

# 2020 Annual Report



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## Mission Statement

The Knox County Regional Forensic Center seeks to:

- Provide accurate, timely, compassionate, and professional death investigative services for the citizens of Knox County and other counties it serves;
- Identify and develop an understanding of sudden, unexpected, and unnatural deaths and educate the public about those deaths;
- Assist law enforcement agencies in their investigations;
- Offer consults to medical professionals and attorneys;
- Render unbiased opinions and testimony in court; and
- Extend research support for local and national medical, legal, academic, and law enforcement organizations.



## Knox County Regional Forensic Center

### History

The Knox County Medical Examiner's Office has been in existence since the early 1950s when it operated out of a small, one-room morgue in the basement of the former University of Tennessee Hospital. In 1998, the Regional Forensic Center (RFC) moved to a new ground floor facility of the expanding University of Tennessee Medical Center. In 2014, Knox County, with financial support from the State of Tennessee, built an 18,000-square-foot facility located on Sullins Street in Knoxville, Tennessee, and officially began service as the Regional Forensic Center.

### Overview

The Knox County Regional Forensic Center is a department under the purview of the Knox County Mayor's Office. It serves as the Office for the Chief Medical Examiner for Knox and Anderson counties and provides autopsy and consultative services for 21 other counties in Middle and East Tennessee. The facility operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all year long. There is always at least one autopsy technician at the facility. There is also always a Medical Examiner/Forensic Pathologist on-call or on duty and a Medico-Legal Death Investigator available to respond to death scene investigations.

### Legal Jurisdiction

There are three areas of the Tennessee Code that dictate how deaths and death status are reported in the State of Tennessee.



### *Tennessee Code Annotated §38-7-104 – County Medical Examiner*

*A county medical examiner shall be appointed by the county mayor, subject to confirmation by the county legislative body, based on a recommendation from a convention of physicians resident in the county. A county medical examiner shall be a physician who is either a graduate of an accredited medical school authorized to confer upon graduates the degree of doctor of medicine (M.D.) and who is duly licensed in Tennessee, or is a graduate of a recognized osteopathic college authorized to confer the degree of doctor of osteopathy (D.O.) and who is licensed to practice osteopathic medicine in Tennessee, and shall be elected from a list of a maximum of two (2) doctors of medicine or osteopathy nominated by convention of the physicians, medical or osteopathic, resident in the county, the convention to be called for this purpose by the county mayor.*

### *Tennessee Code Annotated §38-7-104 – Medico-Legal Death Investigators*

*A medical investigator shall be a licensed emergency medical technician (EMT), paramedic, registered nurse, physician's assistant or a person registered by or a diplomat of the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators and approved by the county medical examiner as qualified to serve as medical investigator...The county medical investigator may conduct investigations when a death is reported, as provided in §38-7-108, under the supervision of the county medical examiner. The county medical investigator may make pronouncements of death and may recommend to the county medical examiner that an autopsy be ordered. However, the county medical investigator shall not be empowered to sign a death certificate. The county medical examiner may delegate to the county medical investigator the authority to order an autopsy.*

### *Tennessee Code Annotated §38-7-108 – Death under suspicious, unusual or unnatural circumstances*

*Any physician, undertaker, law enforcement officer, or other person having knowledge of the death of any person from violence or trauma of any type, suddenly when in apparent health, sudden unexpected death of infants and children, deaths of prisoners or persons in state custody, deaths on the job or related to employment, deaths believed to represent a threat to public health, deaths where neglect or abuse of extended care residents are suspected or confirmed, deaths where the identity of the person is unknown or unclear, deaths in any suspicious/unusual/unnatural manner, found dead, or where the body is to be cremated, shall immediately notify the county medical examiner or the district attorney general, the local police or the county sheriff, who in turn shall notify the county medical examiner.*

## Function

The Knox County Regional Forensic Center serves citizens by investigating deaths that are unnatural and/or unexpected and determining the cause and manner of death; recognizing and collecting evidence needed for adjudication; defining public health and product safety risks; and providing compassionate services to families.

These investigations begin with the careful review of the scene of death and are supplemented, when appropriate, by physical examination, autopsy, toxicologic testing, and other studies.

The Center is responsible for the investigation and certification of cause and manner of death of all sudden, unexpected, violent, suspicious and/or unnatural deaths or deaths without medical attendance that occur in its jurisdictional counties.

The Knox County RFC also provides autopsy and consultative services for similar deaths occurring in 23 Middle and East Tennessee counties—Knox and Anderson are jurisdictional; the 21 others are not—at the written request of local authorities.

**Cause of death** refers to a disease, injury, drug toxicity or combination of factors that causes a physiological derangement severe enough to result in death.

**Manner of death** refers to the circumstances surrounding how a death came about and has five possible classifications including natural, accidental, suicide, homicide or undetermined.

## National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs)

As part of *Tennessee Code Annotated §38-6-1*, Regional Forensic Centers are also charged with taking control of an unidentified body and coordinating efforts with law enforcement and NamUs to identify the decedent. The RFC serves as a regional resource for East Tennessee counties with a need to identify a decedent or assist in finding a missing person and partners with NamUs to work cases to identify missing and unidentified persons.

## Opiate Information

### Knox County Drug Related Death Task Force

The RFC partners with the Office of the District Attorney in the Sixth Judicial District, Knox County government, Knoxville Police Department, Knox County Sheriff's Office, Drug Enforcement TBI and the Appalachia High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area as part of the Knox County Drug Overdose Task Force.

The force was formed out of a desire to address the growing drug issues and increasing drug deaths in Knox County. The goals of the Task Force are:

- Identifying drug categories of interest, prosecutable street-level sources of illegal opiates and other drugs, and strategies to lower drug-related deaths, overdoses, and arrests;
- Developing best practices and a uniform data collection tool for local and regional use and a drug-related death data reference resource for medical and service professionals; and
- Creating a confidential and secure system (behind the DRDTF firewall) to collect law enforcement and medically sensitive information for quantification in order to analyze the information and data for use in redacted reports in collaboration with community partner agencies.

The RFC has also partnered with the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and participates in its DEA360 program which focuses on coordinating education and community action for drug issues in Knox County.

### Drug Related Death Report

The RFC produces an annual Drug Related Death Report for Knox and Anderson counties, where Dr. Darinka Mileusnic-Polchan serves as Chief Medical Examiner. This report is inclusive of only jurisdictional counties because the RFC feels more able to ensure a thorough investigation of these possible drug related deaths which ensures a greater confidence that they were properly evaluated.

The Drug Related Death Report provides data on the number of drug deaths, demographic details about decedents, the location of injury and/or death and the drugs involved therein. It also provides an overview of emerging drug trends.

For a copy of the most recent report, visit the Knox County Regional Forensic Center website at <https://www.knoxcounty.org/rfc/reports.php>.

## Community Involvement and Educational Activities

The RFC prides itself in regular interaction with the local community and tries to assure staff is well integrated into its service communities.

In 2020, the RFC completed the following community or service activities:

- Hosted pathology residents from the University of Tennessee Graduate School of Medicine, forensic dentistry fellows from the Department of General Dentistry's Forensic Odontology program, and graduate students and PhD candidates from the University of Tennessee's Forensic Anthropology program.
- Held numerous Zoom calls with high school and college students interested in the field of forensic pathology.
- Spoke to Criminal Justice Classes at Anderson County High School.

- Presented on Medico-Legal death investigation at educational conferences for regional medical examiners, Medico-Legal death investigators, law enforcement, emergency response personnel, and others involved in death investigation
- Hosted conferences in conjunction with the National Forensics Academy that focus on providing training to law enforcement on death scene investigation, autopsy techniques and fingerprinting decedents
- Hosted new Knoxville Police Department recruits giving them a tour of the facility and providing lectures on Medico-Legal Death Investigation and forensic pathology topics
- Served on the Knox County Child/Infant Fatality Death Review Team, the Anderson County Child/Infant Fatality Death Review Team, the Elder Abuse Coordinated Community Response Committee, the Metro Drug Coalition, the Overdose Fatality Review Team, and consulting for the East Tennessee District's Child/Infant Fatality Death Review Teams and the State of Tennessee Medical Examiner Advisory Council
- Shared lectures about RFC operations and death investigation processes with groups that include Knox County Emergency Management Agency and funeral home director groups, among others;
- Participated on committees with multiple state and regional government and non-government agencies focused on emergency preparedness and community development
- Served with the 17 county Knox/East Tennessee Healthcare Coalition that includes hospitals, emergency management agencies, public health agencies, and healthcare organizations to address emergency medical management and healthcare planning within the region by holding tabletop and full-scale emergency preparedness exercises and training opportunities as well as working to seek grant opportunities for funding of regional and organizational needs.

## Community Care

One of the most important interactions in which the RFC staff participates is when Medical Examiners/Pathologists meet with family members to review autopsy findings. This is often a sensitive part of the family's grieving process. Staff is also available to consult with local physicians and hospitals, as needed, to discuss autopsy findings.

## Coverage

In 2020, RFC staff provided services—including personally requested private autopsies—to its two jurisdictional counties (Knox and Anderson) and 21 non-jurisdictional counties that include: Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union.

Jurisdictional counties (green on the map below) are those where Dr. Darinka Mileusnic-Polchan is the Chief Medical Examiner, and the RFC is the primary Medico-Legal death investigator. Non-jurisdictional counties (blue on the map below) are those where there is an appointed Medical Examiner—not Dr. Mileusnic-Polchan or one of the other RFC Deputy/Assistant Medical Examiners—who is a Tennessee-licensed physician responsible for conducting Medico-Legal investigative activities. These Medical Examiners may or may not also have Medico-Legal Death Investigators working for them in their counties.



