



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 FEBRUARY 2021

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

Non-Coroner's Cases ⁽²⁾	409
Coroner's Case: ⁽³⁾	48
Total Death Investigations:	457

Total death investigations for February 2020: 427

- Of the total Coroner's Cases for February 2021 (48), the Manner of Death (or suspected Manner of Death) is outlined in the following pages. Due to pending finalization of Autopsy reports, Toxicology reports, and Investigative Agency reports, a total of 1 case is still pending final disposition.
- Of the 48 Coroner's Cases a total of 43 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 35 toxicology test and as a result, 31 samples were sent to an outside laboratory for further quantitative/qualitative testing.
 - In addition, the Lake County Coroner's Office Toxicology Laboratory conducted 90 toxicology tests for various outside agencies including the Lake County Jail and Probation Services.
- The Lake County Coroner's Office Issued 300 Permits for Cremation to area funeral homes in February 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.



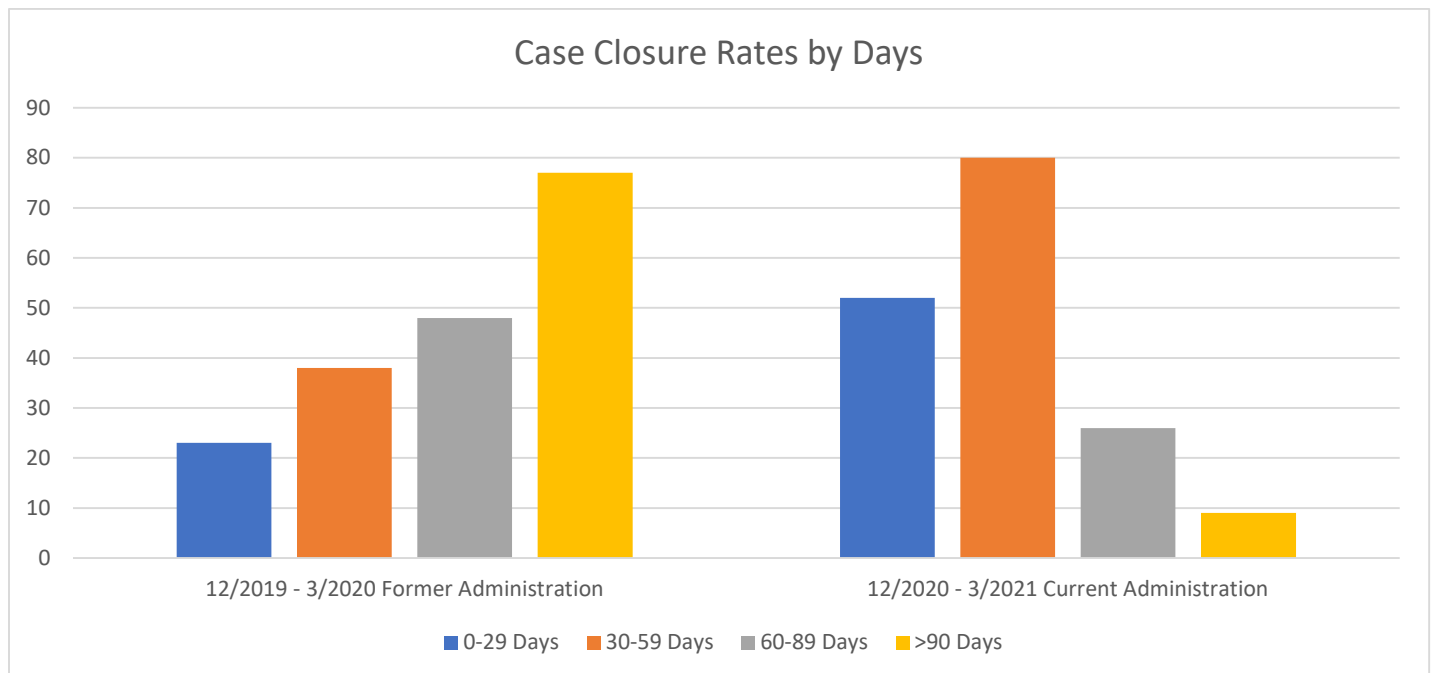
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Coroner's Office News March 2021 – April 2021:

- As outlined in last month's report Coroner Banek has implemented the Employee Evaluations and a key goal to in the process is to maintain a minimum 80% case closure rate within 60 days of the start of the investigation.
 - 80% As there are cases with special testing, case considerations, legal proceedings.
- The chart below demonstrates the case closure rates as compared from December 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020 (Past Administration) and December 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021 (Current Administration)
 - Under the past administration most of the cases handled by the Coroner's Office took over 60 to more than 90 days to close, causing a delay in the issuance of death certificates, limiting our ability to capture data accurately and promptly, and MOST importantly, negatively impacting families.
 - Under the current administration, through the implementation of policy, evaluation process and accountability standards, most of the cases handled by the Coroner's Office are closed within 60 days (when the investigation is complete).



