

County of Santa Clara

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MEDICAL EXAMINER - CORONER
COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA



TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
Jeffrey V. Smith, County Executive

FROM: Michelle A. Jordan MD, Chief Medical Examiner-Coroner *mag.*

SUBJECT: Off-Agenda Report: Number 34
Updated Information on Medical Examiner-Coroner Death Notices

DATE: December 12, 2022

The weekly number of deaths are provided in continuation from the prior reports (see data tables below).

Fentanyl fatalities from Jan 1, 2015 – November 30, 2022

Year	Count of Decedent	
2015	9	
2016	13	
2017	16*	*(1 case=San Benito)
2018	12*	*(1 case=San Benito)
2019	29*	*(2 case=San Benito)
2020	90*	*(2 case=San Benito)
2021	135*	*(4 case=San Benito)
2022	106*	*(2 case=San Benito)
Total	410**	

**Not all drug related deaths are closed in our system and this number will increase as we continue to certify deaths and close cases. Cases examined in late 2022 are expected to close in early months of 2023.

FENTANYL FATALITIES CONTINUE:

Fentanyl continues to take many lives in Santa Clara County. Fentanyl is an extremely potent opioid which can cause death at small doses (up to 80-100X more potent than morphine). Fentanyl is found in pills illegally sold and purchased on the streets which we term “fake pills”. Fentanyl is also available in powder form and can be mixed with other deadly drugs (i.e., cocaine, methamphetamine). As we are aware, Fentanyl is now available as a candy form in multiple colors. Most Fentanyl drug deaths in Santa Clara County continue to involve Fentanyl combined with other drugs, including methamphetamine. The Medical Examiner-Coroner has certified multiple deaths due to combined methamphetamine and fentanyl. Fentanyl can be ingested, smoked, injected and/or snorted. Continued education regarding the dangers of Fentanyl, particularly fentanyl-laced candy, is strongly encouraged.

COVID-19:

The ME-C is closely monitoring deaths due to COVID-19. This off-agenda report incorporates revised COVID-19 death statistics since the last report to incorporate prior pending and open cases which have since closed.

INCREASED CASELOAD HANDLED BY ME-C:

The number of cases examined by the ME-C has increased since 2019 (*please see below*). Although the number of deaths has slowed in 2022 when compared to last year, the number of deaths examined by the ME-C has remained consistently higher in 2022 when compared to 2019 numbers. We will continue to monitor the caseload as year-end approaches.

Summary tables are provided for your convenience:

Count of Decedent				
Month	2019	2020	2021	2022
Jan	364	353	965	528
Feb	303	354	543	470
Mar	325	405	421	375
Apr	275	441	317	321
May	288	360	345	381
Jun	287	334	300	353
Jul	258	339	313	422
Aug	304	398	376	345
Sep	256	391	429	368
Oct	322	343	396	362
Nov	286	432	363	416
Dec	341	845	424	
Grand Total	3609	4995	5192	4341

