



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Coroner Division

Quarter 4 Comparison Report

Report time frame: Oct. - Dec. 2020

(comparing to: Oct. - Dec. 2019)

Total cases

750

(+23% from 610 in 2019)

Q4 Total includes 9 cases pending and 10 cases undetermined

Accident

329

(+91%)

Homicide

15

(+114%)

Suicide

70

(-13%)

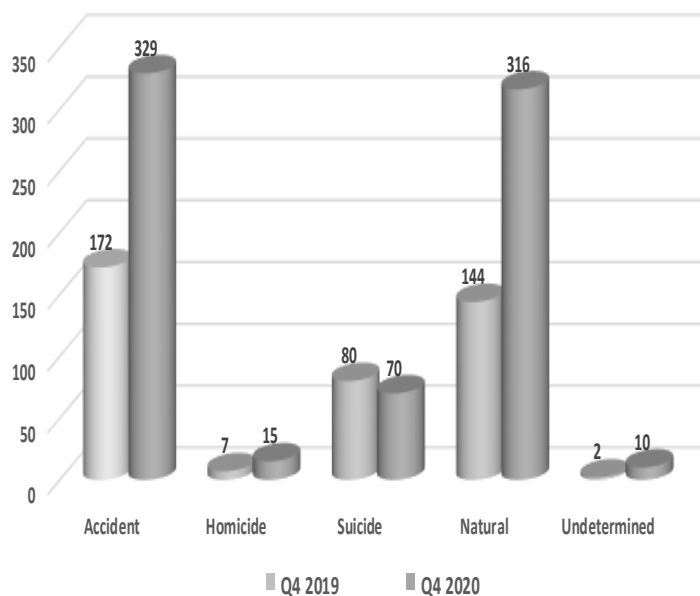
Natural

316

(+119%)

MANNER OF DEATH

Comparing Quarter 4 of 2019 to 2020, accidental deaths have increased by 91%, homicides increased by 114%, suicides were down by 13%, and natural deaths falling under the jurisdiction of the Coroner increased by 119%.



Accidents

Unintentional prescription and illicit drug related deaths increased in Quarter 4 of 2020 to 50% of all accidental deaths when compared to the Quarter 4 (9%) in 2019. Falls accounted for 20%, while traffic related deaths were at 21%.



Unplanned deaths due to illicit or prescription drugs and/or ethanol toxicity increased by 888% in Quarter 4 of 2020 compared to the same time period in 2019 (17 to 168)

Methamphetamine appeared in 49% of all overdoses cases which was a 2% increase compared to the fourth quarter of 2019.

Fentanyl related deaths showed a 1375% increase (8 to 118)



Falls decreased 8% in Quarter 4 of 2020 compared to 2019 (73 to 67) which makes them the third highest of all accidental death cases. Same level falls were most prevalent at 51% of all falls in 2020 and down from 78% in 2019.



Vehicular traffic related deaths increased by 11% in the 4th quarter in comparison to the 4th quarter of 2019 (69 to 62) with Auto vs. Auto decreasing by 13%.

Pedestrian deaths accounted for 28% of all vehicular deaths in Quarter 4 of 2020 while in Quarter 4 of 2019 they were at 32%. (19 to 20)

Motorcycle related deaths saw an 120% increase. (5 to 11)

Traffic Deaths

+11%

INCREASE (62 to 69)

28% of the cases involved a pedestrian.

Suicides

In Quarter 4 of 2020 there was a 13% decrease in suicides compared to Quarter 4 of 2019.

During this time frame Asphyxia was the leading method at 46% followed by Gunshot at 26%

The work of the Coroner Division is largely based on Government Code § 27491, which states that all unnatural deaths including homicides, suicides, accidents, and deaths in custody are under the coroner/medical examiner's jurisdiction to investigate. Also falling under our jurisdiction are infectious diseases reaching epidemic proportions, deaths in state or local institutions, and deaths believed to be natural but that occurred suddenly and unexpectedly where the decedent had not seen their health care provider in the last 20 days of life. Note: All deaths that fall under § 27491 are also subject to whether the facts indicate the death occurred under natural circumstances and the physician of record has sufficient knowledge to reasonably state the cause of death occurred under natural circumstance. Therefore, not every death that falls under one of these categories will be investigated by the Medical Examiner's office. See Govt Code § 27491.

*Due to some cases still under investigation within the quarter, manner of death counts and associated insights will adjust as those cases are closed