



Tennessee
Bureau of Investigation
CJIS Support Center

Law Enforcement-Related Deaths 2017





BILL HASLAM
Governor

TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

901 R.S. Gass Boulevard
Nashville, Tennessee 37216-2639
(615) 744-4000
Facsimile (615) 744-4500
TDD (615) 744-4001



MARK GWYN
Director

March 29, 2018

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation would like to present the 2017 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 black ink, appearing to read "Mark Gwyn".

Mark Gwyn
Director



Law Enforcement Related Deaths in Tennessee

Introduction

Annually, the TBI's Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division collects crime data through the Tennessee Incident Based Reporting system, also known as TIBRS. Although most data collected is predominately TIBRS, the TBI's CJIS Division deployed the CrimeInsight Portal to collect data on Law Enforcement-Related Deaths. 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 Deaths means "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."

An Arrest Related Non-Forcible Death (ARNFD) is any death that is attributed to suicide, alcohol, drug intoxication, or medical conditions (i.e. cardiac arrest) that occur 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 which meet the T.C.A.§38-10-102 definition.



Law Enforcement Related Deaths Overview

This report only contains information pertaining to deaths that 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 which did not result 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 contain deaths that occur 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 that meet the criteria of the data collection. Jails and Prisons are responsible for submitting a CJ-9 form to the TBI for deaths that occurred in their facility.

Findings

In 2017, 53 agencies reported a Law Enforcement Related Death. Some agencies reported more than one event in 2017.

Reporting Agency by Type

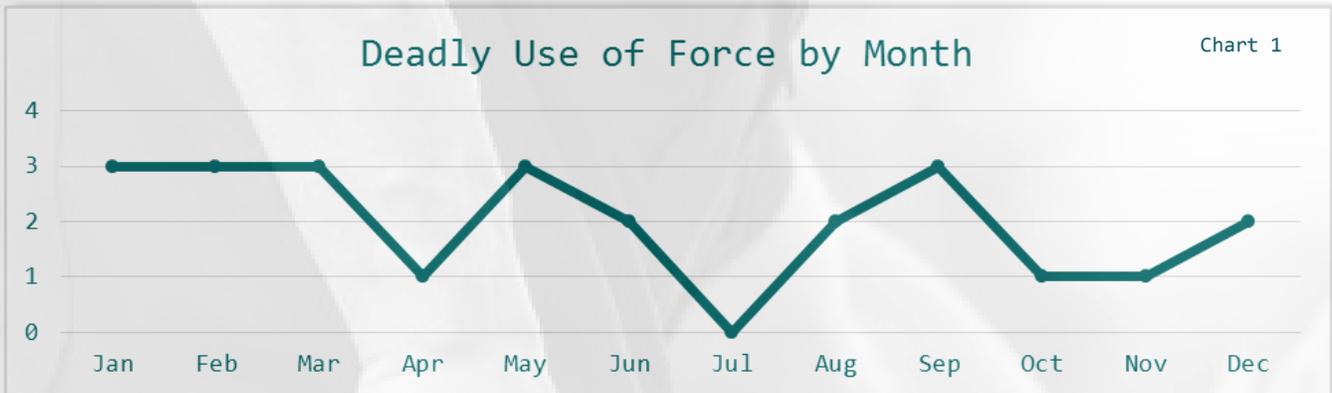
- 16 Sheriff's Offices
- 17 Police Departments
- 18 Jails/Prisons
- 1 State Agency
- 1 Law Enforcement College
- 0 Task Forces



The diagram above should be interpreted with caution, as the location icons do not represent the total reported occurrences of law enforcement related deaths, but rather an approximate location of the jurisdiction in which the event occurred. Also, the diagram above does not indicate whether more than one agency was involved in an incident.

