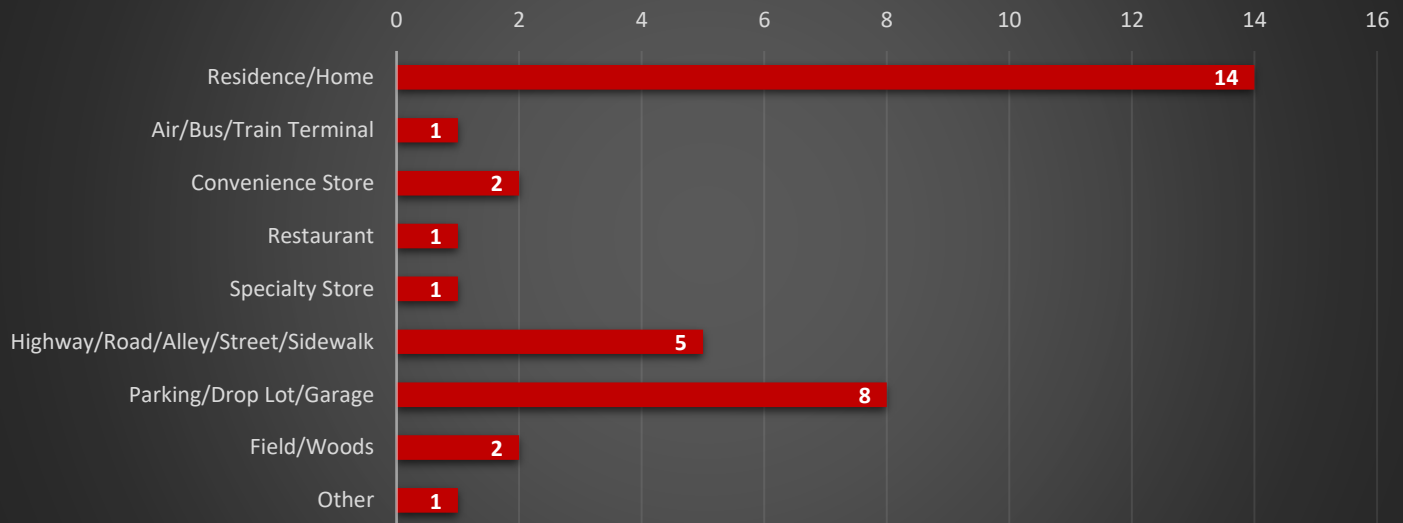


In 2025, there were 35 incidents involving a deadly use of force. An average of three Deadly Use of Force incidents occurred each month, with peaks of five in both May and June, and none reported in August.



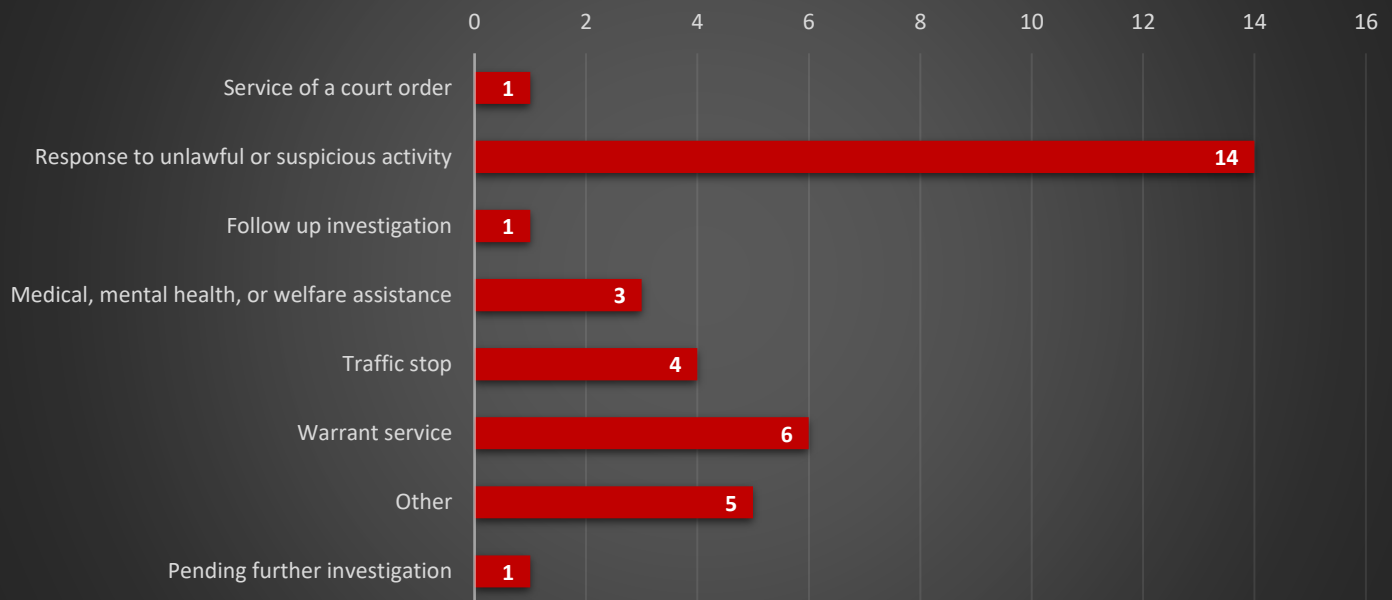
Analysis of Deadly Use of Force incidents by time of day indicates that they most often occurred between the afternoon and late evening. The highest proportions were reported between 3:00–5:59 p.m. (20.00%), followed by 6:00–8:59 p.m. and 9:00–11:59 p.m., each accounting for 17.14% of incidents.