It is important to note that many cases come to Knox County from non-jurisdictional counties because of the Level 1 and 2 Trauma Center and referral hospitals located in the community. When this happens, the Knox County RFC coordinates activities with the Medical Examiner from the county in which the incident occurred.

## Staffing

There are 32 full-time staff at the Regional Forensic Center including the Chief Medical Examiner, the Deputy Chief Medical Examiner, three Assistant Medical Examiners/Forensic Pathologists, the Chief Administrative Officer, two Forensic Clerks, a manager for the eight Medico-Legal Death Investigators, a manager for the 10 Autopsy Technicians, two night morgue attendants, a Physicians Administrative Assistant, and an Administrative Assistant. A part-time Forensic Anthropologist is also contracted.

### Medical Examiners/Forensic Pathologist

All five Medical Examiners/Forensic Pathologists are board-certified by the American Board of Pathology in Anatomic, Clinical, and Forensic Pathology. They hold appointments as either Clinical Associate or Assistant Professors with the University of Tennessee and an affiliation with the board-certified Forensic Odontology group. They also assist with the University of Tennessee's Department of Pathology Resident Graduate Medical Education.

These staff members are responsible for the professional, medico-legal death investigation, and determination of the cause and manner of death for cases handled at the RFC. They are experts in the evaluation of sudden unexpected natural deaths and unnatural deaths such as those caused by firearms, sharp and blunt force trauma, among others. They are frequently called to testify on cause of death and share their medical findings and interpretations, particularly in homicide cases. These individuals consult in forensic pathology, neuropathology, odontology, anthropology, toxicology, and other disciplines to assist in their evaluations of cases.

Forensic Pathologists complete Death Certificates for cases in Knox and Anderson counties. At the request of the County Medical Examiner, they will also complete Death Certificates on certain cases sent to the RFC from other counties. When physicians in Knox and Anderson counties refuse to sign a Death Certificate on their patient, as defined by State Code, forensic pathologists will complete Death Certificates for those cases, in order to ensure that the final act of patient/victim care is completed for the decedents and their families.

### Medico-Legal Death Investigators (MDI)

The Medico-Legal Death Investigators are required to become certified by the American Board of Medico-Legal Death Investigators; three of the local investigators are Diplomats with the organization and three are in the process of earning certification.

These staff members have an initial responsibility for accepting or declining jurisdiction for death cases reported to the RFC. If jurisdiction is accepted, MDIs are responsible for a variety of activities to guarantee the case is properly investigated.

### Autopsy Technicians

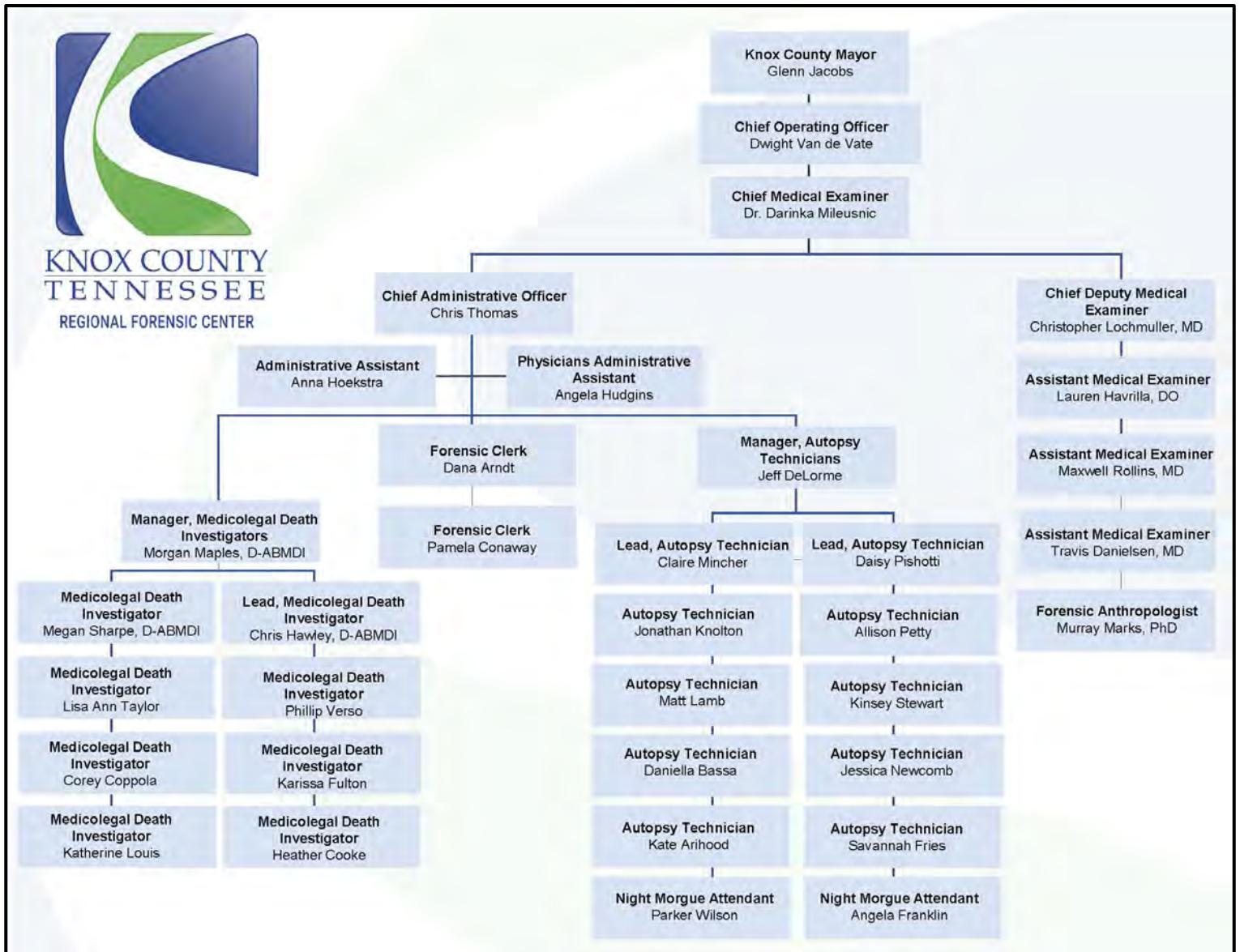
The Autopsy Technician staffers are responsible for coordinating anthropology assignments, X-rays, lab testing, and other activities for the decedent; receiving/releasing them from the RFC; assisting Forensic Pathologists in conducting autopsies and external examinations; and working with funeral homes to transition the decedent for their final disposition, assisting in finger printing, and evidence processing for law enforcement.

### Administration

The Forensic Clerks and Administrative Assistants are responsible for coordinating Forensic Pathologists' schedules for depositions and court testimony, medical billing, tracking death certifications, completing open records requests, assuring proper case closure, and coordinating indigent internment, among other activities. They work with funeral homes, law enforcement, District Attorney's, lawyers, families, media, and others to ensure requested information is provided in a timely manner. Forensic Clerks are also responsible for coordinating proper Death Certificate actions between the State of Tennessee Department of Vital Records, Funeral Homes, and the Regional Forensic Center.



The Center's organizational structure is as follows.



## National Association of Medical Examiners Accreditation

The National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) is the national professional organization of forensic pathologists, physician medical examiners, medical death investigators, death investigation system administrators and consultants who perform the official duties of Medico-Legal investigation of deaths of public interest in the United States.

Accreditation is a rigorous process and requires a lengthy inspection by an independent Medical Examiner appointed by the NAME. The accreditation requirements are extensive and include more than 360 items covering diverse points of quality ranging from how specimens are labeled to the professional qualifications/certifications of staff members.

The Knox County Regional Forensic Center achieved the distinction of Accreditation by the National Association of Medical Examiners in May 2010 and has maintained accreditation since that date. The Center undergoes an annual review of accreditation standards and an on-site inspection every four years. Receiving full accreditation with no deficiencies in June 2019 marked 10 years of continuous accreditation for the RFC. The most recent on site visit occurred in July 2020 and earned the RFC full accreditation. The next on site visit will be in 2024.



Below is a table outlining the essential NAME data collected in 2020. For clarification, “in jurisdiction” references Anderson and Knox counties; “non-jurisdiction” refers to the other 21 service/referral counties the RFC serves. A “full autopsy” is classified as a complete external and internal examination of a decedent. An “external examination” is one focusing on the exterior of the decedent. A “limited examination” is one focused on a specific organ or region of the body (these can include external examination).

<b>Measure</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Deaths in jurisdiction (all deaths including non-ME/C cases)	7,862	8,757
Deaths reported to the office	5,890	6,939
Deaths investigated (certified)	5,890	6,939
Scenes investigated by ME/C staff	1,274	1,493
Bodies brought to the facility	1,971	2,371
Inspections (External examinations)	943	1,102
Autopsies performed in jurisdiction	440	567
Autopsies performed outside jurisdiction	579	691
Partial autopsies	5	9
Toxicology only	2	0
Microscopic studies	726	947
Formal neuropathologic studies	3	4
Formal cardiac pathologic studies	0	0
Deaths certified as homicide	73	97
Homicides autopsied	72	96
Death certified as suicide	200	203
Suicides autopsied	107	120
Non MVA-Accident deaths certified	800	1,041
Non MVA-Accident deaths autopsied	440	627
MVA Accidental deaths certified	167	183
MVA-Accidental deaths autopsied	66	79
Deaths certified as natural	751	835
Natural deaths autopsied	301	303
Deaths certified as undetermined or unclassified	42	44
Undetermined autopsied	41	38
Unidentified bodies	2	2
Unidentified bodies autopsied	2	2
Organ donations	60	72
Corneal and other tissue donations	77	60
Average number of bodies in storage at the facility per day	48	48

## Regional Forensic Center Cases in 2020

Based on the latest United States Census Bureau data, the approximate combined population of Knox and Anderson counties is 537,659. According to the reported provisional data from Tennessee Vital Statistics, 8,757 deaths occurred in the two counties in 2020, or 1.62 percent of the population. Of these deaths, 6,175 or 70.51 percent, were reported to the Medical Examiner.

