



2021 Greene County Coroner's Office Annual Report

To the Citizens of Greene County:

The responsibility of determining the cause and manner of unexpected deaths in Greene County is one that the Coroner's Office staff takes very seriously. The results of these investigations provide valuable information, which is used by the criminal justice system, families of the deceased, public health personnel and other concerned parties.

The National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) has accredited the Greene County Coroner's Office since 2000. This achievement is the result of years of work by our entire staff. We are one of only six Coroner's Offices in Ohio to be accredited. We are very proud of this accomplishment.

In 2021, there were 1507 deaths in Greene County. The Greene County Coroner's Office was contacted regarding 1269 of these deaths. This office actively investigated 181 cases, 128 of these cases required autopsies and 53 cases required medical records to determine the cause and manner of death. We performed 122 autopsies in county and the remaining six were, Greene County citizens whose deaths occurred outside of the county.

The workload of Coroner cases has **increased 39.1%** since 2017. The Greene County Coroner's Office continues to provide services that adhere to the high professional standards demanded by NAME.

Most people believe the Coroner's Office is primarily concerned with the circumstances surrounding death. Our office is equally concerned with the preservation of life. The entire staff spends many hours with the Child Death Review Team to examine all types

of data related to the death of children under the age of 18 in our county. We are an active member of the Greene County Suicide Prevention Coalition; participate in mock accidents at local high schools; and speak at high school health classes.

On behalf of the Greene County Coroner's Office, I would like to thank the local fire and emergency medical service squads and law enforcement as well as the local hospitals and nursing home personnel for their excellent support and cooperation, which enables us to provide this necessary service to the people of Greene County. I also wish to express my heartfelt thanks to the excellent staff of the Greene County Coroner's Office who keep our program running very efficiently. It is my pleasure to present the Greene County Coroner's Office 2021 Annual Report.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin L. Sharrett, M.D.
Coroner of Greene County



Office of the Greene County Coroner

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Coroner's Office Personnel



Kevin L. Sharrett, M.D.
Greene County Coroner



John Turner
Chief Investigator

Jean Harner, R.N.
Administrative Assistant

Carl Day
Investigator

William L. Harden
Administrator/Investigator

Coroner & Staff

The National Association of Medical Examiners accredits the Coroner's Office.

Dr. Sharrett and his staff are required to attend the semi-annual training sessions conducted by the Ohio State Coroner's Association.

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Greene County Coroner Office is to investigate and determine the cause and manner of death due to an accident, homicide, suicide, or sudden/unexplained deaths when a person who was in apparent good health dies.

Procedures that are used to conclude the investigation may include autopsies, testing for toxicological substances in the body, histological examinations from tissues samples for the presence of disease, trauma, or irregularities of the body or scene that may have contributed to the death.

Ohio Law requires that the cost of the autopsy shall be paid by the county in which an injury that caused the death occurred, even though they died in another county. In 2021, there were six of those types of autopsies.

The Greene County Coroner's Office utilizes the Montgomery County Coroner's Office to perform forensic autopsies, which includes a fully accredited crime laboratory. Forensic anthropologists and odontologists serve as consultants as needed. The National Association of Medical Examiners also accredits the Montgomery County Coroner's Office.

Reportable Deaths to the Coroner

Chapter 313 of the Ohio Revised Code defines the qualifications, duties and records of the Coroner. It also defines the deaths that require notification to the Coroner. Not all deaths referred to the Coroner for investigation result in an autopsy. Our office is not always notified of all deaths although it is not required it is strongly encouraged.

Types of Deaths Reportable to the Coroner

1. Sudden and unexpected deaths, medical procedure deaths, occupational deaths, no medical history.
2. Violent deaths such as homicide, suicide, gunshot, stabbing etc.
3. Accidental deaths such as motor vehicle crash, burns, drowning, falls, drug overdose/abuse; other recent or past trauma.
4. Any suspicious circumstances surrounding a death.
5. Death of a person in the custody or control of a law enforcement agency.

Types of Coroners Cases for Which Autopsy is usually ordered?

1. Sudden and unexpected death when the coroner believes there is insufficient medical history.
2. Violent deaths of all types such as homicide, suicide, gunshot, etc.
3. Accidental deaths of all types. If the victim has been hospitalized for a length of time, it is the Coroner's decision to order an autopsy.
4. Suspicious circumstance surrounding death, including unidentified bodies.
5. Death of a person in the custody or control of a law enforcement agency.
6. Sudden infant deaths and deaths of children 18 and under without significant medical history.
7. An autopsy may be ordered at the discretion of the Coroner if the cause of death cannot be determined by the attending physician.

Manner of Death Definitions

The deaths identified in this report are organized in five main categories; these are Natural, Accident, Homicide, Suicide, and Undetermined. Listed below are each of these categories and their definition.

Natural

Natural Deaths discussed in this report are those that were reported to the Coroner and determined to be caused by disease (morbid process) attributable to known or unknown cause, non-traumatic, and not a result of act or omission of another. If the cause of death is ascertained by autopsy, the death certificate is signed by the Coroner.