## Deadly Use of Force by Location

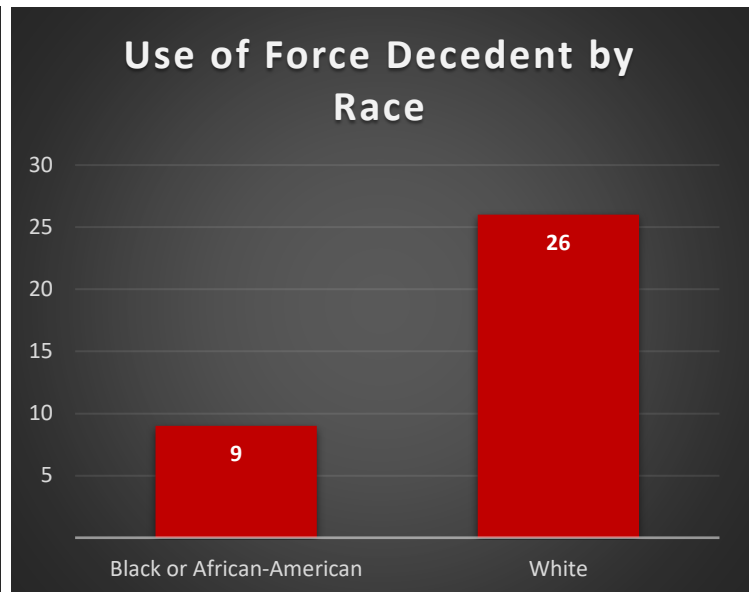
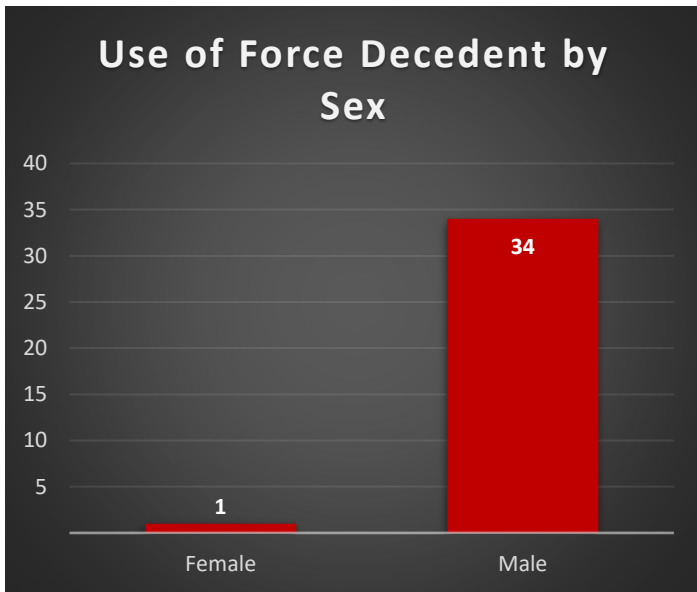


When examining deadly use of force incidents in 2025, the three locations that appeared the most frequently are Residence/Home at 40.00%, Parking Lot/Drop Lot/Garage at 22.86%, and Highway/Road/Alley/Street/Sidewalk with 14.29% of the total. The other six locations comprise the remaining 22.85% of reports.

