



KENTUCKY INJURY PREVENTION  
AND RESEARCH CENTER

# Kentucky Resident Drug Overdose Deaths, 2020–2024

## Annual Report, Updated January 2026

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 About this Report

This report presents the burden of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents from 2020–2024. It includes only deaths of Kentucky residents. Data on Kentucky residents who died outside of the Commonwealth may be incomplete, resulting in a potential undercount of all drug overdose deaths that occurred among Kentucky residents. Counts greater than zero but less than five and rates based on counts greater than zero but less than 10 were suppressed in accordance with state data management policy. Rates based on counts less than 20 are unstable and should be interpreted with caution. Population estimates are based on the US Census Bureau’s Annual County Resident Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin. All rates presented in this report have been age-adjusted using the US Standard 2000 population. Population estimates for 2024 were not available at the time this report was generated. Rates for 2024 are based on the population estimates for 2023.

This project is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of cooperative agreement 1 NU17CE010186 totaling \$16,222,256 with 0% financed with nongovernmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, CDC, HHS, or the U.S. government. For more information, please visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

## 1.2 Definitions

The source for the Kentucky resident data in this report is the Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data are provisional and subject to change. Drug overdose deaths include events with an underlying cause of death code of X40–X44, X60–X64, X85, or Y10–Y14.

Overdose deaths identified by specific drug types are not mutually exclusive; a drug overdose record that includes codes for two different drug types will be counted under each category. The majority of drug types identified as involved in a drug overdose death are based on the use of ICD-10 codes as a supplemental cause of death. Tables where the drug type is identified using toxicology testing are labeled accordingly. The following ICD-10 codes listed as a supplemental cause of death were used to identify drug overdoses:

Drug Type	ICD-10
All Opioids	T40.0–T40.4, T40.6
All Stimulants	T40.5, T43.6
Heroin	T40.1
Prescription Opioids	T40.0, T40.2–T40.3
Synthetic Opioids	T40.4
Fentanyl	T40.4 and a text mention of fentanyl
Benzodiazepines	T42.4
Cocaine	T40.5
Other Psychostimulants	T43.6
Methamphetamine	T43.6 and a text mention of methamphetamine

## 1.3 Executive Summary

- In 2024, **1,439** Kentucky residents died from a drug overdose, resulting in an age-adjusted mortality rate of **32.7 deaths per 100,000 residents**. This is a **decrease of 28.8%** from the 2,020 drug overdose deaths in 2023.
- Among non-Hispanic White residents in 2024, **1,235** died from a drug overdose, resulting in an age-adjusted mortality rate of **47.5 deaths per 100,000 White residents**. This is a **decrease of 27.1%** from the 1,693 deaths in 2023.
- Among non-Hispanic Black residents in 2024, **169** died from a drug overdose, resulting in an age-adjusted mortality rate of **70.6 deaths per 100,000 Black residents**. This is a **decrease of 36.7%** from the 267 deaths in 2023.
- In 2024, people aged **35 to 44 years old** experienced the highest proportion of deaths with **385** deaths. This is a **decrease of 33.7%** from the 581 deaths in 2023.
- Number of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl in 2024: **829**
  - Percentage of total drug overdose deaths in 2024: **57.6%**
  - Percentage change from 2023: **decrease of 41.1%**
- Number of drug overdose deaths involving heroin in 2024: **15**
  - Percentage of total drug overdose deaths in 2024: **1.0%**
  - Percentage change from 2023: **decrease of 37.5%**
- Number of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine in 2024: **576**
  - Percentage of total drug overdose deaths in 2024: **40.0%**
  - Percentage change from 2023: **decrease of 26.2%**
- Number of drug overdose deaths involving cocaine in 2024: **191**
  - Percentage of total drug overdose deaths in 2024: **13.3%**
  - Percentage change from 2023: **decrease of 32.0%**

**Table 1.3.1: Kentucky counties with the highest age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths in 2024**

	<b>Kentucky County</b>	<b>Rate of Deaths per 100,000 Residents</b>	<b>Number of Deaths</b>
1	Lee	156 <sup>†</sup>	12
2	Knott	141.5 <sup>†</sup>	19
3	Breathitt	129.6 <sup>†</sup>	16
4	Powell	109.8 <sup>†</sup>	12
5	Estill	85.4 <sup>†</sup>	11
6	Rowan	85 <sup>†</sup>	16
7	Lawrence	77.9 <sup>†</sup>	13
8	Pendleton	76.9 <sup>†</sup>	11
9	Clay	76.8 <sup>†</sup>	17
10	Harlan	76.5 <sup>†</sup>	19

Counties with rates based on counts less than 10 have been excluded from this list. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

<sup>†</sup> Rates based on counts less than 20 are unstable and should be interpreted with caution.



## 2 Total Drug Overdose Deaths

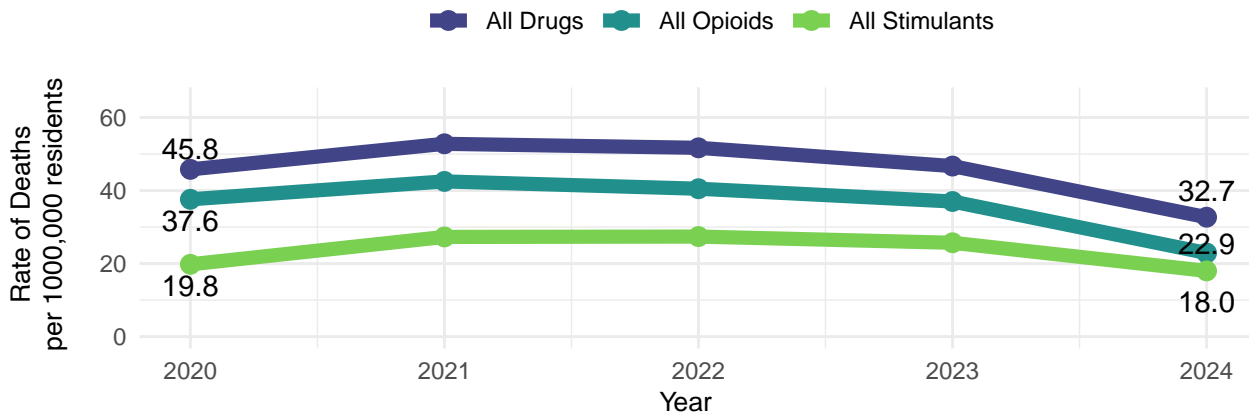
In 2024, a total of 1,439 Kentucky residents died from a drug overdose. This is a decrease of 28.8% from the 2,020 drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents in 2023. A total of 987 deaths, or 68.6% of the total drug overdose deaths in 2024, involved at least one type of opioid, while 785 deaths, or 54.6%, involved at least one type of stimulant. The total number of opioid overdose deaths among Kentucky residents decreased by 37.4%, from 1,577 deaths in 2023 to 987 deaths in 2024. The total number of stimulant-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents decreased by 28.6%, from 1,099 deaths in 2023 to 785 deaths in 2024.

**Table 2.1: Counts and age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents, 2020–2024**

Year	Any Drug		Any Opioid		Any Stimulant	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
2020	1,965	45.8	1,594	37.6	827	19.8
2021	2,257	52.8	1,799	42.5	1,151	27.3
2022	2,200	51.7	1,706	40.5	1,151	27.4
2023	2,020	46.7	1,577	37.0	1,099	25.7
2024	1,439	32.7	987	22.9	785	18.0

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Figure 2.1: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents, 2020–2024**