Weekly Case		Weekly Case		Weekly Case		Weekly Case	
Week	2019	Week	2020	Week	2021	Week	2022
1/14 - 1/5	63	1/1 - 1/4	45	1/1 - 1/2	73	1/1	13
1/6 - 1/12	87	1/5 - 1/11	83	1/3 - 1/9	223	1/2 - 1/8	103
1/13 - 1/19	85	1/12 - 1/18	80	1/10 - 1/16	245	1/9 - 1/15	106
1/20 - 1/26	74	1/19 - 1/25	81	1/17 - 1/23	210	1/16 - 1/22	139
1/27 - 2/2	76	1/26 - 2/1	76	1/24 - 1/30	186	1/23 - 1/29	131
2/3 - 2/9	60	2/2 - 2/8	94	1/31 - 2/6	172	1/30 - 2/5	133
2/10 - 2/16	83	2/9 - 2/15	85	2/7 - 2/13	159	2/6 - 2/12	122
2/17 - 2/23	87	2/16 - 2/22	84	2/14 - 2/20	129	2/13 - 2/19	115
2/24 - 3/2	80	2/23 - 2/29	79	2/21 - 2/27	104	2/20 - 2/26	113
3/3 - 3/9	68	3/1 - 3/7	84	2/28 - 3/6	81	2/27 - 3/5	89
3/10 - 3/16	76	3/8 - 3/14	82	3/7 - 3/13	111	3/6 - 3/12	89
3/17 - 3/23	80	3/15 - 3/21	97	3/14 - 3/20	73	3/13 - 3/19	78
3/24 - 3/30	66	3/22 - 3/28	98	3/21 - 3/27	120	3/20 - 3/26	76
3/31 - 4/6	55	3/29 - 4/4	100	3/28 - 4/3	71	3/27 - 4/2	88
4/7 - 4/13	81	4/5 - 4/11	125	4/4 - 4/10	69	4/3 - 4/9	79
4/14 - 4/20	62	4/12 - 4/18	109	4/11 - 4/17	78	4/10 - 4/16	77
4/21 - 4/27	60	4/19 - 4/25	86	4/18 - 4/24	77	4/17 - 4/23	66
4/28 - 5/4	56	4/26 - 5/2	85	4/25 - 5/1	78	4/24 - 4/30	77
5/5 - 5/11	51	5/3 - 5/9	99	5/2 - 5/8	83	5/1 - 5/7	73
5/12 - 5/18	61	5/10 - 5/16	72	5/9 - 5/15	61	5/8 - 5/14	100
5/19 - 5/25	86	5/17 - 5/23	70	5/16 - 5/22	76	5/15 - 5/21	74
5/26 - 6/1	67	5/24 - 5/30	86	5/23 - 5/29	87	5/22 - 5/28	89
6/2 - 6/8	67	5/31 - 6/6	84	5/30 - 6/5	63	5/29 - 6/4	92
6/9 - 6/15	68	6/7 - 6/13	66	6/6 - 6/12	75	6/5 - 6/11	78
6/16 - 6/22	63	6/14 - 6/20	76	6/13 - 6/19	86	6/12 - 6/18	78
6/23 - 6/29	75	6/21 - 6/27	81	6/20 - 6/26	68	6/19 - 6/25	78
6/30 - 7/6	55	6/28 - 7/4	76	6/27 - 7/3	55	6/26 - 7/2	107
7/7 - 7/13	61	7/5 - 7/11	74	7/4 - 7/10	70	7/3 - 7/9	82
7/14 - 7/20	58	7/12 - 7/18	84	7/11 - 7/17	69	7/10 - 7/16	104
7/21 - 7/27	57	7/19 - 7/25	81	7/18 - 7/24	72	7/17 - 7/23	92
7/28 - 8/3	59	7/26 - 8/1	78	7/25 - 7/31	80	7/24 - 7/30	94
8/4 - 8/10	63	8/2 - 8/8	68	8/1 - 8/7	84	7/31 - 8/6	94
8/11 - 8/17	66	8/9 - 8/15	84	8/8 - 8/14	82	8/7 - 8/13	71
8/18 - 8/24	69	8/16 - 8/22	106	8/15 - 8/21	76	8/14 - 8/20	77
8/25 - 8/31	79	8/23 - 8/29	93	8/22 - 8/28	97	8/21 - 8/27	77
9/1 - 9/7	46	8/30 - 9/5	92	8/29 - 9/4	88	8/28 - 9/3	79
9/8 - 9/14	65	9/6 - 9/12	92	9/5 - 9/11	115	9/4 - 9/10	95
9/15 - 9/21	60	9/13 - 9/19	106	9/12 - 9/18	106	9/11 - 9/17	79
9/22 - 9/28	71	9/20 - 9/26	82	9/19 - 9/25	93	9/18 - 9/24	78
9/29 - 10/5	64	9/27 - 10/3	83	9/26 - 10/2	87	9/25 - 10/1	85
10/6 - 10/12	56	10/4 - 10/10	65	10/3 - 10/9	98	10/2 - 10/8	82
10/13 - 10/19	88	10/11 - 10/17	75	10/10 - 10/16	85	10/9 - 10/15	78
10/20 - 10/26	75	10/18 - 10/24	81	10/17 - 10/23	94	10/16 - 10/22	85
10/27 - 11/2	68	10/25 - 10/31	91	10/24 - 10/30	86	10/23 - 10/29	80
11/3 - 11/9	78	11/1 - 11/7	88	10/31 - 11/6	74	10/30 - 11/5	110
11/10 - 11/16	58	11/8 - 11/14	83	11/7 - 11/13	102	11/6 - 11/12	84
11/17 - 11/23	55	11/15 - 11/21	123	11/14 - 11/20	80	11/13 - 11/19	108
11/24 - 11/30	80	11/22 - 11/28	103	11/21 - 11/27	81	11/20 - 11/26	94
12/1 - 12/7	103	11/29 - 12/5	113	11/28 - 12/4	84	11/27 - 11/30	50
12/8 - 12/14	62	12/6 - 12/12	160	12/5 - 12/11	93		
12/15 - 12/21	68	12/13 - 12/19	195	12/12 - 12/18	99		
12/22 - 12/28	72	12/20 - 12/26	236	12/19 - 12/25	110		
12/29 - 12/31	36	12/27 - 12/31	176	12/26 - 12/31	74		
Grand Total	3609	Grand Total	4995	Grand Total	5192	Grand Total	4341