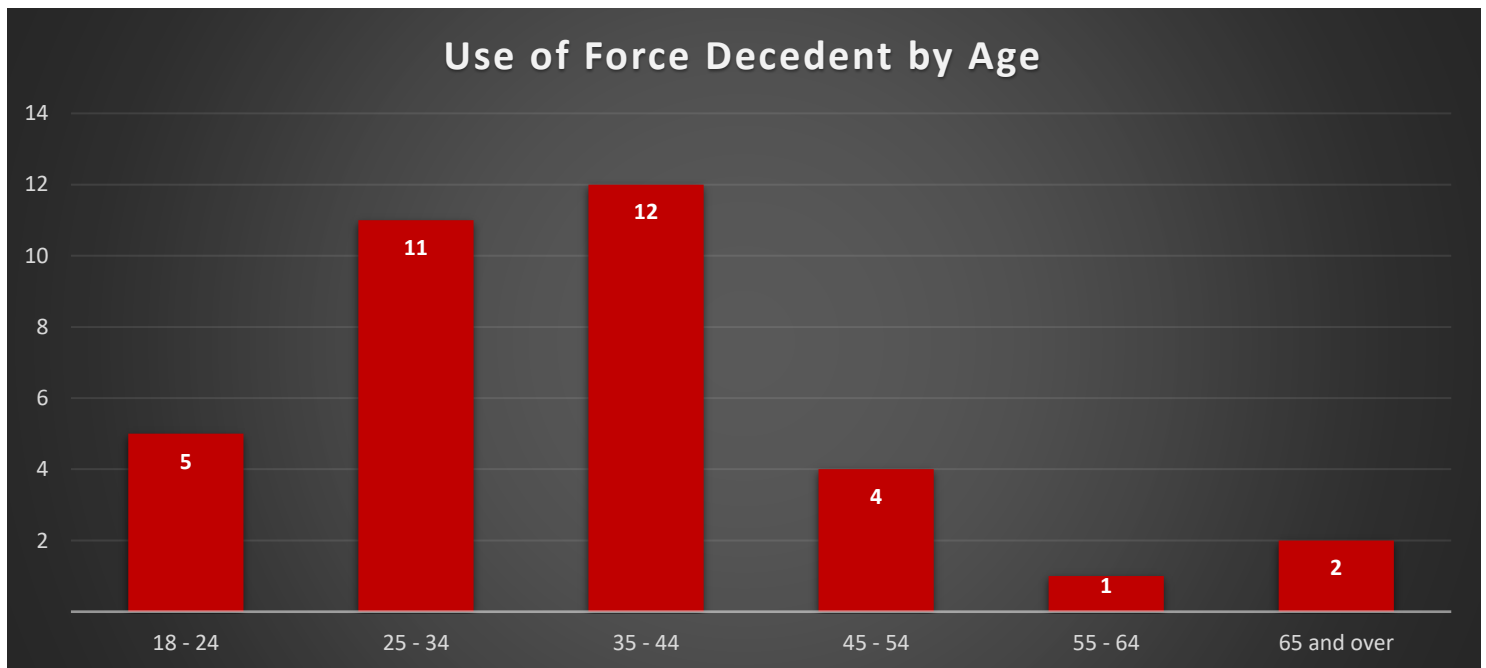
## Deadly Use of Force by Initial Contact



Another facet of data collected about deadly use of force incidents are the circumstances in which contact was made with the decedent. In 2025, the most commonly reported initial contact type by far was Response to unlawful or suspicious activity at 40.00%. Of the remaining seven types of initial contact reported, Warrant service was reported the most at 17.14%.



In 2025, 97.14% of individuals involved in Deadly Use of Force incidents were identified as male. Analysis of race and ethnicity shows that White decedents accounted for 74.29% of reported cases, while Black or African American decedents comprised the remaining 25.71%.



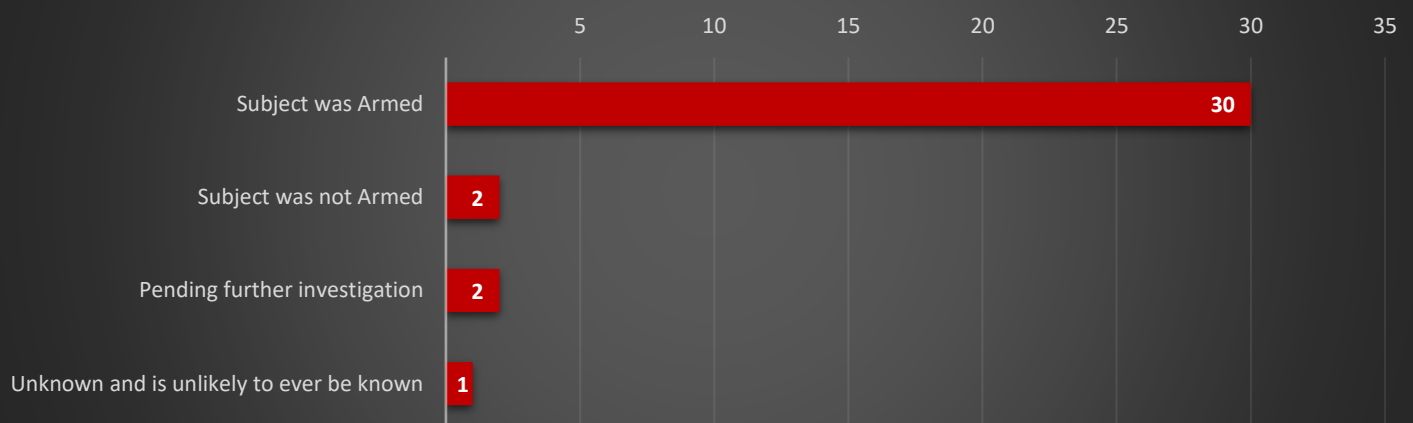
Examining 2025 use of force decedents by age reveals individuals between 35-44 were the most affected group at 34.29%. Following this group, 25-34 is the next most common, comprising 31.43% of decedents.

## Deadly Use of Force by Subject Resistance



When reporting a deadly use of force incident, law enforcement agencies are able to input what type of resistance, if any, the subject showed during the event. In 2025, the most commonly reported type of resistance was Displaying a Weapon at an Officer or Another, followed by Failing to Comply with Verbal Commands or Other Types of Passive Resistance and Using a Firearm against an Officer or Another, comprising 21.88%, 17.19%, and 14.06% respectively. Please note, multiple resistance types may be flagged for any given incident, resulting in a higher total than deadly use of force incidents.

