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Lake County Coroner
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TO: THE LAW AND JUDICIAL COMMITTEE

FROM: CORONER JENNIFER BANEK

DATE: October 14, 2025

RE: CORONER'S INVESTIGATION REPORT FOR **AUGUST 2025**

Coroner's Monthly Report of Investigations conducted for the month of **August 2025** [1]:

Non-Coroner's Cases [2]	436
Coroner's Case: [3]	43
Total Death Investigations:	**479**

*Total death investigations for August 2024: 467*

- Of the total Coroner's Cases for August 2025 (43), the Manner of Death (or suspected Manner of Death) is outlined in the following pages.

- Of the 42 Coroner's Cases a total of 35 had further forensic examination (Autopsy) conducted by Lake County Coroner's Forensic Pathologist, Eimad Zakariya, M.D., in conjunction with the Lake County Coroner's Forensic Technician and Deputy Coroner Investigators.

- The Lake County Coroner's Office Toxicology Laboratory conducted 27 toxicology tests, and, as a result, 24 samples were sent to an outside laboratory for further quantitative/qualitative or expanded testing.

  o In addition, the Lake County Coroner's Office Toxicology Laboratory conducted 117 toxicology tests for various outside agencies including the Lake County Jail and Probation Services.

- The Lake County Coroner's Office issued 297 Permits for Cremation to area funeral homes in August 2025, for a total of $29,300 in revenue from state mandated permit fees.

- To date, Coroner Office Investigators completed and closed **91.66%** of <u>JULY</u> Cases within 60 days of the date of the case with 0 cases pending. [4]

- In August 2025, the Coroner's Office investigated 4 deaths as a result of firearms, 4 suicide. This brings the total number of firearm related deaths to 31 for the calendar year.

