

Jackson County Medical Examiner's Office 2024 Annual Report

950 E. 21st Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64108
(816) 881-6600



2024 Annual Report
Jackson County Medical Examiner' s Office

Lindsey J. Haldiman, D.O.
Chief Medical Examiner

Ransom Ellis, D.O.
Deputy Chief Medical Examiner

Tiffany Hollenbeck, D.O.
Deputy Medical Examiner

Julie Schrader, D.O.
Deputy Medical Examiner

Joshua Smith, D.O.
Deputy Medical Examiner

950 E. 21st Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64108
Telephone: 816.881.6600
Fax: 816.881.6641

The Jackson County Medical Examiner's Office (JCMEO) is a National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) Accredited Medical Examiner's Office in the State of Missouri.

The office is staffed with American Board of Pathology (ABP) Certified Forensic Pathologists, American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators (ABMDI) registered and certified Death Investigators, Forensic Technicians, and trained Administrative Staff who handle pathologists' dictations, death certificates, case files, and medical records.

Services offered by the Jackson County Medical Examiner's Office include expert pathology examination, death scene investigations, medical records review, locating next of kin, court testimony, body examinations, and police and attorney consultation. Accredited by the American Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), JCMEO also provides pathology residency rotations as well as a 1-year Forensic Pathology Fellowship program to train future Forensic Pathologists.

Toxicology, Radiology, and Histology are additional services that assist in determining the cause & manner of death. Forensic services provided include expert Forensic Anthropology, Odontology, and Entomology consultations for cases where identification and time of death cannot be made by normal means. The JCMEO also takes reports of all Hospice and Nursing Home deaths and many attended hospital deaths that occur in Jackson County.

The JCMEO provides 24/7 coverage and death scene investigation to Jackson County by medicolegal death investigators with prompt contract transportation services, and completion of autopsy reports and death certificates within a timely manner. JCMEO is a state-of-the-art resource for the Kansas City Metro area and also provides referral autopsy services to assist other counties in Missouri. The JCMEO supports recovery of organ and tissue donations, and works closely with the Child Death Review Board with documentation of all child deaths, and also works closely with Health Departments to report all potential and confirmed heat and cold related deaths.

The Jackson County Medical Examiner's Office is the lead agency for the Kansas City Regional Mortuary Operational Response Group (KCRMORG), a group created by the JCMEO in conjunction with the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) in the area of Mass Fatality preparedness and response. A Mass Fatality Incident is described as any occurrence of multiple deaths that overwhelm the usual routine capacity of the local Medical Examiner or Coroner. KCRMORG consists of volunteer professionals from several aspects of forensic investigation. This team is responsible for the response and management of a mass fatality event and can be deployed by the Medical Examiner or Coroner to the incident area.

The Medical Examiner has direct jurisdiction for Jackson County and is required by Missouri State Statutes # RSMo 58.720 to investigate deaths as a result of:

- Violence by homicide, suicide, or accident
- Thermal, chemical, electrical, or radiation injury
- Criminal abortions, including those self-induced
- Disease thought to be of hazardous and contagious nature or which might constitute a threat to public health.
- Any person that dies suddenly when in apparent good health
- When unattended by a physician, chiropractor, or an Accredited Christian Science practitioner, during a period of thirty-six hours immediately preceding death
 - While in custody of the law, or while an inmate in a public institution
 - In any unusual or suspicious manner
- All child deaths, involving individuals below the age of eighteen years

Our office is staffed by:

- (1) Full Time Board Certified Chief Medical Examiner
- (1) Full Time Board Certified Deputy Chief Medical Examiner
- (3) Full Time Board Certified Deputy Medical Examiners
- (1) Forensic Pathology Fellow
- (1) Chief of Forensic Operations and Investigations
- (1) Deputy Chief Investigator
- (10) Full Time Medicolegal Death Investigators
- (1) Full Time Forensic Supervisor
- (5) Full Time Forensic Technicians
- (1) Executive Assistant to the Chief Medical Examiner
- (4) Full Time Administrative Staff

2024 Summary

A total of **7015** deaths were reported to our office in 2024.

These include accepted jurisdiction, declined jurisdiction, and nursing home and hospice cases. The majority of those reported deaths were reported from nursing home and hospice. Nursing home and hospice deaths accounted for **2952** of those reported.

The Medical Examiner's Office performed a complete autopsy on **989** cases.

The manner of death on those **989** cases were determined as:

