

Fatal Drug Overdose Quarterly Report

2nd Quarter, 2026

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VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

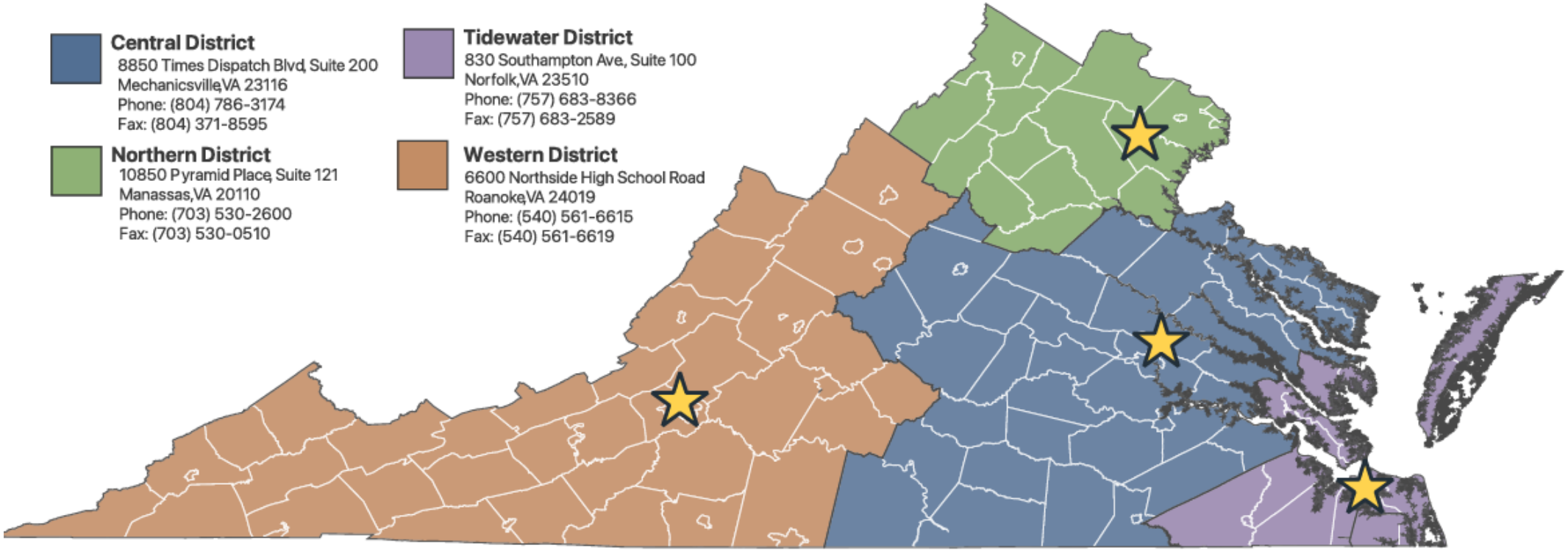
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Data Update

The Virginia Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) migrated to a new database, Moon, in spring 2026. Information in this new database is housed differently and therefore, previous analytical methodology developed to report out statistics required revision to reflect changes within Moon. The newest version of this drug report published July 2026 was developed utilizing revised methodology similar to previous reports. Numbers presented in this report reflect these changes from 2025 to present and include very minor changes to some drug categories.

Methods, Considerations, and Limitations

This quarterly report contains the most recent number of drug related deaths in Virginia for the previous quarter. The numbers represented in this report are preliminary, subject to change, and are most likely slightly under reported at the time of publication due to operational practices and limitations (specifically case turnaround time for reports) within the agency; therefore, updates and/or changes to numbers previously published in past reports should be expected. It is highly recommended that when citing these data and reports, the edition number is included.

Data analyzed in the report is obtained from the Virginia Medical Examiner Database System (VMEDS) from 2007-2024 and Moon from 2025 to present. VMEDS and Moon is an internal agency database which contains detailed information on all deaths reported to the OCME. Data presented in this report is based upon accepted cases of either full autopsy or external exams. All manners of fatal drug overdoses (accident, homicide, suicide, and undetermined) are included in this report.

Due to the nature of law enforcement and OCME death investigation, all deaths presented in this report are based upon locality of occurrence and not residential status of the decedent. The numbers and rates of these death by locality of injury and drug name/drug category are available in separate documents (http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/medical-examiner/forensic-epidemiology/).

Methods, Considerations, and Limitations

This report compiles data on drugs causing or contributing to death in fatal drug overdose cases. This report does not include data on drugs detected, but not contributing or causing death. Often, drug-related deaths have more than one drug causing or contributing to death. Therefore, deaths in which multiple categories of drugs caused or contributed to death will be represented once within each drug category, but multiple times within the entire report. Example: a fatal cocaine, heroin, and alprazolam overdose death will be counted in the cocaine summary, the heroin summary, and the benzodiazepine summary.

