

Franklin County Coroner

2016 Annual Report

Franklin County Coroner
1016 North 4th Street
Pasco, Washington 99301

Last Revised: February 22, 2017

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Message to the Board of Commissioners and Citizens of Franklin County

The Franklin County Coroner's Office investigates sudden, violent, unexpected, and suspicious deaths that occur in Franklin County. The Office of the Coroner certifies death after investigation and postmortem examination and issues the death certificate as required by law. Complete findings of the death investigation are distributed to families and law enforcement agencies as appropriate.

The main duties of the Office of the Coroner are to determine the cause and manner of death, and certify deaths that are reported to the coroner. The cause of death is the disease process or injury that resulted in death. There are thousands of diseases and injuries that may result in death. The manner of death is a classification in which a determination is made regarding whether the death resulted from natural causes, homicide, suicide, or an accident. On occasion, the manner of death is classified as indeterminate.

Information collected during the investigation helps clarify the circumstances, such as the sequence of events prior to death. Evidence collected during an investigation and/or postmortem examination may help lead to the arrest or successful conviction of a suspect in a homicide case. Because deaths occur around the clock, coroner staff members are available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.

Our medical examiners and investigators also extend their duties to the living by answering questions and addressing concerns regarding deaths within the county. Coroner investigators frequently make personal contact with family members of a deceased and assist them by providing appropriate answers regarding the circumstances of the death. Coroner investigators are supplied with a pamphlet for distribution to families. The information provides answers to common questions and facts about autopsies and also provides resource information pertaining to grief counseling.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the Franklin County Board of Commissioners for their support of the coroner program and the services we provide to the citizens of the Franklin County.

Coroner Staff/ Pathologists

Dan Blasdel, Coroner

Candice Hermanson, Chief Deputy Coroner

Harold Livingston, Deputy Coroner

Phil Morton, Deputy Coroner

Sigmund Menchel M.D.
Forensic Pathologist

Aldo Fusaro M.D.
Forensic Pathologist

Jeffrey Reynolds, M.D.
Forensic Pathologist

Types of Deaths Reportable to the Coroner

Deaths Reportable to the Coroner:

- Violent death (e.g., strangulation, gunshot, stabbing, poisoning, etc.)
- Accidental deaths (e.g., falls, drowning, motor vehicle collisions, burns, overdose, etc.)
- Death of a prisoner (e.g., deaths in any county or city jail while imprisoned or in custody).
- Suspicious Circumstances (e.g., Unidentified Bodies or events surrounding death)
- Sudden and Unexpected deaths (e.g., all deaths during a surgical procedure, in recovery,
- anesthesia-related, unexpected natural death, occupational-related deaths)*
- Without medical attendance within 48 hours of death
- In cases of chronic illness, the attending physician may sign the death certificate if s/he can be reasonably certain of the cause of death.
- Death of a mother due to an abortion.
- Unexpected infant deaths

The coroner may order an autopsy for any of the reportable deaths listed above.

Franklin County Coroner Cases 2016

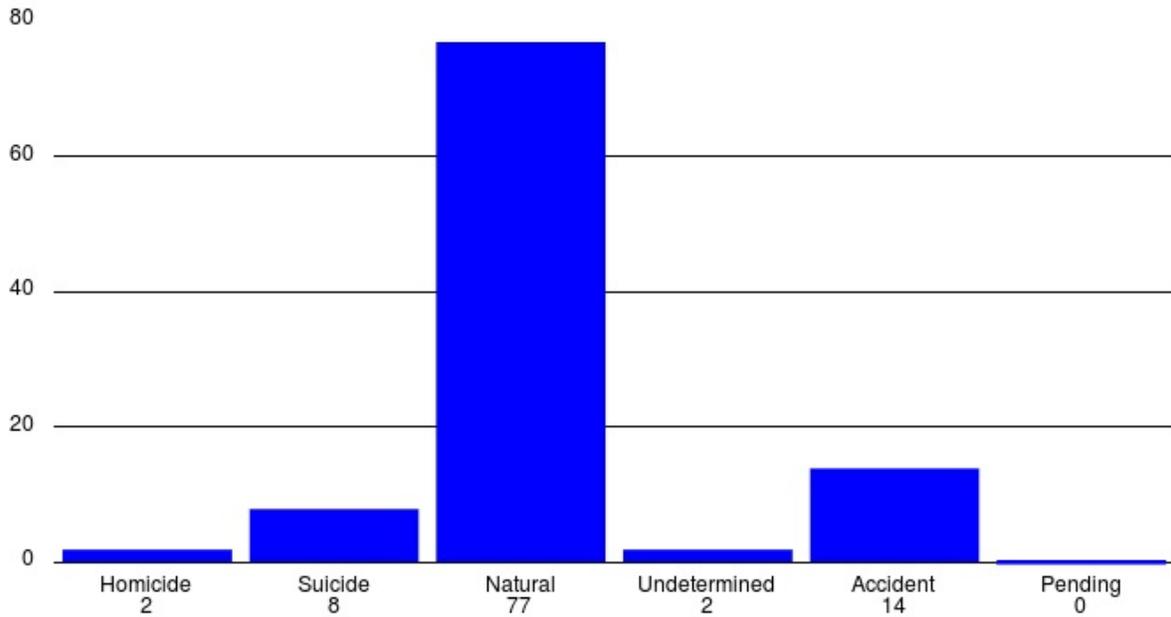
Franklin County Population (2015 Census)	88,807
Total Deaths in Franklin Co in 2016 (Benton Franklin Health Dept)	226
Total Cases Reported to Coroner	185
A. Number of deaths certified after postmortem examination	103
1. Full Autopsies Performed	12
2. External Examination Only	91
C. Number of deaths not reported to Coroner's Office for Certification (Physician Attended Deaths)	41