176 Homicides

66 Suicides

51 Traffic Deaths

329 Accidental Deaths

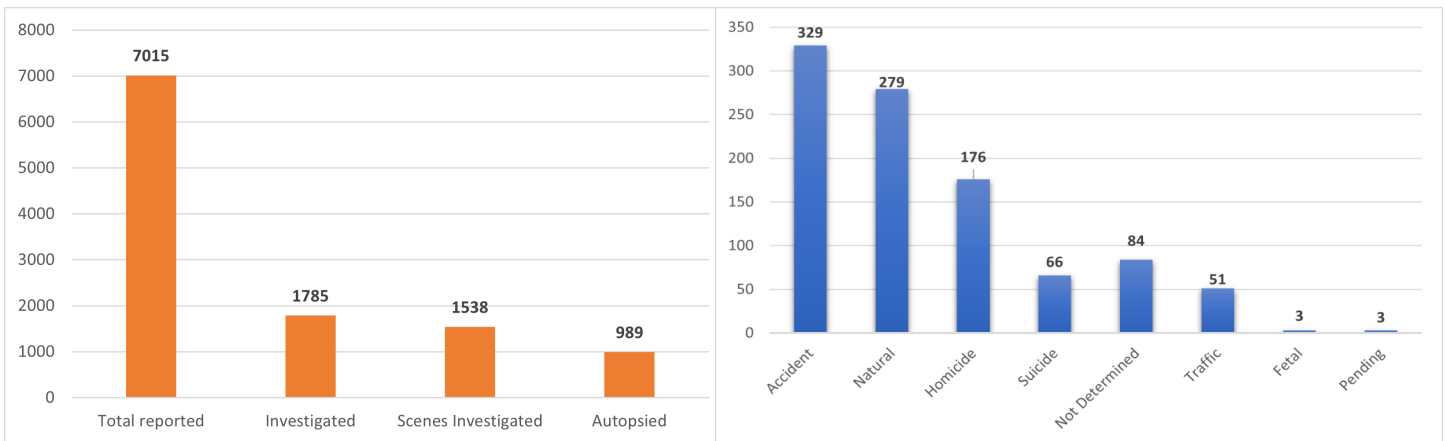
279 Natural Deaths

84 deaths due to undetermined causes

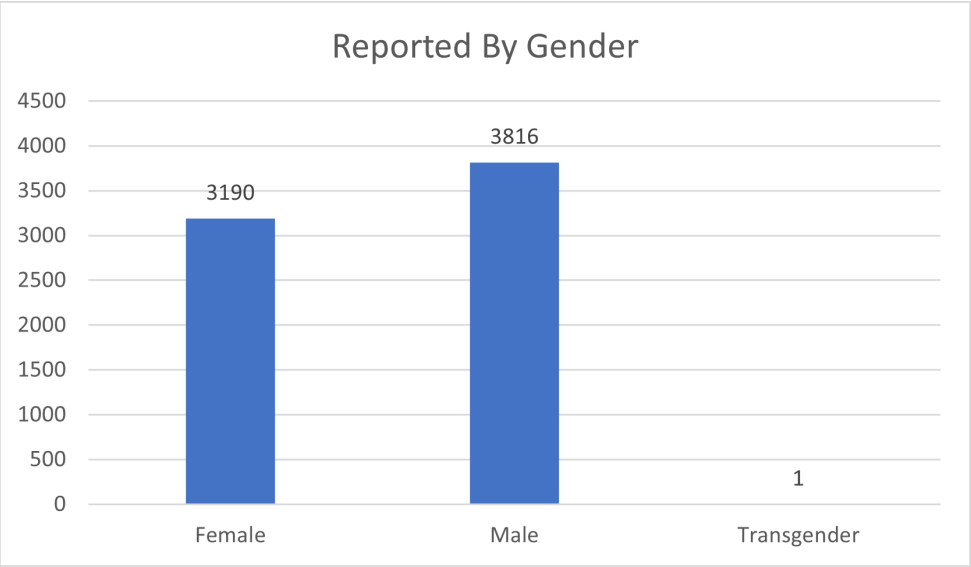
3 case still remain pending at the time of this report

3 Fetal demise

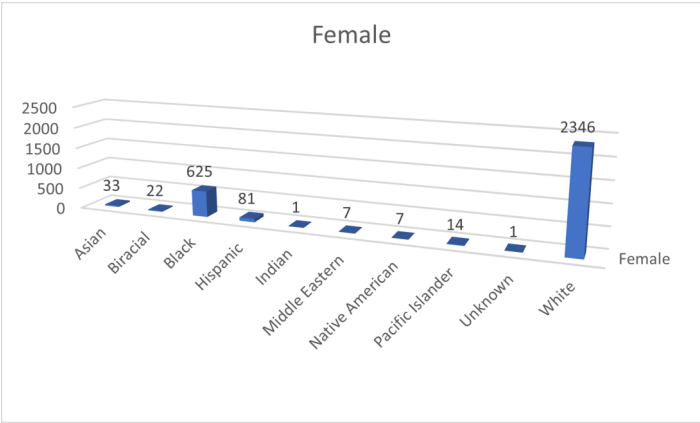
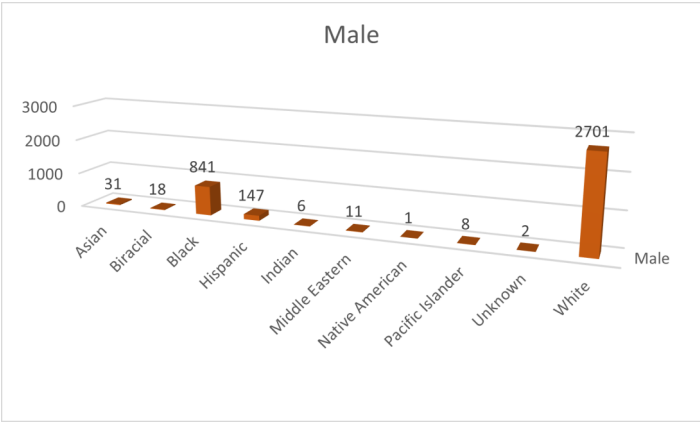
Does the office prepare an annual report tabulating total cases reported, accepted, examined, and autopsied, and the major causes of death sorted by each manner of death category?



Does the office annually compile statistical data on deaths reported?

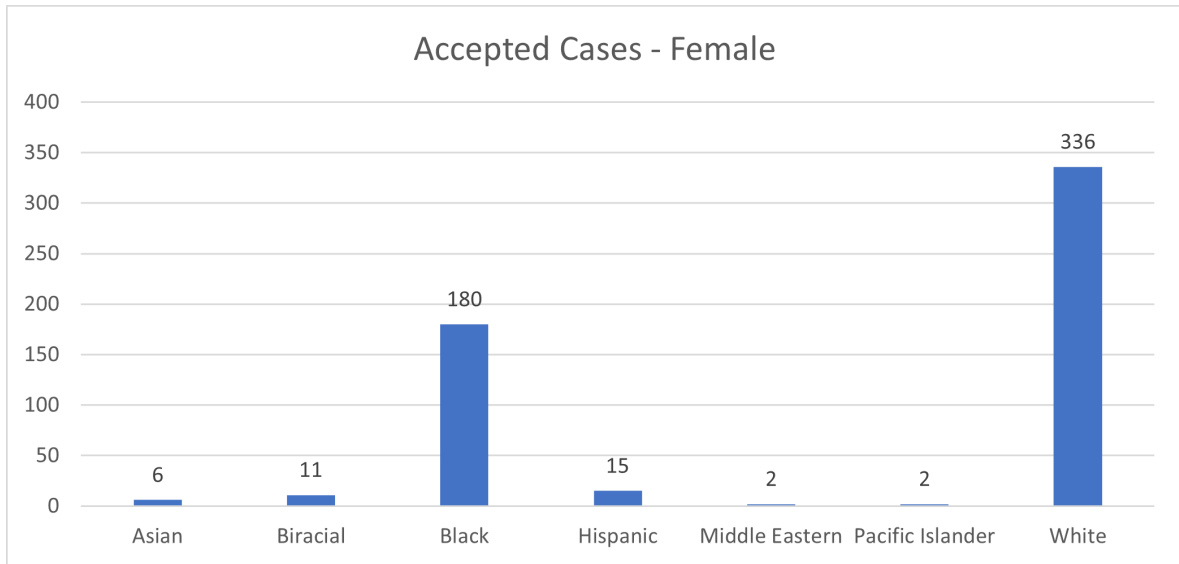


	Asian	Biracial	Black	Hispanic	Indian	Middle Eastern	Native American	Pacific Islander	Unknown	White
Female	33	22	625	81	1	7	7	14	1	2346
Male	31	18	841	147	6	11	1	8	2	2701
Transgender										1