Prescription Opioids analyzed in this report include buprenorphine, codeine, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, levorphanol, meperidine, methadone, morphine, oxycodone, oxymorphone, pentazocine, propoxyphene, tapentadol, and tramadol and are included in the category of ‘Prescription Opioids’. Benzodiazepines analyzed in this report include adinazolam, alprazolam, bromazolam, clonazepam, clonazolam, deschloroetizolam, diazepam, etizolam, flualprazolam, flubromazolam, flubromazepam, flurazepam, lorazepam, meclonazepam, midazolam, nordiazepam, oxazepam, phenazepam, temazepam, and triazolam and are included in the category of ‘Benzodiazepines’.

Methods, Considerations, and Limitations

Projected estimates are calculated based upon initial counts by quarter, average toxicology turnaround time at the time of the report, the date of data analysis, and previous quarter fatality trend review.

Rate calculations are based upon Virginia population estimates. From 2007 to 2020, Bridged-Race Population Estimates from the National Center for Health Statistics were used for rate calculations; however, these estimates were discontinued in 2020. From 2021 forward, rates were calculated using Single-Race Population Estimates from the US Census.

Quarters are based upon calendar year and are defined as follows:

- Quarter 1 (Q1)- January 1st - March 31st
- Quarter 2 (Q2)- April 1st – June 30th
- Quarter 3 (Q3)- July 1st – September 31st
- Quarter 4 (Q4)- October 1st – December 31st

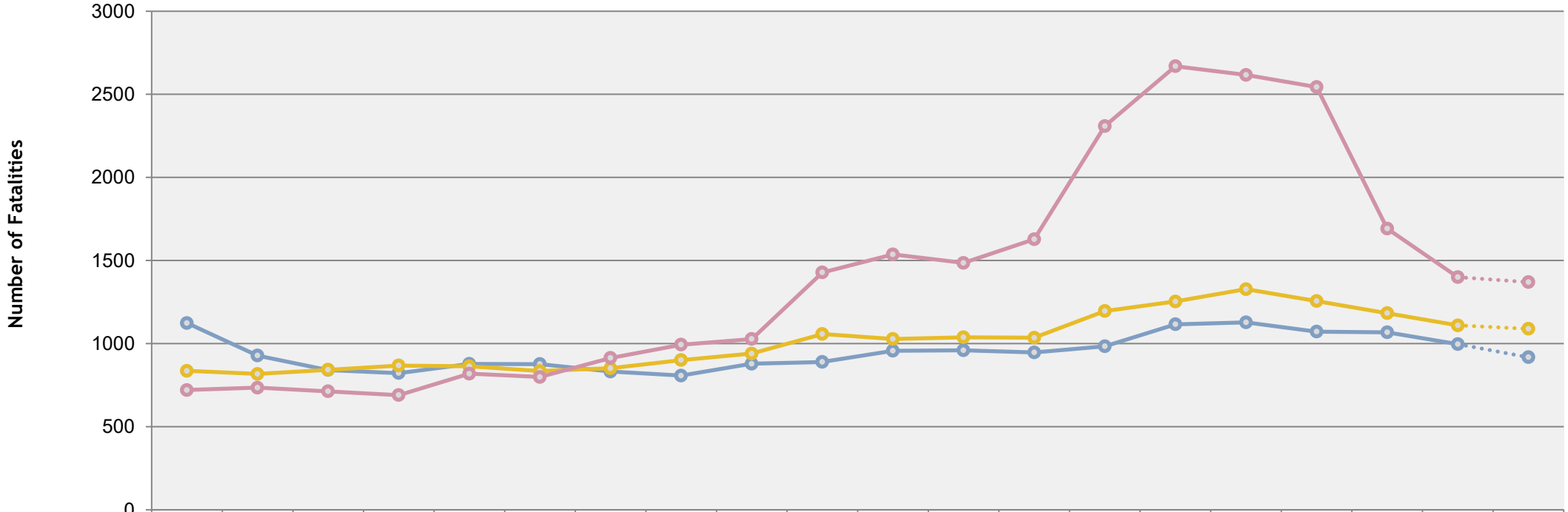
Main Takeaways

- Fatal drug overdose has been the leading method of unnatural death in Virginia since 2013
- Opioids, specifically illicit fentanyl, have been the driving force behind the large increases in fatal overdoses since 2013
- In 2015 statewide, the number of illicit opioids deaths surpassed prescription (Rx) opioid deaths. This trend continued at a greater magnitude in 2016 to present
- Fatal drug overdoses of any substance peaked in 2021 (n = 2,669) but began to decline in 2022, 2023, and 2024. Totals for 2025 of all drug overdose deaths, any substance, decreased 17.3% compared to 2024
- From 2007-2021, fatal prescription (Rx) opioid overdoses were relatively stable; however, from 2022 to present, there have been large drops in annual fatal Rx opioid overdoses compared to the past 15-year span
- Fentanyl (prescription, illicit, and/or analogs) caused a total of 53.1% of all fatal overdoses in 2025
- In 2025, the most common combination of substances causing fatal overdoses was cocaine and fentanyl, representing a total of 23.9% of all overdose deaths

