



Jennifer Banek, MS, CRNA

Lake County Coroner

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TO: THE LAW AND JUDICIAL COMMITTEE
FROM: CORONER JENNIFER BANEK
RE: CORONER'S INVESTIGATION REPORT FOR JULY 2021

Coroner's Monthly Report of Investigations conducted for the month of JULY 2021 ⁽¹⁾:

Non-Coroner's Cases ⁽²⁾	402
Coroner's Case: ⁽³⁾	49
Total Death Investigations:	451

Total death investigations for July 2020: 409

- Of the total Coroner's Cases for July 2021 (49), the Manner of Death (or suspected Manner of Death) is outlined in the following pages.
- Of the 49 Coroner's Cases a total of 41 had further forensic examination (Autopsy) conducted by the Lake County Coroner's Forensic Pathologist, Eimad Zakariya, M.D., in conjunction with the Lake County Coroner's Autopsy Technician and Deputy Coroner Investigators.
- The Lake County Coroner's Office Toxicology Laboratory conducted 45 toxicology tests and, as a result, 32 samples were sent to an outside laboratory for further quantitative/qualitative testing.
 - In addition, the Lake County Coroner's Office Toxicology Laboratory conducted 151 toxicology tests for various outside agencies including the Lake County Jail and Probation Services.
- The Lake County Coroner's Office Issued 263 Permits for Cremation to area funeral homes in July 2021.

(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 more recent months data.

(2) Non-Coroner's Cases:

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) Coroner's Cases

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.



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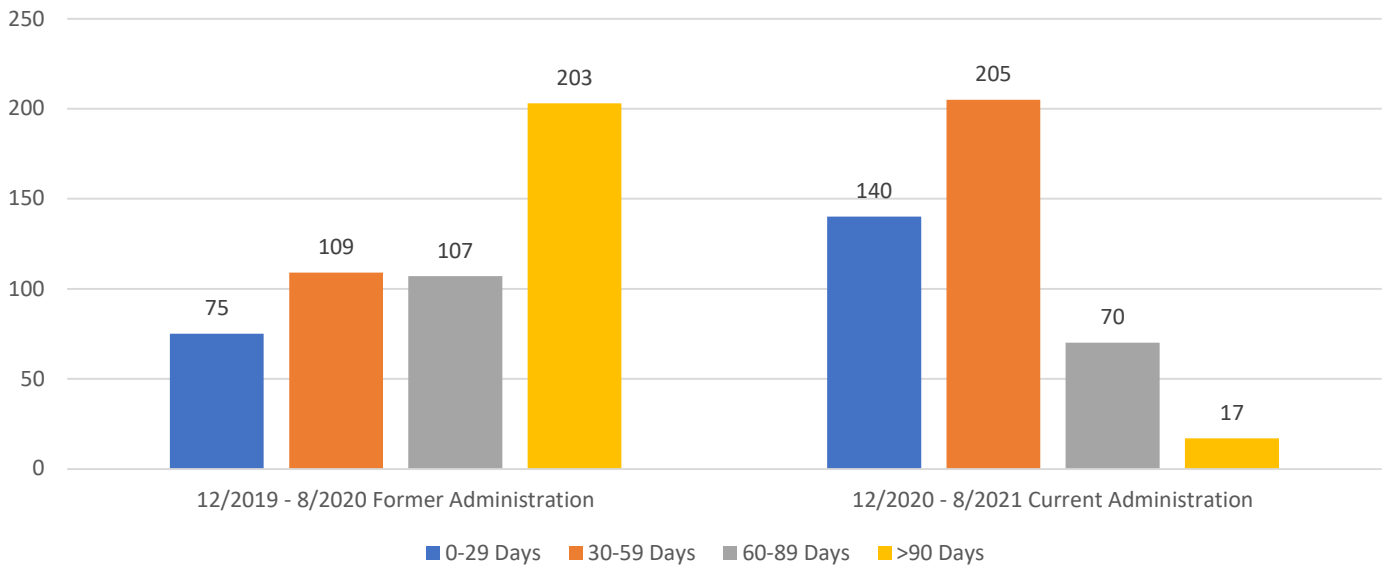
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Coroner's Case Closure Rate December 1 – August 31:

- The chart below demonstrates the case closure rates as compared from December 1, 2019, through August 31, 2020, (Past Administration) and December 1, 2020, through August 31, 2021 (Current Administration)
 - December 2019 – August 2020
 - Of the total cases only 37% were closed within 60 days, leaving 63% open for more than 60 days. Of the total cases, 40% were open over 90 Days.
 - December 2020 – August 2021 (Current Administration)
 - Of the total cases 70% have been closed within 60 days, leaving 30% open more than 60 days. Of the total cases, 3% were open over 90 days.

