



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Coroner Division

Quarter 1 Comparison Report

Report time frame: January - March 2022

(comparing to: January - March 2021)

Total cases

861

(+1% from 849 in 2021)

Q1 Total include 4 cases pending and 15 cases undetermined

Accident

397

(+9%)

Homicide

21

(+10%)

Suicide

74

(-14%)

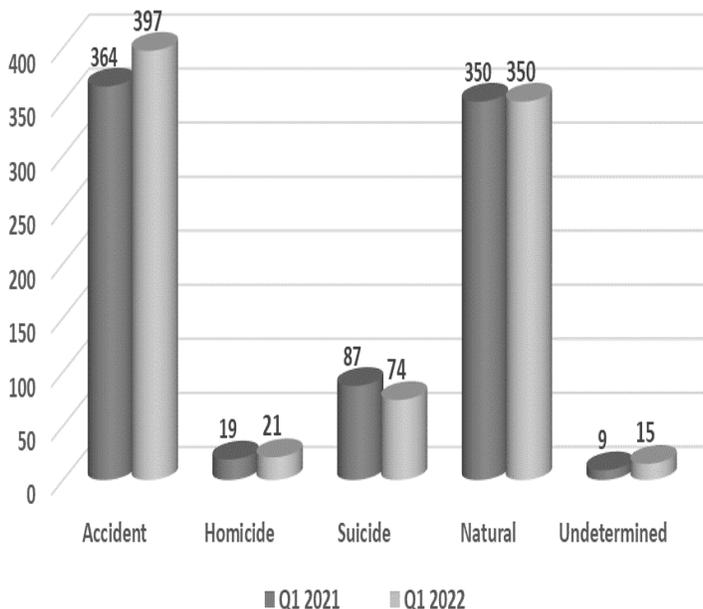
Natural

350

(0%)

MANNER OF DEATH

Comparing Quarter 1 of 2021 to 2022, accidental deaths have increased by 9%, homicides were up by 10%, suicides were down by 14%, and natural deaths falling under the jurisdiction of the Coroner remained the same.



Accidents

Unintentional prescription and illicit drug related deaths increased in 2022 to 57% of all accidental deaths when compared to the same time frame in 2021. Traffic related deaths accounted for 20% while falls were at 15%.



Unplanned deaths due to illicit or prescription drugs and/or ethanol toxicity increased by 8% in the first quarter of 2022 compared to the same time period in 2021 (210 to 227).

Methamphetamine appeared in 61% of all overdoses cases which was a 13% increase compared to the first quarter of 2021.

Fentanyl related deaths also showed a 9% increase (154 to 168).



Falls decreased 3% in 2022 compared to 2021 (62 to 60) which makes them the third highest of all accidental death cases. Same level falls were most prevalent at 63% of all falls in 2022 which is 3% lower than 2021.



Vehicular traffic related deaths increased by 14% in comparison to 2021 (70 to 80) with Auto vs. Auto up 29% from 2021 (17 to 22).

Pedestrian deaths accounted for 25% of all vehicular deaths in Quarter 1 of 2022 while in 2021 they were at 41%.

Motorcycle related deaths saw a 43% increase (7 to 10).

Homicides

10%

INCREASE

In 62% of the cases a firearm was used.

Suicides

In Quarter 1 of 2022 there was a 14% decrease in suicides compared to Quarter 1 of 2021.

During this time frame gunshot was the leading method at 31% followed by asphyxia at 28%.

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 Coroner's office. See Govt Code § 27491.

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