



Office of the Medical Examiner — December 12, 2023

Performance Measure Review





**Alignment with
Board Priorities**



**Department
Strategic Goals**



**Key
Performance
Measures**



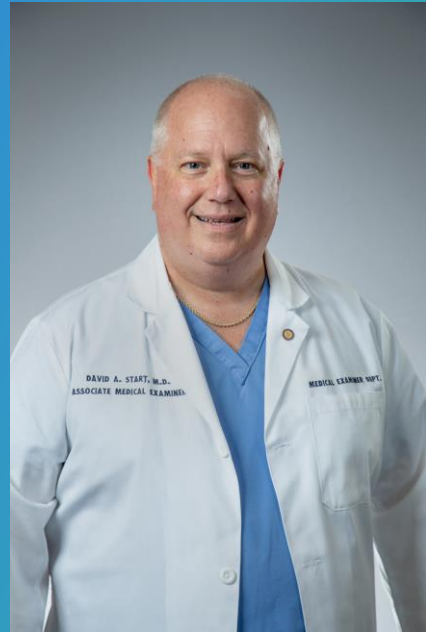
**Significant
Accomplishments**



A Look Ahead



Stephen D. Cohle, MD
Forensic Pathologist
Chief Medical Examiner



David A. Start, MD
Forensic Pathologist
Deputy Chief Medical Examiner

Under Michigan Medical Examiner Law, Public Act 181 of 1953, the office of the Medical Examiner provides forensic investigation and postmortem examination to determine the cause and manner of death events. Medical Examiner Investigators conduct on-scene death investigations and gather medical details to further assist determinations. The office of the Medical Examiner is also authorized to issue cremation and disinterment permits as well as arranging burial of unclaimed decedents.

Medical Examiner
Investigators

Roberto Anaya, Jr.

Elizabeth Brown, D-ABMDI

Paul Davison

Cynthia Debiak, RN

Jodi Noble

Peter Noble

Theodore Oostendorp

David Start, MD

Thomas Wodarek, D-
ABMDI

Administrative Staff

Brittany Richardson, Office
Administrator

Contracted Staff

Carrier-On-Call, Conveyance
Specialist

Absolute Call Center, Answering
Service





Department Strategic Goals

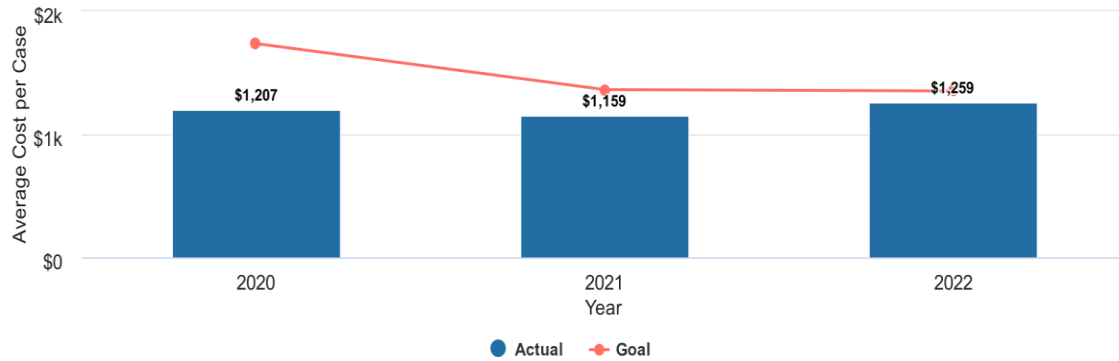
- To investigate and determine cause and manner of death under Michigan Medical Examiner Law.
- To complete investigative case reports and autopsy reports within three months from date of referral.
- To provide prompt response to death notifications and arrive to scene investigations within 1 hour notice.