Based on analysis of the circumstances, and scenes, of these reported deaths and the medical history of the decedents, the Regional Forensic Center performed autopsies on 1,612 of these reported deaths equating to 26.1 percent of all deaths within the RFC jurisdiction.

### Referrals

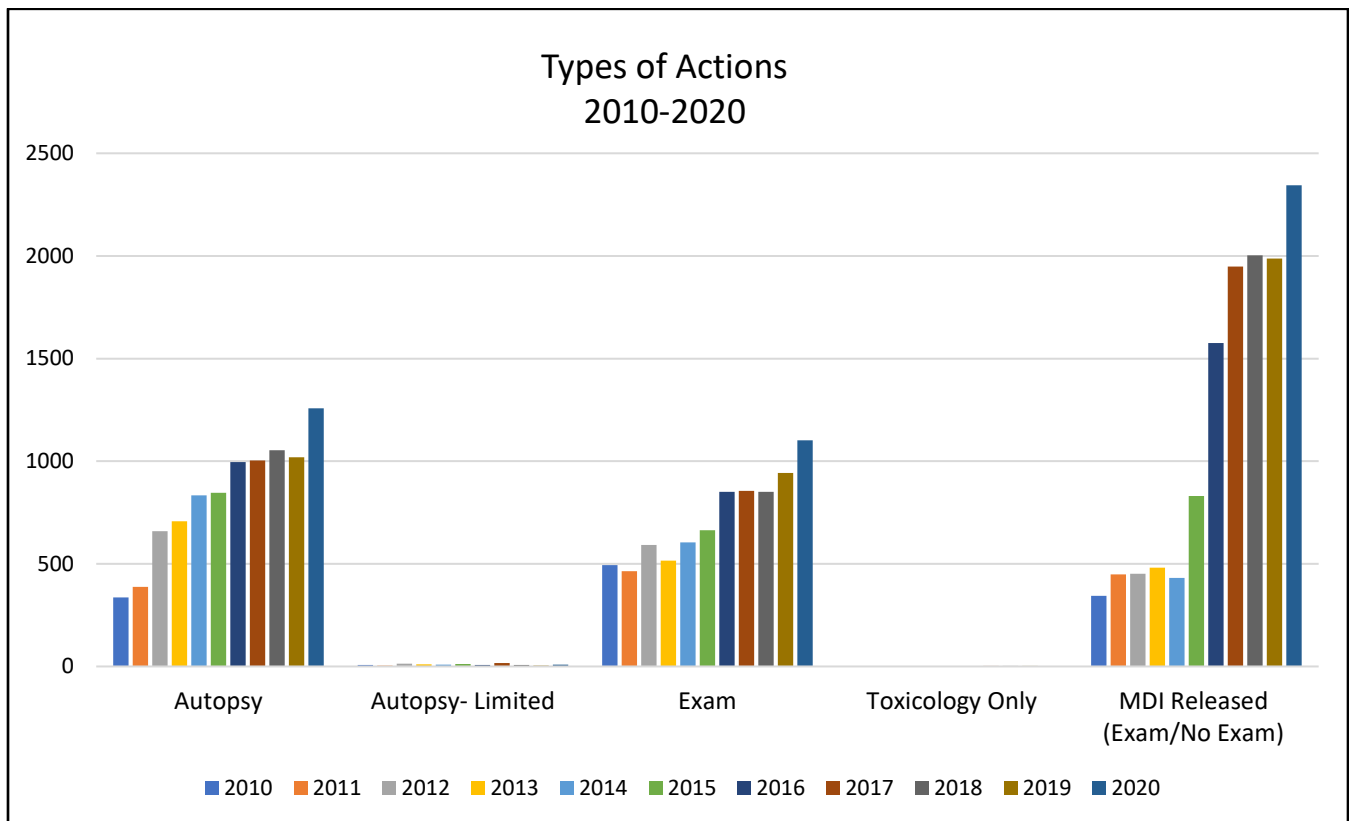
Every referral requires a preliminary screening by the RFC medical death investigation staff to determine if the case falls within the jurisdiction of the Medical Examiner. There were deaths reported to the Medical Examiner in which jurisdiction was released to another county.

### Data

The number of deaths reported to the Regional Forensic Center is growing each year. The following graphics will illustrate the progression of that growth; it will also depict an increase in the number of procedures completed at the Regional Forensic Center. The data comprising the charts that follow represents a mix of jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional cases where Knox County provided autopsy or consulting services or completed work prior to a decedent being cremated. Note that a case can have more than one activity depicted in the charts.

### Number and Type of Actions Completed by the RFC Over 10 Years

These charts depict the amount and types of some of the activities handled by the RFC over a 10-year period.

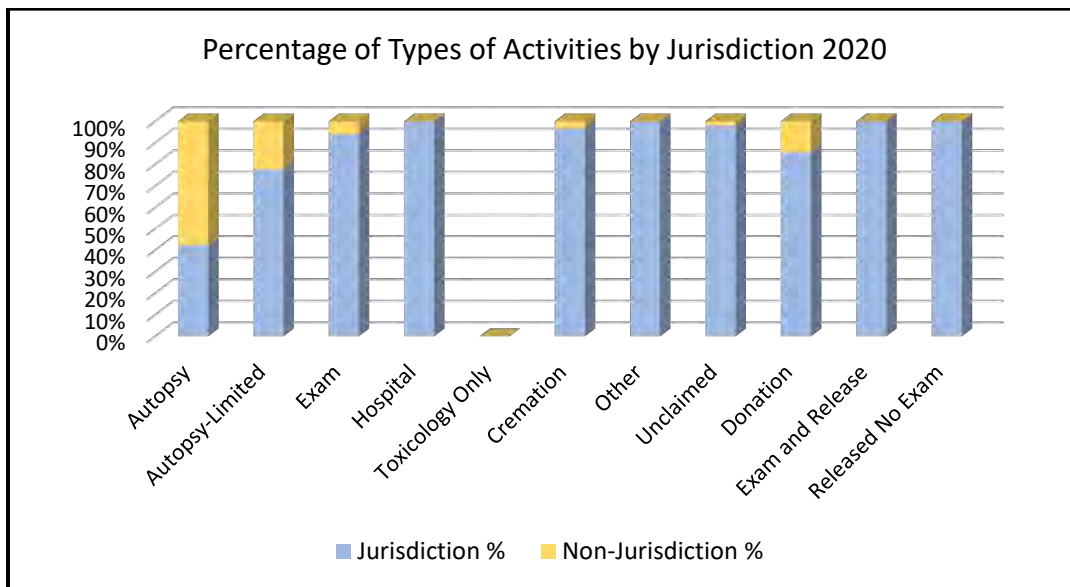


Types of Activities	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Autopsy	336	387	659	708	833	846	996	1,003	1,054	1,019	1,258
Autopsy - Limited	7	5	13	11	9	12	8	17	8	5	9
Exam	493	464	592	516	605	663	850	855	850	943	1,102
Toxicology Only	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	2	0
MDI Released (Exam/No Exam)	344	448	451	482	431	830	1,575	1,948	2,003	1,987	2,344
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,180</b>	<b>1,299</b>	<b>1,715</b>	<b>1,717</b>	<b>1,878</b>	<b>2,351</b>	<b>3,429</b>	<b>3,826</b>	<b>3,918</b>	<b>3,956</b>	<b>4,713</b>

### Deaths Reported to the RFC

The chart and graph that follow depict the amount/percentage and types of cases handled by the RFC in 2020 and denote how each case was jurisdictionally classified.

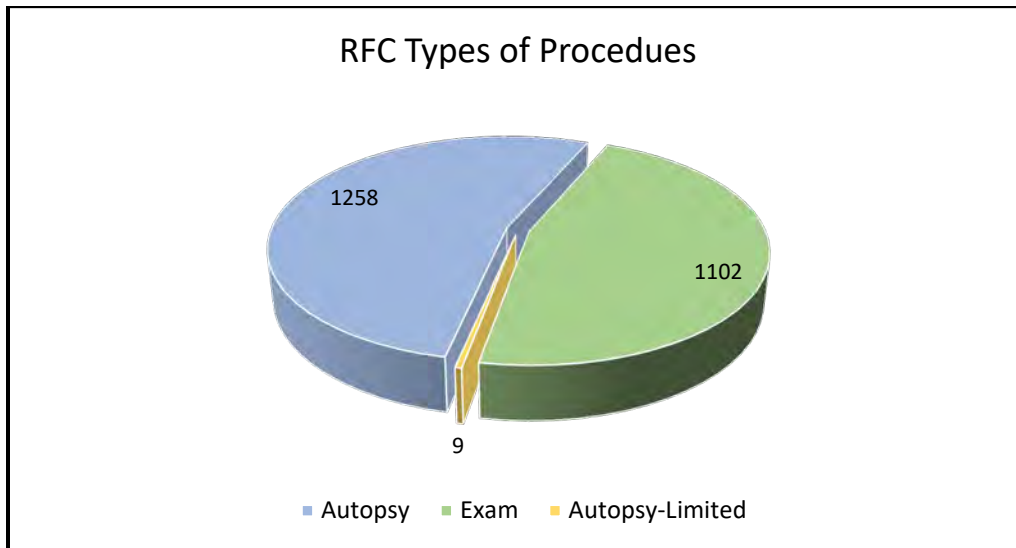
Types of Activities	Jurisdiction	Non-Jurisdiction	Total
Autopsy-Full	513	691	<b>1,204</b>
Autopsy - Limited	7	2	<b>9</b>
Exam	1,038	64	<b>1,102</b>
Hospital/Private Autopsy	54	0	<b>54</b>
Toxicology Only	0	0	<b>0</b>
Cremation	4,188	134	<b>4,322</b>
Other	2,222	2	<b>2,224</b>
Unclaimed/Public Fiduciary	53	1	<b>54</b>
Donation	6	1	<b>7</b>
Exam and Released	456	0	<b>456</b>
Released No Exam	1,545	0	<b>1,545</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,082</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>10,977</b>