## Deadly Use of Force Subject Armed



Relating to subject resistance, law enforcement agencies also report on whether or not the subject in a deadly use of force incident was armed at the time. In 2025, nearly all deadly use of force decedents were reported as being armed with 85.71% decedents being reported as such. Of the remainder, only two, or 5.71% of decedents, were definitively reported as being unarmed.

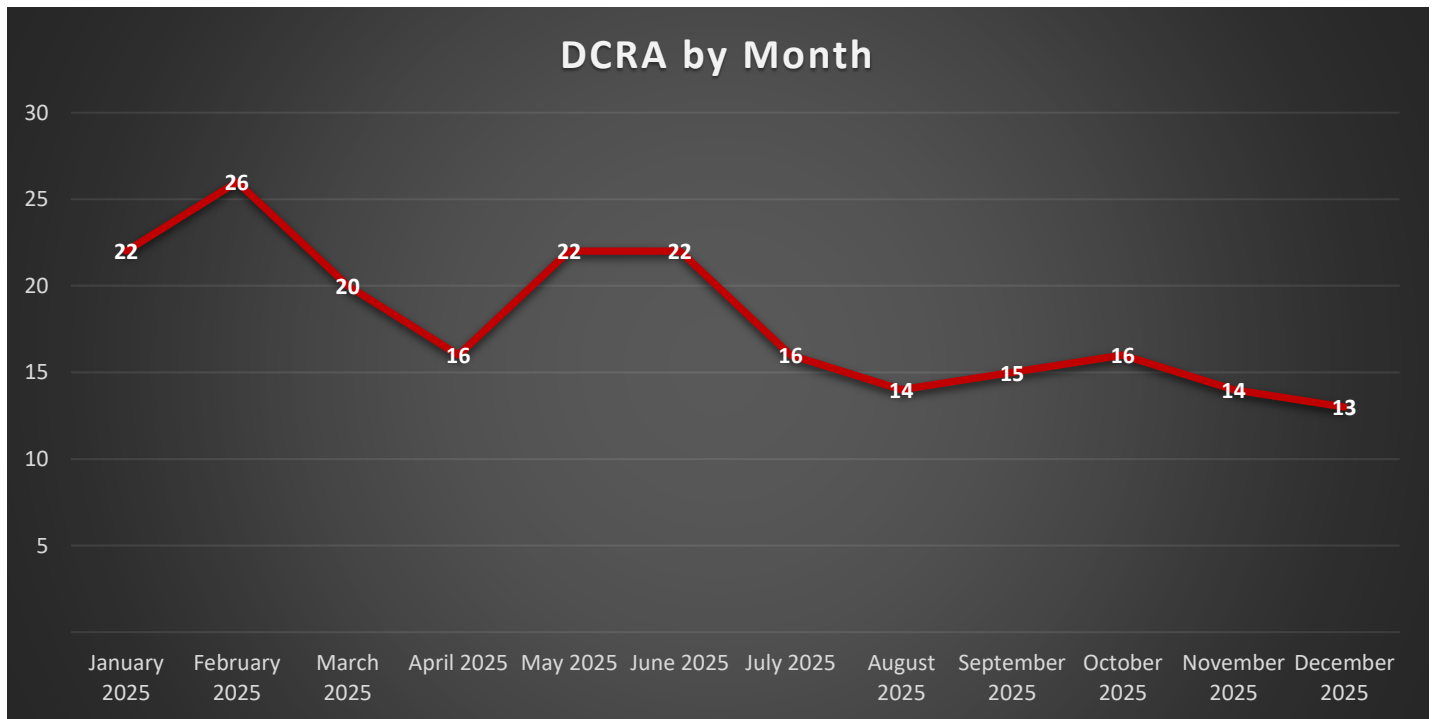
## SECTION 2: ARREST RELATED NON-FORCIBLE DEATHS (ARNFD)

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 (e.g., cardiac arrest, etc.) occurring during the process of an arrest by, or in the custody of, state or local law enforcement personnel.