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

### 3 Drug Overdose Deaths by Sex

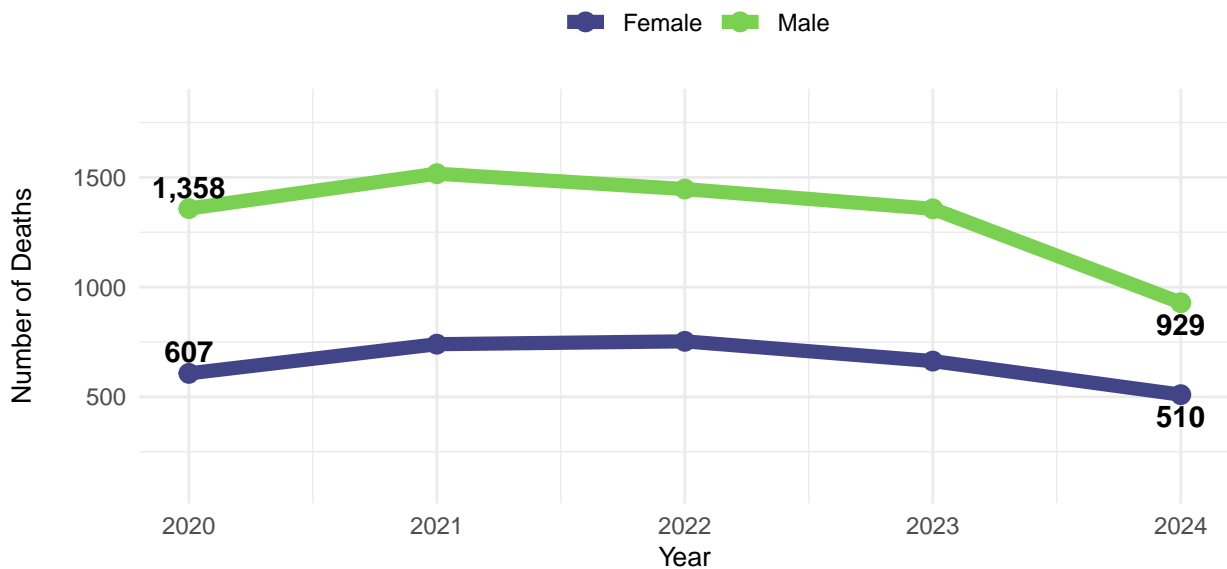
For the five-year period from 2020 to 2024, 66.9% of Kentucky resident drug overdose decedents were males. Males also made up 67.4% of all opioid overdose deaths among Kentucky residents and 69.3% of all stimulant-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents. The total number of drug overdose deaths among male Kentucky residents decreased by 31.5% (from 1,357 deaths to 929 deaths) from 2023 to 2024. For this same time period, opioid overdose deaths among male Kentucky residents decreased by 40.9% (from 1,077 deaths to 637 deaths), while stimulant-involved overdose deaths among male Kentucky residents decreased by 39.3% (from 765 deaths to 549 deaths). Among female Kentucky residents, the total number of drug overdose deaths in 2024 decreased by 23.1% (from 663 deaths to 510 deaths) from 2023. For that same time period, opioid overdose deaths among female Kentucky residents decreased by 30% (from 500 deaths to 350 deaths), while stimulant-involved overdose deaths among female Kentucky residents decreased by 29.3% (from 334 deaths to 236 deaths).

**Table 3.1: Counts and age-adjusted rates of total drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by sex, 2020–2024**

Sex	Year	Any Drug		Any Opioid		Any Stimulant	
		Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate
Female	2020	607	28.0	488	22.7	234	11.4
	2021	740	34.7	591	28.0	348	16.8
	2022	753	35.7	569	27.3	387	19.1
	2023	663	30.8	500	23.5	334	15.8
	2024	510	23.0	350	16.1	236	11.2
Male	2020	1,358	63.5	1,106	52.3	593	28.1
	2021	1,517	70.7	1,208	56.8	803	37.8
	2022	1,447	67.6	1,137	53.5	764	35.7
	2023	1,357	62.5	1,077	50.4	765	35.5
	2024	929	42.4	637	29.6	549	24.8

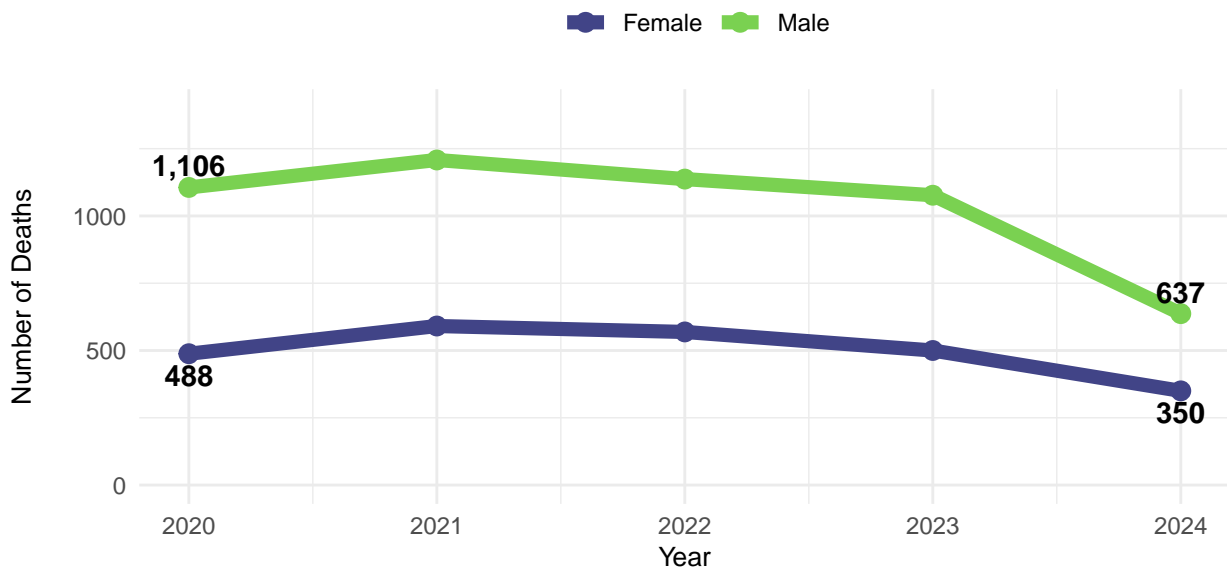
Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Figure 3.1: Counts of total drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by sex, 2020–2024**



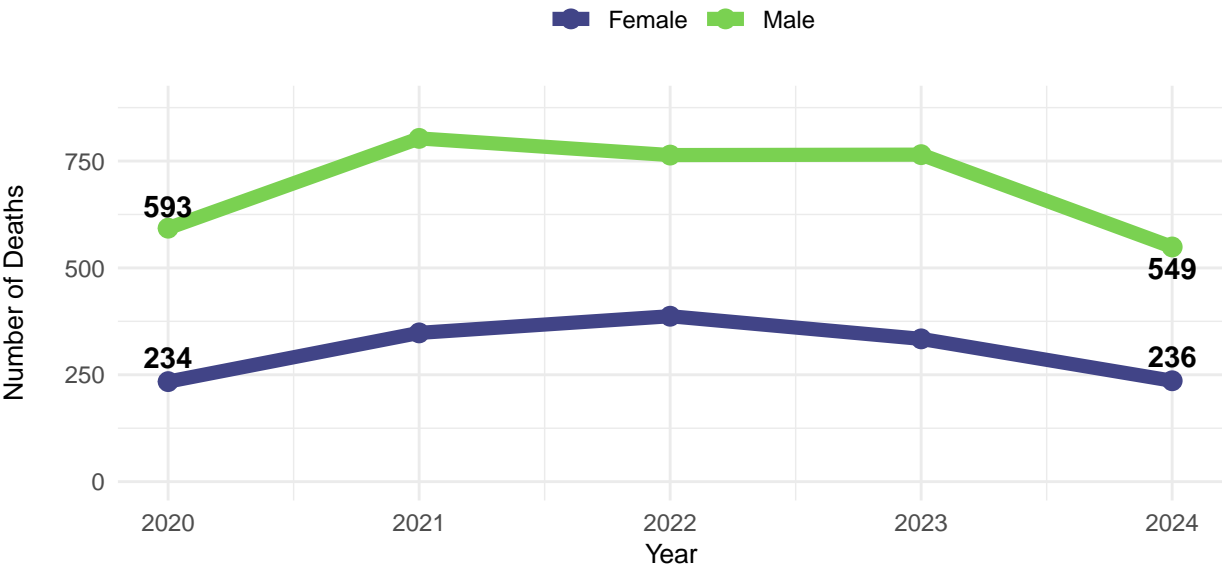
Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Figure 3.2: Counts of opioid overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by sex, 2020–2024**



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Figure 3.3: Counts of stimulant overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by sex, 2020–2024**



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

## 4 Drug Overdose Deaths by Race and Ethnicity

The drug overdose mortality rate for non-Hispanic Black Kentucky residents surpassed the rate for non-Hispanic White Kentucky residents for the first time in 2021 and remained higher in 2024 (44.8 deaths per 100,000 non-Hispanic Black residents vs. 33.8 deaths per 100,000 non-Hispanic White residents). In 2024, non-Hispanic White decedents accounted for 85.8% of Kentucky resident drug overdose deaths, while non-Hispanic Black decedents accounted for 11.1% of deaths. Non-Hispanic White decedents made up 85.6% of all opioid drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents (23.4 deaths per 100,000 White residents) and 85.1% of all stimulant-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents (18.7 deaths per 100,000 White residents). The percentages of opioid and stimulant-involved overdose decedents who were non-Hispanic Black were 11.9% (33.5 deaths per 100,000 non-Hispanic Black residents) and 8.3% (25.7 deaths per 100,000 non-Hispanic Black residents), respectively. Hispanic decedents accounted for 1.7% of deaths, with a rate of 8.7 deaths per 100,000 Hispanic residents. The percentages of opioid and stimulant-involved overdose decedents who were Hispanic were 1.8% (7.4 deaths per 100,000 Hispanic residents) and 0.9% (3.8 deaths per 100,000 Hispanic residents), respectively.