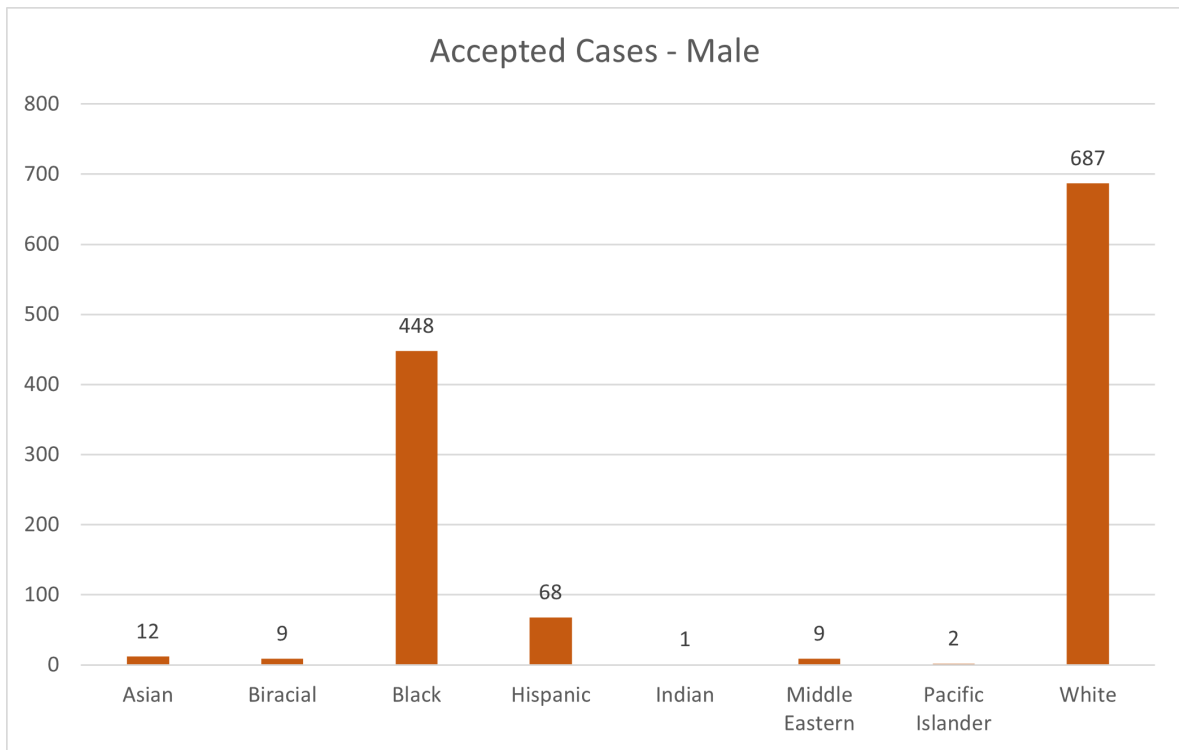


Of all cases reported, 1 was Transgender

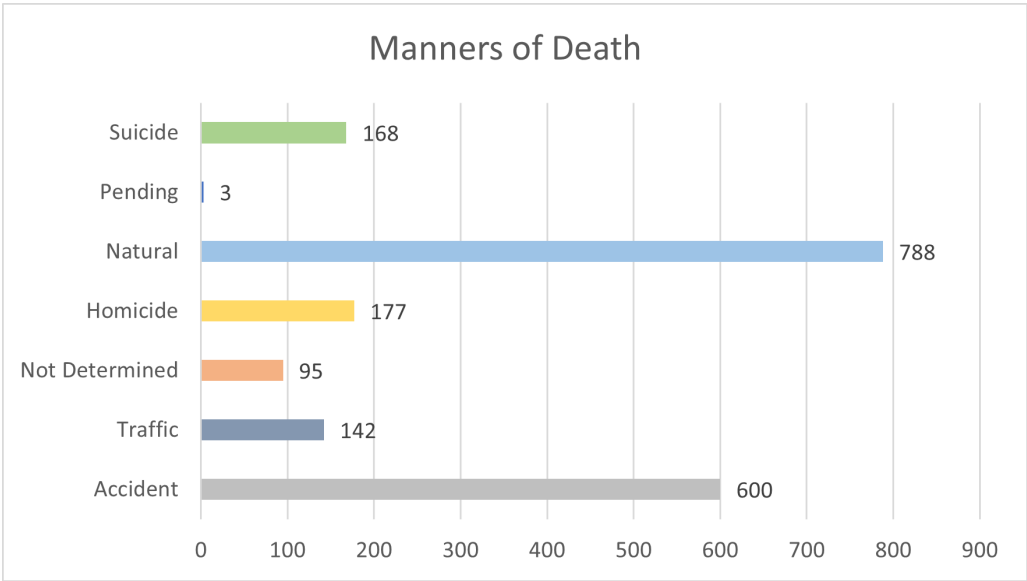
Does the office annually compile statistical data on cases accepted?