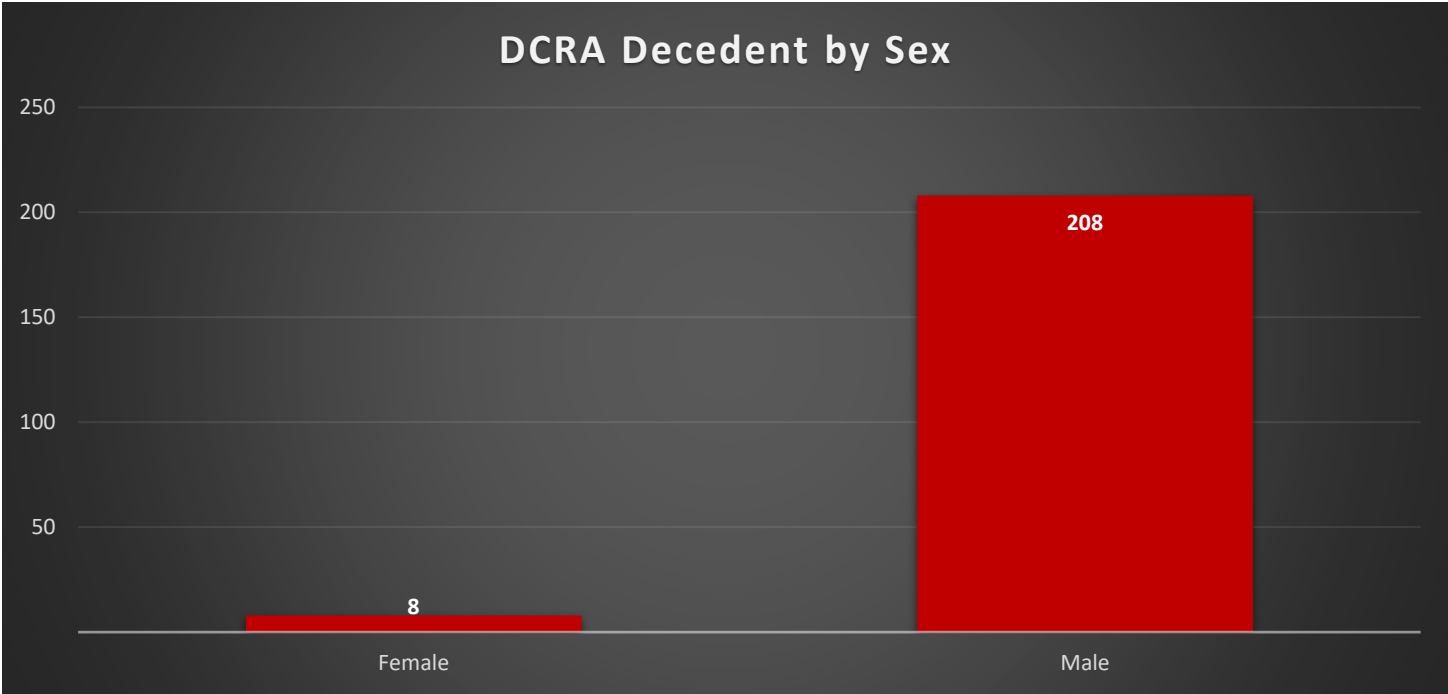
In 2025, zero Arrest Related Non-Forcible Deaths were Reported.

## SECTION 3: DEATHS IN CUSTODY REPORTING ACT (DCRA)

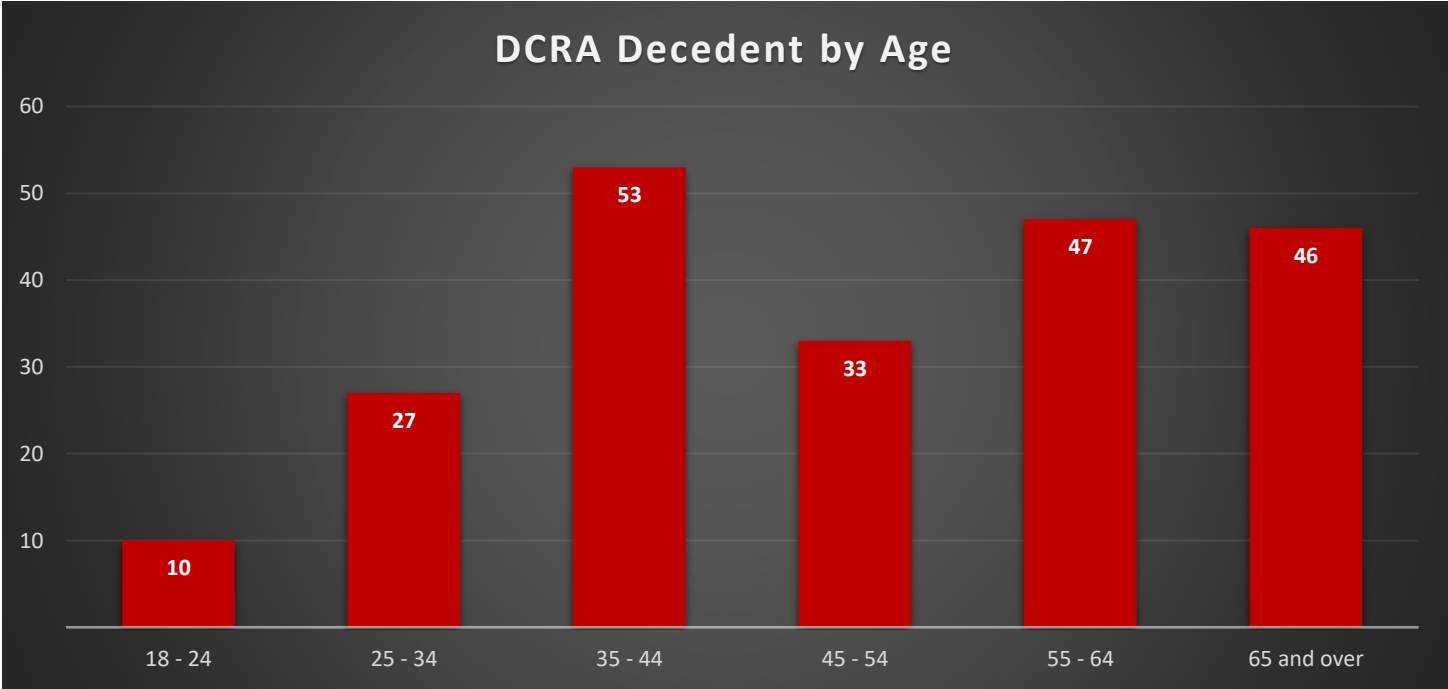
The Deaths in Custody Reporting Act collects data on deaths occurring in jails and prisons.