(1) As forensic reports such as Autopsy Reports, Toxicology Reports and other investigative agency reports may take 4 – 8 weeks for completion, Coroner Banek is presenting statistical data that is more complete than the previous month's data.
(2) <u>Non-Coroner's Cases:</u>
Cases reported to the Office of Coroner where Minimal Investigation is needed; primarily consisting of review of medical history, medical records, and discussion with health care providers involved in the case.
(3) <u>Coroner's Cases</u>
Thorough investigation as to the cause of death, with subsequent Case Conference to determine the manner of death (i.e., homicide, suicide, accidental, or undetermined). Where required and mandated by Illinois Statute by type of death, select cases may be sent to an Inquest by Jury.
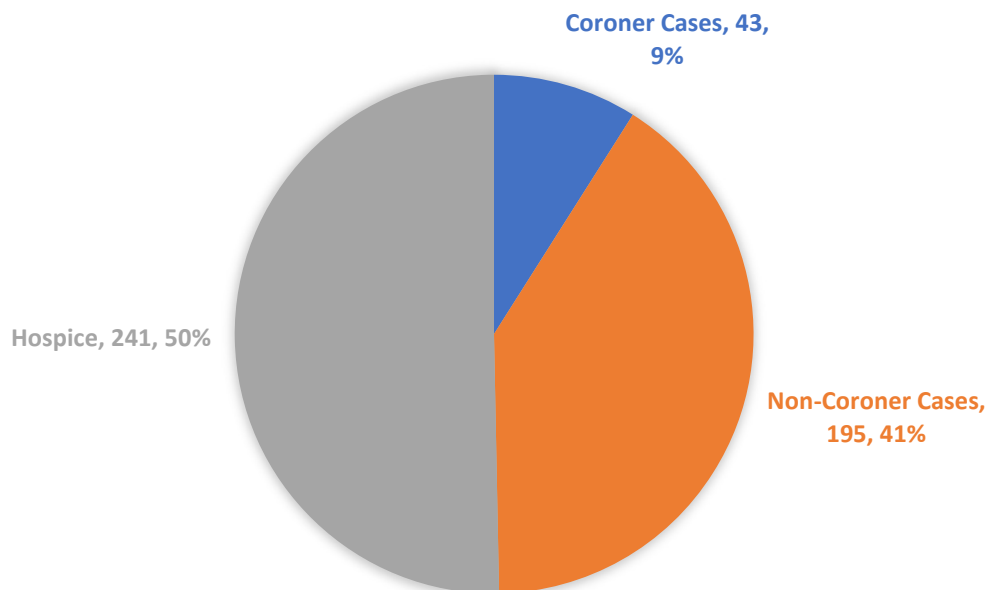(4) Data reported is from the month prior to the reporting month to allow more complete data.
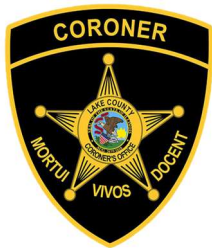
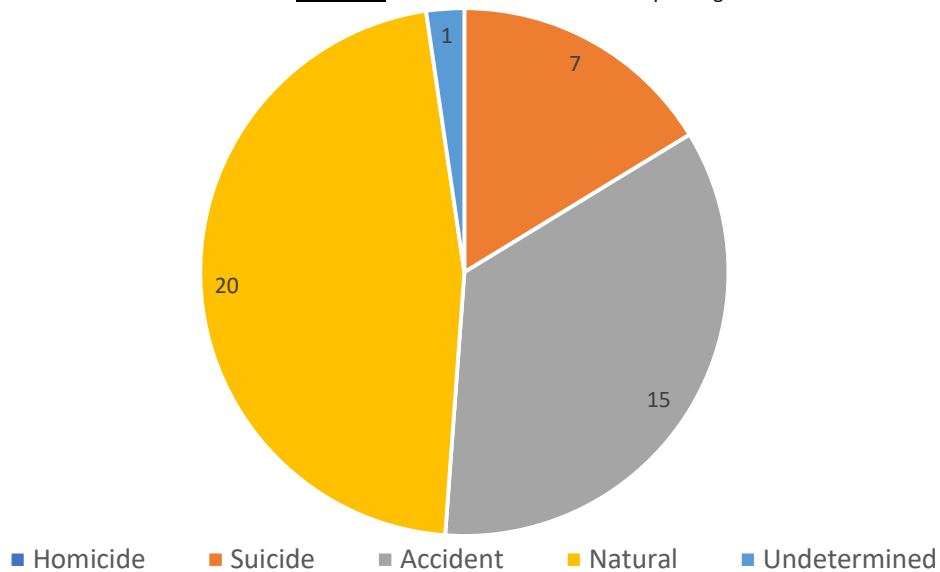**Jennifer Banek, MS, CRNA**

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AUGUST 2025 OVERALL CASES

Coroner Cases, 43, 9%

Non-Coroner Cases, 195, 41%

Hospice, 241, 50%

AUGUST 2025 CORONER CASES

This data includes Suspected Manner of Death in Cases still pending finalization.

0

1

7

15

20

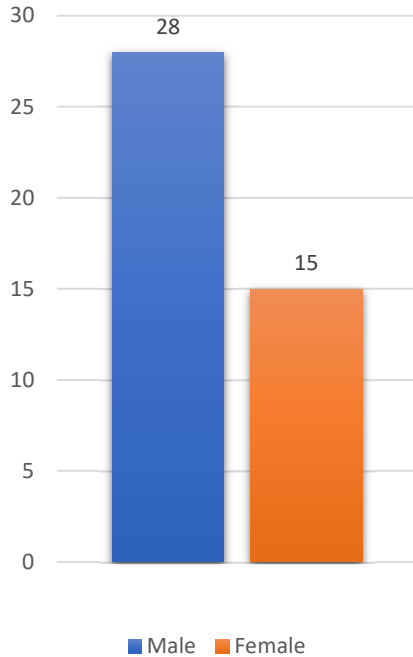■ Homicide ■ Suicide ■ Accident ■ Natural ■ Undetermined