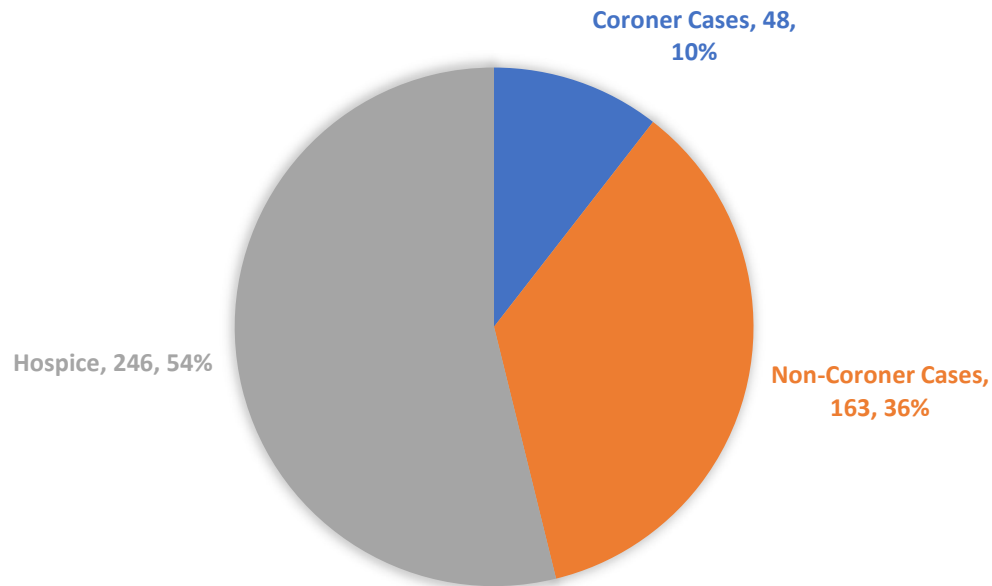


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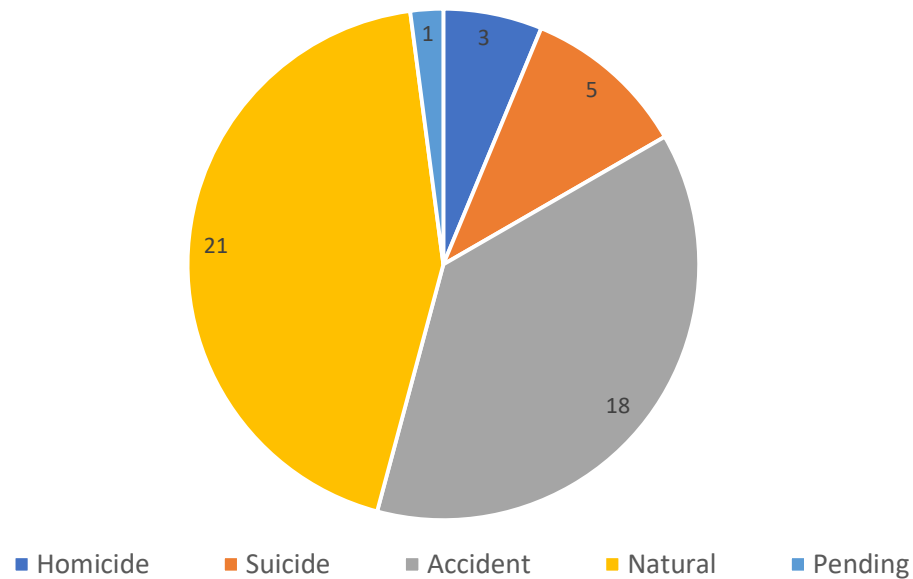
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FEBRUARY 2021 OVERALL CASES