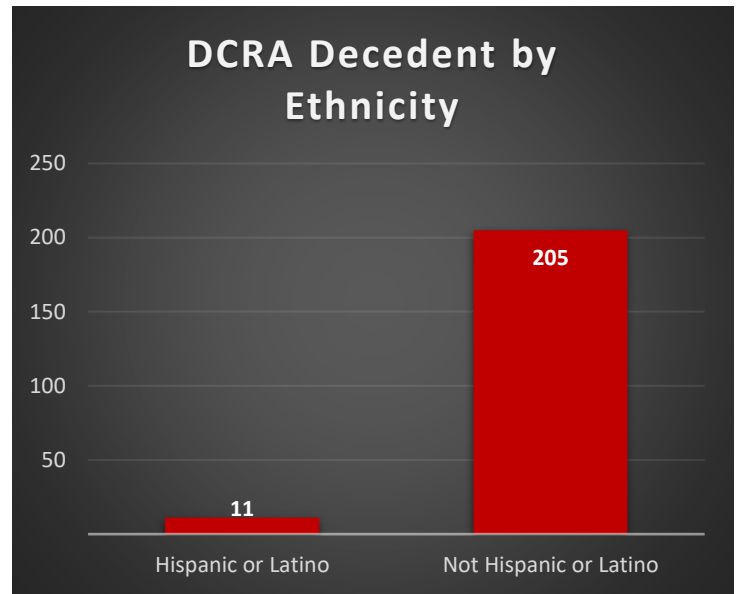
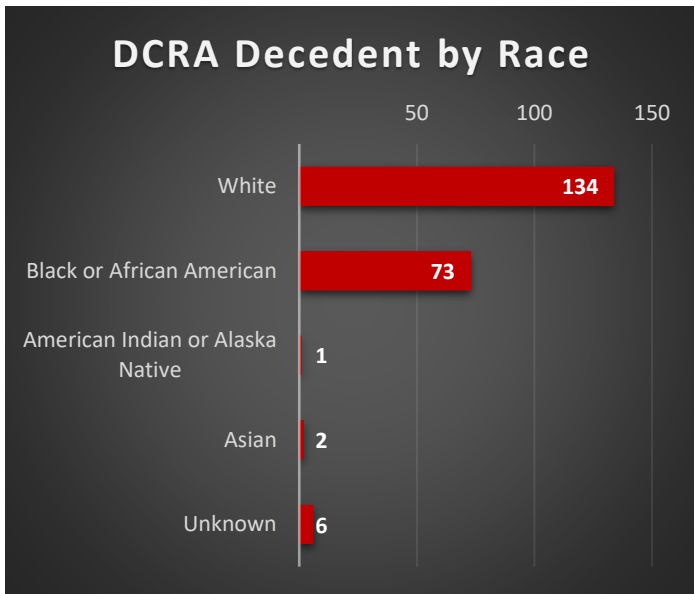
In 2025, 216 deaths were reported across 34 correctional facilities. The highest number of deaths in custody occurred in February at 26 deaths, or 12.04%, followed by January, May, and June at 22 or 10.19% each. The month with the fewest number of reported deaths in custody was December with 13, or 6.02%.