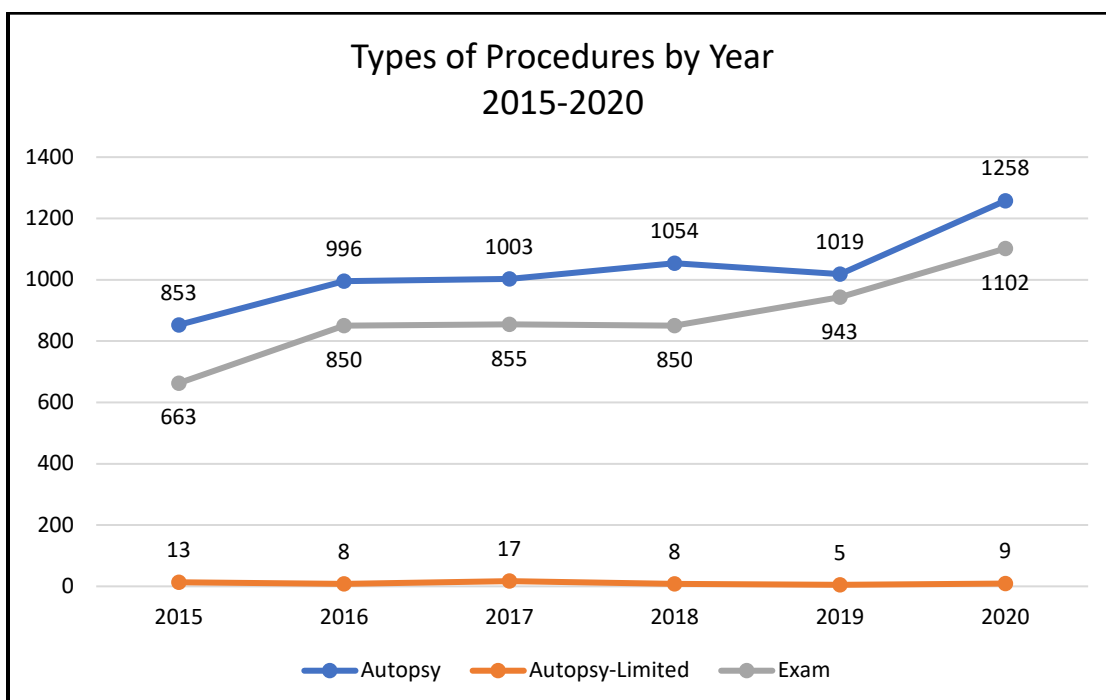


## Exam Types

The charts and graphs below depict the types of procedures completed by RFC Medical Examiners/Pathologists in 2020.

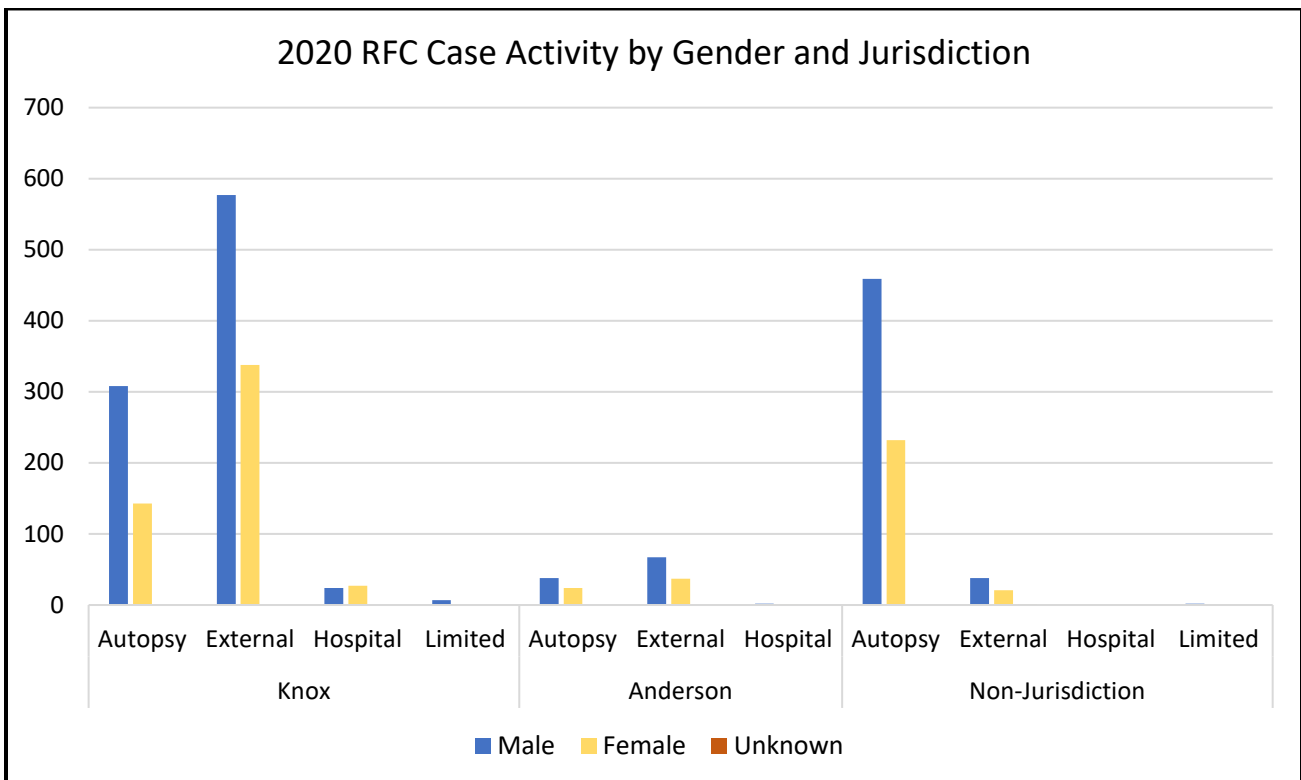
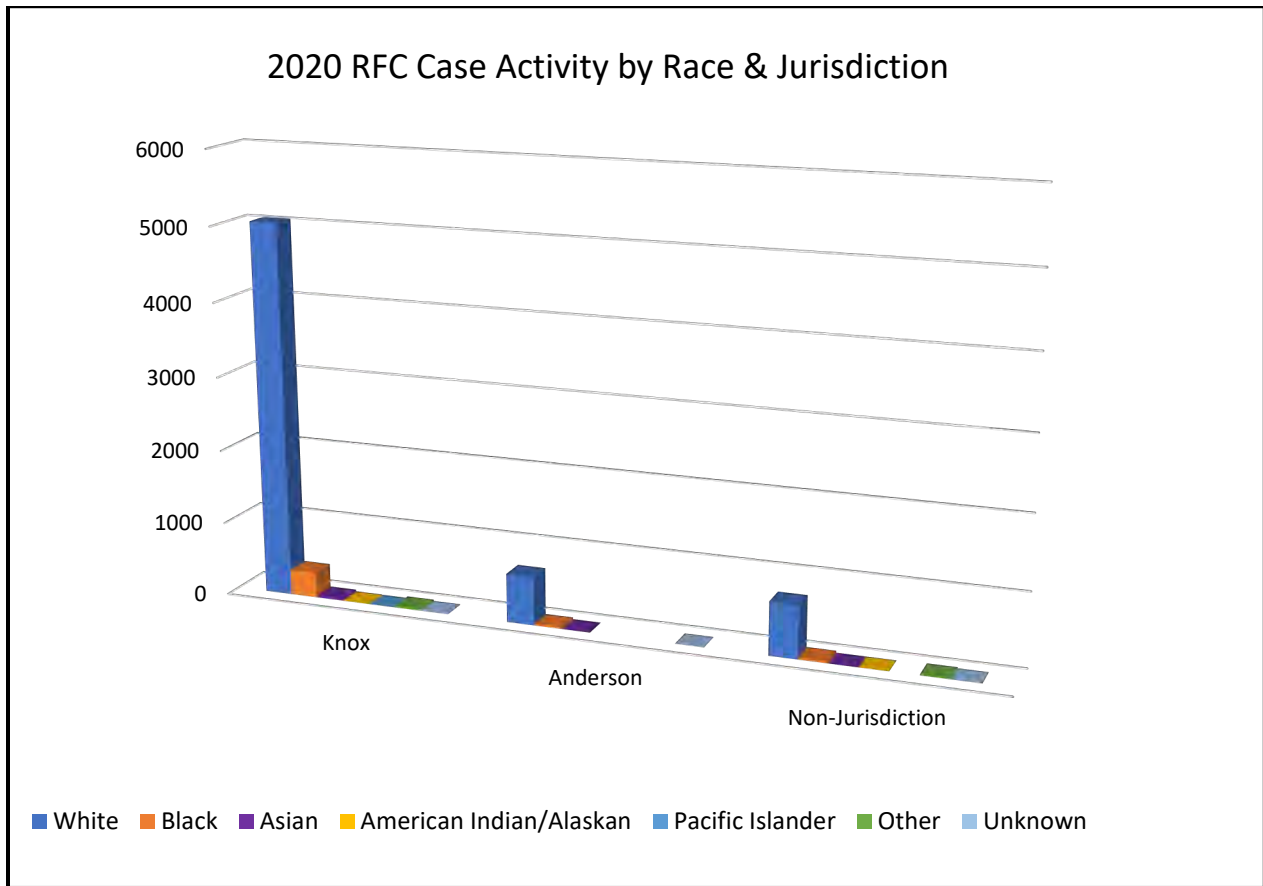