FEBRUARY 2021 CORONER CASES

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



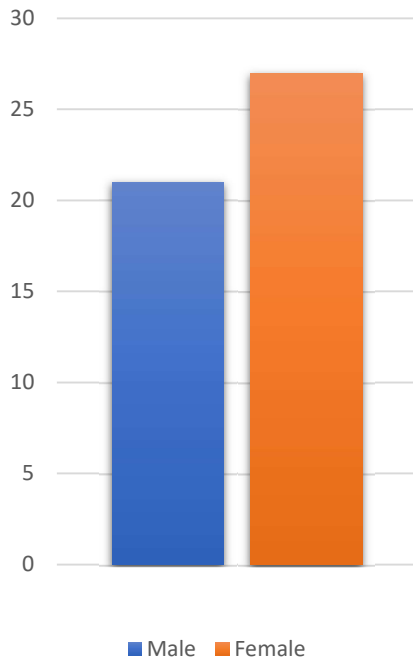


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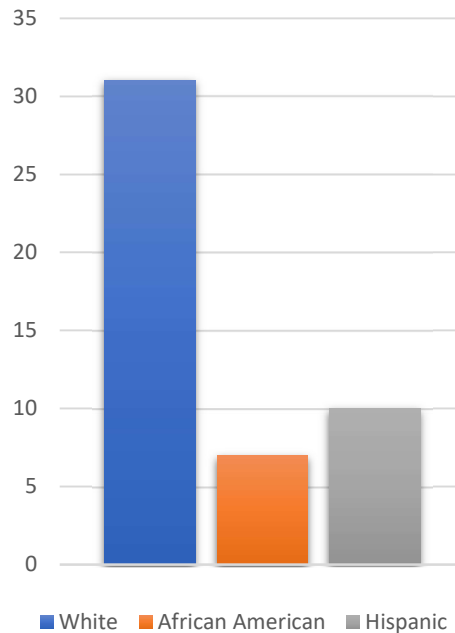
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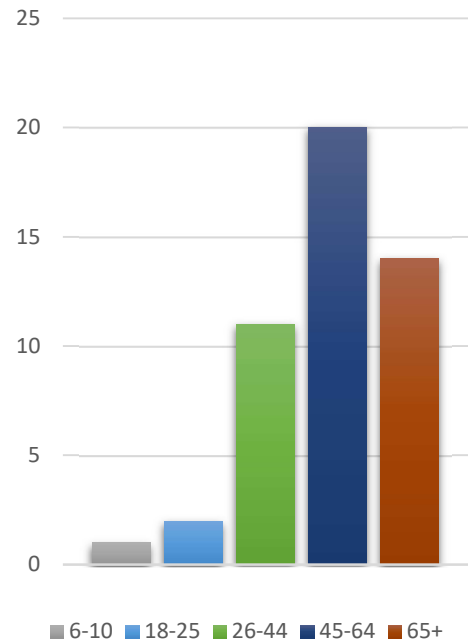
Coroner Cases/Gender



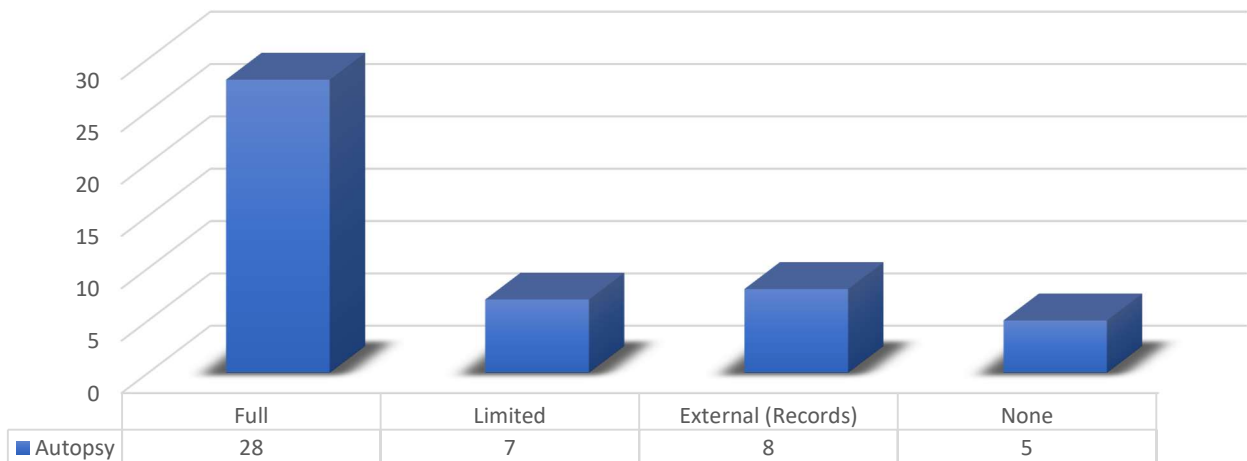
Coroner Cases/Race



Coroner Cases/Age



Autopsies February 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.