Weekly Cases

COVID-19	2020
1/1-4	0
1/5-11	0
1/12-18	0
1/19-25	0
1/26-2/1	0
2/2-8	1
2/9-15	0
2/16-22	1
2/23-29	0
3/1-7	1
3/8-14	3
3/15-21	11
3/22-28	19
3/29-4/4	14
4/5-11	20
4/12-18	27
4/19-25	16
4/26-5/2	15
5/3-9	10
5/10-16	7
5/17-23	1
5/21-30	2
5/31-6/6	7
6/7-13	3
6/14-20	1
6/21-27	5
6/28-7/4	7
7/5-11	12
7/12-18	15
7/19-25	12
7/26-8/1	15
8/2-8	9
8/9-15	12
8/16-22	19
8/23-29	21
8/30-9/5	12
9/6-12	14
9/13-19	20
9/20-26	13
9/27-10/3	15
10/4-10	12
10/11-17	10
10/18-24	16
10/25-31	10
11/1-7	20
11/8-14	11
11/15-21	22
11/22-28	22
11/29-12/5	45
12/6-12	73
12/13-19	108
12/20-26	140
12/27-31	117
Grand Total	966

Weekly Cases

COVID-19	2021
1/1-2	51
1/3-9	136
1/10-16	152
1/17-23	130
1/24-30	100
1/31-2/6	93
2/7-13	65
2/14-20	47
2/21-27	35
2/28-3/6	22
3/7-13	23
3/14-20	11
3/21-27	12
3/28-4/3	10
4/4-10	14
4/11-17	4
4/18-24	5
4/25-5/1	6
5/2-8	8
5/9-15	2
5/16-22	3
5/23-29	2
5/30-6/5	2
6/6-6/12	6
6/13-19	3
6/20-6/26	3
6/27-7/3	2
7/4-10	2
7/11-17	3
7/18-24	6
7/25-31	6
8/1-7	4
8/8-14	14
8/15-21	15
8/22-28	23
8/29-9/4	21
9/5-11	31
9/12-18	25
9/19-25	11
9/26-10/2	11
10/3-9	14
10/10-16	9
10/17-23	11
10/24-30	11
10/31-11/6	11
11/7-13	14
11/14-20	12
11/14-27	10
11/28-12/4	17
12/5-11	8
12/12-18	7
12/19-25	17
12/26-31	9
Grand Total	1269

Weekly Cases

COVID-19	2022
1/1/2022	2
1/2-8	25
1/9-15	32
1/16-22	60
1/23-29	58
1/30-2/5	45
2/6-12	39
2/13-19	35
2/20-26	31
2/27-3/5	15
3/6-12	21
3/13-19	4
3/20-26	11
3/27-4/2	11
4/3-9	1
4/10-16	9
4/17-23	5
4/24-30	8
5/1-5/7	2
5/8-5/14	10
5/15-5/21	8
5/22-5/28	17
5/29-6/4	12
6/5-11	14
6/12-18	18
6/19-25	15
6/26-7/2	22
7/3-9	18
7/10-16	24
7/17-23	27
7/24-30	22
7/31-8/6	36
8/7-13	15
8/14-20	17
8/21-27	8
8/28-9/3	14
9/4-10	14
9/11-17	12
9/18-24	10
9/25-10/1	9
10/2-8	9
10/9-15	5
10/16-22	5
10/23-29	5
10/30-11/5	11
11/6-11/12	8
11/13-11/19	11
11/20-11/26	8
11/27-11/30	4
Grand Total	822

cc: Chief Board Aides

James Williams, County Counsel

Greta Hansen, Chief Operating Officer

Tiffany Lennear, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

Mary Ann Barrous, Agenda Review Administrator