Case Closure Rates by Days





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July 2021

- ***Inquest held.***

- Coroner Banek presided over an inquest into the manner of death on one Coroner Case. The purpose of the Inquest is to present pertinent information concerning the victim's death in order for the jury to arrive at a cause and manner of death. The cause of death may have already been determined from available medical evidence, including toxicology and autopsy results. Upon completion of the testimony, the Coroner's Jury will deliberate in private. They may request additional testimony, evidence, or conference, as they deem necessary. When the jury has concluded their deliberation, they will issue a verdict through the Foreman as to the cause and manner of death. The real responsibility of the jury is to establish the manner of death (Natural, Homicide, Suicide, Accident, or Undetermined).

- ***New Beginnings North Chicago.***

- The Lake County Coroner's Office partnered with the North Chicago Police Department and other community partners in the first meeting of the New Beginnings Community Resource Center, a grant-based service. Chief Deputy Newton will be the Coroner's Liaison in this partnership. The mission of the New Beginnings Community Resource Center is to provide instantaneous community care for those experiencing opioid and other drug addiction.

- ***Compassion Funeral Service.***

- Based on meetings held in past months that addressed removal service issues, the Lake County Coroner's Office along with the Lake County Purchasing Department entered into an agreement with a secondary removal service, Compassion Funeral Service, in order to increase efficiency, decrease wait times, and provide service to our community.

- ***US Naval Station Drill Preplanning.***

- Senior Deputy Tammy Mayer attended meetings held with staff at the U.S. Naval Training Center at Great Lakes for the purposes of planning a multi-jurisdictional mass fatality drill in the coming months.

- ***Deputy Coroner Candidate Interviews.***

- The Lake County Coroner's Office received 47 applications for the open Deputy Coroner Position. Of the 47 applicants, 25 completed an initial interview.

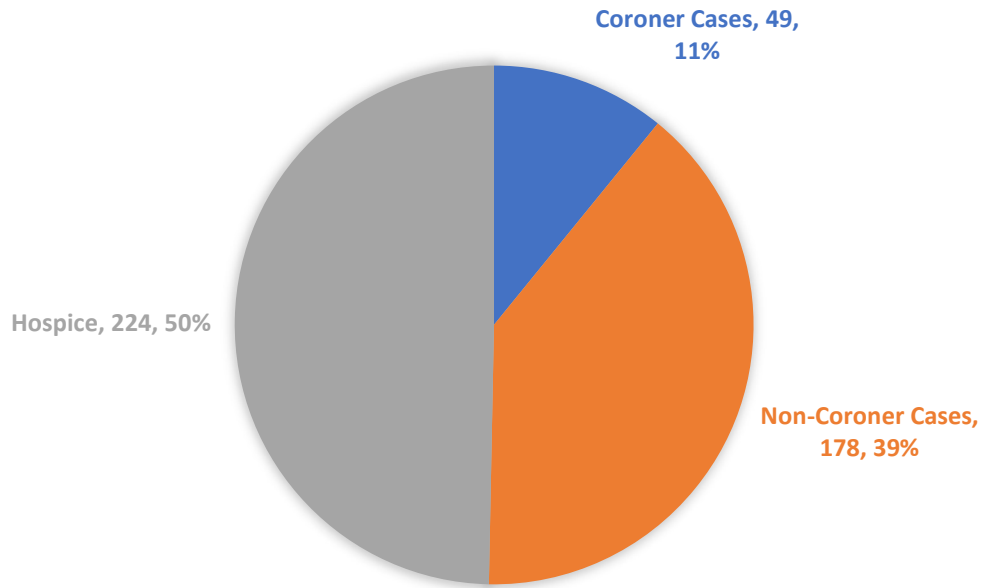


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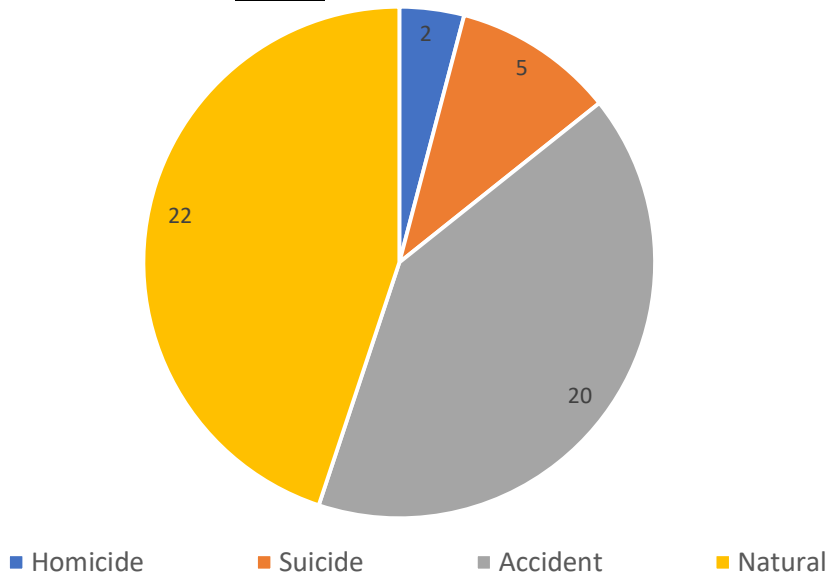
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JULY 2021 OVERALL CASES