Accident

Unforeseen event, misfortune, loss, act or omission causing death; when death is caused by conduct of another human agency, not being intentional in nature, and free of gross negligence.

Suicide

Suicide Deaths are those where the death is the result of an intentional, self-inflicted act intended to commit self-harm or cause death to oneself. Methods may include asphyxia (via hanging or suffocation), gunshot, and overdose of medication or other drugs.

Homicide

Homicide Deaths are those where the death is caused by the hands of another, other than by accident. The intent to cause death is not required for classification as Homicide and deaths classified as Homicide do not indicate or imply criminal intent was determined.

Undetermined

Classified in the Undetermined Death category are those deaths where the designation of Natural, Accident, Suicide, or Homicide could not be determined. After thorough consideration of all available information, the classification of one manner of death may be no more compelling than the other competing manners.

Generally, these deaths have been thoroughly investigated by the Coroner, including an autopsy examination and related scientific tests. In many cases the cause of death may be known, however the external factors cannot be confidently established.

Table 1: 2021 Budget – Greene County Coroner’s Office

The Greene County Coroner’s 2021 appropriated budget was \$ 707,170.00

	2021 Budget
Salaries	314,848.00
Benefits	143,272.00
Travel and Training	1,350.00
Medical Fees	210,000.00
Professional Services	21,060.00
Dues & Subscriptions	6,000.00
Telephone & Comm.	2,740.00
Outside Repairs	1,150.00
Materials and Supplies	4,750.00
Equipment & Vehicles	2,000.00

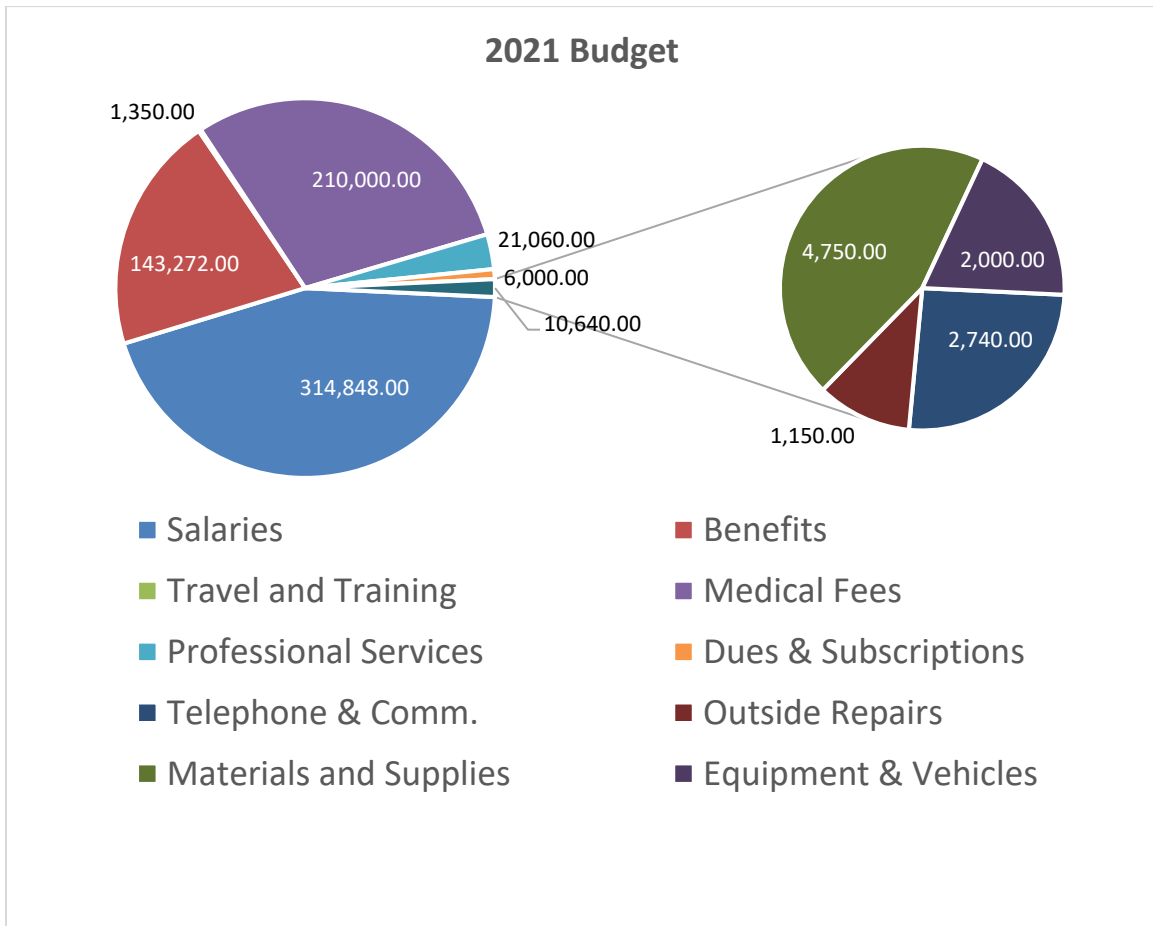
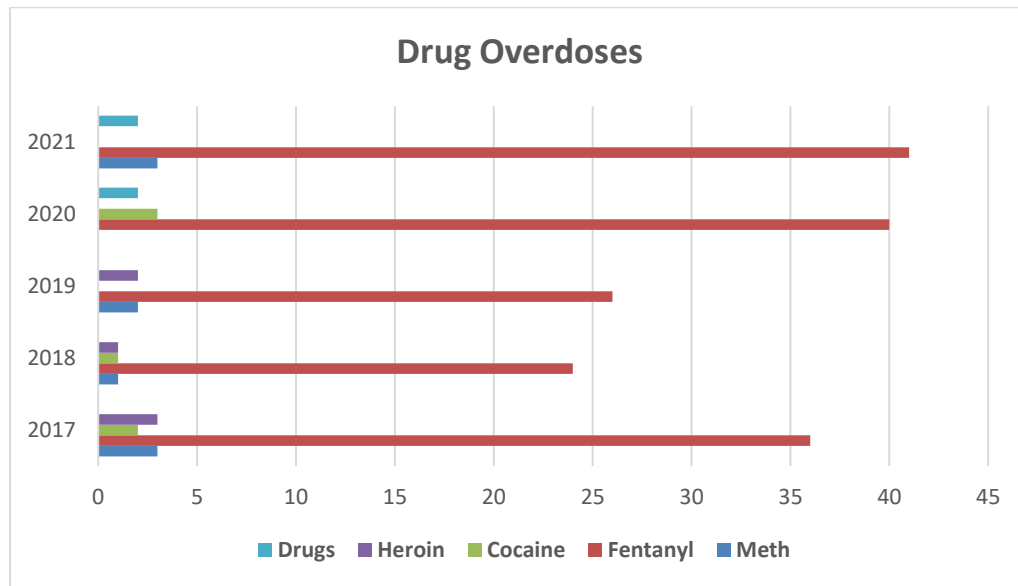