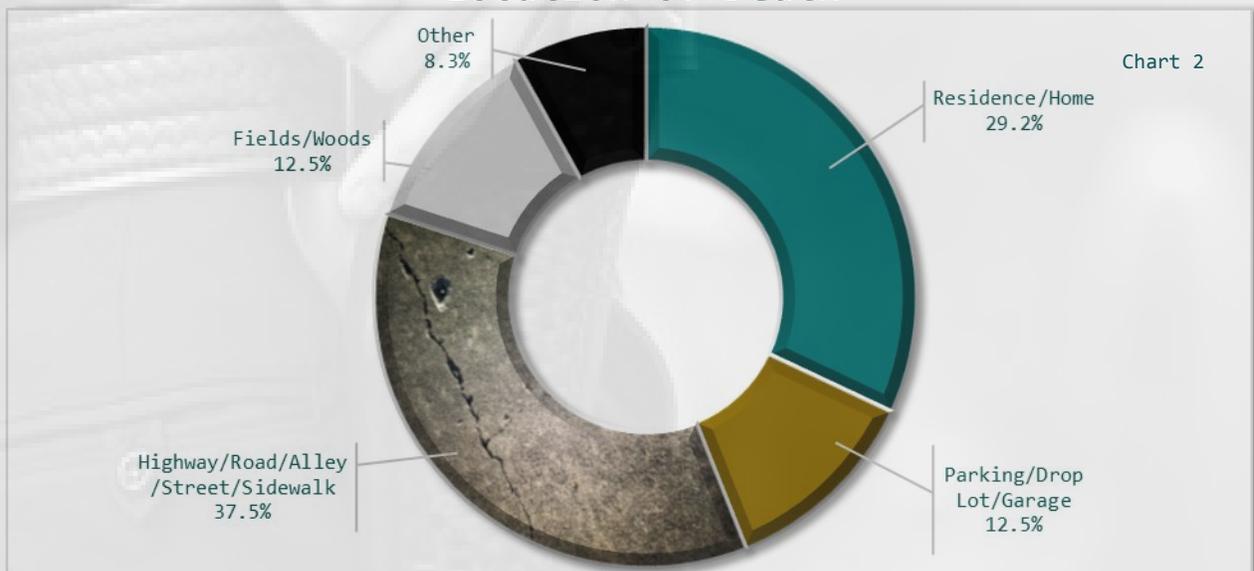


Deadly Use of Force Summary



In 2017, a total of 120 Law Enforcement Related Deaths were reported by 35 police agencies and 18 facilities in Tennessee. Of all the reported deaths, 24 met the reporting criteria of Deadly Use of Force by a police officer. Deadly Use of Force events occurred predominately during the first six months of 2017 accounting for 62.5% of the total number. There were zero reported in the month of July. Chart 1 displays a spike in the month of September in deadly use of Force incidents, followed by a slight decrease for the remainder of the year—2017.

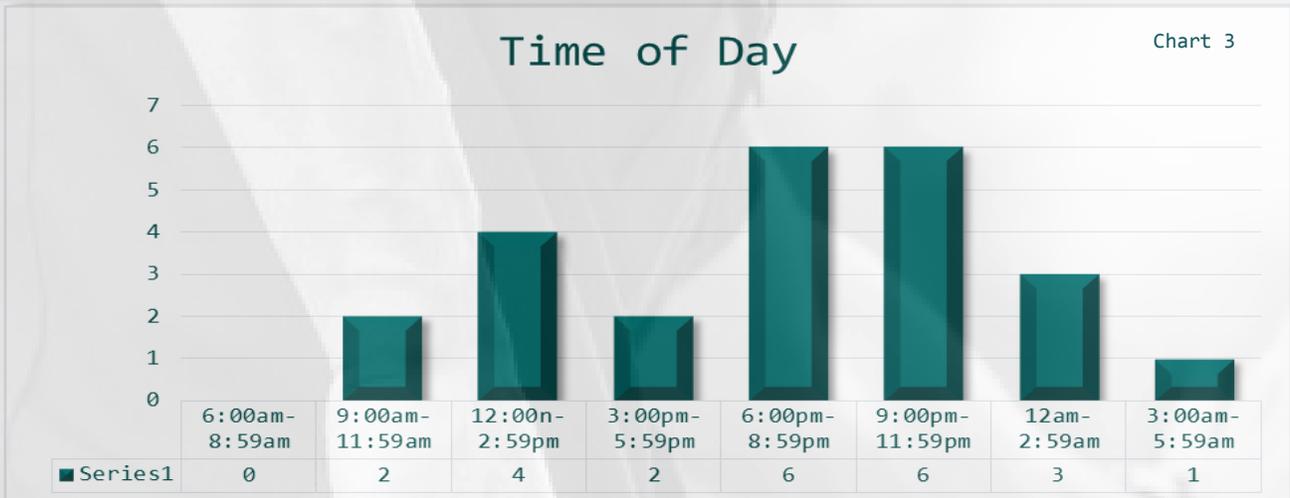
Location of Death



Further analysis revealed Highway/Road/Alley/Street/Sidewalk made up 37.5% of all reported locations, followed by the location type of Residence/Home at 29.2%. For the purpose of this study, the location of Camp/Campground and Church/Synagogue/Temple/Mosque were combined and categorized as Other.