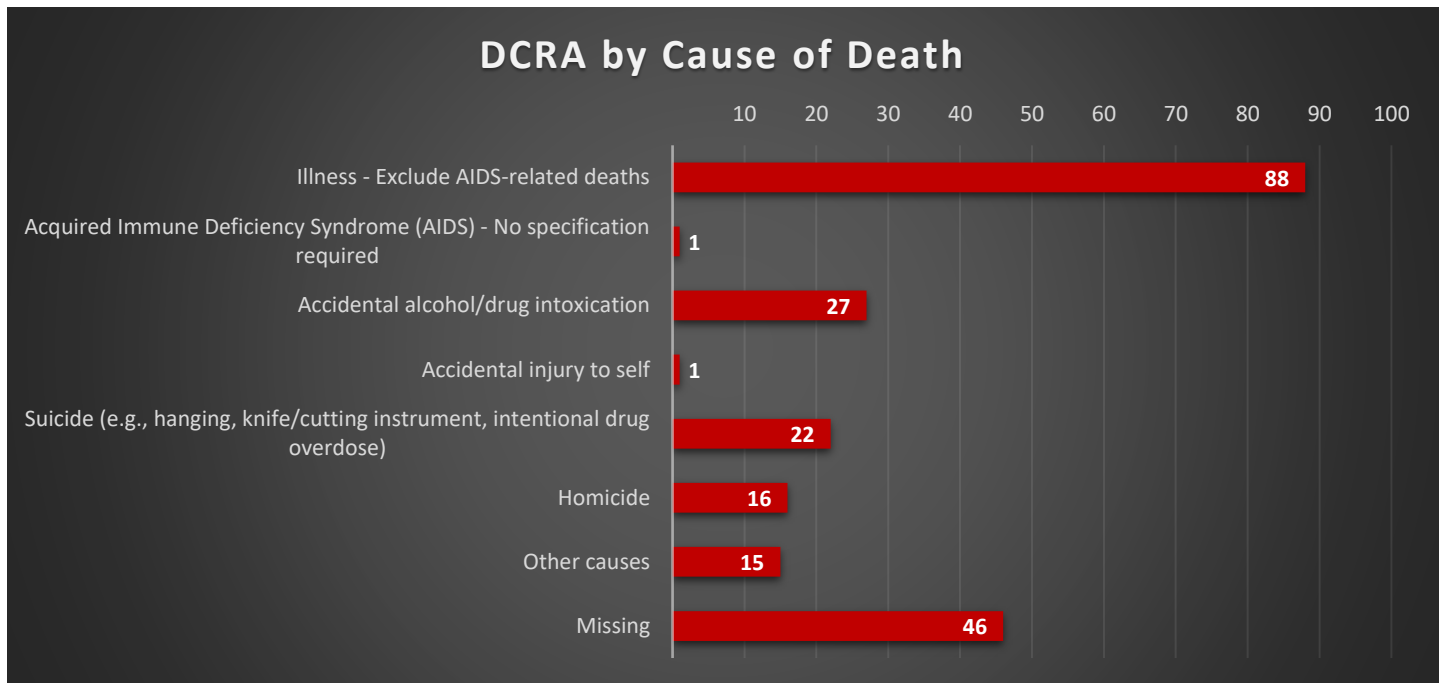
Of the 216 reported DCRA decedents, Males accounted for the majority at 96.30% compared to Females at 3.70%. This means that in 2025 over 26 times as many Males were reported as having died in custody than Females.



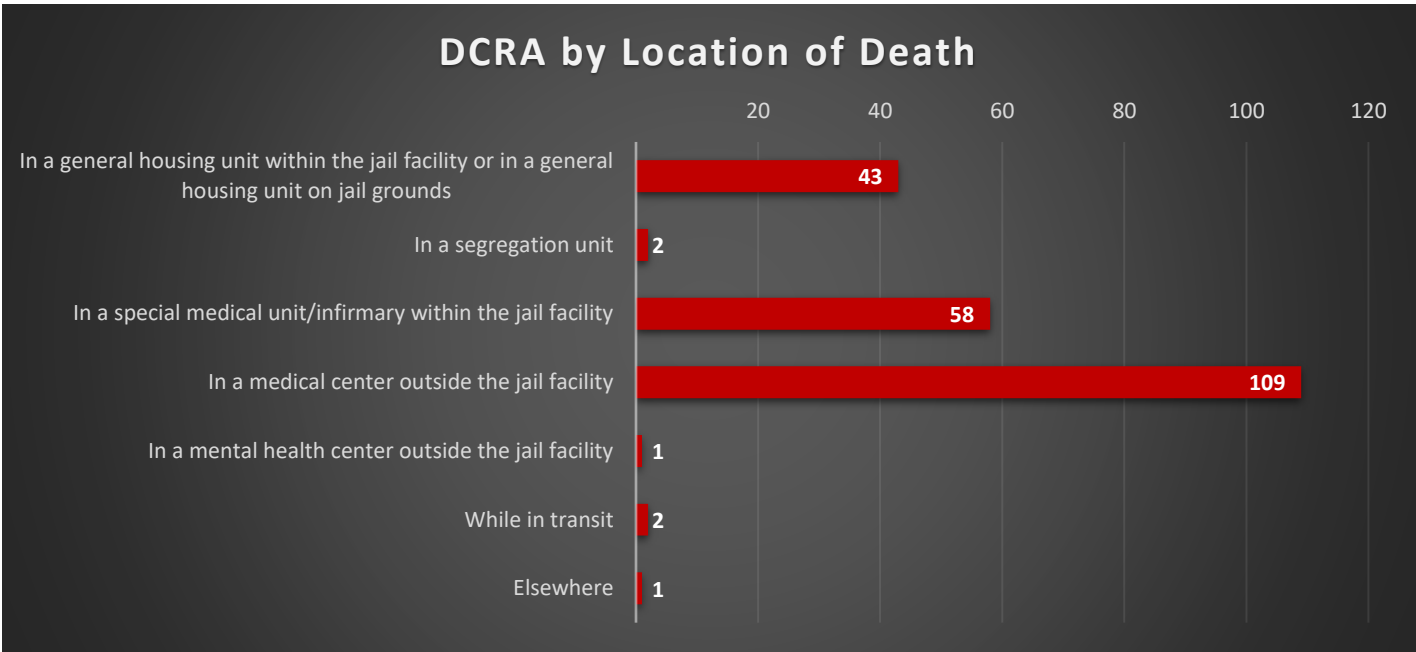
The majority of DCRA decedents in 2025 tended to be between the ages of 35-44, comprising 24.54% of the total. Following this are the age groups of 55-64 and 65 and over, accounting for 21.76% and 21.30% of incidents respectively.



