



# ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

## Coroner Division

### Quarter 4 Comparison Report

Report time frame: Oct. - Dec. 2022

(comparing to: Oct. - Dec. 2021)

Total cases

**796**

(-0.6% from 753 in 2021)

Q4 Total includes 12 cases pending and 10 cases undetermined

Accident

**397**

(+3%)

Homicide

**14**

(-18%)

Suicide

**74**

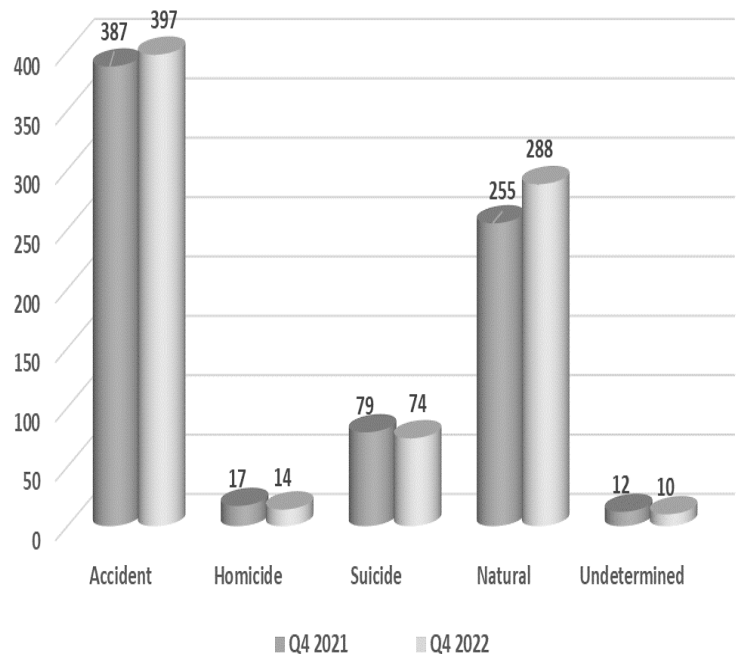
(-6%)

Natural

**288**

(-13%)

## MANNER OF DEATH



## Accidents

MECAP (Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project) related deaths consist of accidental trauma related deaths where a consumer product is involved in the cause, such as bicycles, stairs, pools, ladders, bathtubs, furniture, etc. In the 4th quarter of 2022, there were 22 MECAP deaths and 22 deaths in the same timeframe in 2021. These 2022 deaths featured the leading cause: nine falls from height, including four involving stairs, three from ladders, one from a roof and one a garage step. The second leading cause was related to drownings 2022 at six and 2021 at seven.



Unplanned deaths due to illicit or prescription drugs and/or ethanol toxicity decreased by 10% in Quarter 4 of 2022 compared to the same time period in 2021 (243 to 219).

Methamphetamine appeared in 53% of all overdoses cases which was a 1% increase compared to the fourth quarter of 2021.

Fentanyl related deaths showed a 15% decrease (198 to 168).



Falls increased 8% in Quarter 4 of 2022 compared to 2021 (59 to 64) which makes them the third highest of all accidental death cases. Same level falls were most prevalent at 73% of all falls in 2022 and up from 46% in 2021.

Vehicular traffic related deaths increased by 27% in the 4th quarter in comparison to the 4th quarter of 2021 (59 to 75) with Auto vs. Auto increasing by 20%.

Pedestrian deaths accounted for 37% of all vehicular deaths in Quarter 4 of 2022 while in Quarter 4 of 2021 they were at 31%. (28 to 18)

Motorcycle related deaths stayed the same. (8 to 8)

## Homeless Deaths

Increased by 30% (83 to 108)

64% of the homeless deaths during the 4th Quarter of 2022 were related to a drug overdose.

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 will adjust as those cases are closed