The total number of drug overdose deaths among non-Hispanic White Kentucky residents decreased by 27.1% from 2023 to 2024 (from 1,693 deaths to 1,235 deaths). For that same time period, opioid overdose deaths among non-Hispanic White Kentucky residents decreased by 35.9% (from 1,302 deaths in 2023 to 834 deaths in 2024), while stimulant-involved overdose deaths among non-Hispanic White Kentucky residents decreased by 25.4% (from 899 deaths to 671 deaths). The total number of drug overdose deaths among non-Hispanic Black Kentucky residents decreased by 36.7% (from 267 deaths in 2023 to 169 deaths in 2024). For that same time period, opioid overdose deaths among non-Hispanic Black Kentucky residents decreased by 44.2% (from 226 deaths in 2023 to 126 deaths in 2024), while stimulant-involved overdose deaths among non-Hispanic Black Kentucky residents decreased by 40.7% (from 167 deaths in 2023 to 99 deaths in 2024). Among Hispanic Kentucky residents, the total number of drug overdose deaths decreased by 58.1% (from 43 deaths in 2023 to 18 deaths in 2024). For that same time period, opioid overdose deaths among Hispanic Kentucky residents decreased by 57.1% (from 35 deaths in 2023 to 15 deaths in 2024), while stimulant-involved overdose deaths among Hispanic Kentucky residents fell by 61.9% (from 21 deaths in 2023 to 8 deaths in 2024).

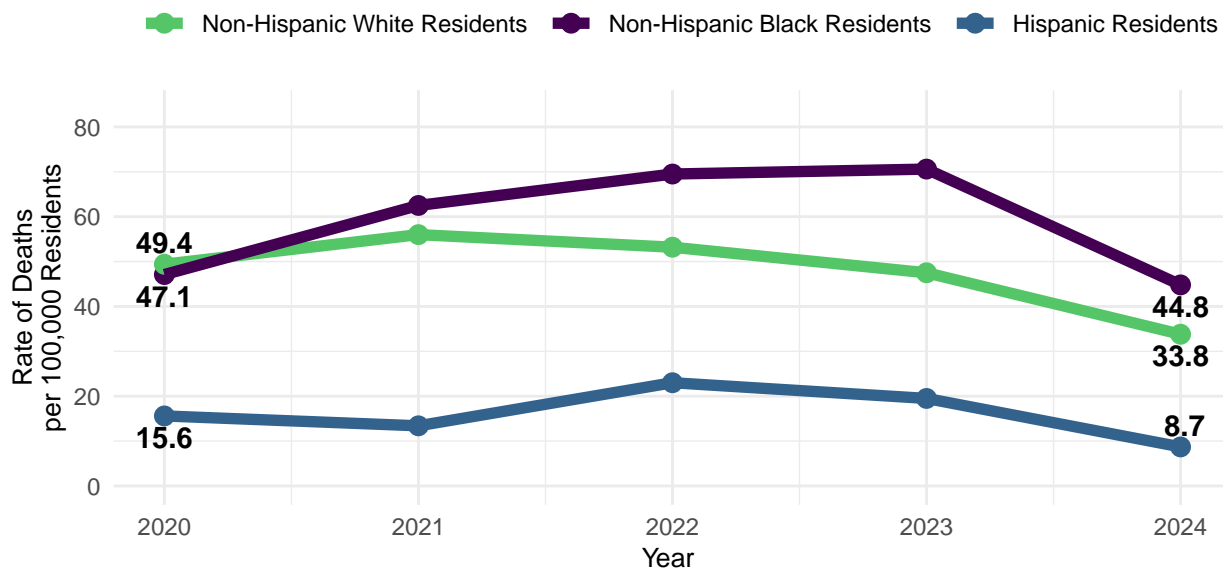
**Table 4.1: Counts and age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by ethnicity and race, 2020–2024**

Ethnicity/ Race	Year	Any Drug		Any Opioid		Any Stimulant	
		Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate
Hispanic	2020	25	15.6	18	10.7	8	*
	2021	29	13.4	26	12.1	13	6.1
	2022	49	23.0	42	19.7	21	10.1
	2023	43	19.5	35	15.5	21	9.6
	2024	18	8.7	15	7.4	8	*
Non-Hispanic Black	2020	172	47.1	141	38.7	90	25.1
	2021	233	62.5	200	53.5	138	36.1
	2022	258	69.5	219	59.3	145	39.0
	2023	267	70.6	226	59.6	167	44.0
	2024	171	44.8	127	33.5	99	25.7
Non-Hispanic White	2020	1,765	49.4	1,433	40.7	728	21.0
	2021	1,984	56.0	1,563	44.6	997	28.8
	2022	1,878	53.2	1,431	41.0	977	28.2
	2023	1,694	47.5	1,302	37.2	900	25.7
	2024	1,236	33.8	835	23.4	672	18.7

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

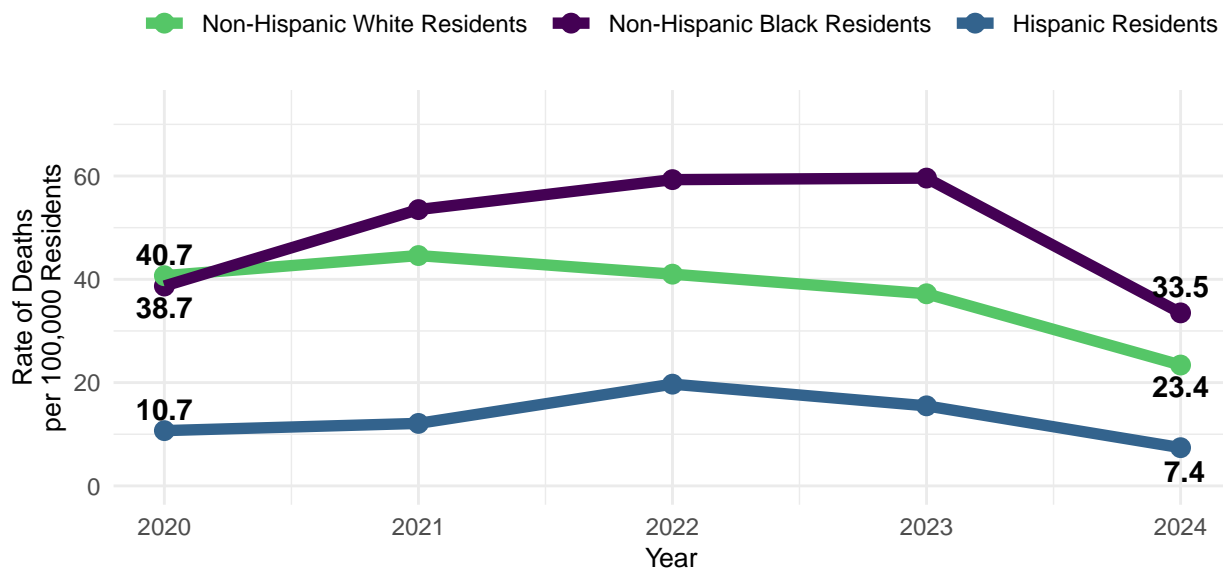
\* Rates based on counts less than 10 have been suppressed in accordance with state data management policy.

**Figure 4.1: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by ethnicity and race, 2020–2024**



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

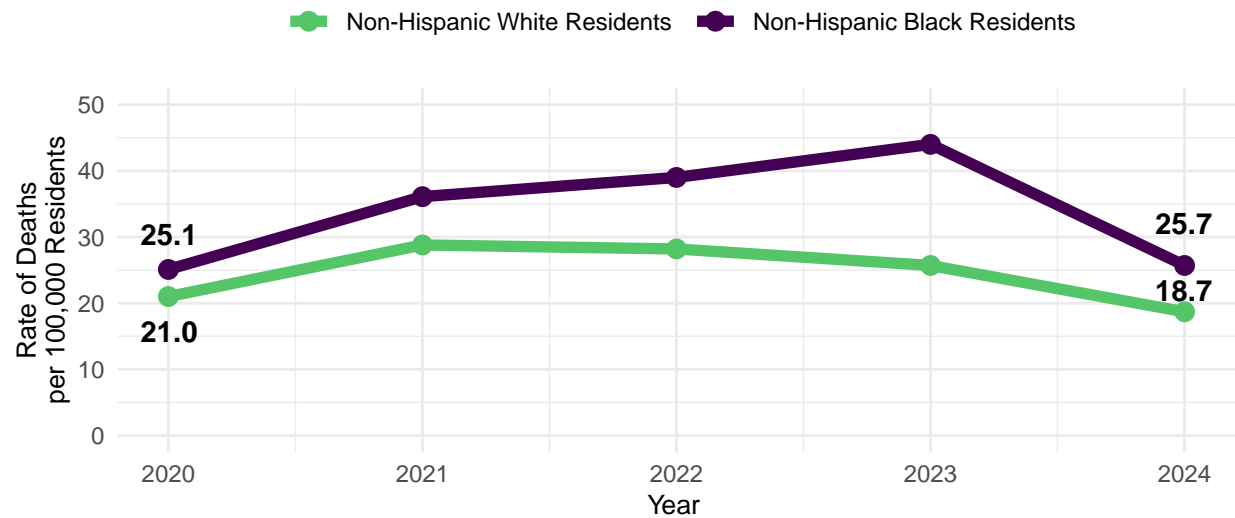
**Figure 4.2: Age-adjusted rates of opioid overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by ethnicity and race, 2020–2024**



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.