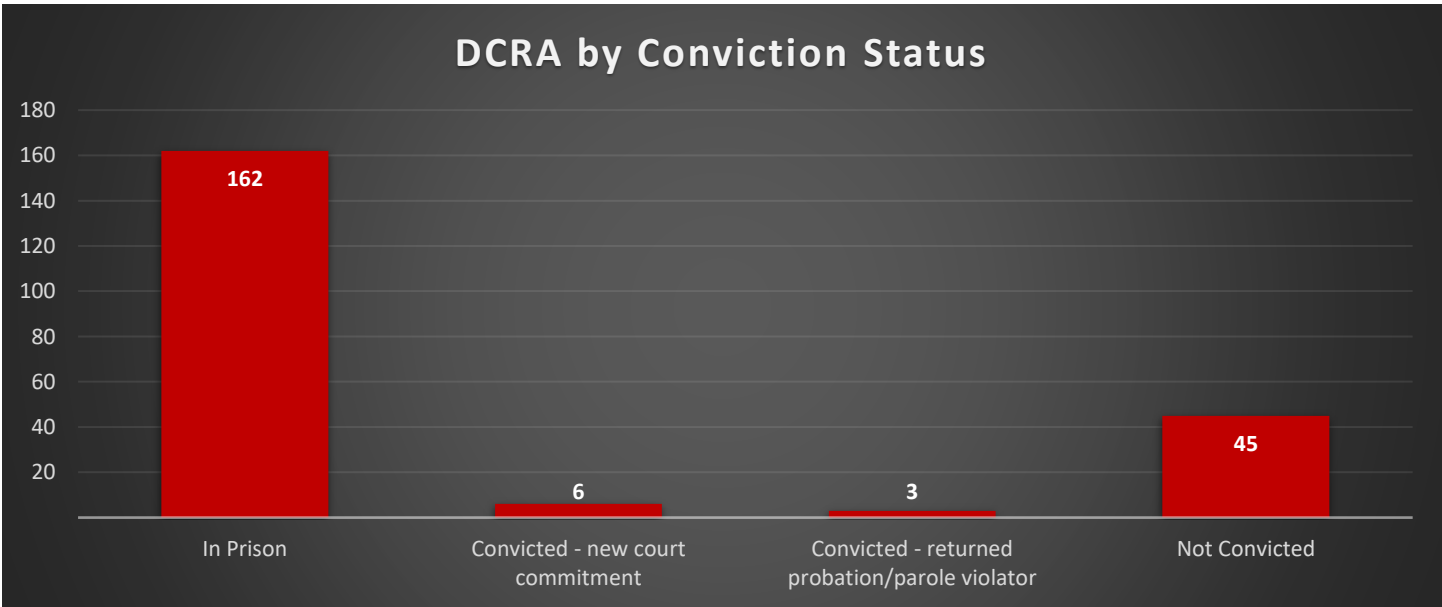
The most commonly reported race of DCRA decedents was White, accounting for 62.04%. Those categorized as Black or African American comprised 33.80% of DCRA decedents. Examining the ethnicity of DCRA decedents shows that nearly all of those reported, or 94.91%, were categorized as Not Hispanic or Latino.



When looking at DCRA incidents by Cause of Death, the most commonly reported cause in 2024 was Illness- Exclude AIDS-Related Deaths, accounting for 40.74%. The next most commonly reported cause was Accidental Alcohol/Drug Intoxication, at 12.50% of the total. While Accidental Alcohol/Drug intoxication was the second most common known cause. 21.30% of reports were missing a cause of death.



Relating to the fact that the most commonly reported cause of death under DCRA in 2025 was Illness- Exclude AIDS-Related Deaths, the two most commonly reported locations of death were in a medical center outside the jail facility and in a special medical unit/infirmary within the jail facility, accounting for 50.46% and 26.85% of reported locations of deaths in custody respectively. The other statistically significant location of death was in a general housing unit within the jail facility or in a general housing unit on jail grounds, comprising 19.91%.



The last data element of DCRA reviewed was the Conviction Status of the decedent at the time of death. The majority of those who died in custody had the status of In Prison, making up 75.00% of decedents. The other large group reported were those with a status of Not Convicted, mostly meaning those in custody who are still awaiting, or in the midst of a trial, at 20.83%.



TN Bureau of Investigation, Authorization # N82G72-1, electronic only,  
March 26,2026. This public document was promulgated at a cost of \$0.00  
per copy.