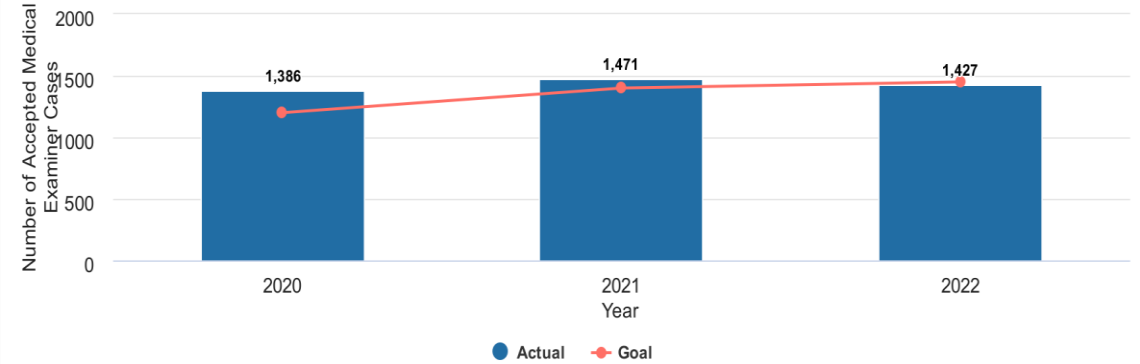
2022 Performance Metrics



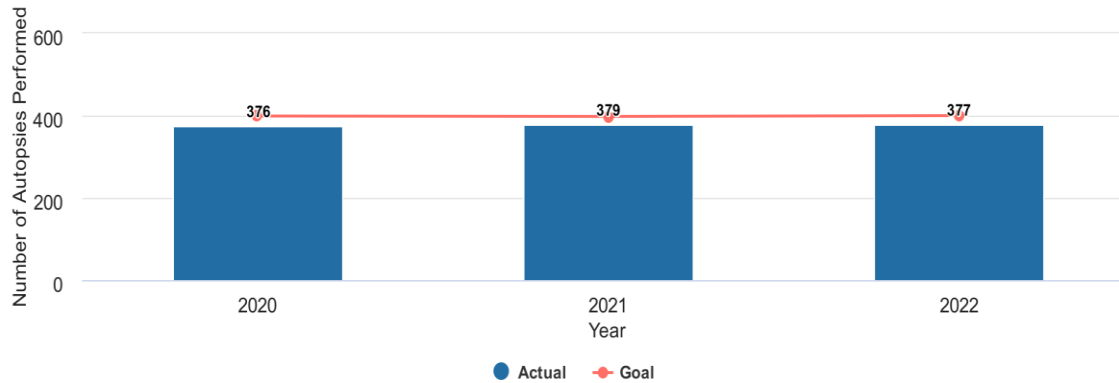
Average Cost per Case of Death Investigated



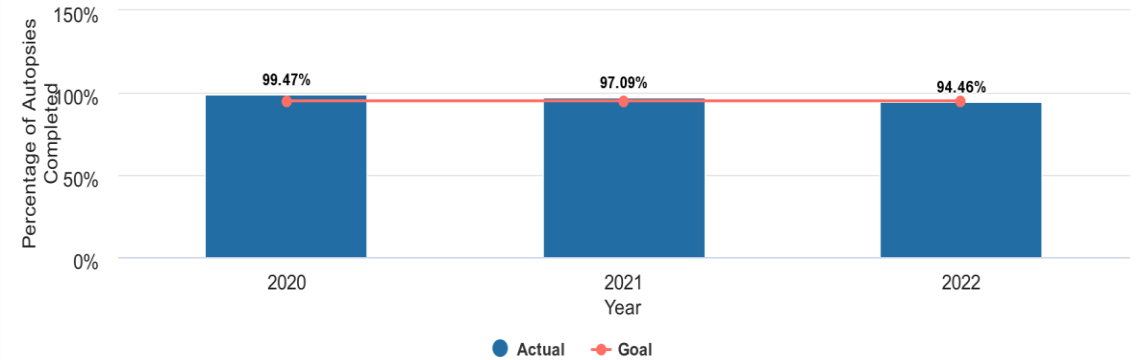
Number of Accepted Medical Examiner Cases