**Figure 4.3: Age-adjusted rates of stimulant overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by ethnicity and race, 2020–2024**



Hispanic decedents and decedents of other races were excluded from this graph as their rates were not reportable for some of the five years due to low counts of deaths (n=100 for the period of 2020–2024). Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

# 5 Drug Overdose Deaths by Age Group

## 5.1 All Ages

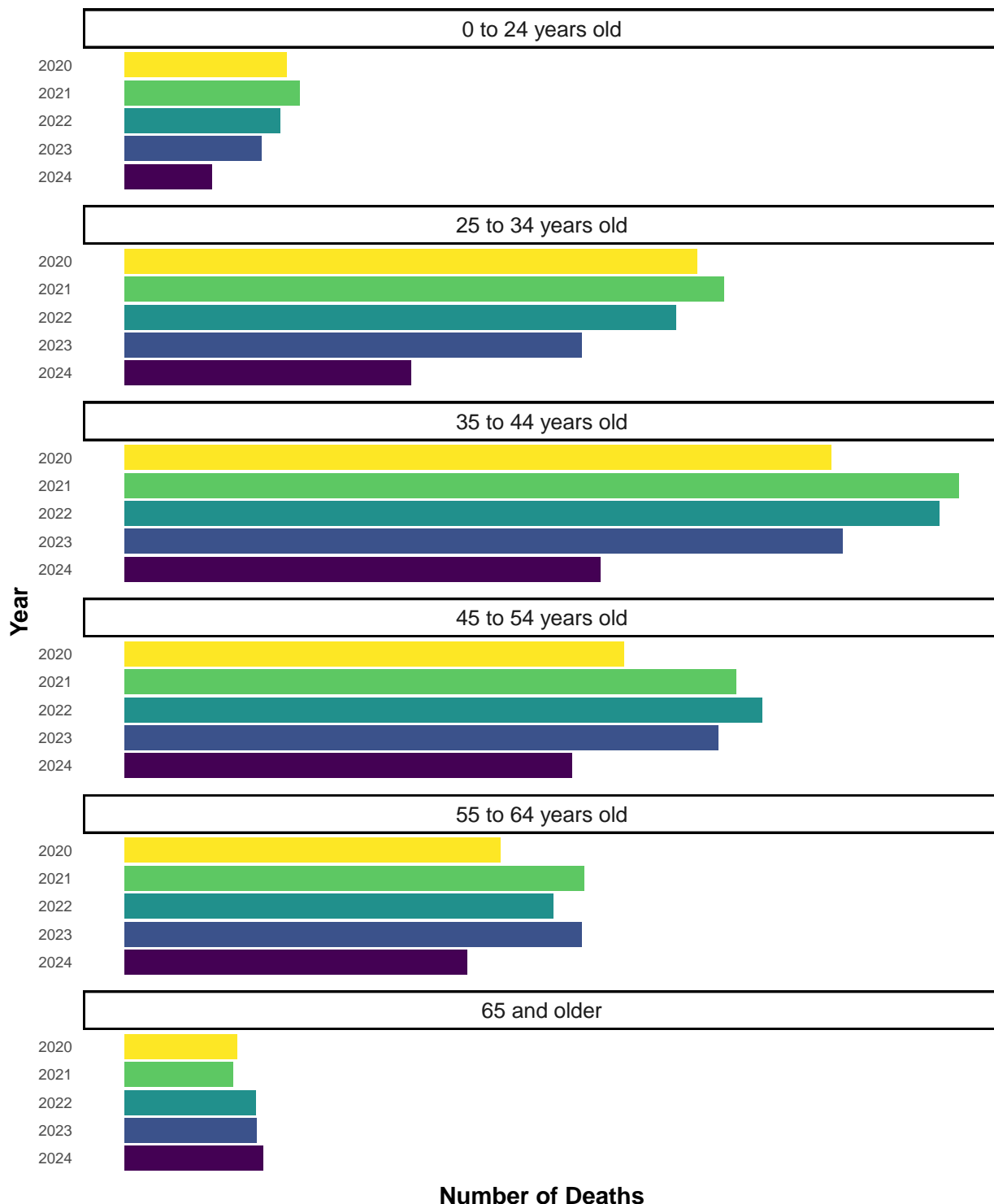
In 2024, the greatest number of drug overdose deaths involved decedents who were 35 to 44 years old, with 385 deaths representing 27% of the total drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents. This is a decrease of 34% from the 581 drug overdose deaths involving decedents 35 to 44 years old in 2023. Decedents who were 45 to 54 years old made up the second-largest age group represented among drug overdose deaths, with 362 deaths and representing 25% of the total drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents in 2024.

**Table 5.1.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by age group, 2020–2024**

Age Group	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
0 to 24 years old	131	142	126	111	71
25 to 34 years old	463	485	446	370	232
35 to 44 years old	572	675	659	581	385
45 to 54 years old	404	495	516	480	362
55 to 64 years old	304	372	347	370	277
65 and older	91	88	106	107	112

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Figure 5.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by age group, 2020–2024**



**Number of Deaths**

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

## 5.2 Persons 24 and Younger

Of the drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents in 2024, 71 deaths (4.9%) involved a decedent aged 24 or younger. This is a decrease of 36% from the 111 deaths involving a decedent aged 24 or younger in 2023. Consistent with previous years, of all decedents aged 24 or younger who died from a drug overdose in 2024, persons who were 19 to 24 years old made up the majority of drug overdose deaths, with 54 deaths (76.1% of deaths in 2024 involving a person aged 24 or younger). The age group with the second highest number of drug overdose deaths were persons 10 to 18 years old, with 11 deaths (15.5% of the deaths in 2024 involving a person aged 24 or younger). Over the five-year period from 2020 to 2024, the majority of drug overdose deaths among persons aged 24 or younger involved fentanyl, with 477 deaths, followed by methamphetamine, with 134 deaths. Benzodiazepines were involved in 71 deaths.

**Table 5.2.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents 24 years old and younger by age group, 2020–2024**

Age Group	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
0 to 9 years old	<5	<5	7	9	6
10 to 18 years old	11	20	16	15	11
19 to 24 years old	118	119	103	87	54

Counts greater than zero but less than five have been suppressed in accordance with state data management policy. For some years, the age group with the next lowest number has been censored to protect a suppressed value. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Table 5.2.2: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents 24 years old and younger by age group and drug type, 2020–2024**

<b>Drug Type</b>	<b>0 to 9 years old</b>	<b>10 to 18 years old</b>	<b>19 to 24 years old</b>
Heroin	<5	<5	11
Prescription Opioids	<5	6	49
Fentanyl	21	55	401
Unspecified Opioids	0	<5	18
Cocaine	<5	<5	51
Methamphetamine	<5	10	123
Benzodiazepines	0	9	62
Cannabis	<5	10	51

Counts greater than zero but less than five have been suppressed in accordance with state data management policy. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

# 6 Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug Type

## 6.1 Overview of Drug Types

*Please note:* Drug type categories presented in this report are not mutually exclusive. If a death certificate includes codes for multiple drug types, that overdose will be counted for each of the drug types. For this reason, adding the counts for each drug type will not provide the total count of overdoses.

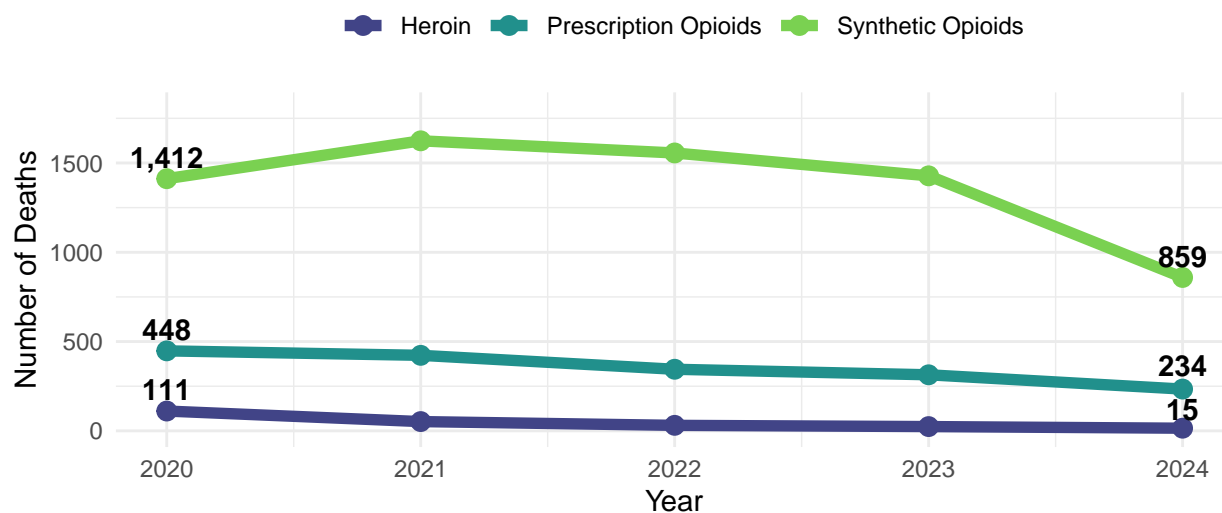
Of the 1,439 drug overdose deaths in 2024, heroin was listed as being involved in 15 deaths (1%), a decrease of 37.5% from the 24 deaths in 2023. An opioid other than heroin was listed as being involved in 985 (68.5%) of the drug overdose deaths in 2024, a decrease of 37.2% from the 1,569 deaths in 2023. Drug overdose deaths involving benzodiazapines decreased by 7%, from 229 deaths in 2023 to 213 deaths in 2024, representing 14.8% of the drug overdose deaths in 2024. There were 191 drug overdose deaths involving cocaine in 2024, a decrease of 32% from the 281 deaths in 2023. Finally, drug overdose deaths involving other psychostimulants decreased by 26.6%, from 880 deaths in 2023 to 646 in 2024, representing 44.9% of the drug overdose deaths in 2024.

