

Injury Deaths to MA Residents

2021

Injuries are the leading cause of death for Massachusetts residents ages 1-44. In 2021, there were 5,496 injury deaths,¹ an increase of 10% over 2020. The leading mechanisms of injury deaths also increased over 2020 numbers: poisonings (12%), falls (13%), and motor vehicle traffic-related crashes (19%).

| Key Indicators | INJURY INTENT | | | | | Totals |
|--|---------------|---------|----------|--------------|---------------------------------------|--------|
| | Unintentional | Suicide | Homicide | Undetermined | Legal Intervention/Other ² | |
| Total Counts by Injury Intent | 4,636 | 605 | 161 | 83 | 11 | 5,496 |
| Percent by Intent | 84.4% | 11.0% | 2.9% | 1.5% | 0.2% | 100% |
| Rate per 100,000 population ³ | 65.9 | 8.6 | 2.3 | 1.2 | 0.2 | 78.2 |

| Injury Mechanism | Unintentional | Suicide | Homicide | Undetermined | Legal Intervention/Other ² | Subtotal Counts | Percent of Total ⁴ | Crude Rate per 100,000 ³ |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------|----------|--------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Cut/pierce | 1 | 24 | 30 | 1 | 0 | 56 | 1.0 | 0.8 |
| Drowning/submersion | 58 | 11 | 1 | 4 | | 74 | 1.3 | 1.1 |
| Fall | 1,142 | 33 | 0 | 1 | | 1,176 | 21.4 | 16.7 |
| Fire/burn | 36 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | 40 | 0.7 | 0.6 |
| Firearm | 0 | 136 | 99 | 3 | 9 | 247 | 4.5 | 3.5 |
| Machinery | 3 | | | | | 3 | -- | -- |
| Natural/environmental | 17 | | | | | 17 | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| Poisoning ⁵ | 2,534 | 131 | 1 | 38 | 0 | 2,704 | 49.2 | 38.5 |
| <i>Drug poisoning</i> | 2,464 | 93 | 1 | 35 | 0 | 2,593 | 47.2 | 36.9 |
| <i>Non-drug poisoning</i> | 70 | 38 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 111 | 2.0 | 1.6 |
| Struck by, against | 12 | | 4 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| Suffocation/hanging | 177 | 248 | 5 | 2 | | 432 | 7.9 | 6.1 |
| Transport Injuries ⁵ | 476 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 480 | 8.7 | 6.8 |
| <i>Motor vehicle traffic-related</i> | 446 | 3 | 0 | 0 | | 449 | 8.2 | 6.4 |
| <i>Occupant⁶</i> | 290 | 3 | 0 | 0 | | 293 | 5.3 | 4.2 |
| <i>Motorcyclist</i> | 66 | | | | | 66 | 1.2 | 0.9 |
| <i>Pedal cyclist</i> | 6 | | | | | 6 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| <i>Pedestrian</i> | 84 | | | | | 84 | 1.5 | 1.2 |
| <i>Pedal cyclist, other</i> | 0 | | | | | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Pedestrian, other</i> | 14 | | | | | 14 | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| <i>Other land transport</i> | 11 | | | 1 | | 12 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| <i>Other transport</i> | 5 | | | | | 5 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Other specified & classifiable | 27 | 15 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 45 | 0.8 | 0.6 |
| Other specified, not classifiable | 33 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 45 | 0.8 | 0.6 |
| Unspecified | 120 | 0 | 13 | 28 | 0 | 161 | 2.9 | 2.3 |

Source: Registry of Vital Records and Statistics, Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

1) Includes Massachusetts residents who died in or out-of-state. Non-MA residents are excluded. An injury-related fatality is defined as any death with an ICD-10 code of U01-U03 or V01-Y89 in the underlying cause field.

Counts may differ from other analyses (e.g., death report), due to slight definitional differences.

2) Legal Intervention/other includes fatalities resulting from police actions and operations of war.

3) Rates provided are crude rather than age-adjusted and may differ slightly from other department publications. Rates are not calculated on counts of less than five, and rates based on counts less than twenty may be unstable. Data used to calculate rates are based on small area population estimates from the Donahue Institute, MDPH, Bureau of Environmental Health; 2020 MA population 7,029,917 was used as a proxy, as 2021 estimates were unavailable.

4) Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

5) Transport includes several subcategories (shown in italics).

6) Includes motor vehicle drivers, passengers and unspecified persons.

• Injury categories are based on the CDC's "Recommended framework of E-code groupings for presenting injury mortality and morbidity data." This framework does not provide for intentionality for certain cause categories as indicated by gray shading.

• Data were extracted and compiled by the Injury Surveillance Program, MDPH, January 2023, Release Date: March 2023