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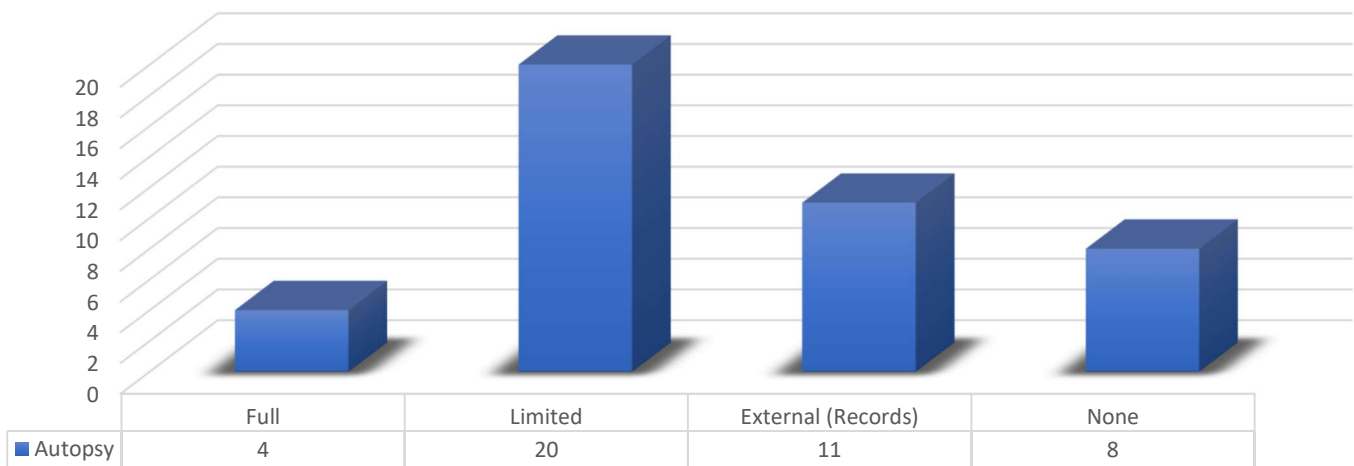JBanek@lakecountyil.gov

Coroner Cases/Gender

Gender	Count
Male	28
Female	15

Coroner Cases/Race

Race	Count
White	33
African American	5
Hispanic	3
Asian	1
Other	1

Coroner Cases/Age

Age	Count
18-25	1
26-44	8
45-64	13
65+	21

Autopsies August 2025

	Full	Limited	External (Records)	None
Autopsy	4	20	11	8
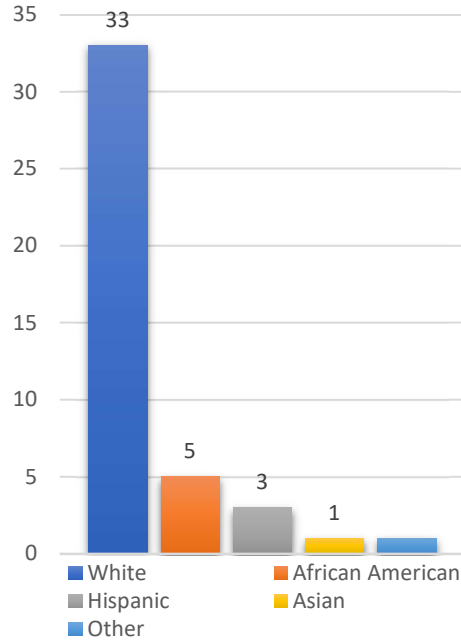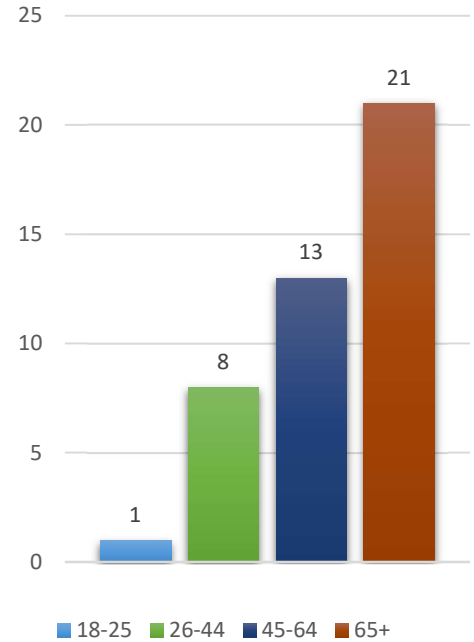
Autopsy Types: **Full** – A complete external and internal examination is completed by the Forensic Pathologist with a written report.