Top Three Methods of Unnatural Death

Total Number of Motor Vehicle, Gun, and Drug Related Fatalities by Year of Death, 2007-2026*

Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
Motor Vehicle Related	1124	928	841	823	878	877	832	808	879	890	957	960	947	984	1116	1128	1072	1068	997	918
Gun Related	836	818	843	868	863	835	852	901	940	1058	1028	1038	1036	1196	1254	1328	1256	1183	1110	1089
Fatal Drug Overdose	721	735	713	690	819	799	914	994	1028	1428	1537	1486	1628	2309	2669	2617	2544	1692	1400	1370

Note: Top three methods of death (motor vehicles, guns, and drugs) include all manners of death (accident, homicide, suicide, and undetermined)

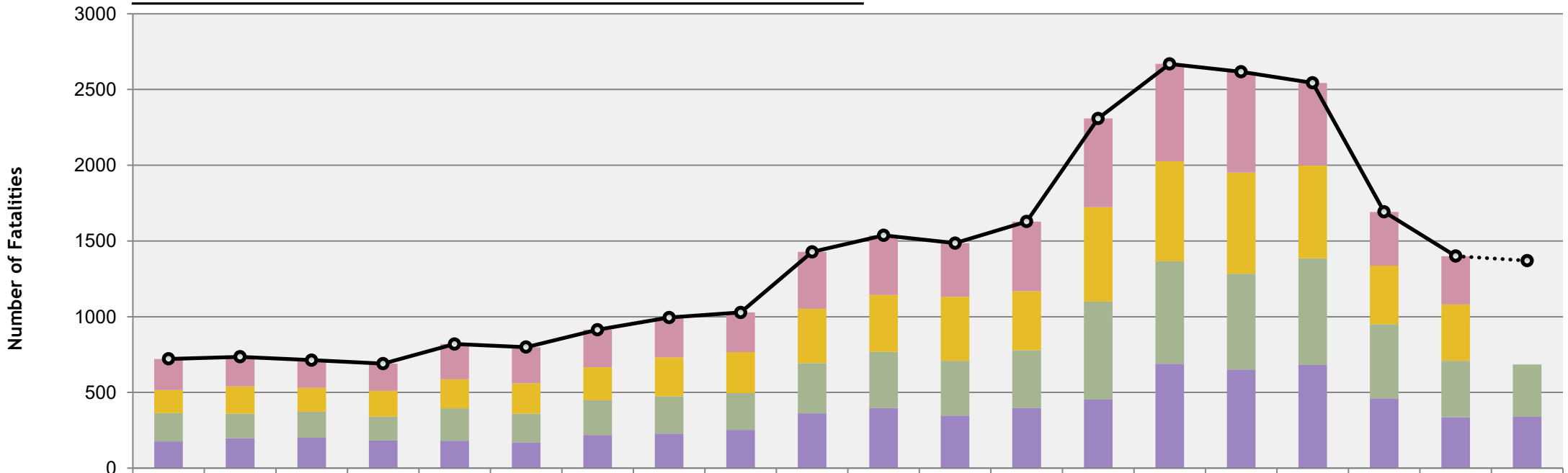
Top Three Methods of Unnatural Death

Since 2007, the leading methods of unnatural death in Virginia have been motor vehicle collisions, gun-related deaths, and fatal drug overdoses (these methods of death include all manners of death: accident, homicide, suicide, and undetermined). In 2013, fatal drug overdose became the leading method of unnatural death in the Commonwealth. This trend has continued through 2025 due mainly to illicit opioids (heroin, illicit fentanyl, and fentanyl analogs).