Table 2: Drug Overdoses

There were 47 deaths due to drug overdose in 2021. The Coroner ruled all 47 deaths as accidents. Total drug deaths are currently higher than 2020. Many have died under the influence of a combination of drugs, and it is often hard to categorize them. The chart below highlights that Fentanyl continues to be the number one cause of drug overdoses.



	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Meth	3	1	2	0	3
Fentanyl	36	24	26	40	41
Cocaine	2	1	0	3	0
Heroin	3	1	2	0	0
Drugs	0	0	0	2	3
Total	44	27	30	45	47

Table 3:

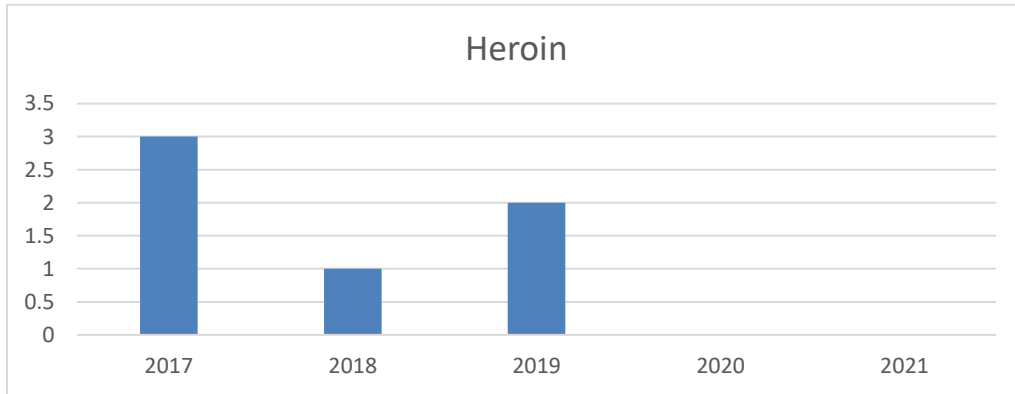


Table 4:

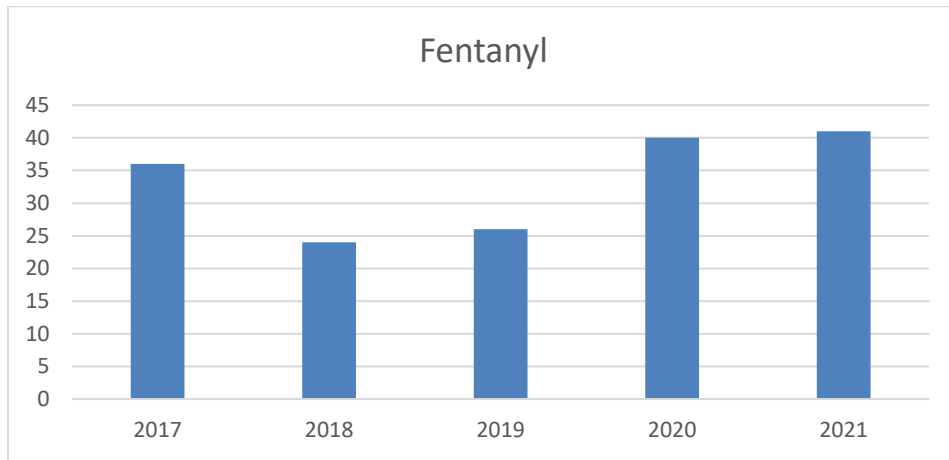


Table 5:

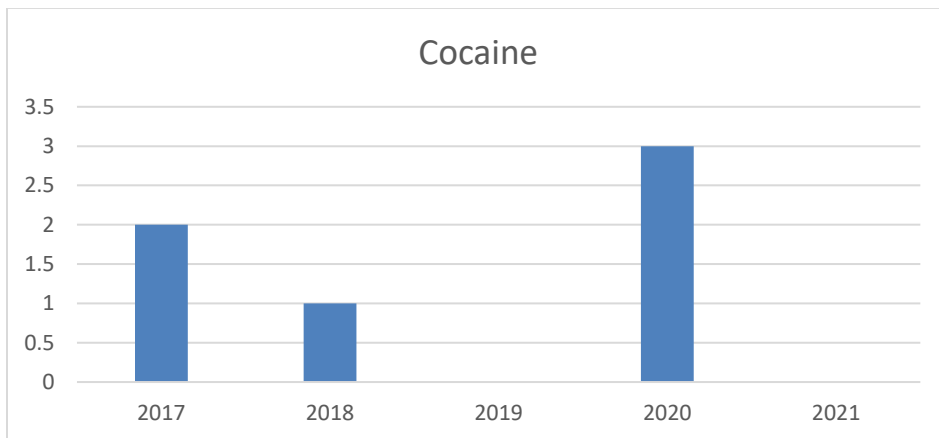
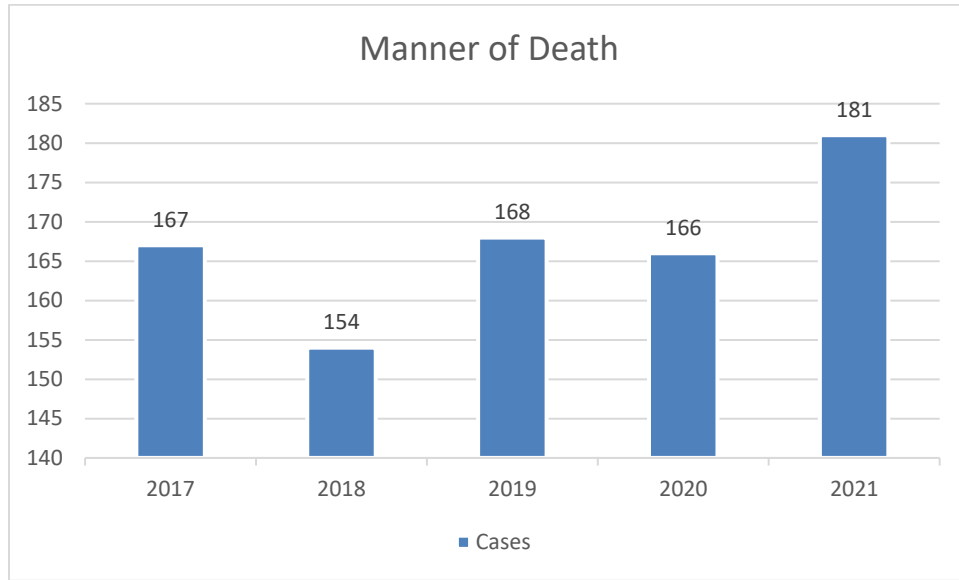


Table 6:



In 2021, there were 1507 deaths in Greene County. The Coroner’s Office was contacted regarding 1269 of these deaths (84.2%). Of the reported 1269 deaths, 128 cases were accepted for full investigation. A total of 1088 cases were declined as they did not fall within the requirements for a full investigation by the Coroner’s Office. Of the 128 cases, 53 were investigated and the death certificate was signed by Dr. Sharrett without an autopsy. Six of the 128 cases were joint investigations with Montgomery County. The Greene County Coroner’s Office covered the cost of these autopsy’s as the decedents were injured or became ill in Greene County and transported to Montgomery County for treatment. The declined cases did however receive a preliminary examination.