Limited – A Complete external, and in some cases limited internal examination, is completed by the Forensic Pathologist with a written report.

External – No Physical examination is completed, however medical records from an external agency (hospital, nursing facility or physician) are reviewed by the Forensic Pathologist with a written report.

None – No physical examination or medical record review is necessary. Most of these cases are signed by the deceased's physician however family or physician information is not available at the time of death warranting a response from the Coroner's Office.
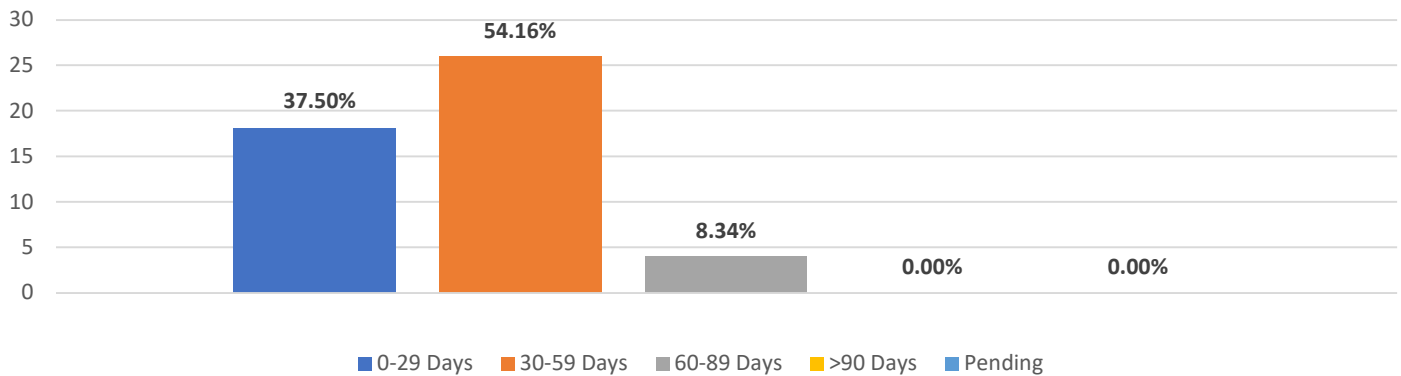
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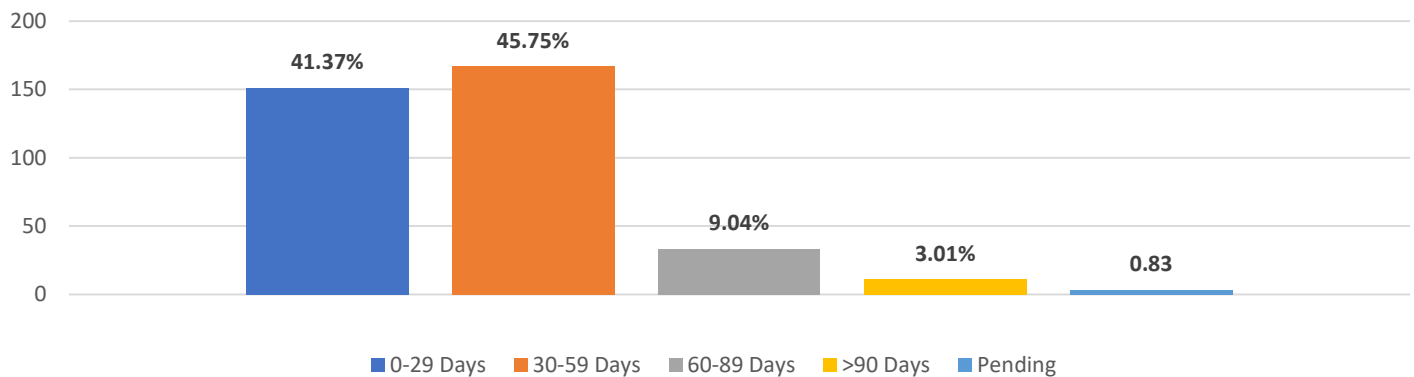JBanek@lakecountyil.gov