**Table 6.1.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by drug type, 2020–2024**

Drug Type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Heroin	111	52	31	24	15
Prescription Opioids	448	423	345	314	234
Synthetic Opioids	1,412	1,624	1,556	1,428	859
Unspecified Opioids	51	50	37	48	43
Cocaine	166	220	227	281	191
Other Psychostimulants	702	991	986	880	646
Benzodiazepines	308	307	252	229	213
Cannabis	80	105	114	83	65

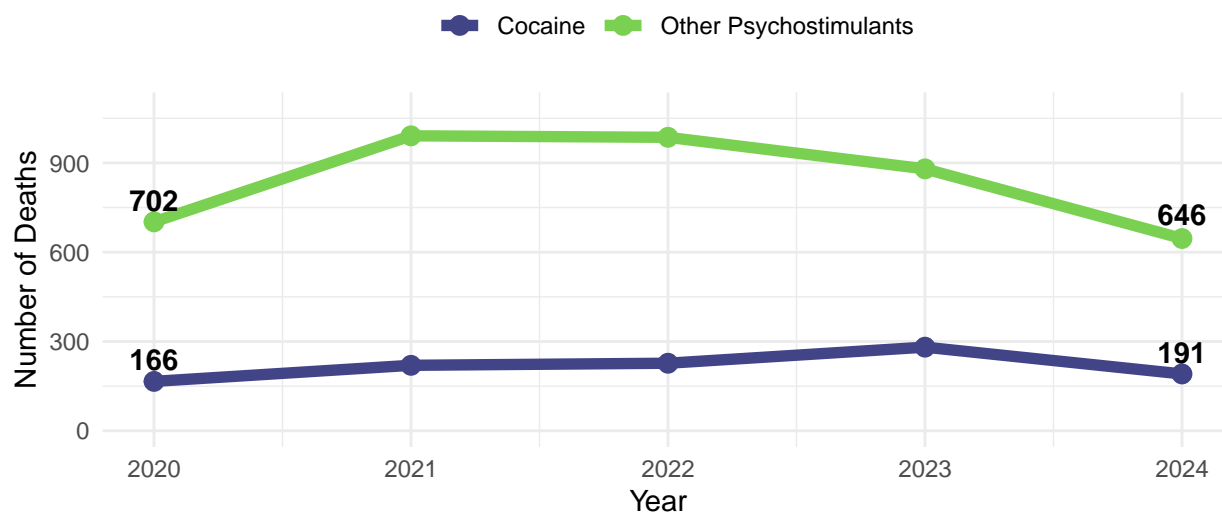
Drug type categories are not mutually exclusive. If a drug overdose death includes codes for multiple drug types, it will be included in each category. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Figure 6.1.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by opioid type, 2020–2024**



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Figure 6.1.2: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by stimulant type, 2020–2024**



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

# 6.2 Fentanyl

Fentanyl was involved in 829 (57.6%) of the 1,439 drug overdose deaths in 2024. This is a decrease of 41.1% from the 1,408 deaths in 2023. In 2024, the average age for a person who died from a fentanyl overdose was 42.1 years, which is lower than the average age for drug overdose deaths involving all drugs of 45.7 years.

The Kentucky counties with the highest counts of fentanyl-involved drug overdose deaths in 2024 were 1) Jefferson, with 269 deaths; 2) Fayette, with 64 deaths; 3) Kenton, with 31 deaths; 4) Madison, with 30 deaths; and 5) Boyd, with 22 deaths.

Meanwhile, the Kentucky counties with the highest age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl in 2024 were 1) Breathitt, with 83.3 deaths per 100,000 residents; 2) Harlan, with 61.5 deaths per 100,000 residents; 3) Rowan, with 58.4 deaths per 100,000 residents; 4) Boyd, with 46.5 deaths per 100,000 residents; and 5) Clark, with 38.6 deaths per 100,000 residents.

Two Kentucky counties had reportable percentage increases in the number of fentanyl-involved drug overdose deaths from 2023 to 2024: 1 Harlan, with a 55.6% increase from 9 deaths in 2023 to 14 deaths in 2024; and 2)McCracken, with a 28.6% increase from 7 deaths in 2023 to 9 deaths in 2024.

**Table 6.2.1: Number of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents involving fentanyl, 2020–2024**

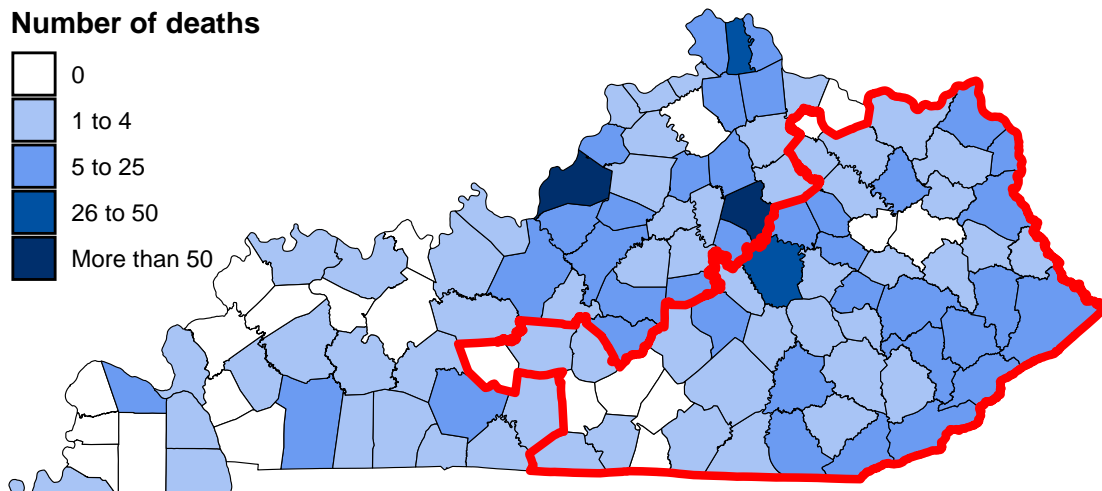
Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Fentanyl	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Fentanyl
2020	1,965	1,354	68.9%
2021	2,257	1,569	69.5%
2022	2,200	1,524	69.3%
2023	2,020	1,408	69.7%
2024	1,439	829	57.6%

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.



**Figure 6.2.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl by Kentucky county of residence, 2024**

Red line denotes Appalachian counties



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

To access a complete table of the counts of drug overdose deaths that involved fentanyl for each Kentucky county, please visit: <https://kiprc.uky.edu/resources>.

**Table 6.2.2: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl among Kentucky residents by sex, 2020–2024**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Drug Overdose Deaths</b>	<b>Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Fentanyl</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Fentanyl</b>
Female	2020	607	376	61.9%
	2021	740	494	66.8%
	2022	753	482	64.0%
	2023	663	419	63.2%
	2024	510	277	54.3%
Male	2020	1,358	978	72.0%
	2021	1,517	1,075	70.9%
	2022	1,447	1,042	72.0%
	2023	1,357	989	72.9%
	2024	929	552	59.4%

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Table 6.2.3: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl among Kentucky residents by race and ethnicity, 2020–2024**

<b>Race/ Ethnicity</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Drug Overdose Deaths</b>	<b>Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Fentanyl</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Fentanyl</b>
Non-Hispanic White	2020	1,765	1,209	68.5%
	2021	1,984	1,346	67.8%
	2022	1,878	1,258	67.0%
	2023	1,694	1,146	67.7%
	2024	1,236	682	55.2%
Non-Hispanic Black	2020	172	128	74.4%
	2021	233	190	81.5%
	2022	258	211	81.8%
	2023	267	216	80.9%
	2024	171	123	71.9%
Hispanic	2020	25	15	60.0%
	2021	29	26	89.7%
	2022	49	41	83.7%
	2023	43	33	76.7%
	2024	18	15	83.3%