Tables 7 and 8 compare the total cases and with autopsy percentages from 2017-2021

Table 7: Total County Deaths and Coroner Notifications, 2017-2021

Years	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Deaths	1193	1205	1232	1426	1507
Coroner Notified	912	989	1013	1220	1269
Percentage	76.5%	82.1%	82.2%	85.5%	84.2%

Table 8: Coroner Cases with Autopsy, 2017-2021

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Number of cases reported	912	989	1013	1220	1269
Number of Autopsies	143	120	122	120	122
Percentage of Autopsies	15.7%	12.1%	12.1%	9.8%	9.6%
Additional Autopsies	3	3	6	10	6

There are five **Manners of Death**: Natural, Accident, Homicide, Suicide and Undetermined. Tables 9 and 10 compare the total cases and percentages of each manner from 2017-2021. Included is a breakdown of the Accident Manner to show deaths from Motor Vehicle Accidents.

Table 9: Coroner Cases by Manner of Death 2017-2021

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Natural	56	56	68	34	82
Accident	52	54	57	52	47
*Traffic	16	9	15	11	12
*Drowning/etc.	13	3	1	2	12
Suicide	25	23	23	25	21
Homicide	3	6	2	4	1
Undetermined	5	3	1	2	6
Total	170	154	167	130	181

Table 10: Percentage of Coroner Cases by Manner of Death, 2017-2021

Natural	32.9%	36.4%	40.7%	26.2%	45.3%
Accident	30.6%	35.1%	34.1%	40.0%	25.7%
*Traffic	9.4%	5.8%	9.0%	8.5%	6.6%
*Drowning/etc.	7.6%	1.9%	0.6%	1.5%	6.6%
Suicide	14.7%	14.9%	13.8%	19.2%	12.0%
Homicide	1.8%	3.9%	1.2%	3.1%	.5%
Undetermined	2.9%	1.9%	0.6%	1.5%	3.3%

***Percentage totals may vary due to rounding.**

Table 11: Cause of Death for Greene County Cases 2021

Cause of Death	Accident	Homicide	Suicide	Natural	Undetermined	Total
Asphyxia	3		1			4
Blunt Force Trauma						0
MV Crash	8					8
Fall	7					7
Plane Crash						0
Carbon Monoxide Poisoning	1		1			2
Blood Disorders						0
Pneumonia						0
Ethanol Abuse				4		4
Renal Failure				1		1
Congenital / Lungs				2		2
Hernia						0
Ulcer						0
Seizure						0
Cardiovascular Disease				59		59
Choking						0
Dementia				1		1
Diabetes Mellitus				4		4
Drug Abuse	6		3			9
Oxycodone						0
Morphine						0
Acryl fentanyl						0
Cocaine						0
Methadone						0
Methamphetamine	3					3
Carfentanil						0
Heroin						0
Fentanyl	41					41
Gunshot Wound	1	1	9			11
Malignancy						0
Products of Combustion						0
Pulmonary Embolus				5		5
Respiratory Disease						0
Seizure Disorder						0
Sepsis						0

Stab Wounds / Cutting			1			1
Hematoma						0
Fracture						0
Strokes				1		1
Coronavirus Disease				3		3
Hypothermia	1					1
Cancer				2		2
Prostate						0
Drowning						0
Ligature Strangulation			5			5
Hanging						0
Undetermined					6	6
Unsafe Sleep (Infant)						0
Other			1			1
TOTALS						181
	71	1	21	82	6	181

In 2021 there were 181 Coroner Cases. Of these cases 122 were autopsies, 53 were sign outs and 6 were joint investigations with Montgomery County Coroner's Office. The leading cause of death was Cardiovascular Disease; Fentanyl was the second leading cause of death.

Tables 12 and 13 represent demographic break down by gender, age, and race for each manner of death in 2021

Table 12: Manner of Death by Age and Gender 2021

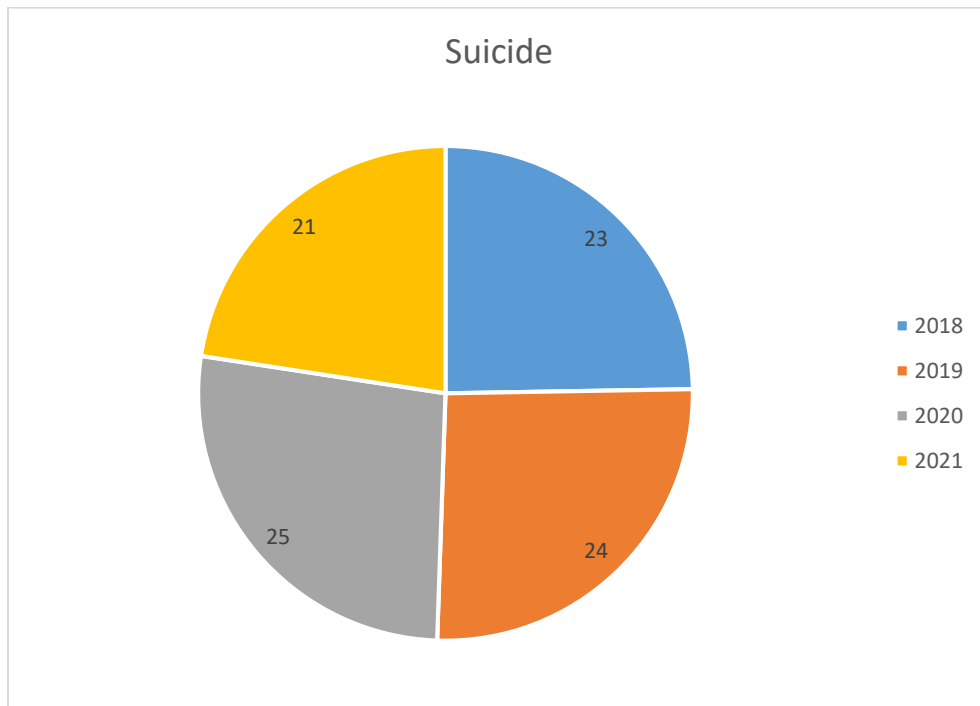
	<18 Years	18-40 Yrs.	41-64 Yrs.	65+ Yrs.	Male	Female
Natural	0	10	36	36	53	29
Accident	1	31	24	15	45	26
Suicide	0	12	6	3	17	4
Homicide	0	0	1	0	1	0
Undetermined	2	1	2	1	1	5