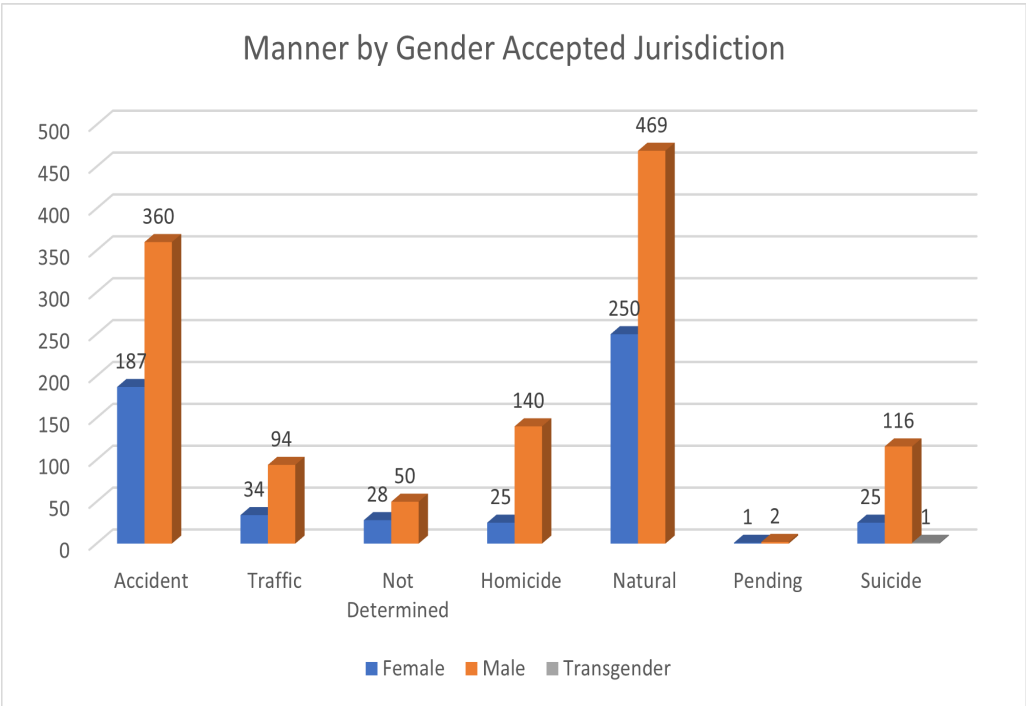
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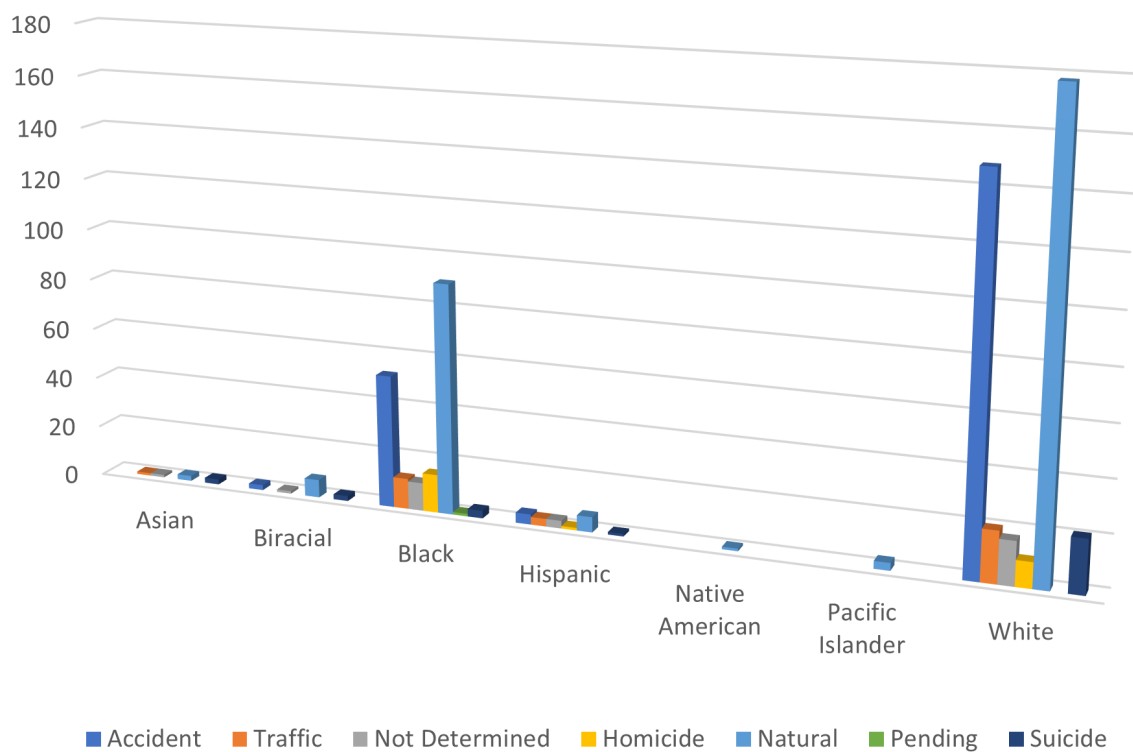
Does the office annually compile statistical data on manners of death?



Both accepted jurisdiction and outside contract counties

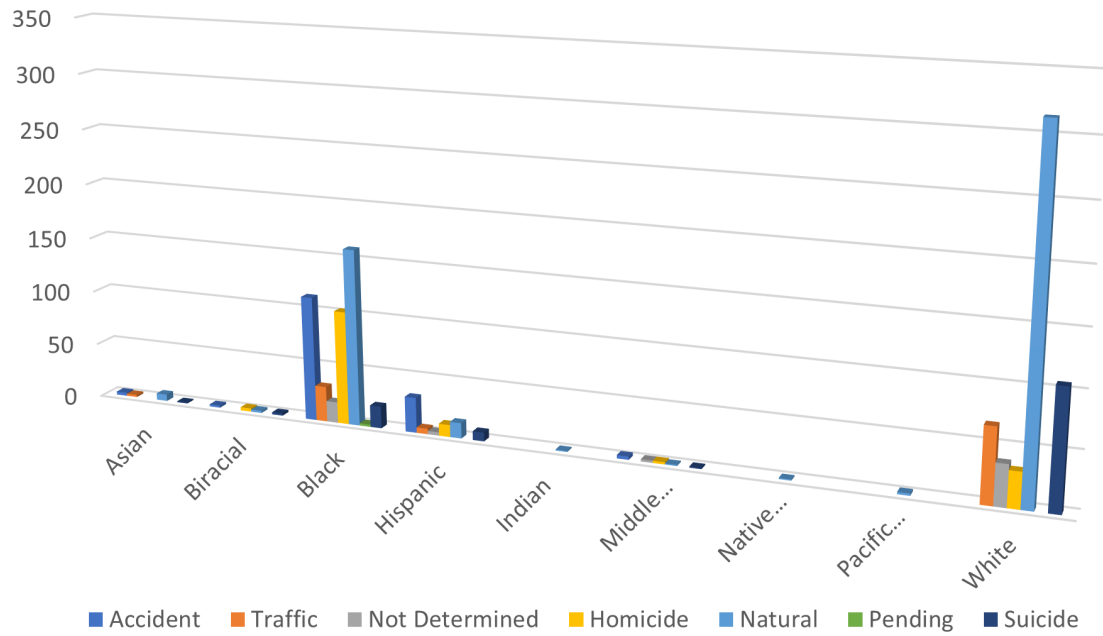


Female Manner by Race



	Accident	Traffic	Not Determined	Homicide	Natural	Pending	Suicide
Asian		1	1		2		2
Biracial	2		1		7		2
Black	52	12	11	15	90	1	3
Hispanic	4	3	3	1	6		1
Native American					1		
Pacific Islander					3		
White	148	20	17	10	178		21

Male Manner by Race



	Accident	Traffic	Not Determined	Homicide	Natural	Pending	Suicide
Asian	3	2			6		1
Biracial	2			3	2		2
Black	113	32	19	103	160	2	20
Hispanic	32	5	3	11	14		8
Indian					1		
Middle Eastern	3		2	2	1		1
Native American					1		
Pacific Islander					2		
White		67	37	32	314		106