Number of Autopsies Performed



Percentage of Autopsies Completed within 3 Months of Death



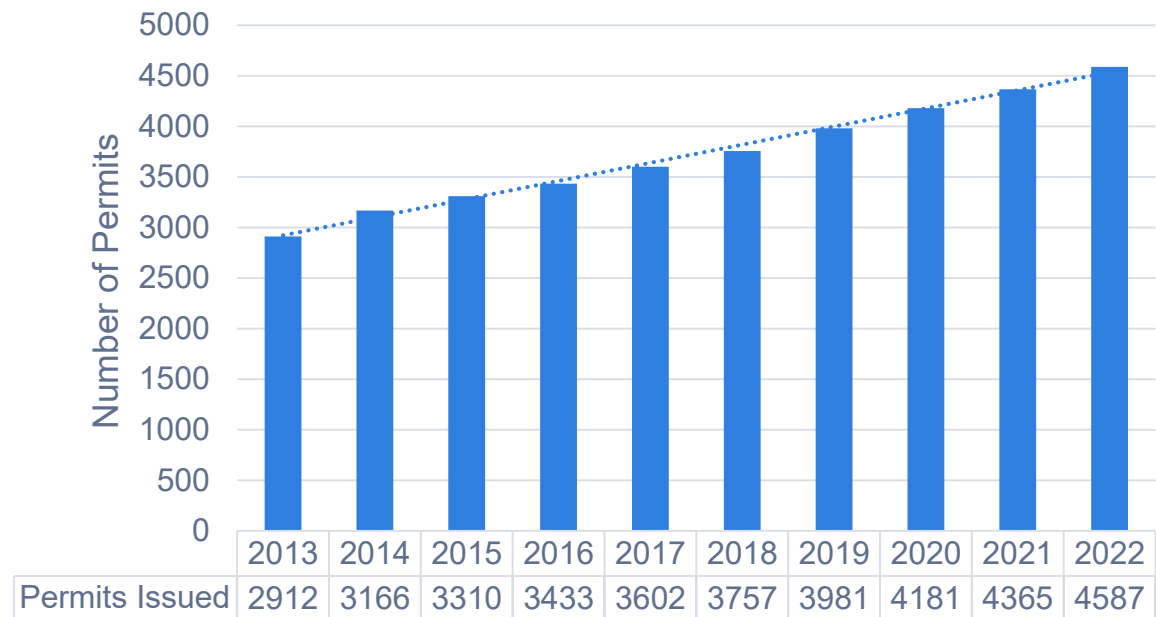


The office of the Medical Examiner is authorized to issue cremation permits. Cremation continues to be the trending method of final disposition for Kent County residents.

Cost of cremation permit: \$70
Cost of disinterment permit: \$70

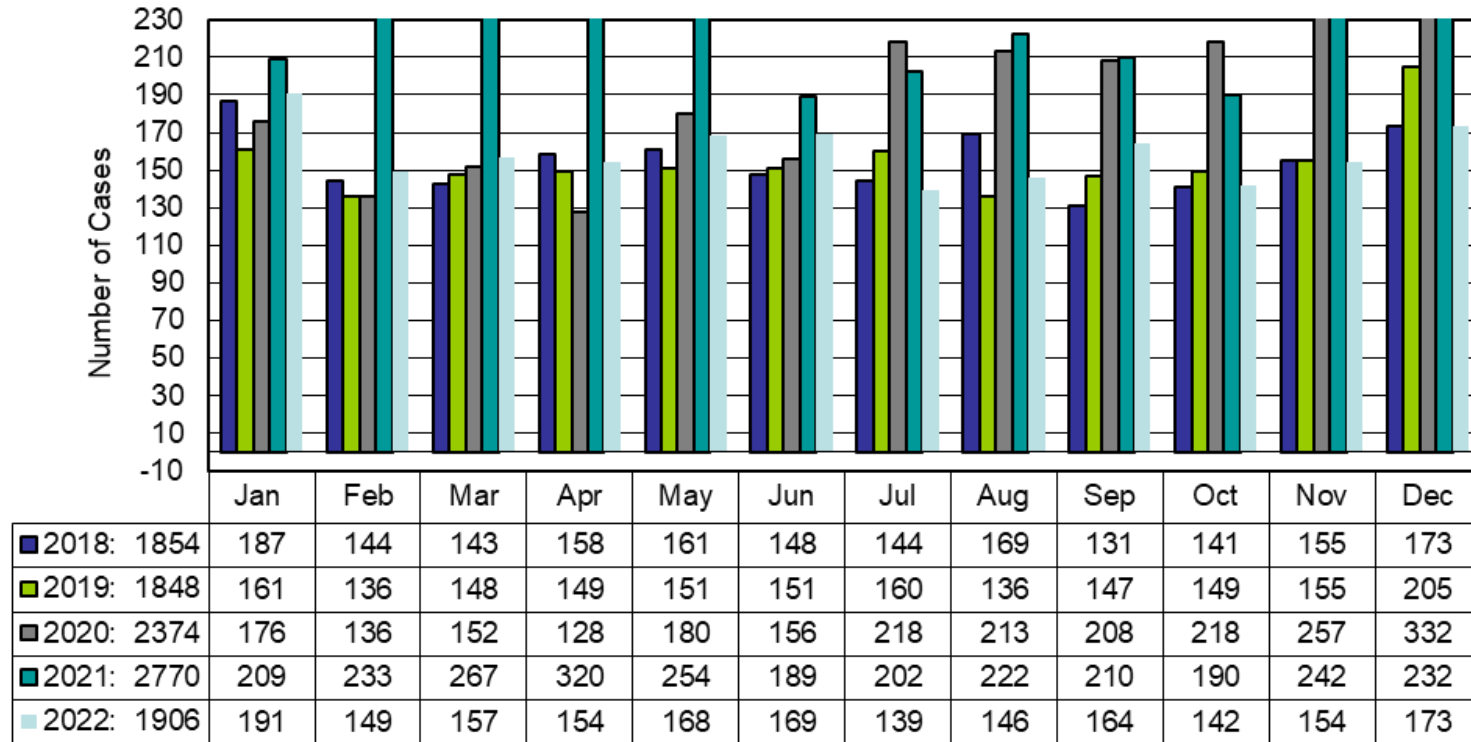
In 2022 4,587 permits were requested by Funeral Home staff. Medical Examiner administrative staff are diligent in prompt issuance of invoices and pursuit of unpaid balances to assist in generating County revenue.