Table 13: Manner of Death by Race /Ethnicity – 2021

	White	Black	Hispanic	Other
Natural	73	6	2	1
Accident	63	5	2	1
Suicide	20	1	0	0
Homicide	1	0	0	0
Undetermined	4	2	0	0

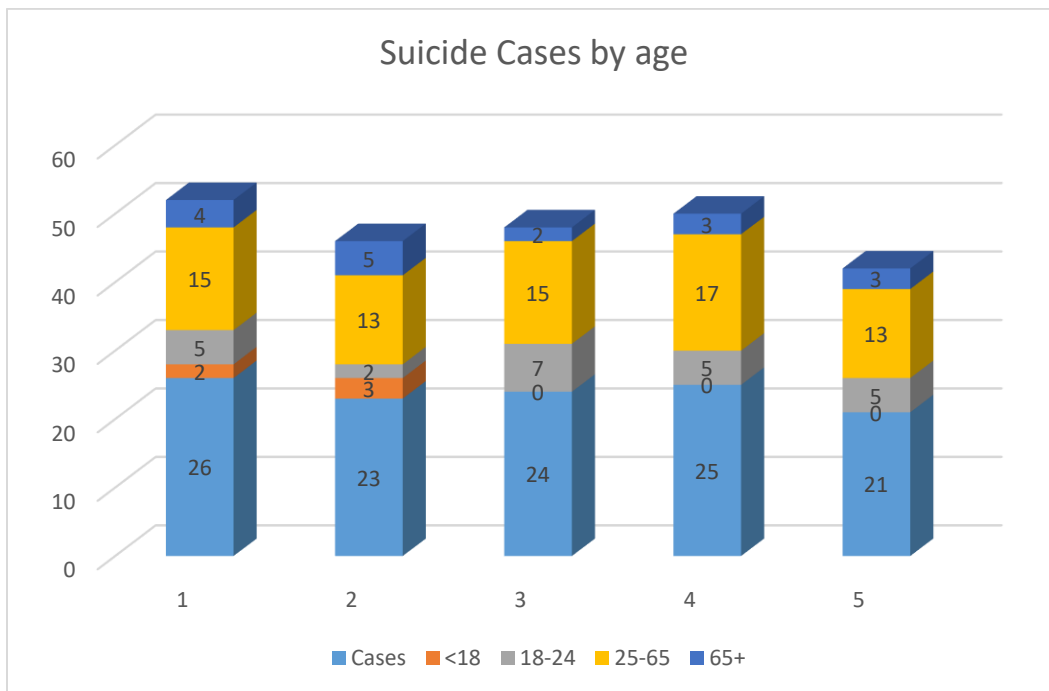
Table 14: Suicides

In 2021, there were **21** suicide deaths. Three factors that are common in suicide deaths: (1) prior attempts or threats, (2) history of alcohol or drug abuse, (3) history of depressions or other mental health illness.



There has been a slight decrease of suicides in Greene County from 2020 to 2021. Tables 15 thru 18 breakdown these suicides by age, race, gender, and method.

Table 15:



Years	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Cases	26	23	24	25	21
<18	2	3	0	0	0
18-24	5	2	7	5	5
25-65	15	13	15	17	13
65+	4	5	2	3	3

Table 16: Suicide Cases by Race, 2017-2021

Years	Cases	White	Black	Hispanic	Other
2017	26	24	1	0	1
2018	23	19	1	0	1
2019	23	20	2	0	1
2020	24	21	3	0	0
2021	21	20	1	0	0