Transgender	Suicide
White	1

Numbers certified by Jackson County only

MOD - Natural

Heart / Lung related	479
Alcohol / Drug related	57
Diabetes / Ketoacidosis	28
Cancer	25
Renal	24
Hemorrhage / Hematoma	18
Morbid Obesity	17
Unspecified Natural Disease	13
Sepsis	9
Brain related	8
Seizure Disorder	7
End Stage Liver Disease	5
Peritonitis	4
Multiorgan failure	3
Cirrhosis	2
Failure to thrive	2
Prematurity	2
Acute pancreatitis	1
Hepatic steatosis	1
Influenza A	1
Kawasaki's disease	1
Meconium aspiration	1
Necrotizing fasciitis	1
Pancreatitis	1
Protein calorie malnutrition	1
Rheumatoid arthritis	1
SARS-CoV-19 infection	1
Severe anemia	1
Small bowel ischemia	1
Steatohepatitis	1
Streptococcus pneumoniae	1
Systemic vasculitis	1

MOD - Traffic

Blunt force injuries	122
Anoxic brain injury	1
Cervical Myelopathy	1
Hemoperitoneum	1
Ischemic cerebral infarct	1
Multiorgan failure	1
Multiorgan failure	1
Respiratory Failure	1

MOD - Accident

Alcohol / Drug related	344
Blunt force injuries	48
Fall / Fracture	44
Hemorrhage / Hematoma	35
Heart / Lung related	22
Asphyxia	13
Carbon monoxide poisoning	7
Smoke / Thermal	6
Hypothermia / Hyperthermia	4
Sepsis / Septic shock	4
Anoxic brain injury	2
Choking	2
Drowning	2
Firearm related	2
Renal / Diabetic	2
Carcinoma	1
Complications of paraplegia	1
Complications of remote TBI	1
Complications of rhabdomyolysis	1
Dog Mauling	1
Electrocution	1
Exsanguination	1
Impalement	1
Multiorgan failure	1

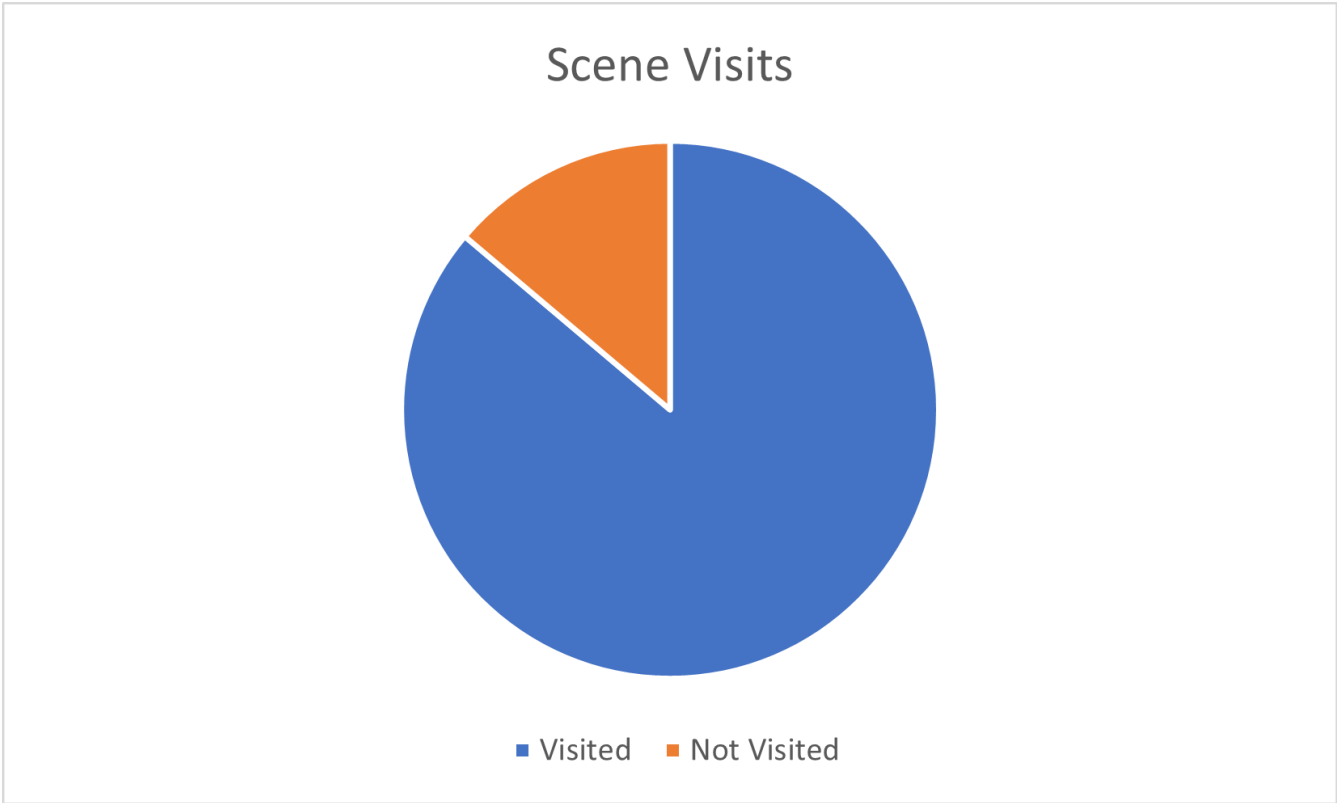
MOD - Not determined

Undetermined	32
Blunt force injuries	11
Alcohol / Drug related	10
Firearm related	6
Heart / Lung related	5
Smoke / Thermal	4
Drowning	2
SUDI	2
Fracture	1
Asphyxia	1
Disseminated Intravascular Coagulation	1
Gastric content aspiration	1
Sharp force injury	1
Urosepsis	1