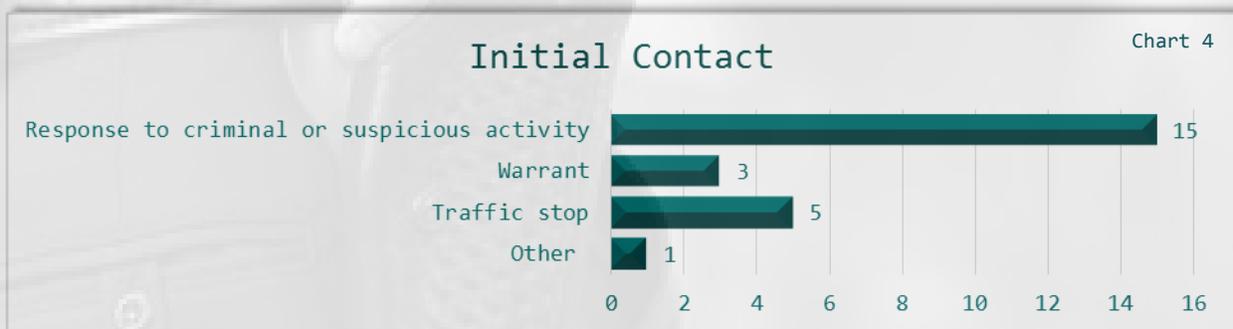


Deadly Use of Force Summary



Upon further examination of data, the most predominate time frame for a deadly use of force incident in 2017 was between the hours of 6:00p.m.-11:59 p.m. Data displayed on Chart 3 show zero deadly use of force occurrences between the hours of 6:00a.m.-8:59a.m.

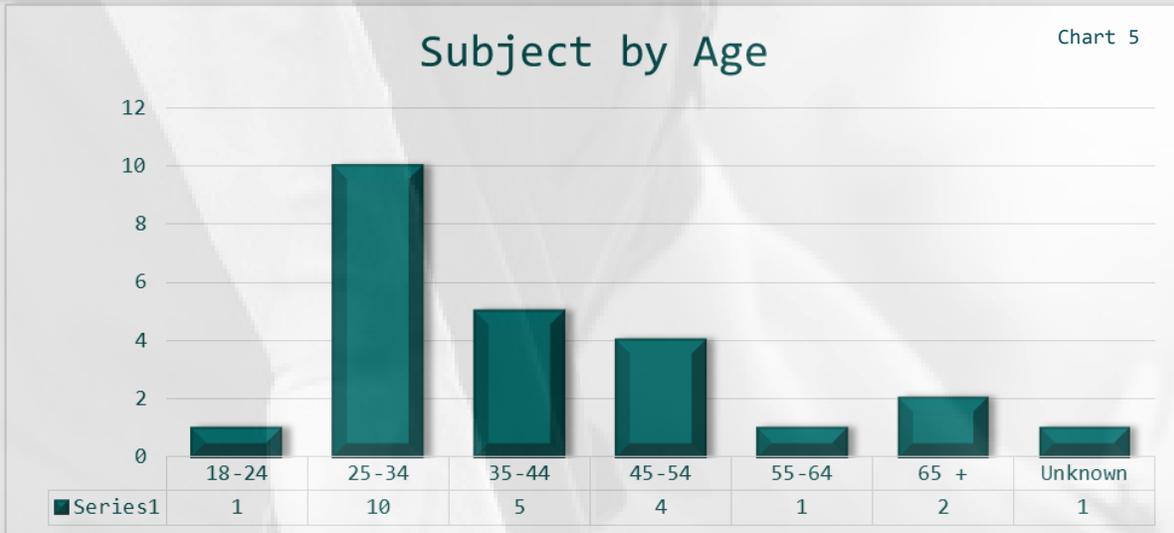
Another important data element to consider when analyzing deadly use of force data is the Initial Contact. This data element is used to identify the primary reason for interaction between an officer and subject or the circumstances upon arrival at the scene.