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Table 6.2.4: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl among Kentucky residents by age group, 2020–2024**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Drug Overdose Deaths</b>	<b>Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Fentanyl</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Fentanyl</b>
0 to 24	2020	131	101	77.1%
	2021	142	117	82.4%
	2022	126	108	85.7%
	2023	111	94	84.7%
	2024	71	57	80.3%
25 to 34	2020	463	399	86.2%
	2021	485	395	81.4%
	2022	446	355	79.6%
	2023	370	294	79.5%
	2024	232	179	77.2%
35 to 44	2020	572	422	73.8%
	2021	675	507	75.1%
	2022	659	496	75.3%
	2023	581	445	76.6%
	2024	385	263	68.3%
45 to 54	2020	404	234	57.9%
	2021	495	323	65.3%
	2022	516	317	61.4%
	2023	480	326	67.9%
	2024	362	177	48.9%
55 to 64	2020	304	169	55.6%
	2021	372	202	54.3%
	2022	347	207	59.7%
	2023	370	215	58.1%
	2024	277	121	43.7%
65+	2020	91	29	31.9%
	2021	88	25	28.4%
	2022	106	41	38.7%
	2023	107	34	31.8%
	2024	112	32	28.6%

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Table 6.2.5: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl among Kentucky residents by Appalachian region, 2020–2024**

Region	Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Fentanyl	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Fentanyl
Appalachian <sup>1</sup>	2020	564	331	58.7%
	2021	748	458	61.2%
	2022	718	431	60.0%
	2023	706	455	64.4%
	2024	491	255	51.9%
Non-Appalachian	2020	1,401	1,023	73.0%
	2021	1,509	1,111	73.6%
	2022	1,482	1,093	73.8%
	2023	1,314	953	72.5%
	2024	948	574	60.5%

<sup>1</sup> The Appalachian residence includes the Kentucky counties of Adair, Bath, Bell, Boyd, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Edmonson, Elliott, Estill, Fleming, Floyd, Garrard, Green, Greenup, Harlan, Hart, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lewis, Lincoln, McCreary, Madison, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Metcalfe, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Nicholas, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski, Robertson, Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Wayne, Whitley, and Wolfe.

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

### 6.3 Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine was involved in 576 (40%) of the 1,439 drug overdose deaths in 2024. This is a decrease of 26.2% from the 781 deaths in 2023. In 2024, the average age for a person who died from a drug overdose involving methamphetamine was 45.8 years, which is higher than the average age for drug overdose deaths involving all drugs of 45.7 years.

The Kentucky counties with the highest counts of methamphetamine-involved drug overdose deaths in 2024 were 1) Jefferson, with 120 deaths; 2) Fayette, with 23 deaths; 3) Madison, with 16 deaths; 4) Hardin, with 12 deaths; and 5) Harlan, with 12 deaths.

Meanwhile, the Kentucky counties with the highest age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine in 2024 were 1) Breathitt, with 78.4 deaths per 100,000 residents; 2) Knott, with 72.1 deaths per 100,000 residents; 3) Rowan, with 65.2 deaths per 100,000 residents; 4) Harlan, with 50.1 deaths per 100,000 residents; and 5) Pike, with 22.1 deaths per 100,000 residents.

Finally, the five Kentucky counties with the greatest reportable percentage increases in the number of methamphetamine-involved drug overdose deaths from 2023 to 2024 were 1) Lee, with a 40% increase from 5 deaths in 2023 to 7 deaths in 2024; 2) Clay, with a 28.6% increase from 7 deaths in 2023 to 9 deaths in 2024; 3) Knott, with a 25% increase from 8 deaths in 2023 to 10 deaths in 2024, 4) Harlan, with a 20% increase from 10 deaths in 2023 to 12 deaths in 2024; and 5) McCracken, with a 16.7% increase from 6 deaths in 2023 to 7 deaths in 2024.

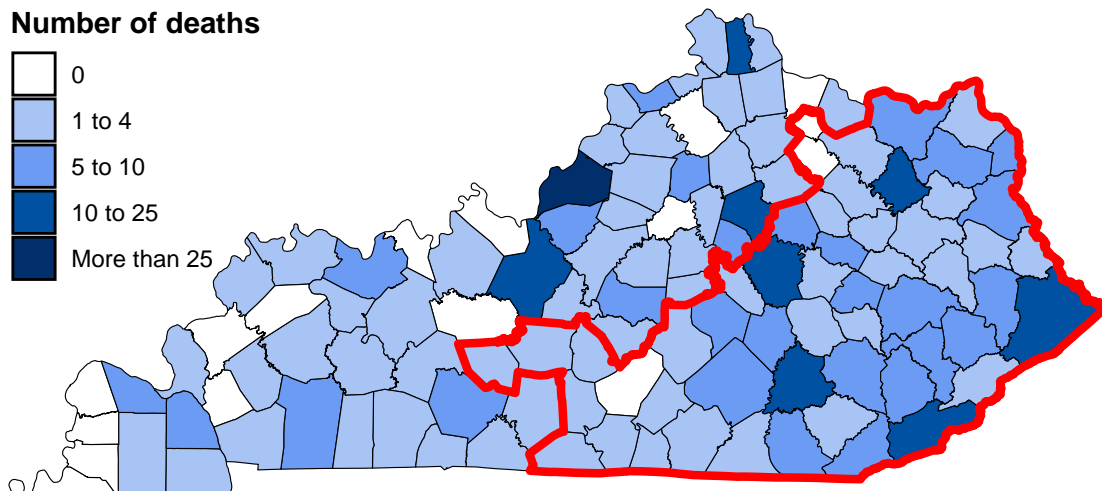
**Table 6.3.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents involving methamphetamine, 2020–2024**

Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Methamphetamine	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Methamphetamine
2020	1,965	579	29.5%
2021	2,257	859	38.1%
2022	2,200	866	39.4%
2023	2,020	781	38.7%
2024	1,439	576	40.0%

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Figure 6.3.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine by Kentucky county of residence, 2024**

Red line denotes Appalachian counties



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

To access a complete table of the counts of drug overdose deaths that involved methamphetamine for each Kentucky county, please visit: <https://kiprc.uky.edu/resources>.

**Table 6.3.3: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine among Kentucky residents by sex, 2020–2024**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Drug Overdose Deaths</b>	<b>Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Methamphetamine</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Methamphetamine</b>
Female	2020	607	167	27.5%
	2021	740	260	35.1%
	2022	753	285	37.8%
	2023	663	237	35.7%
	2024	510	167	32.7%
Male	2020	1,358	412	30.3%
	2021	1,517	599	39.5%
	2022	1,447	581	40.2%
	2023	1,357	544	40.1%
	2024	929	409	44.0%

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.



**Table 6.3.4: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine among Kentucky residents by race and ethnicity, 2020–2024**

<b>Race/ Ethnicity</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Drug Overdose Deaths</b>	<b>Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Methamphetamine</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Methamphetamine</b>
Non-Hispanic White	2020	1,765	536	30.4%
	2021	1,984	789	39.8%
	2022	1,878	789	42.0%
	2023	1,694	698	41.2%
	2024	1,236	529	42.8%
Non-Hispanic Black	2020	172	39	22.7%
	2021	233	65	27.9%
	2022	258	62	24.0%
	2023	267	65	24.3%
	2024	171	38	22.2%
Hispanic	2020	25	<5	N/A
	2021	29	<5	N/A
	2022	49	9	18.4%
	2023	43	11	25.6%
	2024	18	<5	N/A

Counts greater than zero but less than five have been suppressed in accordance with state data management policy. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Table 6.3.5: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine among Kentucky residents by age group, 2020–2024**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Drug Overdose Deaths</b>	<b>Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Methamphetamine</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Methamphetamine</b>
0 to 24	2020	131	30	22.9%
	2021	142	38	26.8%
	2022	126	25	19.8%
	2023	111	27	24.3%
	2024	71	14	19.7%
25 to 34	2020	463	135	29.2%
	2021	485	189	39.0%
	2022	446	168	37.7%
	2023	370	132	35.7%
	2024	232	91	39.2%
35 to 44	2020	572	192	33.6%
	2021	675	295	43.7%
	2022	659	296	44.9%
	2023	581	260	44.8%
	2024	385	164	42.6%
45 to 54	2020	404	140	34.7%
	2021	495	203	41.0%
	2022	516	219	42.4%
	2023	480	191	39.8%
	2024	362	172	47.5%
55 to 64	2020	304	68	22.4%
	2021	372	120	32.3%
	2022	347	132	38.0%
	2023	370	148	40.0%
	2024	277	104	37.5%
65+	2020	91	14	15.4%
	2021	88	14	15.9%
	2022	106	26	24.5%
	2023	107	23	21.5%
	2024	112	31	27.7%

Counts greater than zero but less than five have been suppressed in accordance with state data management policy. For some years, the age group with the next lowest number has been censored to protect a suppressed value. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Table 6.3.6: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine among Kentucky residents by Appalachian region, 2020–2024**

Region	Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Methamphetamine	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Methamphetamine
Appalachian <sup>1</sup>	2020	564	192	34.0%
	2021	748	332	44.4%
	2022	718	318	44.3%
	2023	706	318	45.0%
	2024	491	248	50.5%
Non-Appalachian	2020	1,401	387	27.6%
	2021	1,509	527	34.9%
	2022	1,482	548	37.0%
	2023	1,314	463	35.2%
	2024	948	328	34.6%

<sup>1</sup> The Appalachian region includes the Kentucky counties of Adair, Bath, Bell, Boyd, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Edmonson, Elliott, Estill, Fleming, Floyd, Garrard, Green, Greenup, Harlan, Hart, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lewis, Lincoln, McCreary, Madison, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Metcalfe, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Nicholas, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski, Robertson, Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Wayne, Whitley, and Wolfe.