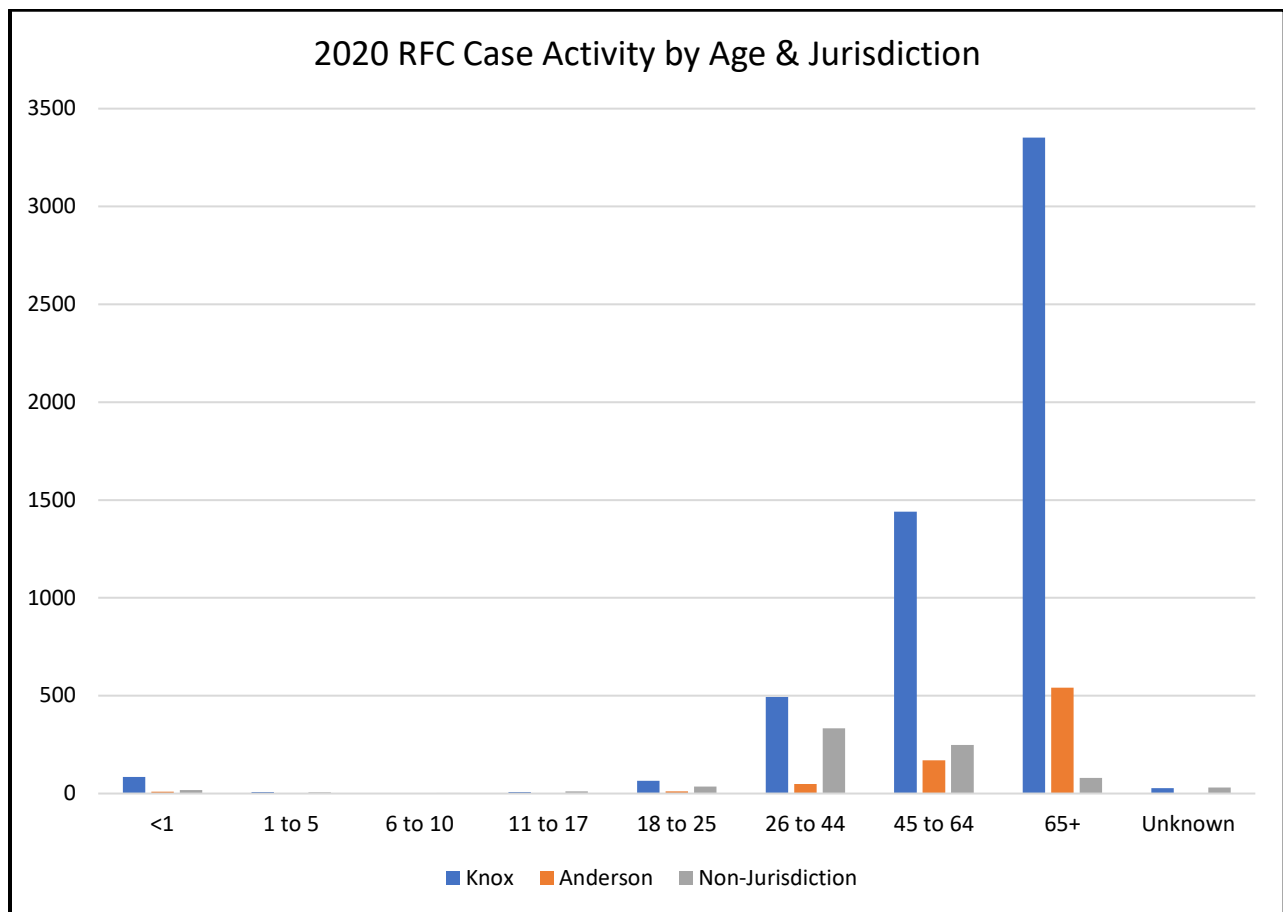
Procedure Type by Jurisdiction				
Procedure	Knox	Anderson	Non-Jurisdiction	Total
Autopsy-Full	502	65	691	<b>1,258</b>
Autopsy – Limited	7	0	2	<b>9</b>
Exam	932	106	64	<b>1,102</b>
Toxicology Only	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,441</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>2,369</b>



## Case Demographics of RFC Activities

The following graphs illustrate some of the demographic data—including gender, age, and race—on various types of activities conducted at the RFC. Demographic information is not collected for all activities.





### Manner of Death Classification for Reported Cases

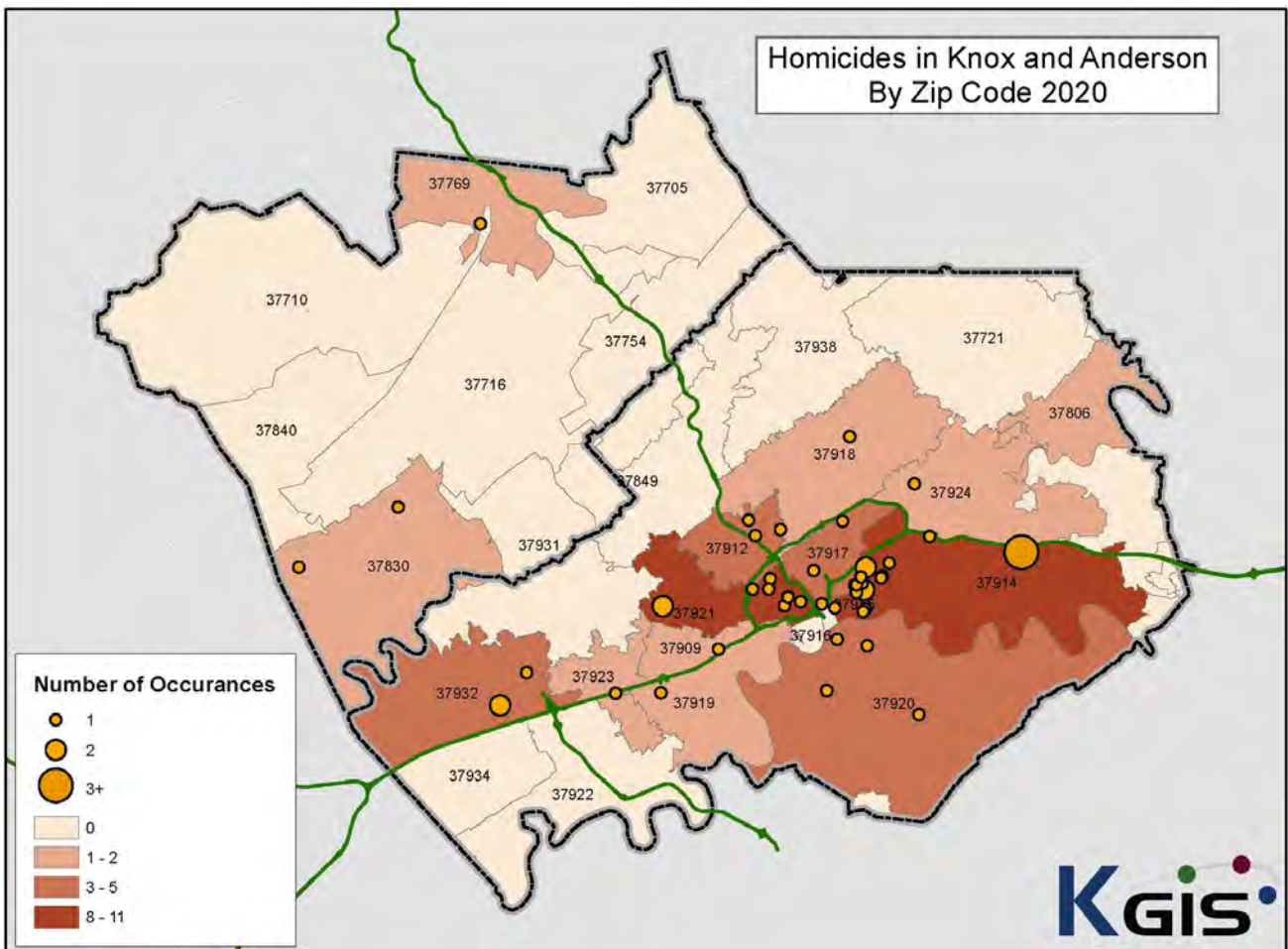
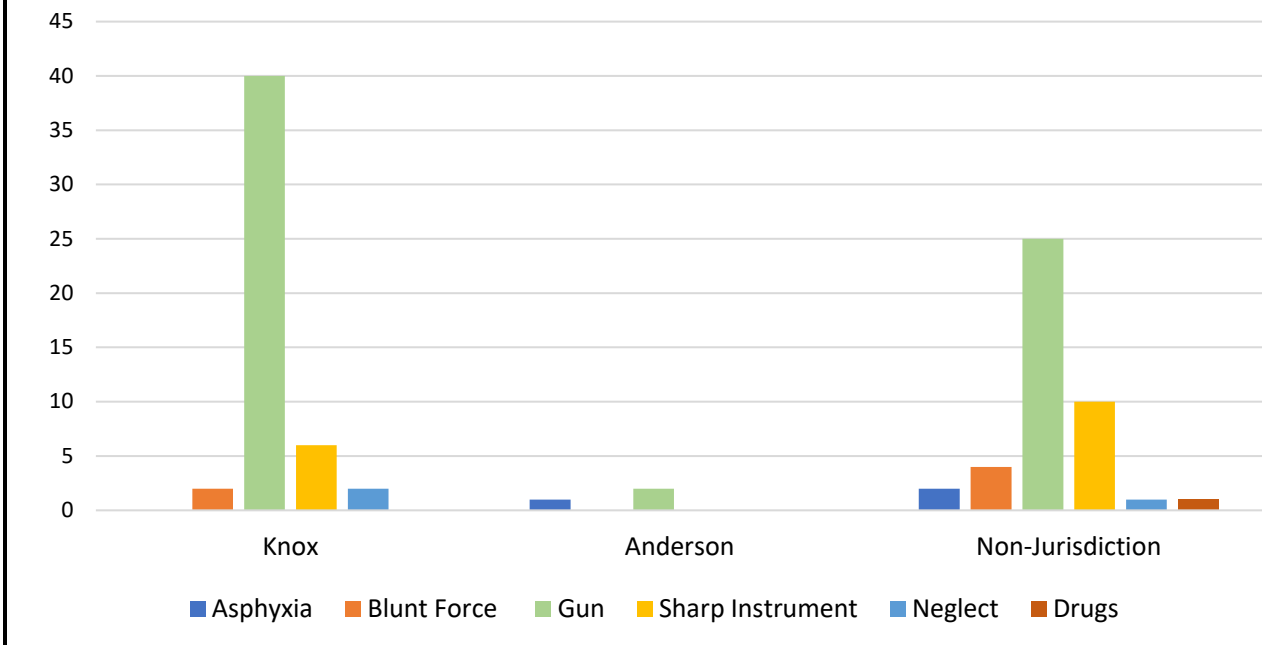
The charts that follow depict how the RFC classified Manner of Death for cases in 2020.