Definitions

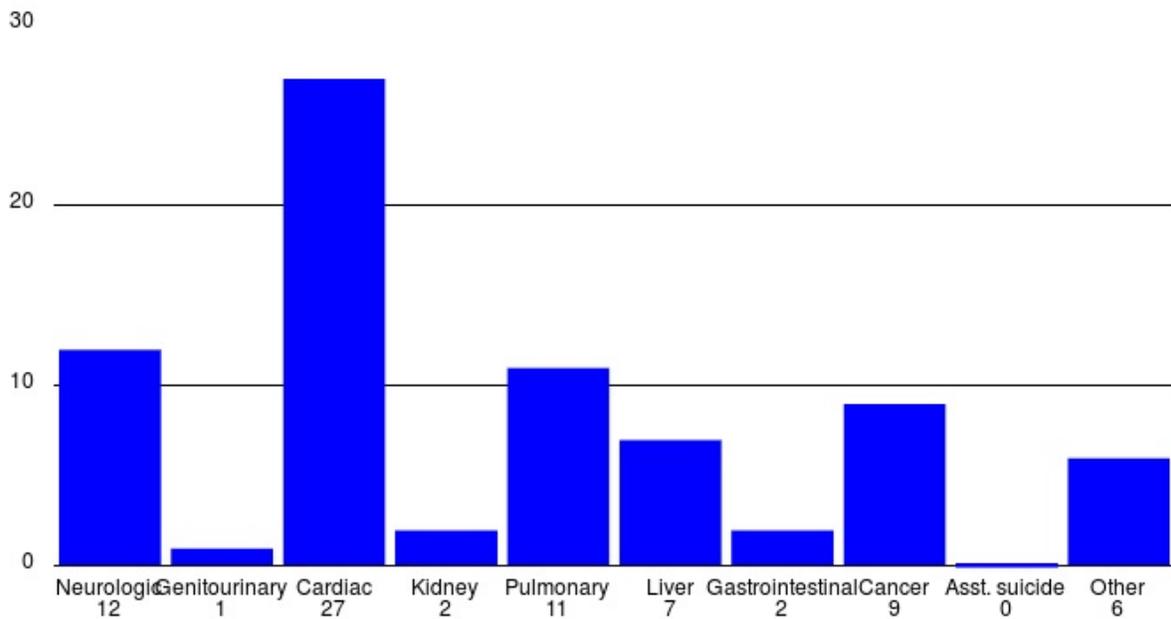
Full Autopsy: A complete external and internal examination of a decedent.

External Examination: An examination of the exterior of a decedent.