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

# 6.4 Polysubstance

In 2024, 93.6% of drug overdoses that involved fentanyl also involved at least one additional type of drug. The most common drugs listed alongside fentanyl among those who died in 2024 were 1) methamphetamine, with 333 deaths; 2) cocaine, with 134 deaths; and 3) benzodiazepines, with 133 deaths. Similarly, 82.8% of drug overdose deaths that involved methamphetamine, 92.7% of drug overdose deaths that involved cocaine, and 94.4% of drug overdose deaths that involved a prescription opioid also involved at least one additional type of drug. Due to the unique pharmacology of the drugs, 100% of drug overdose deaths that involved a benzodiazepine and 96.9% of drug overdose deaths that involved cannabis also involved alcohol or at least one other type of drug.

**Table 6.4.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents involving fentanyl with the presence of additional drugs, 2020–2024**

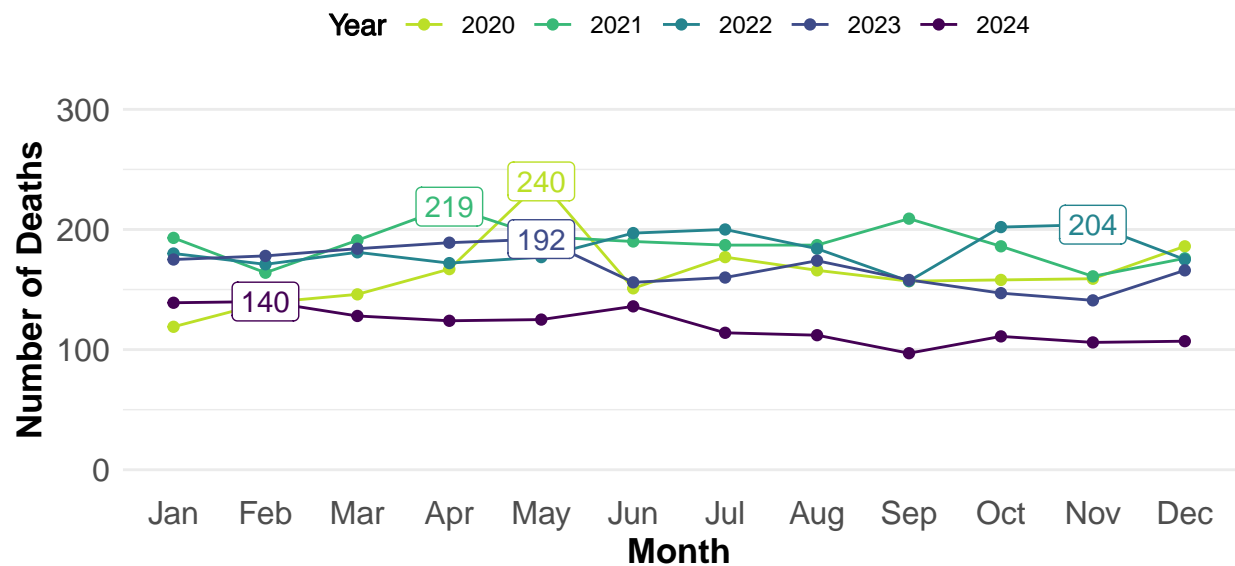
Drug Type(s)	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Fentanyl	1,354	1,569	1,524	1,408	829
Methamphetamine	394	605	596	570	333
Cocaine	124	180	191	231	134
Prescription Opioids	280	252	206	181	110
Heroin	100	46	26	15	13
Benzodiazepines	200	211	164	157	133
Cannabis	63	89	91	70	43
Other Drugs	1,165	1,315	1,249	1,182	721
Fentanyl Only	107	132	131	120	53

Drug types are not mutually exclusive. A fentanyl overdose that involves multiple additional drugs will be counted in each relevant drug category. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

# 7 Drug Overdose Deaths by Month

In 2024, February saw the highest number of drug overdose deaths, at 140. This was a decrease of 27.1% from the highest monthly number of drug overdose deaths in 2023, which occurred in May with 192 deaths.

Figure 7.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by month, 2020–2024



Labeled values display the maximum monthly number for each year.  
Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data are provisional and subject to change. Data extracted January 2026.

## 8 Drug Overdose Deaths by Intent

Consistent with previous years, the majority of drug overdose deaths in 2024 were unintentional, with 1,361 deaths or 94.6% of all drug overdose deaths that year. Suicide was the documented intent for 54 (3.8%) of the drug overdose deaths in 2024, a 6.9% decrease from the 58 deaths in 2023.

**Table 8.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents, by intent, 2020–2024**

Intent	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Unintentional	1,900	2,175	2,114	1,923	1,361
Suicide	39	47	60	58	54
Homicide	0	0	<5	0	0
Undetermined Intent	26	35	24	39	24

Counts greater than zero but less than five have been suppressed in accordance with state data management policy. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

# 9 Drug Overdose Deaths by Pregnancy Status

Kentucky death certificates use a checkbox system for reporting pregnancy status among female decedents. While this system is effective at identifying pregnancy-related and maternal deaths, it has been shown to be less complete when the cause of death is accidental, including deaths involving a drug overdose.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, the counts presented in the table below are likely an undercount of the total number of drug overdose deaths that occurred during a pregnancy or within one year from a pregnancy.

**Table 9.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by pregnancy status, 2020–2024**

Pregnancy Status	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Pregnant at Time of Death	6	10	6	<5	<5
Pregnant within One Year of Death	6	<5	11	<5	<5
Unknown Pregnancy Status	164	224	234	219	146

Counts greater than zero but less than five have been suppressed in accordance with state data management policy. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

<sup>1</sup>Horon IL, Cheng D. Effectiveness of pregnancy check boxes on death certificates in identifying pregnancy-associated mortality. *Public Health Reports*. 2011;126(20):195-200. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3056032/>

# 10 Drug Overdose Deaths by Armed Forces Status

In 2024, a total of 61 active duty military and veteran Kentucky residents died from a drug overdose. This was a decrease of 49.6% from the 121 drug overdose deaths among active duty military and veteran Kentucky residents in 2024. Of those drug overdose deaths among active duty military and veteran Kentucky residents in 2024, at least one type of opioid was involved in 73.8% of those deaths while 52.5% involved at least one type of stimulant.

**Table 10.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by armed forces status, 2020–2024**

Armed Forces Status	Drug Type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Civilian	All Drugs	1,845	2,118	2,082	1,899	1,378
	Any Opioid	1,503	1,692	1,615	1,491	942
	Any Stimulant	774	1,080	1,092	1,034	753
Veteran or Active Duty	All Drugs	120	139	118	121	61
	Any Opioid	91	107	91	86	45
	Any Stimulant	53	71	59	65	32

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.



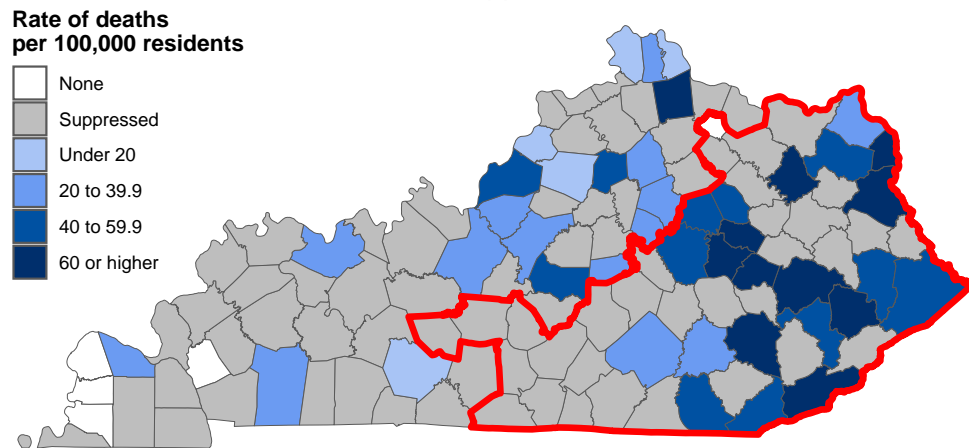
# 11 Drug Overdose Deaths by County of Residence

To access a complete table of the counts of all drug overdose deaths by drug type for each Kentucky county, please visit: <https://kiprc.uky.edu/resources>.