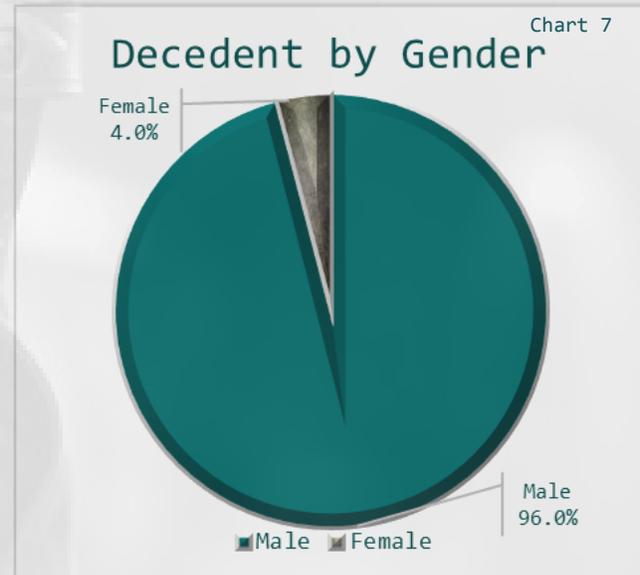
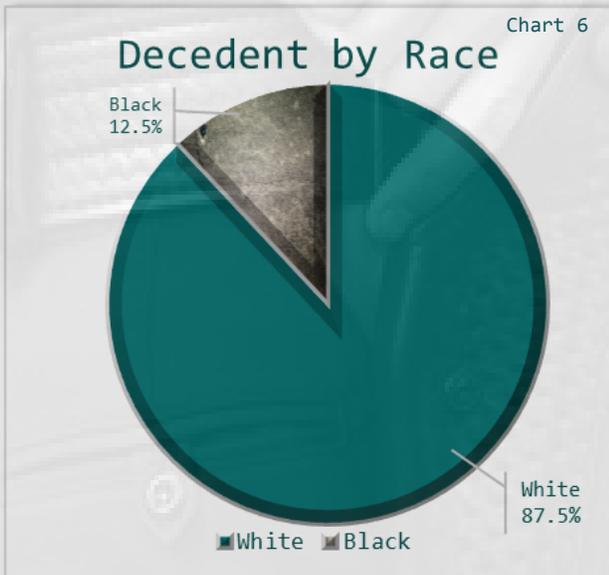
Data revealed the most frequent reported Initial Contact in deadly use of force incidents were “Response to criminal or suspicious activity” accounting for 62.5%. The second highest reported type of contact was “Traffic stop” accounting for 20.8% of all reportable categories listed on Chart 6. The category of “Other”, in this study, is used to describe an event where the decedent was exhibiting unstable behavior.



Deadly Use of Force Summary



The age group categories of 25-54 made up the highest reported age group in 2017 accounting for 79.2% of the total number. The lowest reported age group was 55-64. One incident reported an age of Unknown which is used to indicate that the age is unknown and is not likely to ever be known.



Of the 24 reported deadly use of force incidents in 2017, Whites accounted for 87.5% compared to Black or African American at 12.5%. There were zero Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander reported in 2017. Further analysis of data revealed the Gender type of Male accounted for 96.0% whereas Females only made up 4.0% in 2017.



Deadly Use of Force Summary



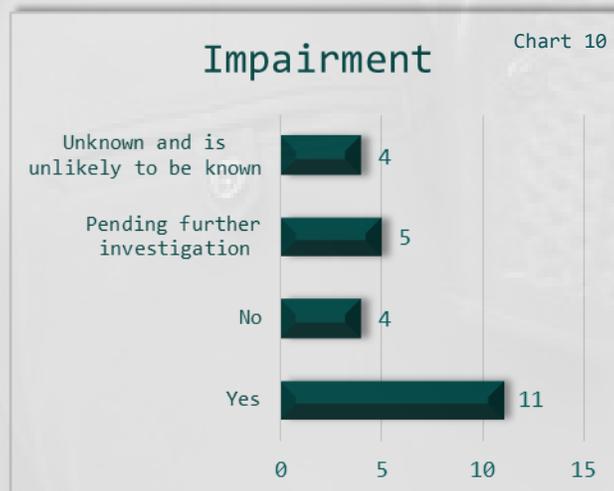
The data element of “Resisted” is used to indicate whether the subject involved resisted against an officer during the incident. Some examples of resistance types include Escape/Flee, Barricade, Verbal Threats, Resist arrest, Physical assault on Officer, Display/Use of a weapon or Noncompliance to verbal commands.