JULY 2021 CORONER CASES

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



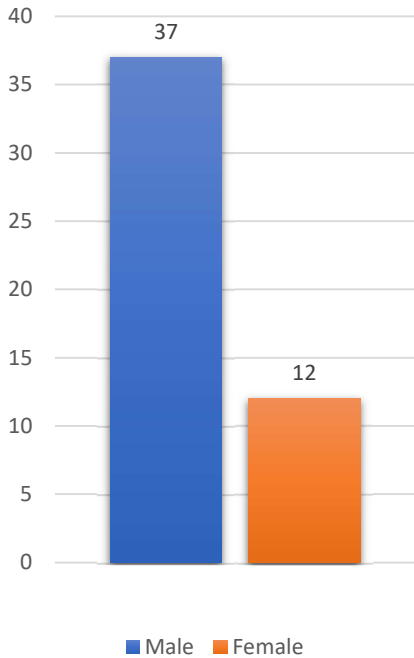


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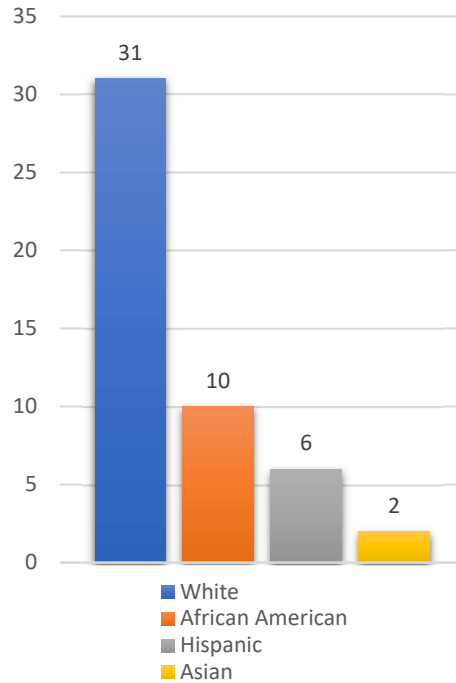
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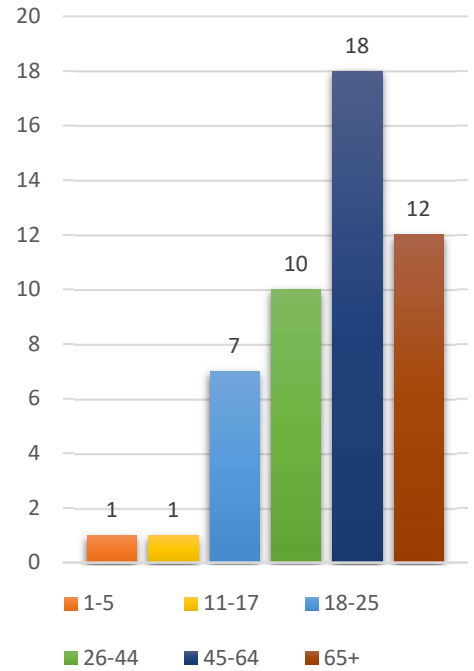
Coroner Cases/Gender



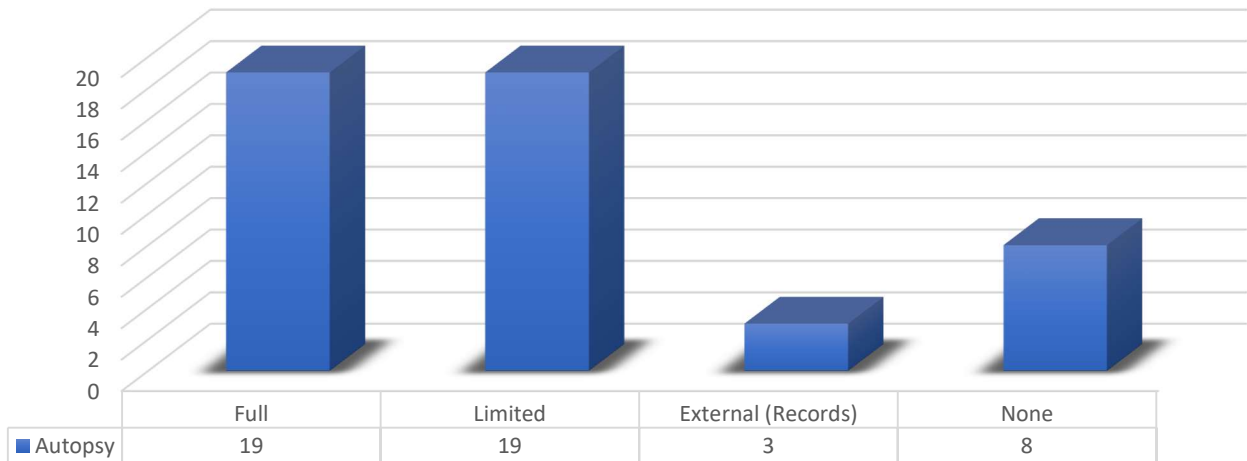
Coroner Cases/Race



Coroner Cases/Age



Autopsies July 2021



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.