Manner of Death	Knox	Anderson	Non-Jurisdiction	Total
Accident MVA	99	13	71	<b>183</b>
Accident - Non MVA	618	58	365	<b>1,041</b>
Suicide	95	11	97	<b>203</b>
Homicide	50	3	44	<b>97</b>
Natural	595	88	152	<b>835</b>
Undetermined	15	4	25	<b>44</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,471</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>2,402</b>

	Knox	Anderson	Non-Jurisdiction	Total
Asphyxia	0	1	2	<b>3</b>
Blunt Force	2	0	4	<b>6</b>
Gun	40	2	25	<b>67</b>
Sharp Instrument	6	0	10	<b>16</b>
Neglect	2	0	1	<b>3</b>
Drugs	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
MVC	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>97</b>



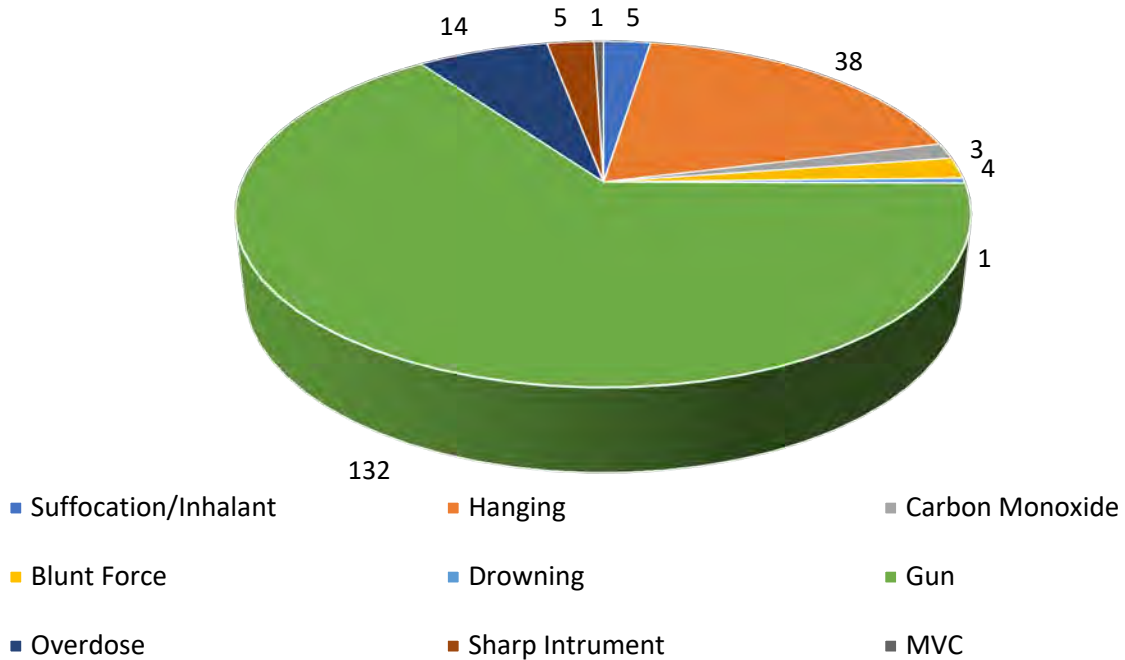
## 2020 Homicides by Method and Jurisdiction



### 2020 Suicides by Method and Jurisdiction

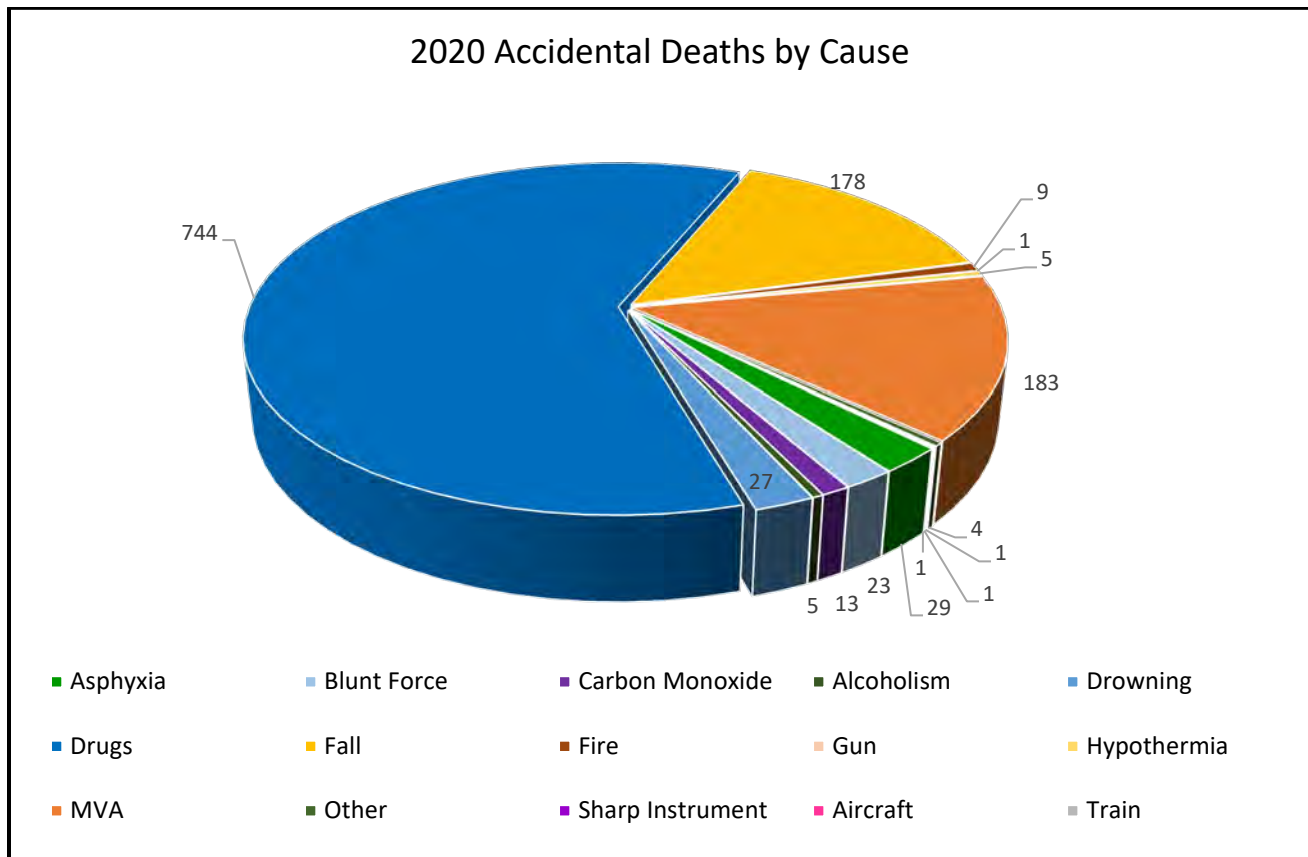
	Knox	Anderson	Non-Jurisdiction	Total
Suffocation/Inhalant	3	1	1	5
Hanging	13	2	23	38
Carbon Monoxide	2	0	1	3
Blunt Force	1	0	3	4
Drowning	0	0	1	1
Gun	65	6	61	132
Overdose	9	2	3	14
Sharp Instrument	1	0	4	5
MVC	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>203</b>