More than one resistance type may be selected for each incident. Data illustrated on Chart 8 indicates that 95.8% of subjects Resisted in some form against police officers.



The data element of “Armed” is used to indicate whether the subject appeared to have a weapon during an incident. Of all the reported deadly use of force incidents in 2017, 16 were reported as subject displayed and/or discharged a weapon type of Firearm.

Further analysis indicates that 4 incidents were reported as the subject used a vehicle as weapon. Three incidents were reported as subject was armed with a Knife/Cutting Instrument.



The data element of “Impairment” is used to determine whether the subject appeared to be intoxicated or exhibited possible mental health issues. Data revealed that 45.8% of reported incidents appeared to be intoxicated by either alcohol or drugs, while 5 are still pending and require further investigation.



Arrest-Related Non-Forcible Death Summary

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

Out of the 120 Law Enforcement Related Deaths reported in 2017, 9 deaths met the Arrest Related Non-Forcible Death (ARNFD) reporting criteria.

- ◆ Of 9 reported ARNFD incidents, corresponding law enforcement agencies reported the majority of *Initial Contact* as Response to Criminal or Suspicious Activity with 5 cases, 2 “Warrant Service”, 1 “Routine patrol other than traffic stop”, and 1 “Welfare Check” in 2017.
- ◆ Findings on *Offender Demographics* revealed that all subjects were white males. The highest reported age group was the age group category of 25-34.
- ◆ The *Manner of Death* is another important data element when exploring ARNFDs. 2017 data indicated 6 were reported as “Suicide” whereas only 1 was reported as Natural Causes. Two incidents were reported as “Accidental”(one from a self inflicted gun shot wound and the other from drowning).
- ◆ Four incidents were reported with the *Location Type* of Residence/Home and the remaining incidents were reported with the location type of Highway/Road/Alley/Street/Sidewalk, Parking/Drop Lot/Garage, Business, and Law Enforcement Facility.
- ◆ *Incident Time* data revealed that all incidents occurred during the day.

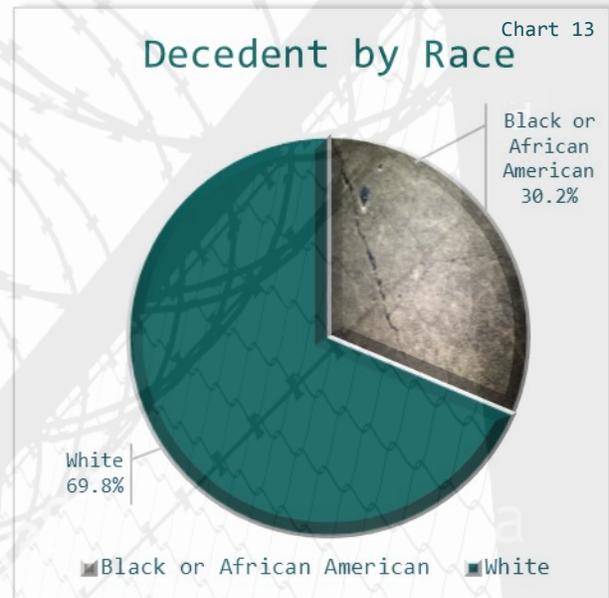
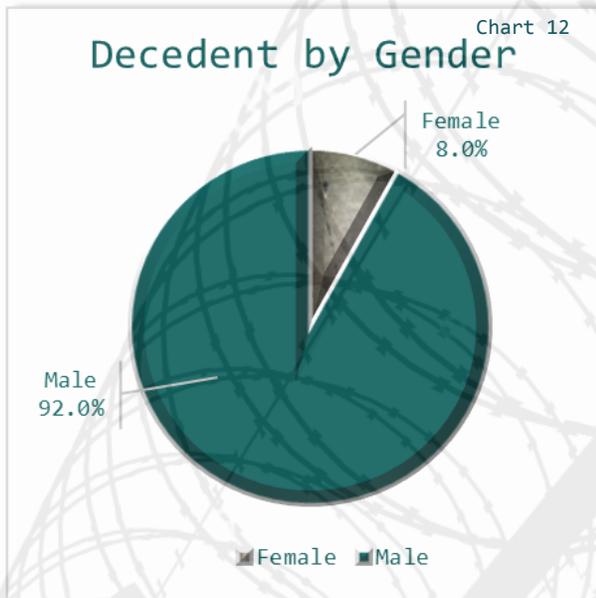


Deaths in Custody Summary

The Deaths in Custody section analyzes data on deaths that occur in local jails or state prisons.