Medical Examiner Cremation Permits Issued 2013 - 2022





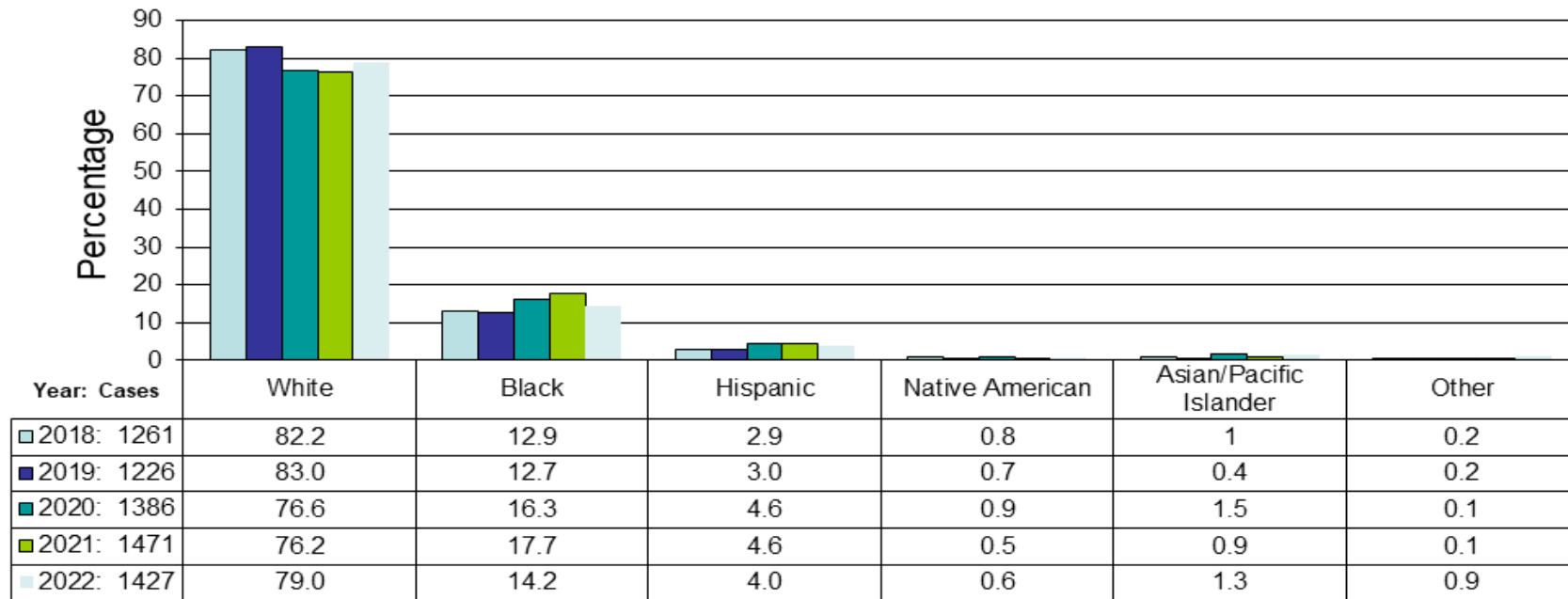
Medical Examiner Caseload Overview 2018 - 2022