## 11.1 County Maps

**Figure 11.1.1: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2024**

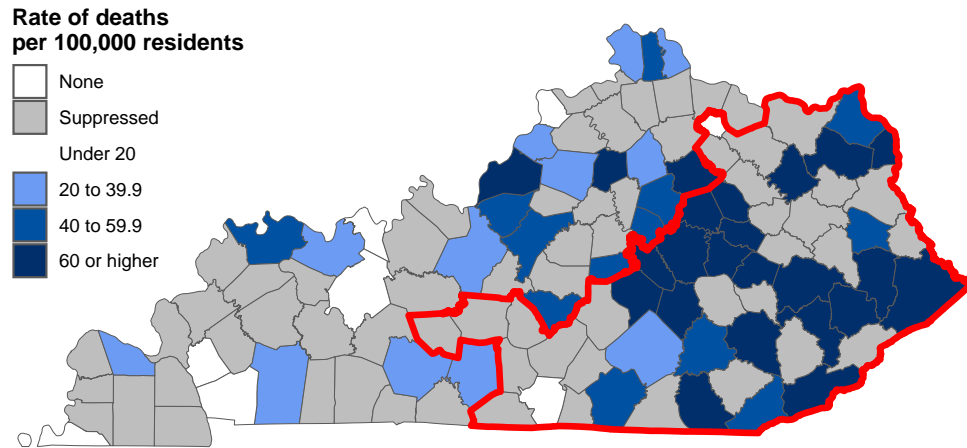
Red line denotes Appalachian counties



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Figure 11.1.2: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2023**

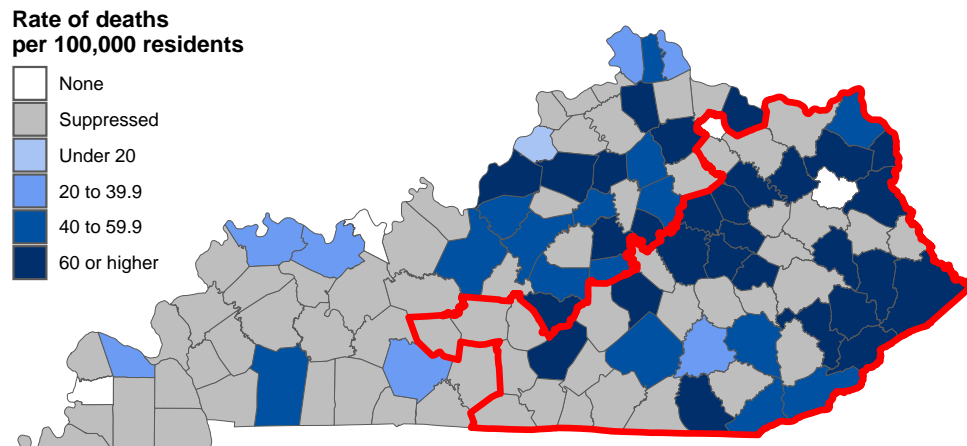
Red line denotes Appalachian counties



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**Figure 11.1.3: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2022**

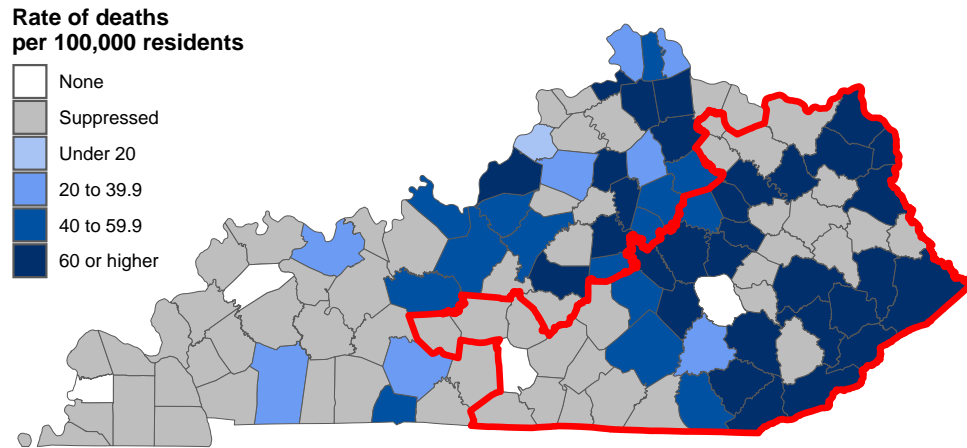
Red line denotes Appalachian counties



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**Figure 11.1.4: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2021**

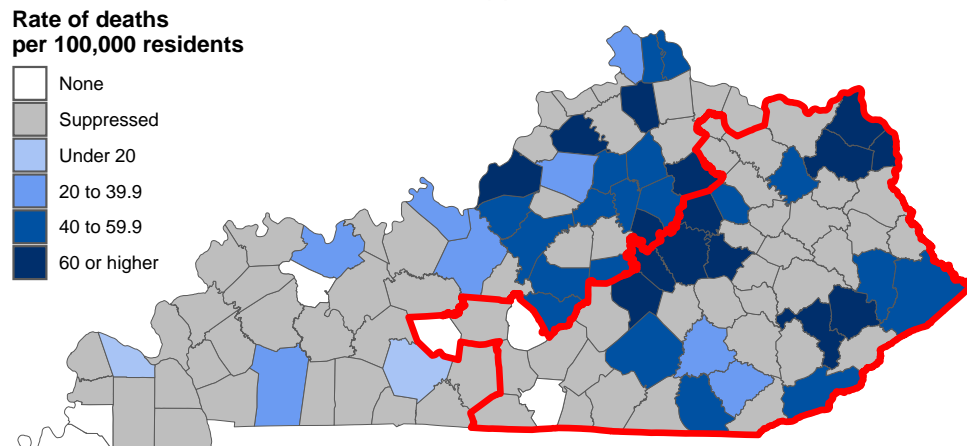
Red line denotes Appalachian counties



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Figure 11.1.5: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2020**

Red line denotes Appalachian counties



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

## 11.2 Appalachian Counties

In 2024, counties in the Appalachian region of Kentucky experienced a drug overdose mortality rate of 43.8 deaths per 100,000 residents. This was a decrease from the 63.9 deaths per 100,000 residents in 2023 and higher than the rate for non-Appalachian counties in 2024 of 28.8 deaths per 100,000 residents. Of the drug overdose deaths that occurred among residents of Appalachian counties in 2024, 325 (66.2%) involved at least one type of opioid and 299 (60.9%) involved at least one type of stimulant. Of the drug overdose deaths that occurred among residents of non-Appalachian counties in 2024, 662 (69.8%) involved at least one type of opioid and 486 (51.3%) involved at least one type of stimulant.

*Note:* The Appalachian region in Kentucky includes the counties of Adair, Bath, Bell, Boyd, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Edmonson, Elliott, Estill, Fleming, Floyd, Garrard, Green, Greenup, Harlan, Hart, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lewis, Lincoln, McCreary, Madison, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Metcalfe, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Nicholas, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski, Robertson, Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Wayne, Whitley, and Wolfe.

**Table 11.2.1: Counts and rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by Appalachian region, 2020–2024**

Region	Year	All Drugs		All Opioids		All Stimulants	
		Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate
Appalachian <sup>1</sup>	2020	564	51.0	425	39.4	257	24.1
	2021	748	68.4	555	51.5	418	39.6
	2022	718	65.9	506	47.2	386	36.5
	2023	706	63.9	525	48.4	393	36.3
	2024	491	43.8	325	29.7	299	27.1
Non-Appalachian	2020	1,401	43.9	1,169	36.9	570	18.2
	2021	1,509	47.4	1,244	39.3	733	23.2
	2022	1,482	46.7	1,200	38.1	765	24.3
	2023	1,314	40.7	1,052	33.1	706	22.1
	2024	948	28.8	662	20.5	486	14.8

<sup>1</sup> The Appalachian region includes the Kentucky counties of Adair, Bath, Bell, Boyd, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Edmonson, Elliott, Estill, Fleming, Floyd, Garrard, Green, Greenup, Harlan, Hart, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lewis, Lincoln, McCreary, Madison, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Metcalfe, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Nicholas, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski, Robertson, Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Wayne, Whitley, or Wolfe.

Rates are presented as the number of deaths per 100,000 population. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted January 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

**Table 11.2.2: Number of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by Appalachian region and drug type, 2020–2024**

Region	Drug Type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Appalachian <sup>1</sup>	Heroin	22	10	10	9	5
	Prescription Opioids	163	165	119	123	103
	Synthetic Opioids	357	487	450	464	270
	Unspecified Opioids	13	6	9	10	5
	Cocaine	21	27	23	34	19
	Other	242	401	372	371	286
	Psychostimulants					
	Benzodiazepines	86	119	101	85	68
	Cannabis	16	38	43	25	20
Non-Appalachian	Heroin	89	42	21	15	10
	Prescription Opioids	285	258	226	191	131
	Synthetic Opioids	1,055	1,137	1,106	964	589
	Unspecified Opioids	38	44	28	38	38
	Cocaine	145	193	204	247	172
	Other	460	590	614	509	360
	Psychostimulants					
	Benzodiazepines	222	188	151	144	145
	Cannabis	64	67	71	58	45

<sup>1</sup> The Appalachian region includes the Kentucky counties of Adair, Bath, Bell, Boyd, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Edmonson, Elliott, Estill, Fleming, Floyd, Garrard, Green, Greenup, Harlan, Hart, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lewis, Lincoln, McCreary, Madison, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Metcalfe, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Nicholas, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski, Robertson, Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Wayne, Whitley, and Wolfe.

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