### 2020 Suicides by Method



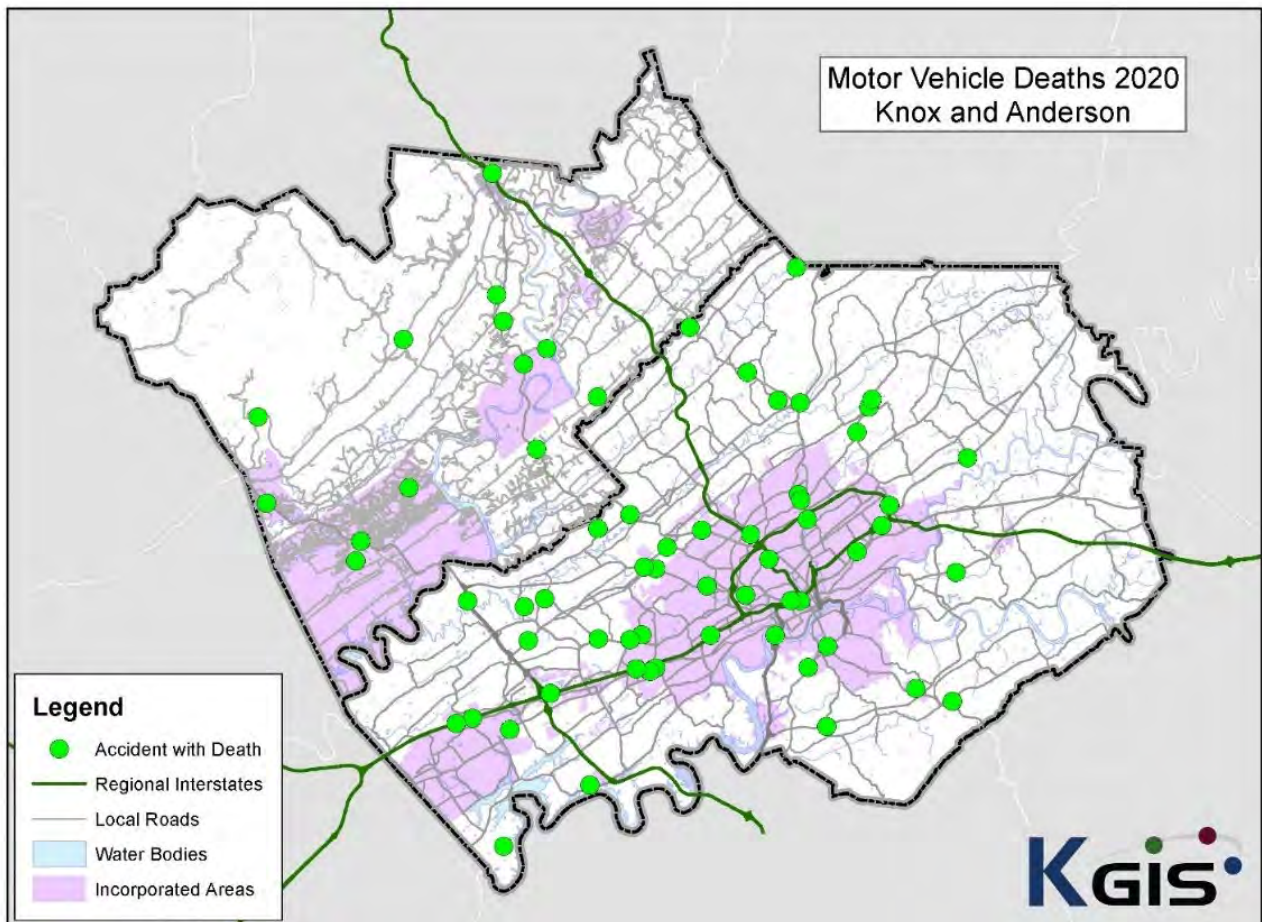
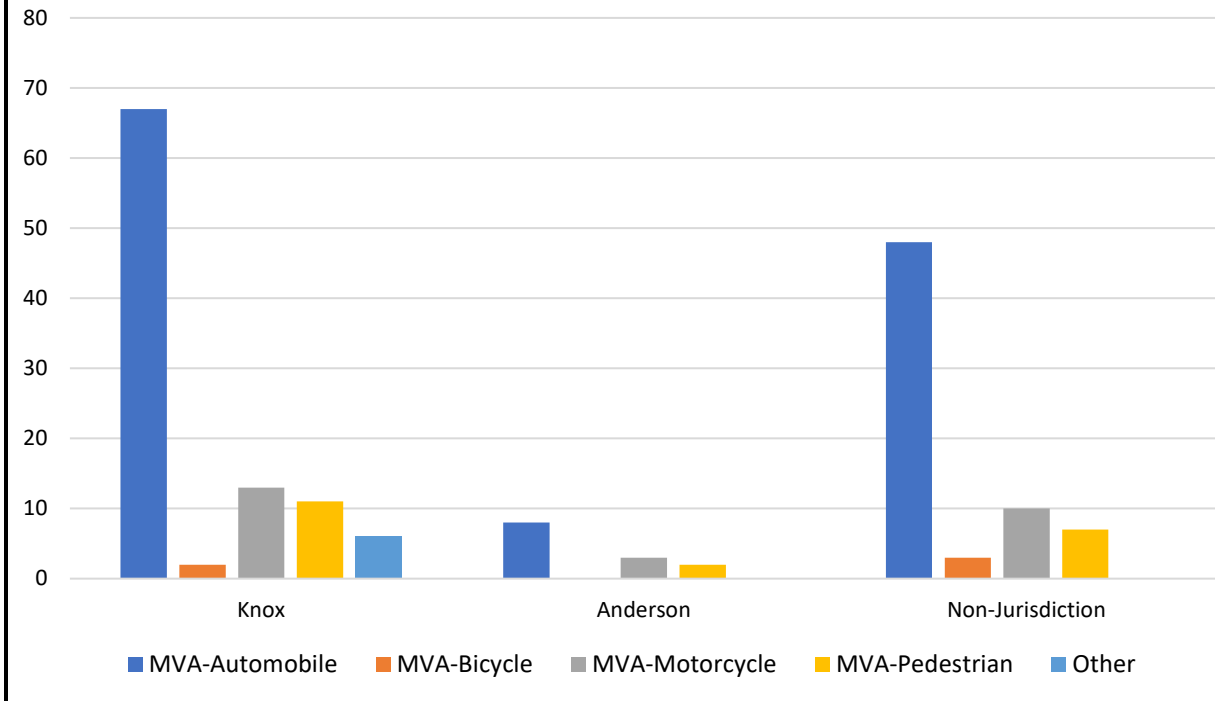
In the chart below, "other" refers to burn-nonthermal, crushed-pinned, dementia, and pregnancy complications.

2020 Accidental Deaths				
Cause of Death	Knox	Anderson	Non-Jurisdiction	Total
Asphyxia	12	0	17	29
Blunt Force	17	0	6	23
Carbon Monoxide	5	0	8	13
Alcoholism	3	0	2	5
Drowning	10	2	15	27
Drugs	404	46	294	744
Fall	156	10	12	178
Fire	3	0	6	9
Gun	1	0	0	1
Hypothermia	2	0	3	5
MVA	99	13	71	183
Sharp Instrument	1	0	0	1
Aircraft	0	0	1	1
Train	1	0	0	1
Other	3	0	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>717</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>1,224</b>





2020 MVA by Type and Jurisdiction



## Infant Deaths

The charts below are the Knox, Anderson, and Non-Jurisdictional counties' infant deaths in 2020. An infant death is from live birth to one year in age.

Knox County Regional Forensic Center			
Reported	Autopsy	Exam	Released-No Exam
Knox	11	2	69
Anderson	3	0	6
Non-Jurisdiction	18	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>75</b>

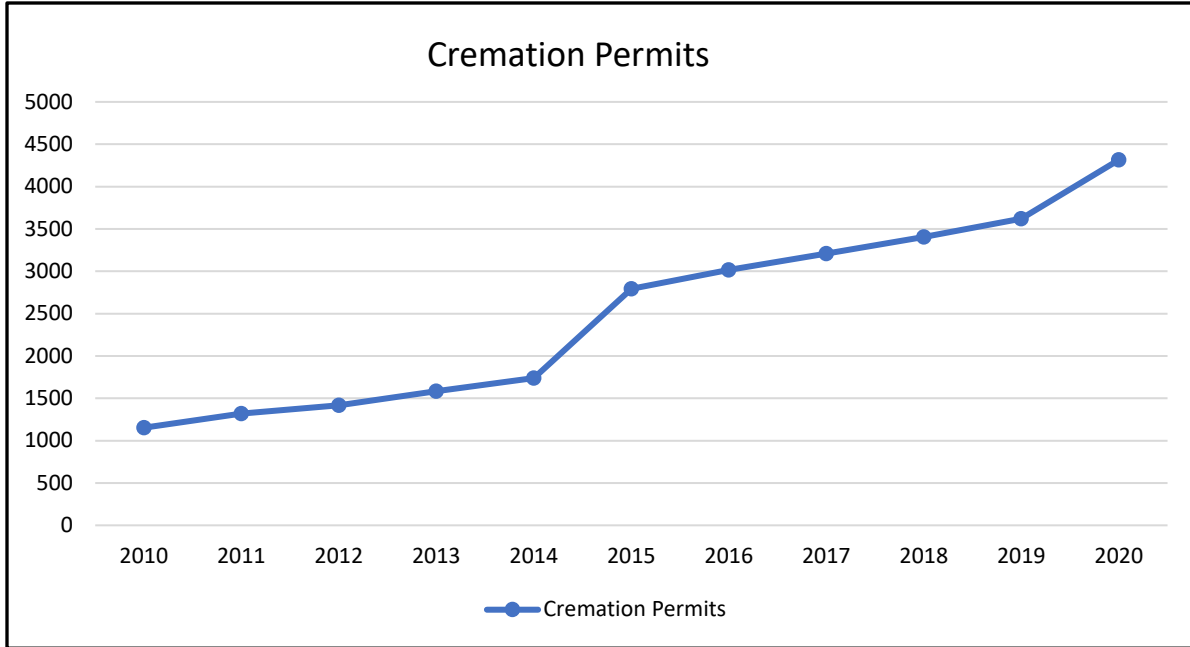
Knox County Regional Forensic Center					
Manner	Accident	Homicide	Natural	Undetermined	Total
Knox	3	0	8	2	<b>13</b>
Anderson	0	0	1	2	<b>3</b>
Non-Jurisdiction	13	1	2	2	<b>18</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>34</b>

Knox County Regional Forensic Center				
Cause	Knox	Anderson	Non-Jurisdictional	Total
Asphyxia	3	0	13	<b>16</b>
Blunt Force	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
Cardiac	3	0	1	<b>4</b>
Drowning	1	0	0	<b>1</b>
Infection	1	0	1	<b>2</b>
Prematurity	3	0	0	<b>3</b>
SUDI	0	1	1	<b>2</b>
Still Birth	1	1	0	<b>2</b>
Undetermined	1	1	1	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>34</b>

## Cremation Authorizations in 2020

The RFC has statutory responsibility to review and sign cremation authorizations prior to a body being cremated which also includes the review of the cremation authorization forms and death certificates of each decedent by a Medical Examiner.