In 2017, 87 deaths were reported across the state. April accounted for the highest reported month followed by January and June. The lowest reported deaths occurred during the month of March.

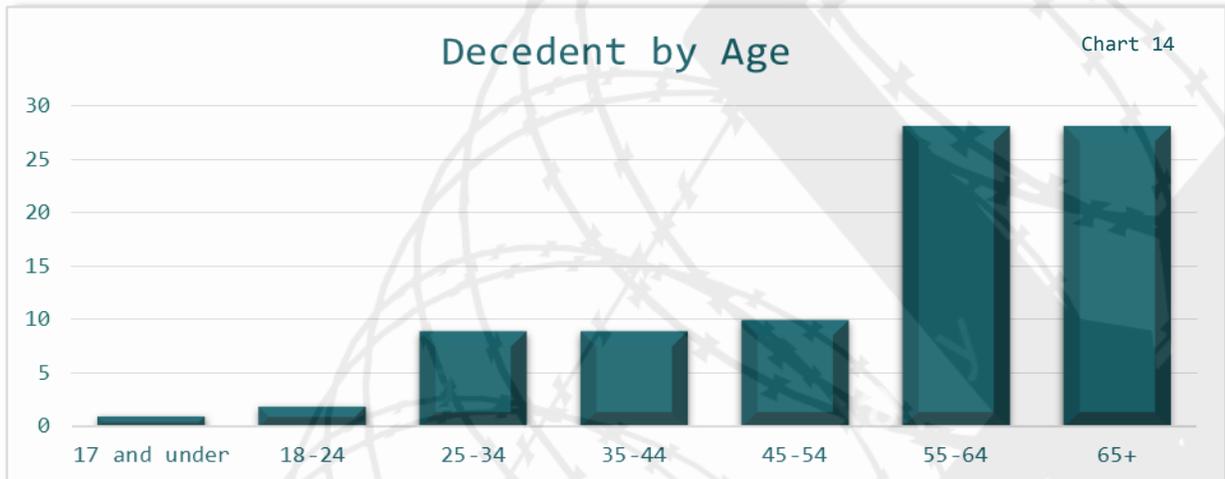


Further analysis of data revealed that Males accounted for the highest reported gender type accounting for a total of 92.0% compared to Females at 8.0%. Inmates classified as White made up 69.8% of all reported Deaths in Custody, followed by Black or African American. One American Indian or Alaska Native was reported in 2017. Zero Asian and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander were reported last year.

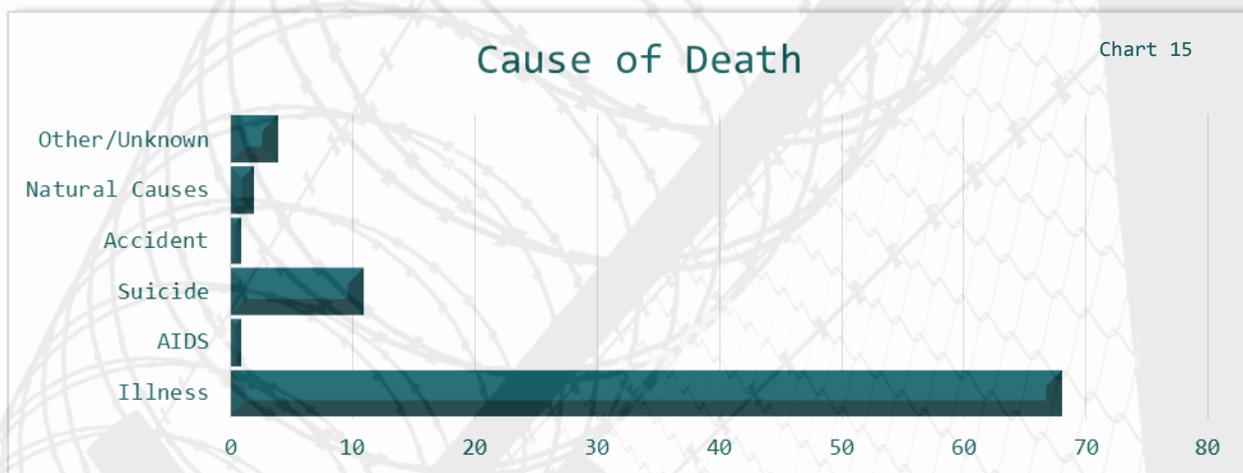


Deaths in Custody Summary

Additional decedent characteristics, such as age is analyzed in this summary. Although local jails book individuals of all ages, decedents under 24 are less likely to be reported by a state prison. Local jails generally hold inmates less than a year whereas state prisons generally hold inmates for more than one year.