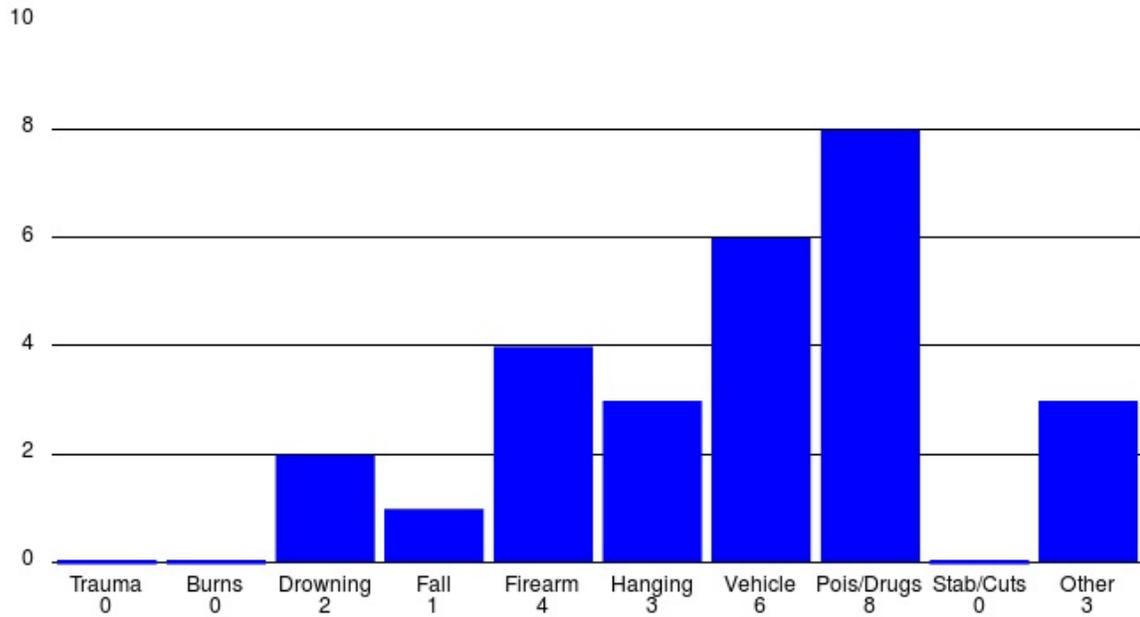
Manner of Death in Cases Requiring Postmortem Exam



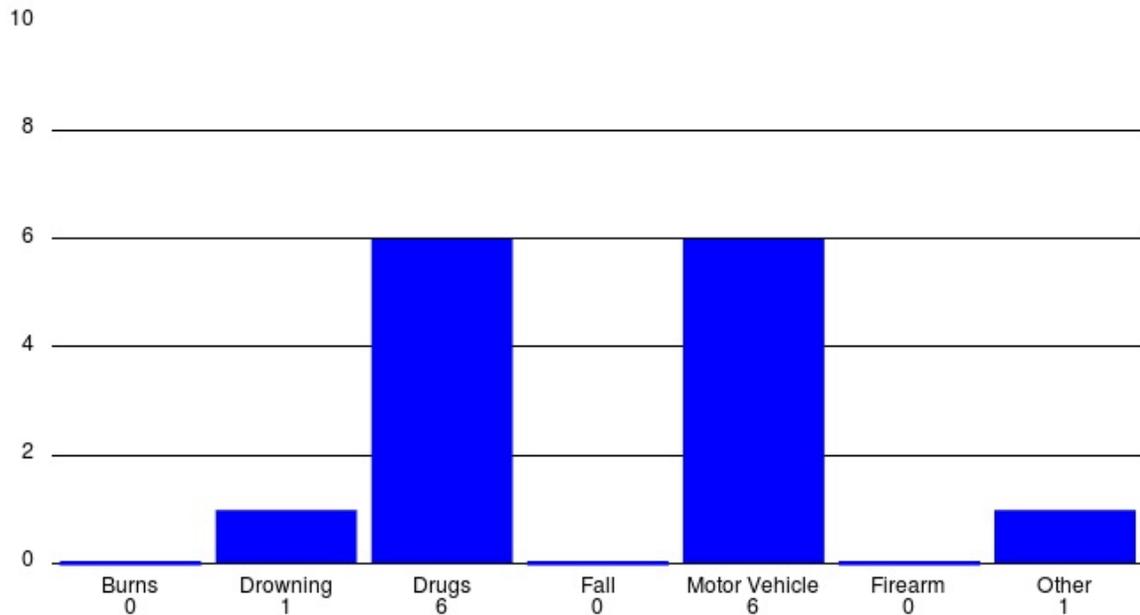
Natural Deaths in Cases Requiring Postmortem Exam