Table 17: Suicide Cases by Gender, 2017-2021

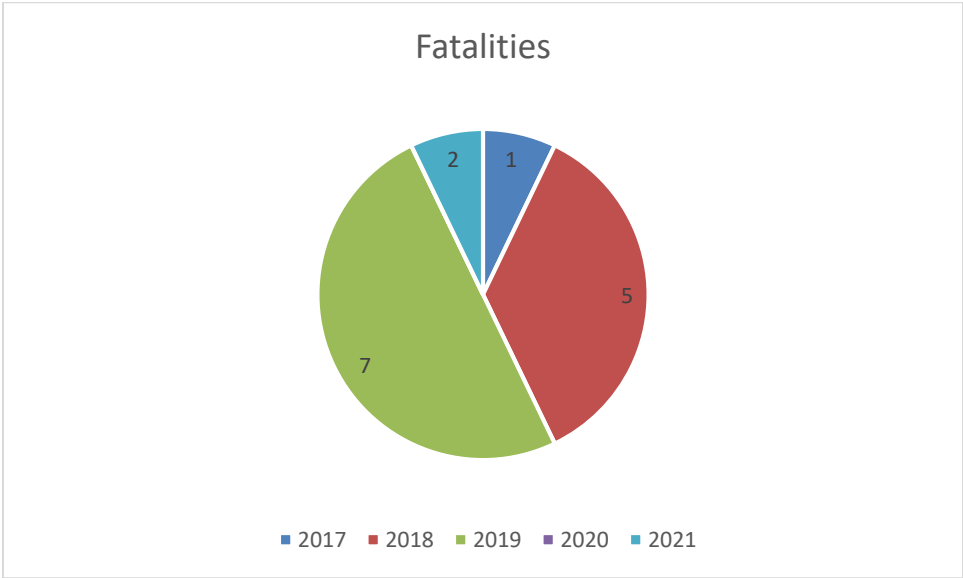
Years	Cases	Male	Female
2017	26	21	5
2018	23	22	1
2019	23	16	7
2020	24	20	4
2021	21	17	4

*Percentage totals may vary due to rounding.
Table 18: Suicide Cases by Method Used, 2017-2021

Years	Cases	Gun	Ligature Strangulation	Drug OD	CO	Cutting	Other
2017	26	16	7	2	0	0	1
2018	23	13	7	0	1	0	2
2019	24	14	5	1	1	0	3
2020	24	15	6	0	0	0	3
2021	21	9	5	1	1	1	4

Table 19: Child Fatalities

In 2021, we had two child fatality (<18 years old) that fell under the jurisdiction of the Greene County Coroner’s Office. These numbers are typically low as unresponsive children are typically transported to Dayton Children’s Hospital. Dayton Children’s falls under the jurisdiction of the Montgomery County Coroner’s Office.

