



Coroner's Investigation Report

January 2026

Monthly Report of Investigations conducted for the month of January 2026¹

Monthly Case Breakdown	Number
Non-Coroner's Cases ²	491
Coroner's Cases ³	51
Total Death Investigations February 2026	542

- Of the total Coroner's Cases for January 2026 (51), the manner of death (or suspected manner of death) is outlined in the following tables.
- In January 2026 the Lake County Coroner's Office Toxicology Laboratory conducted 35 toxicology tests, and, as a result, 32 samples were sent to an outside laboratory for further quantitative/qualitative or expanded testing. In addition, the Lake County Coroner's Office Toxicology Laboratory conducted 108 toxicology tests for various outside agencies including Probation Services.
- The Lake County Coroner's Office issued 360 Permits for Cremation to area funeral homes in January 2026, for a total of \$35,600 in revenue from state mandated permit fees.
- In January 2026, the Coroner's Office investigated 1 death due to firearms, 1 suicide. This brings the total number of firearm related deaths to 1 for the calendar year.

January 2026 Case Information with Manner of death breakdown for Coroner's Cases

January 2026 Overall Cases	Number of Cases	Percentage of Cases
Coroner's Cases	51	9%
Hospice Cases	282	52%
Non-Coroner's Cases	209	39%

Coroner's Case Manner of Death	Number
Accident	26
Natural	22
Suicide	2
Pending	1

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 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 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.

Coroner's Case Gender	Number
Male	25
Female	26

Coroner's Case Race	Number
White	42
African American	4
Hispanic	4
Asian	1

Coroner's Case Ages	Number
Less than 1 year old	1
1 to 5 years old	0
6 to 10 years old	0
11 to 17 years old	0
18 to 25 years old	1
26 to 44 years old	6
45 to 64 years old	16
65 years of age and older	27

Forensic Autopsy Cases

Of the 51 Coroner's Cases a total of 47 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's Investigators.

Coroner's Case Autopsies	Number
Full Autopsy	2
Limited	32
External (Medical Record Review)	13
None	4

Autopsy Type Definitions:

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.

Coroner's Case Closure Rates within 60 days⁴

To date, Coroner Office Investigators completed and closed **92.73%** of **DECEMBER** Cases within 60 days of the date of the case with 3 cases pending. Case Closure Rates within 60 days, for the calendar year 2025, totaled 86.64% of all Coroner's Cases.

Case Closure Rate within 60 days	Percentage of cases
Current: December 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025	92.73%
Running Year: January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025	86.64%
Term: December 1, 2020, through December 31, 2025	84.21%

Monthly Percentage Breakdown for December 2026

Closure Range of Days	Number of cases closed within range of days	Percentage of cases closed within range of days
0 through 29 calendar days	25	45.45%
30 through 59 calendar days	26	47.28%
60 through 89 calendar days	4	7.27%
More than 90 calendar days	0	0.00%
Pending closure	0	0.00%

Case Closure Rates within 60 days for FY2026. The average for FY26 is currently 92.73%

FY26 Months	Percentage
December 2025	92.73%
January 2026	N/A
February 2026	N/A
March 2026	N/A
April 2026	N/A
May 2026	N/A
June 2026	N/A
July 2026	N/A
August 2026	N/A
September 2026	N/A
October 2026	N/A
November 2026	N/A

⁴ Data being reported is from the month prior to the reporting month to allow more complete data.