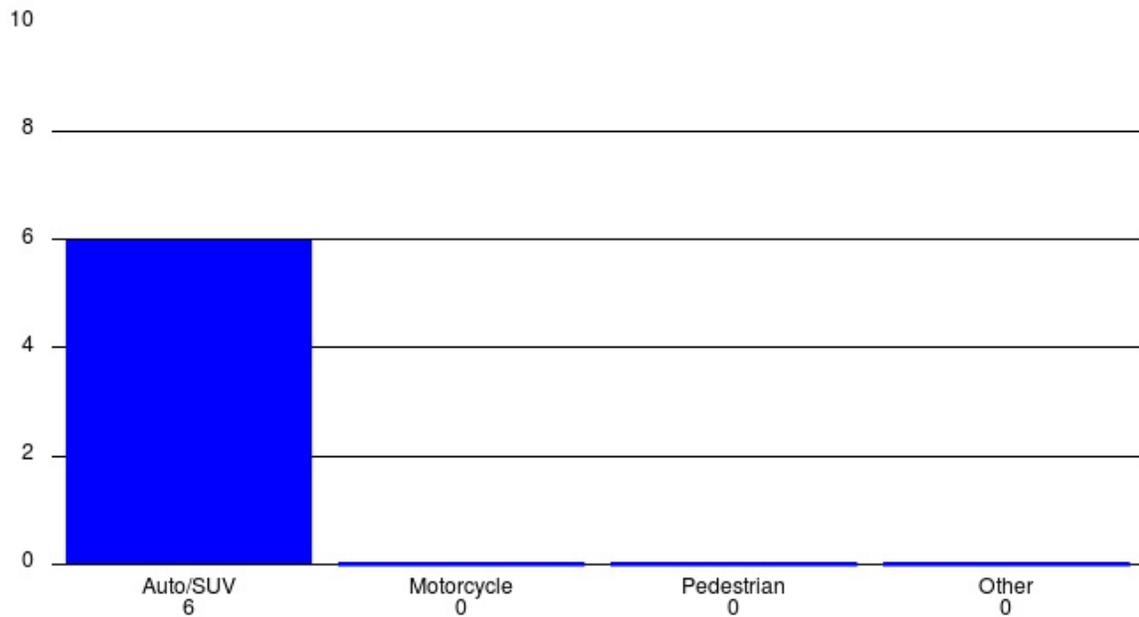
Deaths by Unnatural Causes



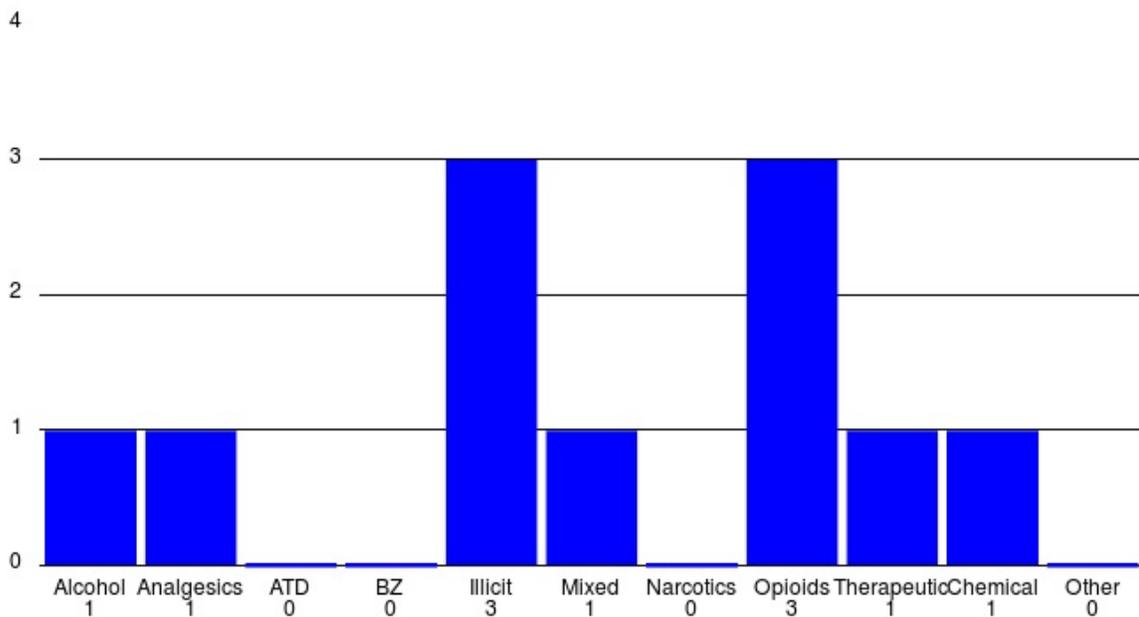
Accidental Deaths by Type



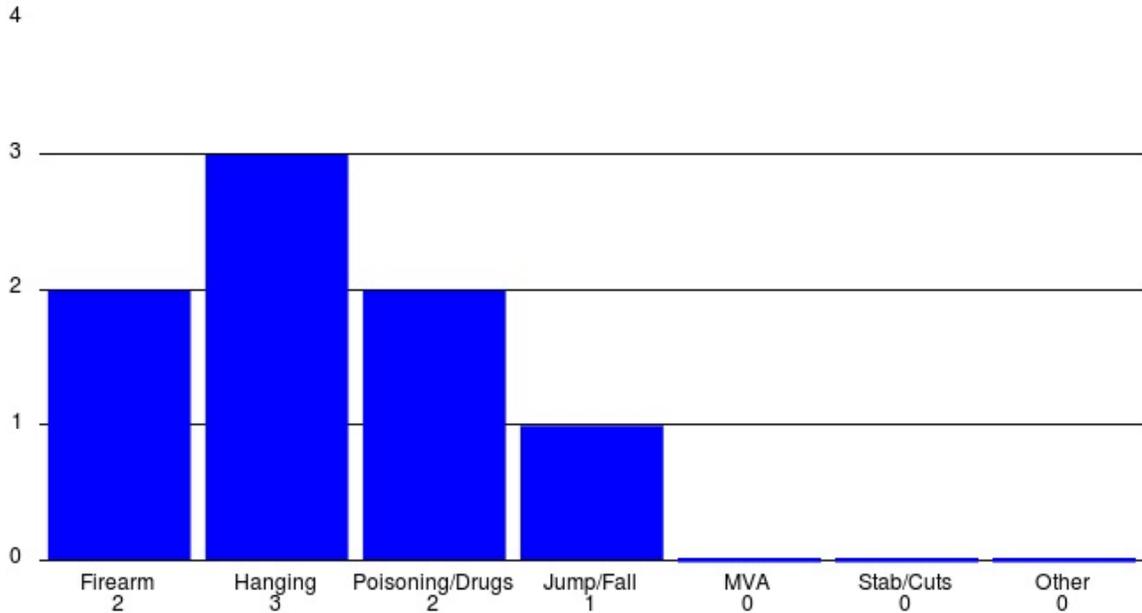
Accidental Deaths - Motor Vehicle Crashes