Case Closure Status

Coroner's Case Closure Rate July 1, 2025 – July 31, 2025: 91.66% [4]

Coroner's Case Closure Rate January 1, 2025 – July 31, 2025 (running): 87.12% [4]
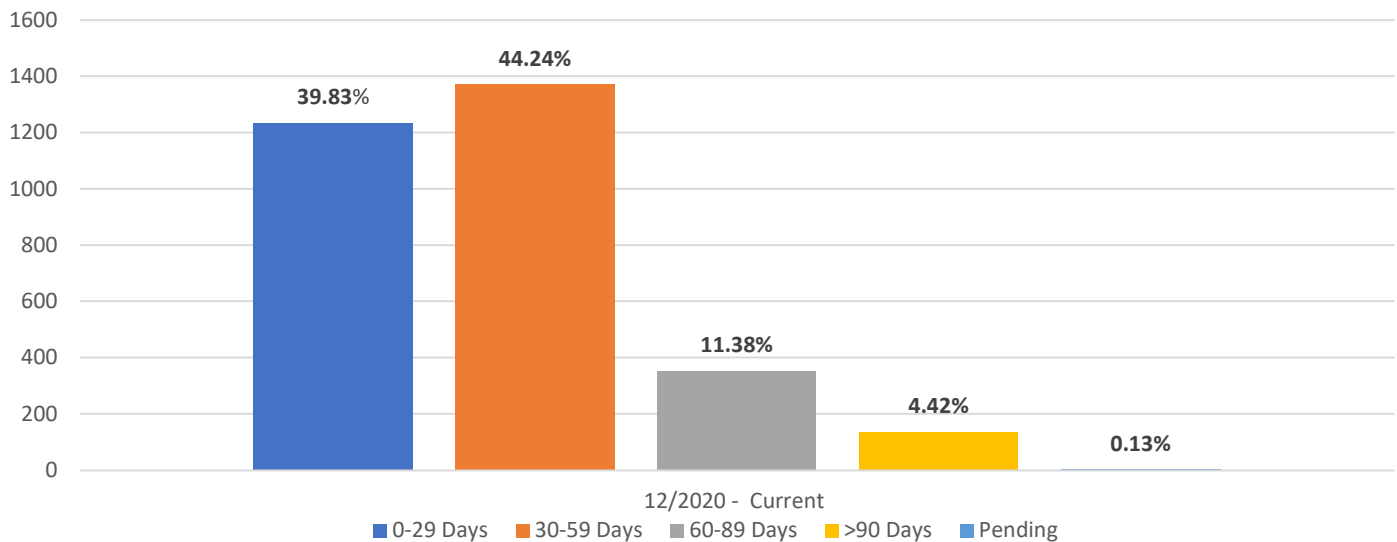
Coroner's Case Closure Rate December 1, 2020 – July 31, 2025: 84.07% [4]

Case Closure Rates by Days

39.83%   44.24%   11.38%   4.42%   0.13%

12/2020 - Current

■ 0-29 Days   ■ 30-59 Days   ■ 60-89 Days   ■ >90 Days   ■ Pending

Case Closure <60 days by FY
Average for FY25 - **87.19%**[4]

········ FY2018   ········ FY2019   ········ FY2020   —— FY2021   —— FY2022   —— FY2023   —— FY2024   —— FY2025