1,906 cases referred for investigation in 2022 (1,427 accepted) (479 declined jurisdiction)



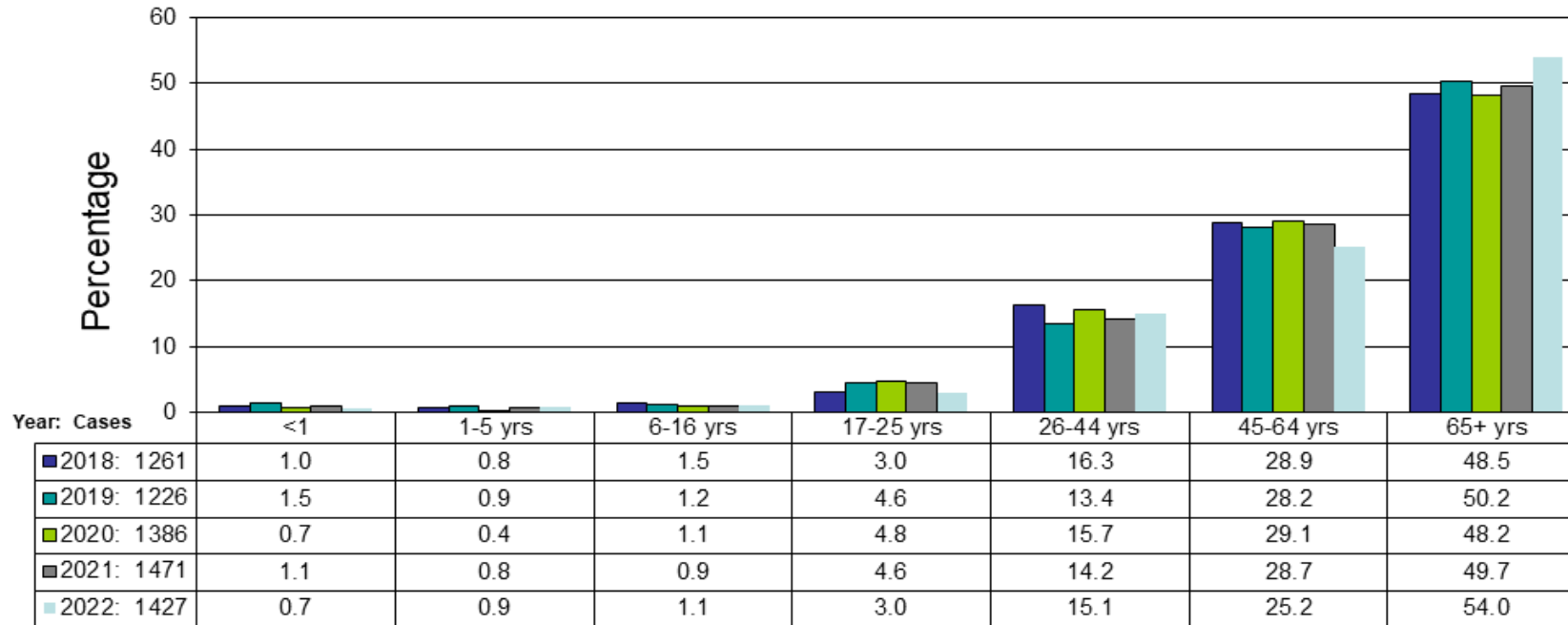
Medical Examiner Cases by Race/Ethnicity 2018 - 2022



Number of 2022 cases: White (1127), Black (203), Hispanic (57), Native American (8), Asian/Pacific Islander (18), Other (14)