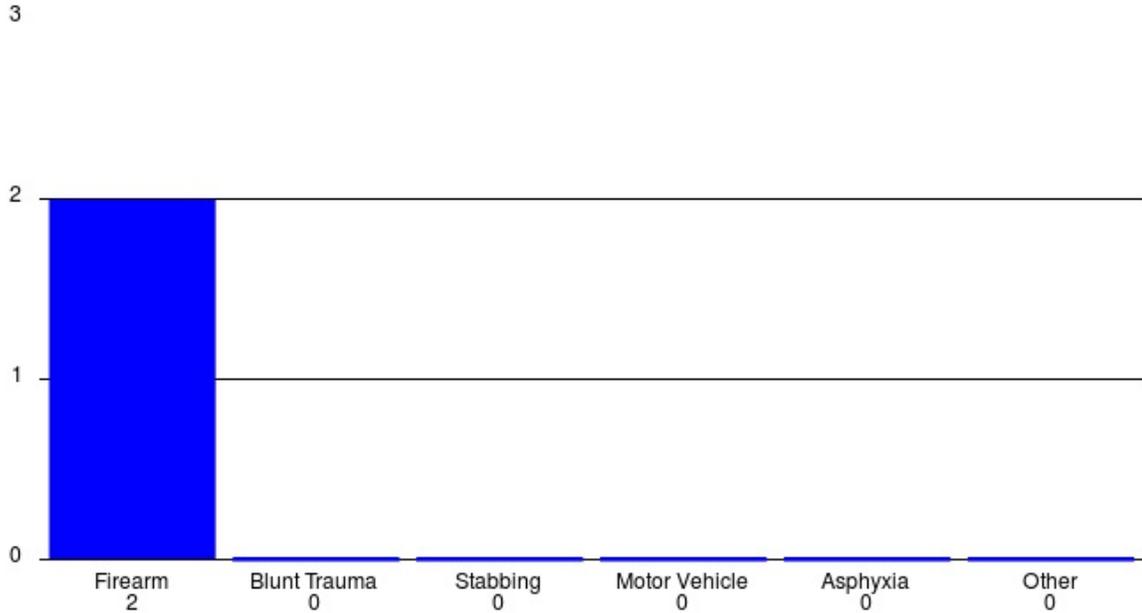
Drugs Contributing to Cause of Death



Suicide by Means



Homicide Deaths



Deaths by Age Group in Cases Requiring Postmortem Examination

