3,163 Fentanyl-Positive Deaths, North Carolina Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) Toxicology Data: 2021^*

3,163 Fentanyl-Positive Deaths, 2021^*

Compared to 2,426 in 2020

^Deaths included in this report tested positive for fentanyl at the time of the death when toxicology testing was performed. Toxicology results are based on analytical testing of specimens performed by NC OCME Toxicology. The detection of fentanyl only indicates deaths with positive fentanyl toxicity results. The presence of fentanyl at time of death does not necessarily indicate fentanyl as the cause of death.

Data Source: NC OCME Toxicology data; NC OCME Toxicology is nationally accredited by the American Board of Forensic Toxicology, Inc. NC OCME Toxicology provides forensic analytical testing of specimens for all 100 counties of the statewide medical examiner system. Toxicology results are based on blood, vitreous fluid, or other specimens used for testing at the discretion of the pathologist and/or toxicologist.

Fentanyl-Positive Deaths: 2015-2021^*

Percent change: Year-to-date (YTD) fentanyl-positive deaths compared to YTD total of previous year.

Fentanyl-Positive Deaths: 2020-2021^*

Last 12 Months Polysubstance Use in Fentanyl-Positive Deaths^*

*2021 data are provisional and subject to change.

Categories are not mutually exclusive. Prescription drugs are defined as benzodiazepines and gabapentin/pregabalin. Other opioids include heroin, prescription opioids, and illicit opioids (excluding fentanyl). Fentanyl alone indicates that alcohol, cocaine, prescription drugs (benzodiazepines and gabapentin/pregabalin), methamphetamine, and other opioids were not present.

ocme.dhhs.nc.gov
5/13/2022
Demographics of Fentanyl-Positive Deaths Compared to Overall NC Population Estimates: 2021^*~

Deaths by Sex

- Female
- Male

Deaths by Age Group

- 15-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64

Deaths by Race/Ethnicity

- White NH
- Black NH
- Hispanic
- Asian NH
- AI/AN NH

*Data Sources: Toxicology Data—NC OCME Toxicology; Demographic Data—OCME medical examiner system; Population Data—U.S. Census Bureau, http://quickfacts.census.gov; 2021 data are considered provisional and should not be considered final.