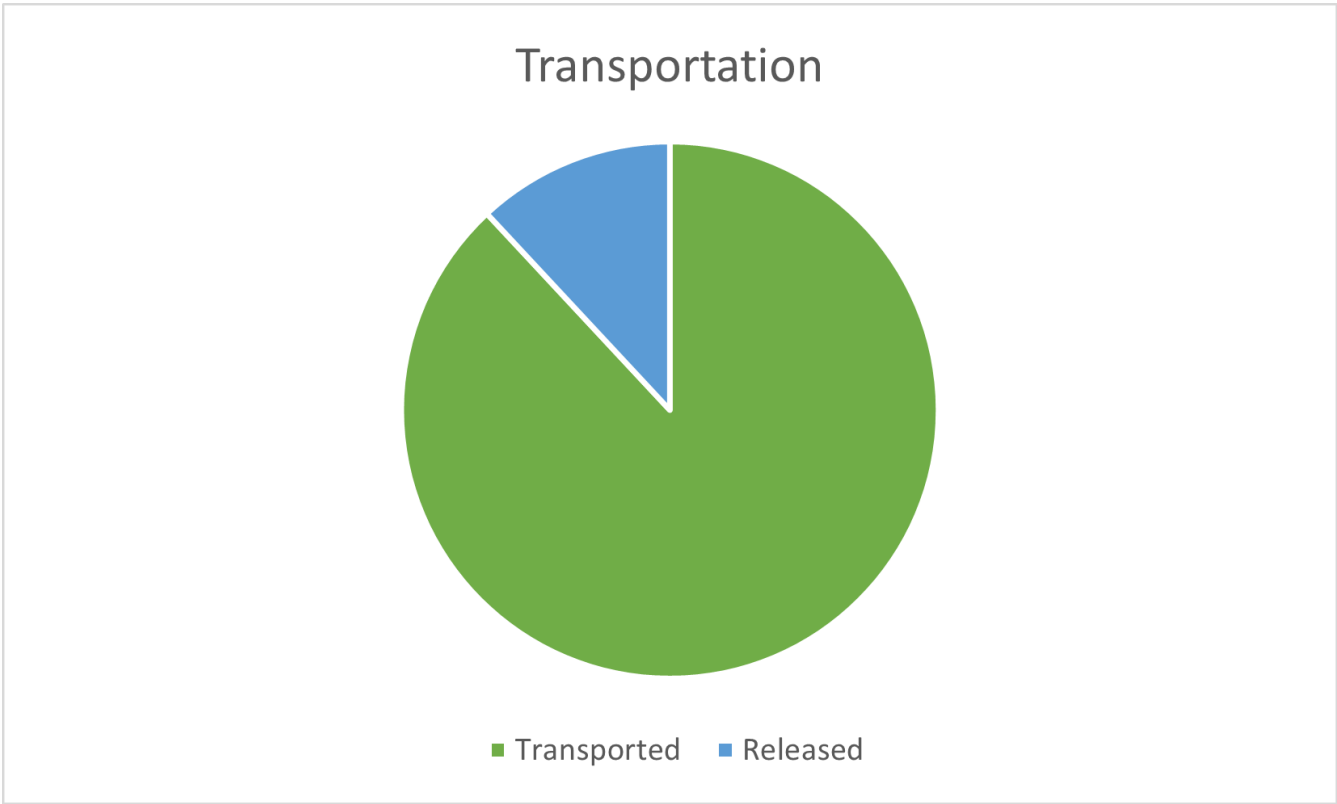
MOD - Homicide

Firearm related	148
Blunt force injuries	8
Stab Wounds	3
Sharp force injuries	4
Strangulation	1
Thermal injuries	1

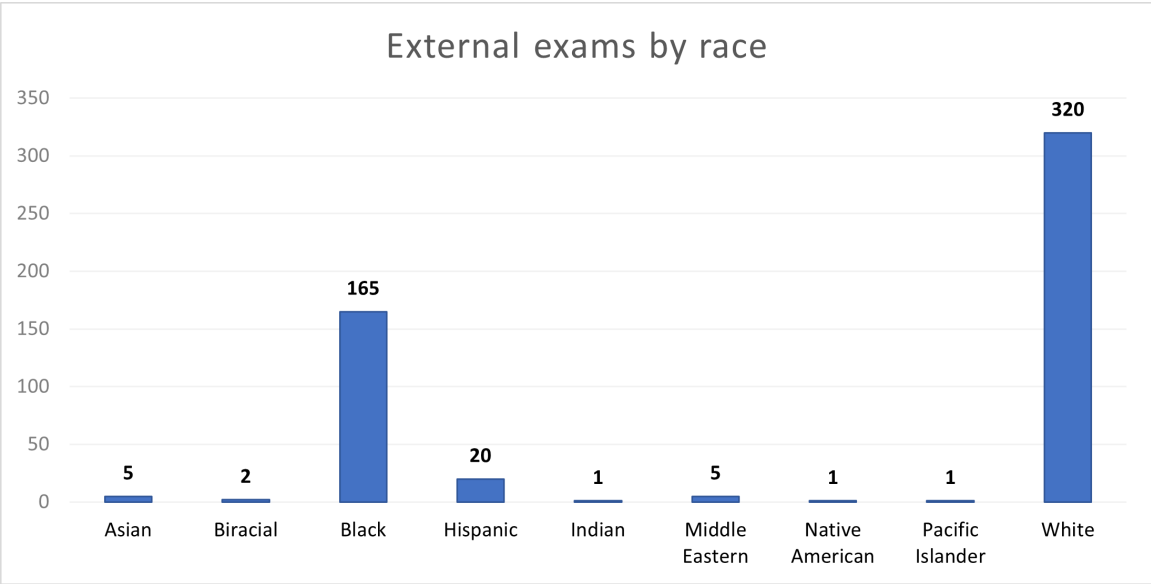
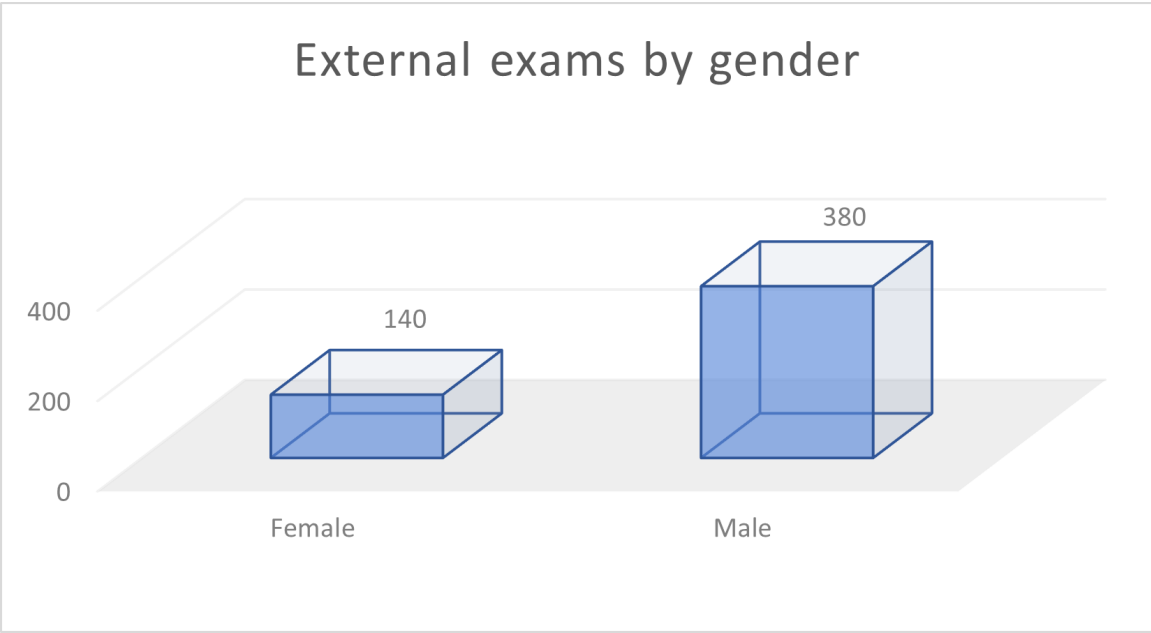
Does the office annually compile statistical data on scene visits by medical examiners or medical examiner investigators?