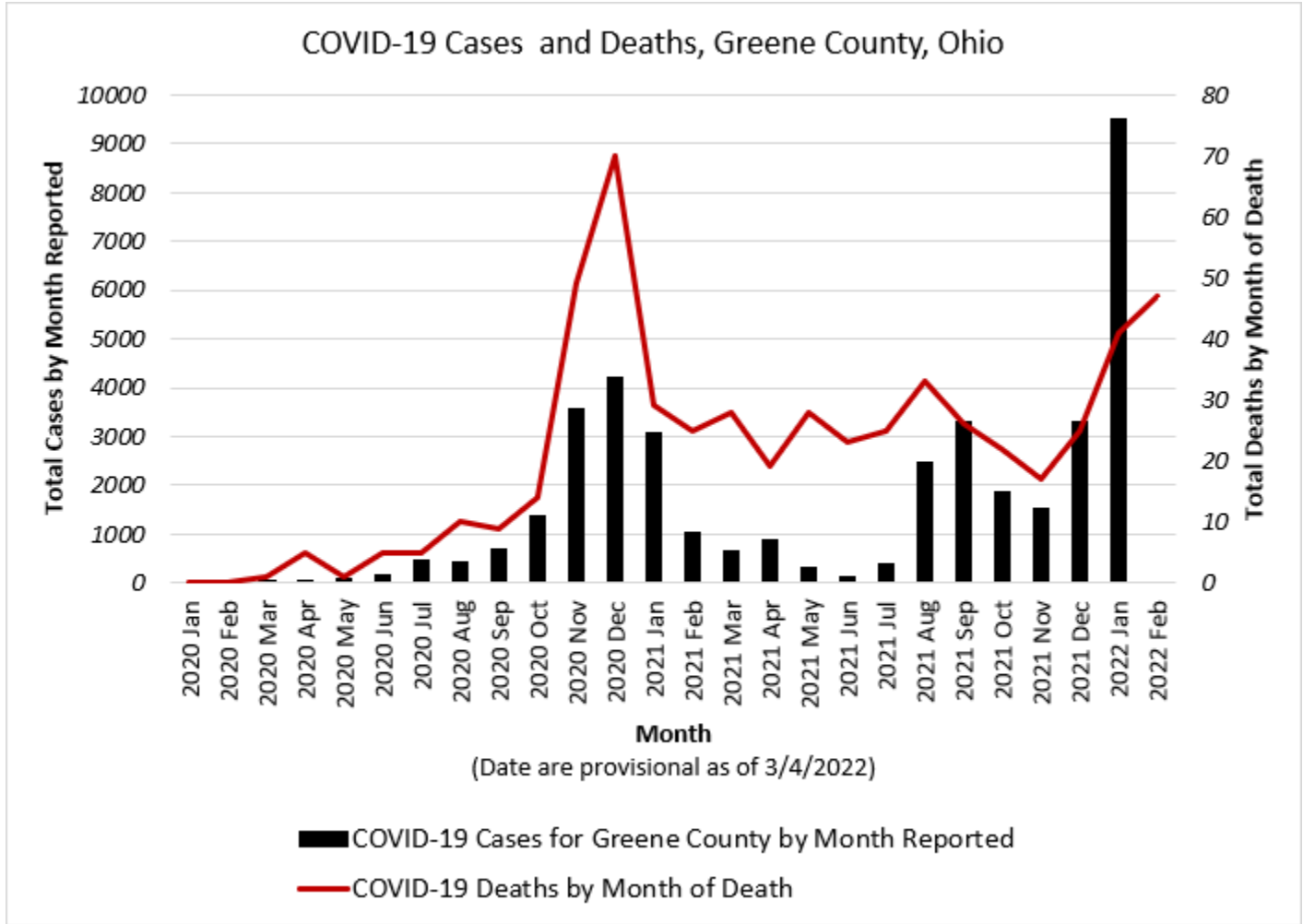


Years	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Fatalities	1	5	7	0	2

Table 20: Cases by Jurisdiction for 2021

Cities		Numbers	
WPAFB		1	
Wilberforce		1	
Xenia		47	
Fairborn		41	
Beavercreek		57	
Sugarcreek		10	
Yellow Springs		8	
Jamestown		5	
Bellbrook		6	
Cedarville		2	
Spring Valley		1	
Bath Twp.		2	
Jefferson Twp.		0	
Silvercreek Twp.		0	
Miami Twp.		0	
Total		181	

Table 20: Coronavirus Disease 2020



Month	COVID-19 GC Cases by Month Reported	COVID-19 GC Deaths by Month of Death
2020 Jan	0	0
2020 Feb	0	0
2020 Mar	14	1
2020 Apr	50	5
2020 May	71	1
2020 Jun	150	5
2020 Jul	449	5
2020 Aug	417	10
2020 Sep	703	9
2020 Oct	1387	14
2020 Nov	3567	49
2020 Dec	4215	70
2021 Jan	3055	29
2021 Feb	1022	25
2021 Mar	647	28
2021 Apr	887	19
2021 May	307	28
2021 Jun	123	23
2021 Jul	394	25
2021 Aug	2467	33
2021 Sep	3288	26
2021 Oct	1870	22
2021 Nov	1537	17
2021 Dec	3301	25
2022 Jan	9492	41
2022 Feb		47
Year Total 2020	11023	169
Year Total 2021	18898	300
YTD 2020 thru Feb	0	0
YTD 2021 thru Feb	3055	54
YTD 2022 thru Feb	9492	88

*Chart furnished from our Greene County Health Department

This chart includes total deaths for 2020 & 2021 that were referred to the Coroner’s Office. It may not include out of state deaths for people who were residents of Greene County because of the extended time needed to receive that state’s data.

OHIO CHILD FATALITY

The Greene County Coroner’s Office annually conducts a Child Fatality Review Board meeting for Greene County. Ohio Revised Code 307.624 mandates this is a confidential meeting. The committee reviewed 7 of 9 deaths under the age of 18 years-old, as two of the cases are currently under investigation by area law enforcement.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

The Coroner’s Office goal is to raise awareness through education, community training, and prevention activities. We collaborate with various organizations within the community, as well as provide training to these organizations on the duties and responsibilities of the Coroner’s Office.

The Greene Co. Coroner’s office is an active member of the Greene County Suicide Prevention Coalition under the under the auspices of the Mental Health and Recovery Board of Clark, Greene, and Madison counties. The Coroner’s Office works closely with organ donor organizations such as the Tissue Bank of Montgomery County and Life Connections of Miami Valley. In addition, we partner with Victim Service Advocates of Greene County, as well as Beavercreek, Xenia and Fairborn Municipal Prosecutor’s Offices.

The following is a list of trainings/presentations/reviews planned for 2021. Due to Covid-19 restriction and Ohio health guideline several activities were cancelled.

Jan. through Feb.	Tissue Bank Referrals update Meeting/Quarterly
January	Updates on Justice Webb access
May	Update training on “Ohio Sunshine” Public Record Laws

- May Doctor Sharrett and Administrator Harden & Chief Investigator John attended a 3-day statewide annual Coroner's Conference/training.
- Oct. Keynote speaker for Xenia Mayor's breakfast
- Oct. Coroner Dr. Sharrett and Office Administrator Harden attended SW Coroner's Conference in Dublin, OH
- Oct. Southwest Ohio Regional Meeting Dayton Ohio