In 2020, RFC Medical Examiners authorized 4,315 cremations. The following chart depicts the 10-year history of cremation authorizations completed.

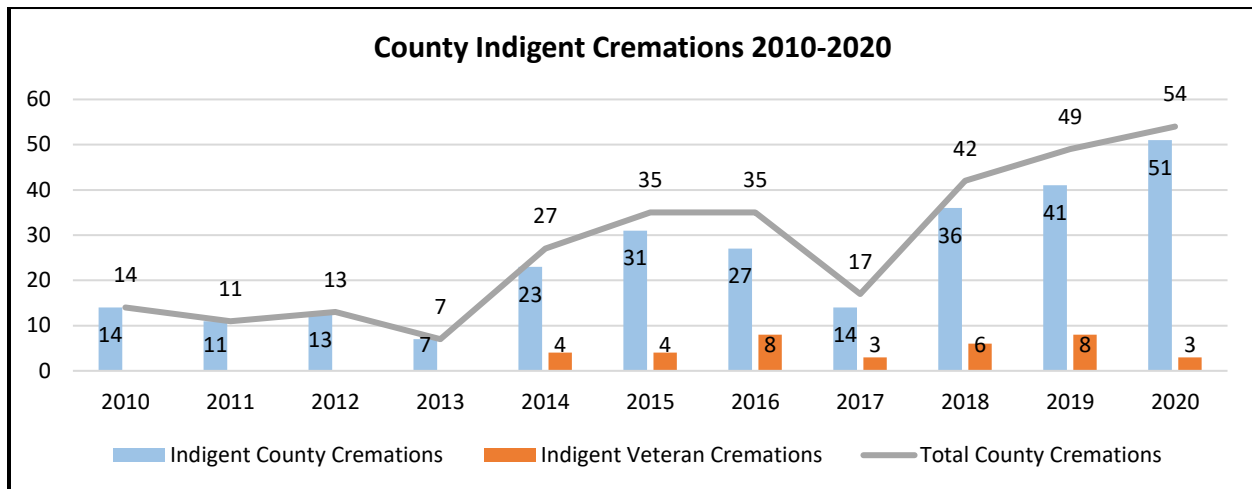


## Indigent Cremation

When the body from a Medical Examiner’s case goes unclaimed or remains unidentified, it is declared indigent. In these circumstances, the RFC will cremate and inter the body in Knox County’s mausoleum. This is done only for Medical Examiner cases. Unidentified individuals are defleshed and permanently retained until identified.

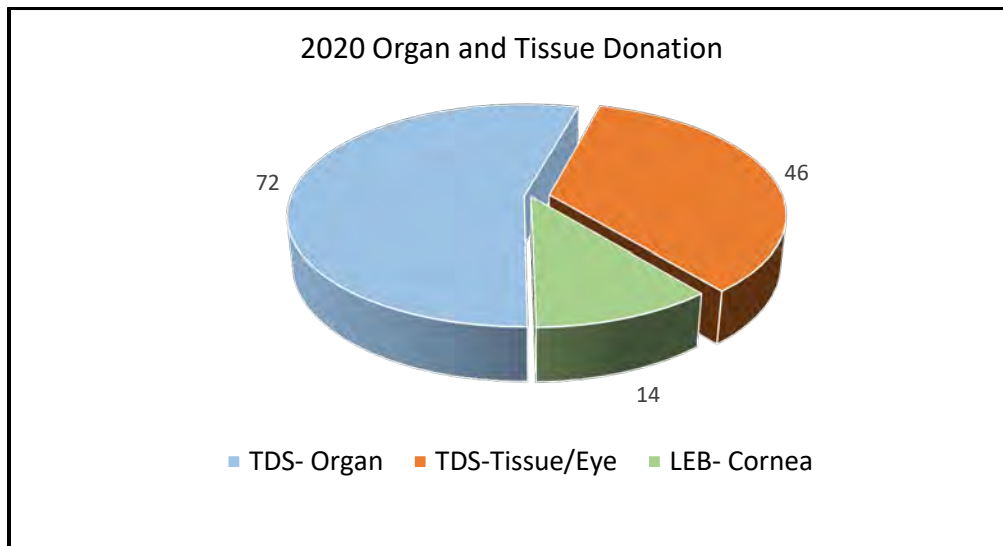
Before moving forward with indigent cremation and interment, the RFC also completes a check for Veteran’s status. If the individual is determined to have Veteran’s status, the RFC works with the local Homeless Veteran’s Burial Program to provide a proper military burial.

The following chart demonstrates the 10-year history of indigent cremations processed by the RFC.



## Organ and Tissue Donations

The Knox County RFC has statutory responsibility to review cases for tissue and organ donation prior to donation; it must also coordinate with organ donation groups within the Medical Examiner's jurisdiction. The chart below depicts data provided by Tennessee Donor Services and East Tennessee Lion's Eye Bank and depicts the number of tissue and organ donations completed in 2020.



## Staff-Specific Data

### Forensic Pathologists

Below are tables depicting the average turnaround time for case completion by each physician in 2020 and case completion rate by days, number of cases, and percentage of complete cases.

2020	# of Cases	%
Incomplete	0	0%
Cases Over 90 Days	390	16.48%
Cases Over 60 Days	571	24.12%
Cases Between 30-60 Days	655	27.67%
Cases Under 30 Days	751	31.73%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,367</b>	<b>100%</b>

Pathologist Activities Performed								
Pathologist	Exams	Autopsies	Hospital	Limited	Declined Cases	Releases	Cremation Permits	Total
Dr. Hawes	71	91	3	0	113	24	44	<b>346</b>
Dr. Lochmuller	279	303	14	1	491	126	1354	<b>2,568</b>
Dr. Mileusnic	225	232	16	3	545	126	1944	<b>3,091</b>
Dr. Havrilla	120	134	6	2	229	60	355	<b>906</b>
Dr. Rollins	144	136	4	1	176	39	418	<b>918</b>
Dr. Oliver	263	308	11	2	334	81	199	<b>1,198</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,102</b>	<b>1,204</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1,888</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>4,314</b>	<b>9,027</b>

Pathologist Average Turn Around Time in Days 2020					
Pathologist	Exams	Autopsies	Hospital	Limited	Total
Dr. Hawes	29	42	64	0	37
Dr. Lochmuller	34	67	79	121	52
Dr. Mileusnic	25	108	94	22	68
Dr. Havrilla	21	79	81	44	52
Dr. Rollins	33	64	64	59	48
Dr. Oliver	49	64	65	36	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>55</b>

Pathologist	Autopsy Equivalent
Dr. Hawes	112
Dr. Lochmuller	387
Dr. Mileusnic	306
Dr. Havrilla	171
Dr. Rollins	177
Dr. Oliver	386
<b>Total</b>	<b>1538</b>
<b>Equivalent per Pathologist</b>	<b>308</b>

### Medico-Legal Death Investigations (MDI)

The charts below depict the types of actions completed by MDIs.

Case by Disposition Category in 2020						
Case Administration - Investigator	Jurisdiction Declined- Autopsy	Jurisdiction Declined - No Autopsy	Other	Released to Funeral Home	Sent to Autopsy Facility	Total
Morgan Maples (Manager)	2	41	19	3	27	92
Christine Hawley	7	142	12	45	185	391
Amanda Eiriksson (left)	10	327	162	55	324	878
Megan Sharpe	5	242	94	68	261	670
Casey File (left)	11	215	63	63	228	580
Karissa Fulton	8	232	70	67	308	685
Lisa Taylor	6	257	111	60	315	749
Phil Verso	14	290	54	59	379	796
Roy Helmuth (left)	0	43	11	16	77	147
Corey Coppola	0	98	13	20	88	219
Other	0	0	1619	0	115	1,734
<b>Total by Disposition</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>1,887</b>	<b>2,228</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>2,307</b>	<b>6,941</b>
<b>% of Total Cases by Disposition</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>27.18%</b>	<b>32.09%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>33.23%</b>	<b>100%</b>



<b>2020 On-Scene Investigator Visits</b>	
<b>Investigator</b>	<b>Number</b>
Morgan Maples (Manager)	15
Christine Hawley	120
Amanda Eiriksson (Left)	217
Megan Sharpe	185
Casey File (left)	163
Karissa Fulton	218
Lisa Taylor	216
Phil Verso	242
Corey Coppola	69
Roy Helmuth (left)	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,500</b>

### Autopsy Technicians

The chart below reports the types of actions completed by the Autopsy Technicians and how quickly autopsy or external examinations were completed once the decedent arrived at the RFC—which impacts how quickly the RFC can release the decedent to the funeral home for final disposition.

<b>2020 Days and Percentage of Cases Where an Autopsy/Exam was Performed from Time of Arrival at RFC</b>		
Within 48 Hours	2,311	97.55%
Within 72 Hours	2,363	99.47%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,369</b>	

The chart that follows shows how many toxicology tests were performed at the Regional Forensic Center and where they went for testing.

<b>2020 Toxicology Locations</b>		
<b>Location Sent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
TBI	41	2.13%
NMS	1,885	97.87%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,926</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Administration

RFC Administration filled more than 1,500 open and subpoenaed records requests and coordinated the completion of 1,862 Death Certificates in 2020.