Data displayed above illustrates mortality rates are the most predominate between the ages of 55 and older. Among all age groups, 24 and under represented the lowest mortality rates in 2017.



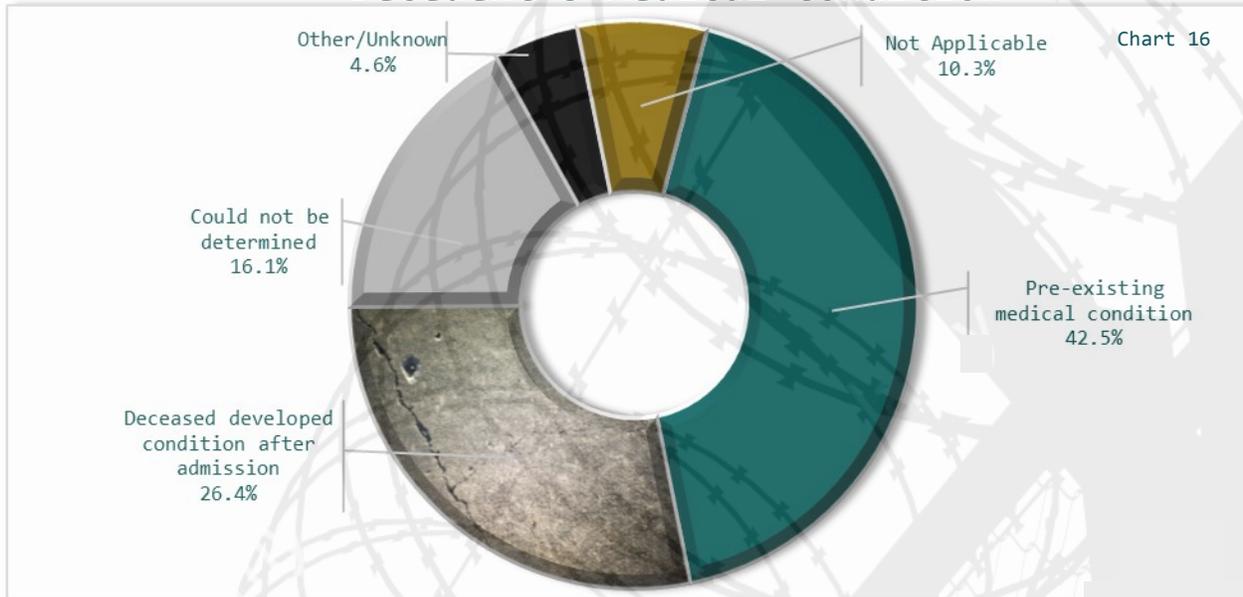
Illness-related deaths accounted for the leading cause reported by local jails and state prisons in 2017. Suicide made up the second highest reported cause of death in 2017. There were 4 cases reported with missing or results pending "Cause of Death" information. These cases were classified as Other/Unknown.



Deaths in Custody Summary

Another important data element to assess is whether the decedent had a pre-existing medical condition. Findings in data revealed that most individuals who died in a jail or prison had a pre-existing medical condition in 2017.

Decedent's Medical Condition



Further findings on medical condition indicate that 26.4% of decedents developed the condition after admission while 16.1% could not be determined. Other/Unknown only accounted for 4.6% of the total reportable categories.

Location of Death	#
In a general housing unit within the jail facility or in a general housing unit on jail grounds	16
In a segregation unit	2
In a special medical unit/infirmery within the jail facility	39
In a special mental health services unit within the jail facility	0
In a medical center outside the jail facility	27
In a mental health center outside the jail facility	0
While in transit	1
Elsewhere	2
Total	87

To conclude, most deaths occurred in a special medical unit/infirmery within the jail facility (44.8%) followed by the location of in a medical center outside the jail facility (31.0%). Deaths reported with the location of housing unit/segregation unit combined accounted for 20.7% of reportable locations. Zero deaths were reported in a mental health services unit or mental health center.