Medical Examiner Cases, by Age 2018 - 2022

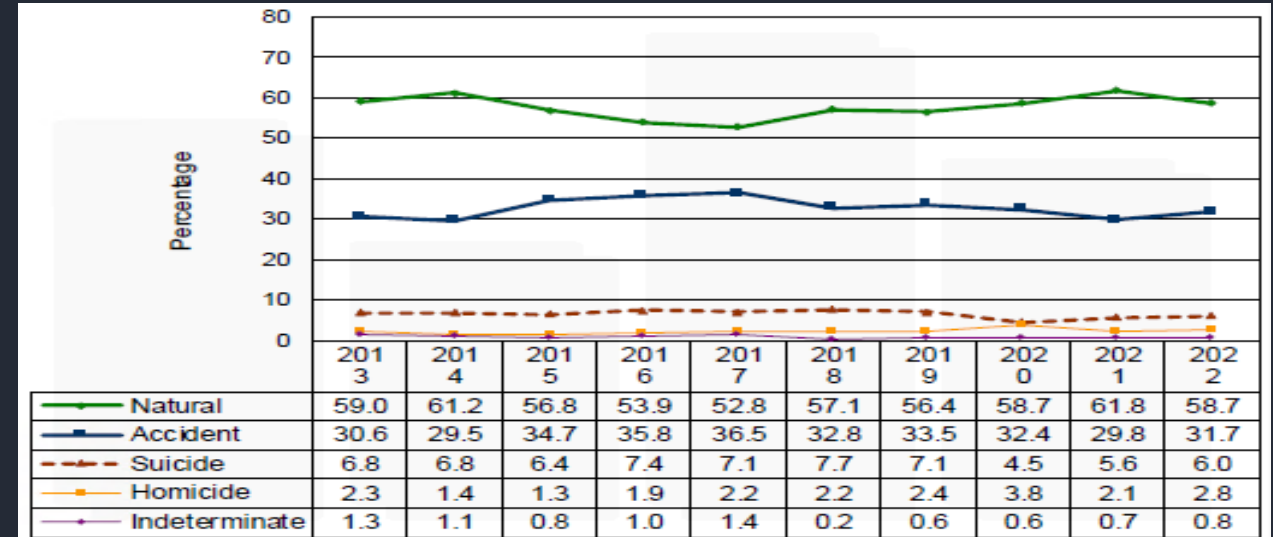


Number of 2022 Cases by Age: <1yrs (10), 1-5yrs (13), 6-16yrs (16), 17-25yrs (43), 26-44yrs (215), 45-64yrs (360), 65+yrs (770)
(36.1%) of deaths were Female (63.9%) were Male

2022 Performance Metrics



- 58.7% Natural
- 31.7% Accident
- 6.0% Suicide
- 2.8% Homicide
- 0.8% Indeterminate



Of the 453 Accidents,
 14.5% Vehicle, 3.5% Pedestrian, 41.5% Falls,
 0.2% Poisoning, 2.2% Fire, 3.0% Drowning,
 3.3% Asphyxia, 26.3% Drug Overdose, 0.2%
 Gun, 5.3% Other means

Of the 86 Suicides,
 44.2% by Gun, 30.2% Hanging, 14%
 Drug Overdose, 1.1% Carbon Monoxide
 Poisoning, 10.5% Other means

Of the 40 Homicides,
 85% by Gun, 2.5% Asphyxia, 2.5%
 Stabbed, 5.0% Assault, 5.0% Other
 means





In 2022, there were 132 Drug Overdose deaths

Drugs of First Mention

0.8% Ethanol (Alcohol)
2.3% Methadone
3.0% Heroin
3.0% Antipsychotics
4.5% Antidepressants
5.3% Other
12.1% Cocaine
69.0% Narcotic Analgesics

Of the 91 Narcotic Analgesic related deaths,
97.8% were a result of Fentanyl
1.1% Hydrocodone
1.1% Buprenorphine

38 Female cases, 94 Male cases
89.4% Accident
9.1% Suicide
1.5% Indeterminate



National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) Accreditation.

Facilitated 38 dignified burials for unclaimed Kent County decedents.

Kent County ranked among the top ten counties in Michigan for Gift of Life donor referrals (2nd place).

Generated nearly \$338,000 in revenue, via Cremation Permits, Autopsy Report record requests, and other reimbursements.

Significant Accomplishments

Performance Measurement Review

A Look Ahead

Awarded \$6 Million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds toward construction of a new County Morgue facility.

- *Architecture & Design firm selected, currently in the Schematic Design phase.*
- *We look forward to the construction of a standalone facility to better serve Kent County.*

Thank you to the Board of Commissioners, County Administration team and Facilities team for continued support of this innovative project.