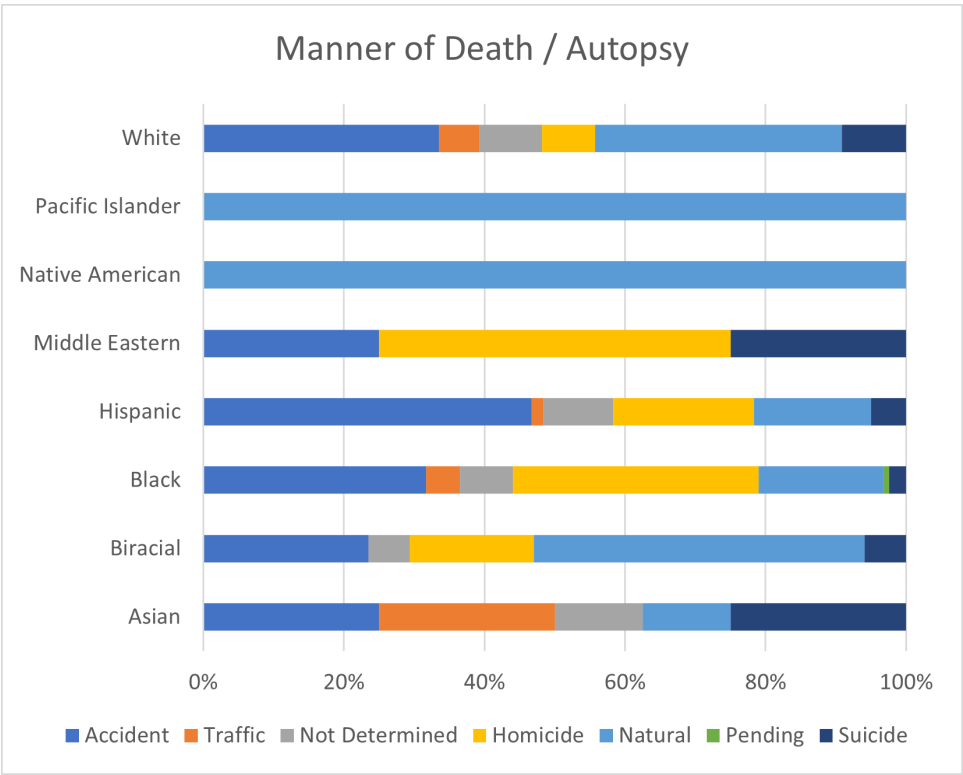
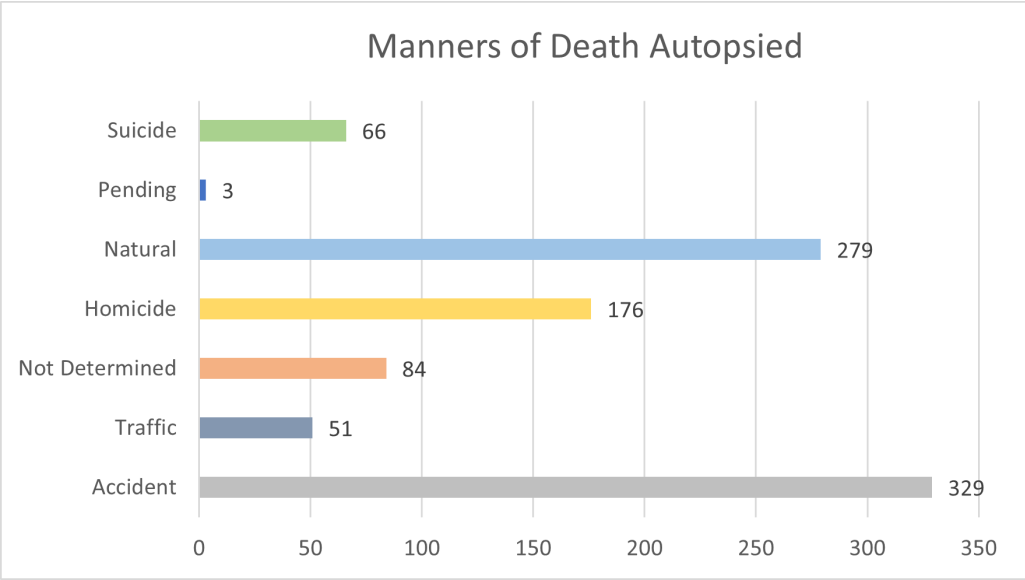
Does the office annually compile statistical data on bodies transported by office or by order of the office?

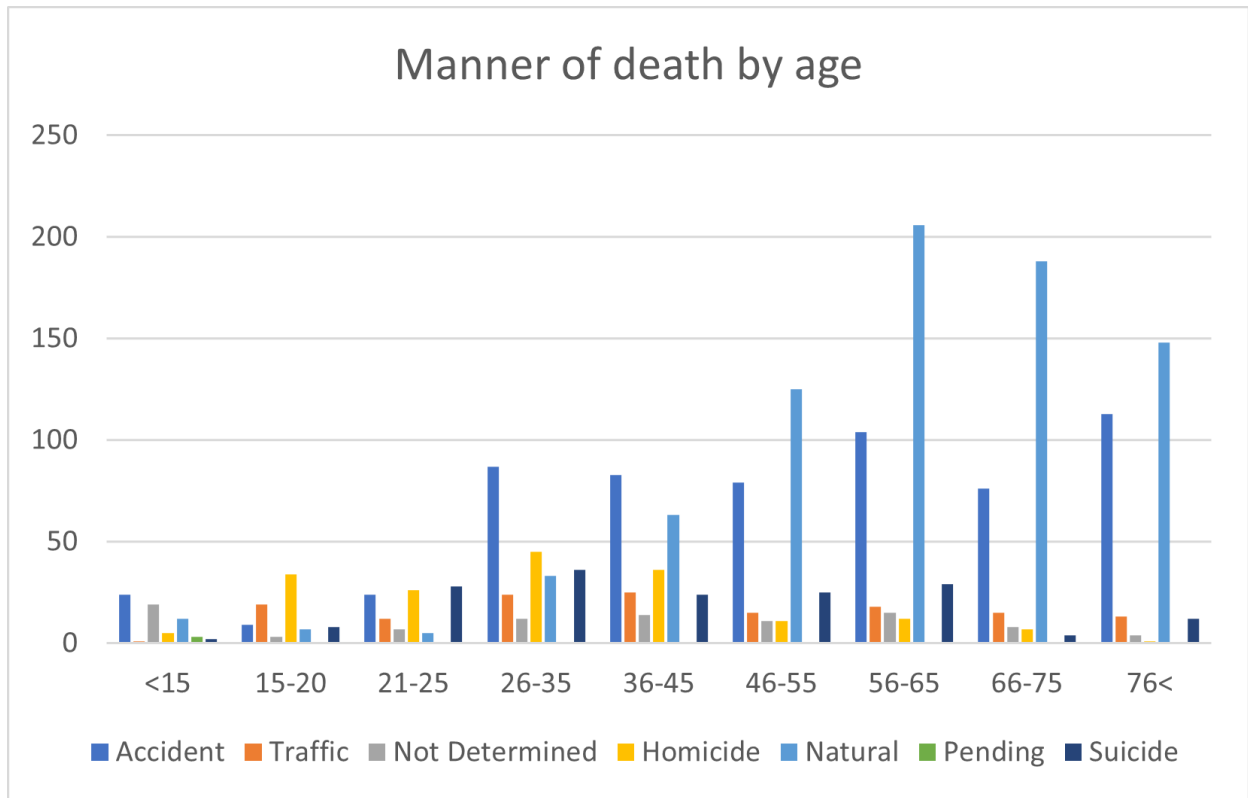


Does the office annually compile statistical data on external examinations?



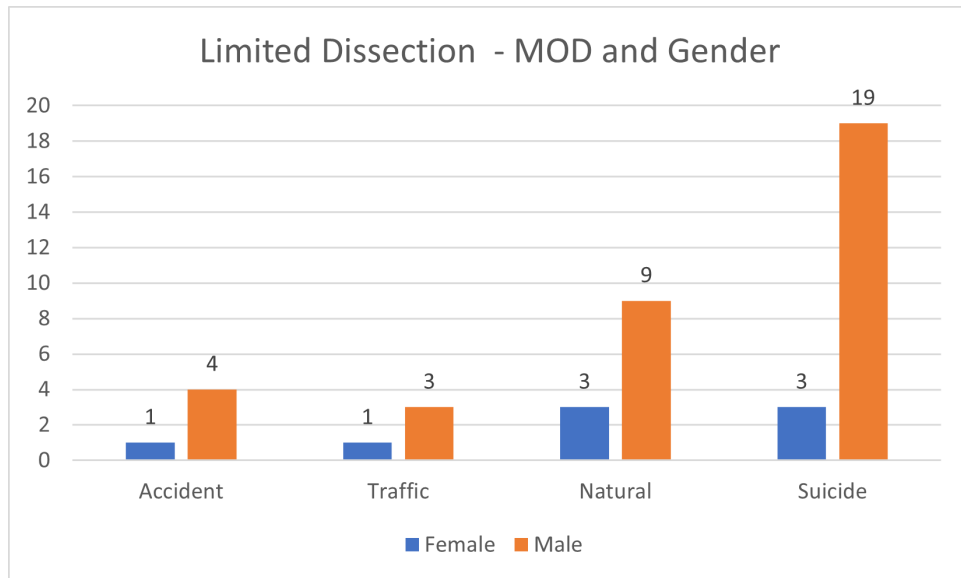
Does the office annually compile statistical data on complete autopsies?





	<15	15-20	21-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66-75	76<
Accident	24	9	24	87	83	79	104	76	113
Traffic	1	19	12	24	25	15	18	15	13
Not Determined	19	3	7	12	14	11	15	8	4
Homicide	5	34	26	45	36	11	12	7	1
Natural	12	7	5	33	63	125	206	188	148
Pending	3								
Suicide	2	8	28	36	24	25	29	4	12

Does the office annually compile statistical data on partial autopsies?



Does the office annually compile statistical data on hospital autopsies retained under ME jurisdiction?

The Jackson County Medical Examiner's Office does not conduct nor take jurisdiction of hospital autopsies.

All autopsy activity takes place in our own facility.

Does the office annually compile statistical data on cases where toxicology is performed?

All cases where jurisdiction is accepted are submitted to toxicological studies in accordance with the "Specimen and Evidence Procurement and Handling and Disposal" policy.

Does the office annually compile statistical data on bodies unidentified after examination?

In 2024, only 1 skull and 1 decomposed individual remained unidentified after examination.

Does the office annually compile statistical data on organ and tissue donations?

**Jackson County Medical Examiner
January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024**

Organ Donors	46
Cornea	78
Dermis	66
Blood Vessels	26
Bone	75
Bone Marrow	0
Bone Other	23
Heart Valve	23
Other Musculoskeletal	10
Pericardium	10
Whole Globe /Sclera	16
Referrals	363

Does the office annually compile statistical data on unclaimed bodies?

In 2024, only 79 bodies were unclaimed and processed for county cremation.

Does the office annually compile statistical data on exhumations?

Exhumation requests are submitted by interested parties and stored in the file room at the medical examiner's office.

Does the office annually compile statistical data on infant deaths (age live birth to one year) including numbers of infant deaths certified, number of infants autopsied and categories of cause and manner of death?

Of the 140 reported infant deaths:

Full autopsy 36

Accepted jurisdiction (certified) 28

Accident	Asphyxia
Not determined	Complications of Bronchopneumonia
	Sudden unexpected death in infancy
	Undetermined / Unknown
Homicide	Blunt force injury of the head
	Complications of thermal burn injuries
	Gunshot wound of the head
Natural	Complications of prematurity
	Complications of Respiratory Infection
	Klebsiella pneumoniae sepsis
	Meconium aspiration
	Myocarditis
Pending	Pending