All Drug Deaths, Any Substance

Total Number of Fatal Drug Overdoses by Quarter and Year of Death, 2007-2026*

Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



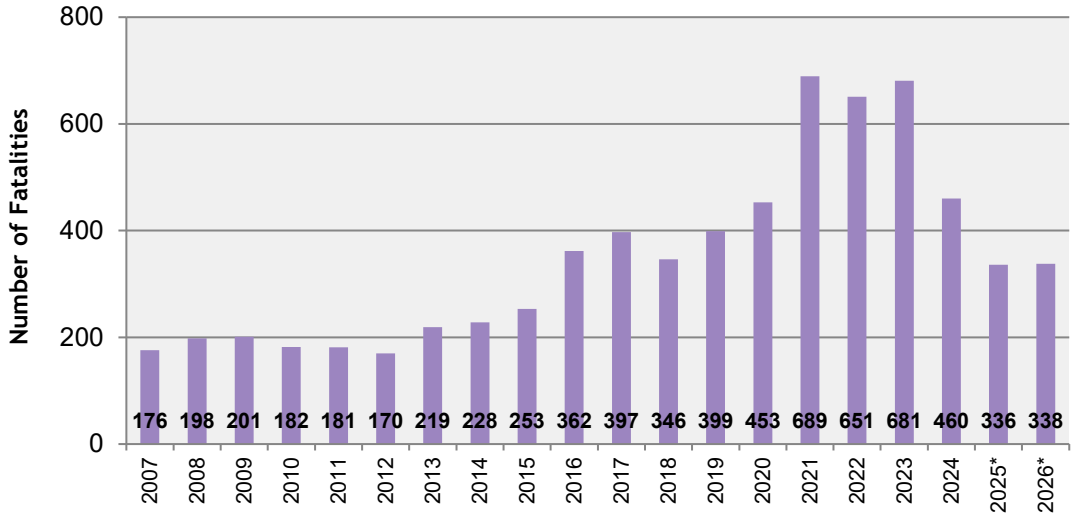
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
Q4	205	195	183	179	232	240	248	263	262	375	393	354	460	585	643	666	543	355	319	
Q3	152	180	157	170	191	199	217	257	270	359	376	423	389	624	660	667	616	387	372	
Q2	188	162	172	159	215	190	230	246	243	332	371	363	380	647	677	633	704	490	373	345
Q1	176	198	201	182	181	170	219	228	253	362	397	346	399	453	689	651	681	460	336	339
Total Fatalities	721	735	713	690	819	799	914	994	1028	1428	1537	1486	1628	2309	2669	2617	2544	1692	1400	1370

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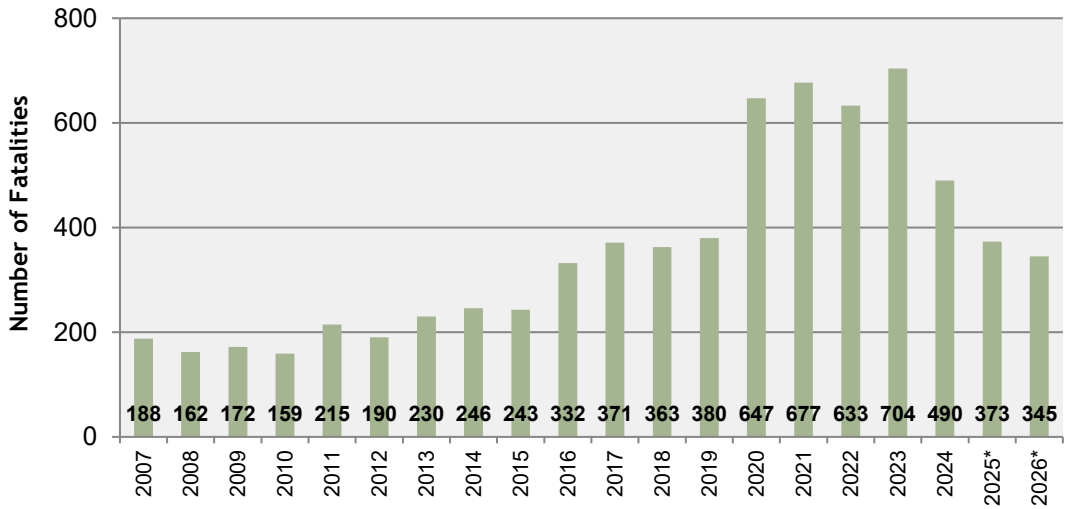
All Drug Deaths, Any Substance

From 2007 to 2021, generally, the total number of fatal drug overdoses statewide increased each year. In 2013, fatal drug overdose became the number one method of unnatural death in the Commonwealth, surpassing both motor vehicle-related fatalities and gun-related fatalities. In 2014, fatal drug overdose became the leading cause of accidental death in Virginia. The number of fatal drug overdoses of any substance peaked in 2021 with 2,669 deaths, but annual totals from 2022 to present began to decline. The preliminary number of fatal drug overdoses, all substances, decreased by 17.3% in 2025 when compared to 2024.

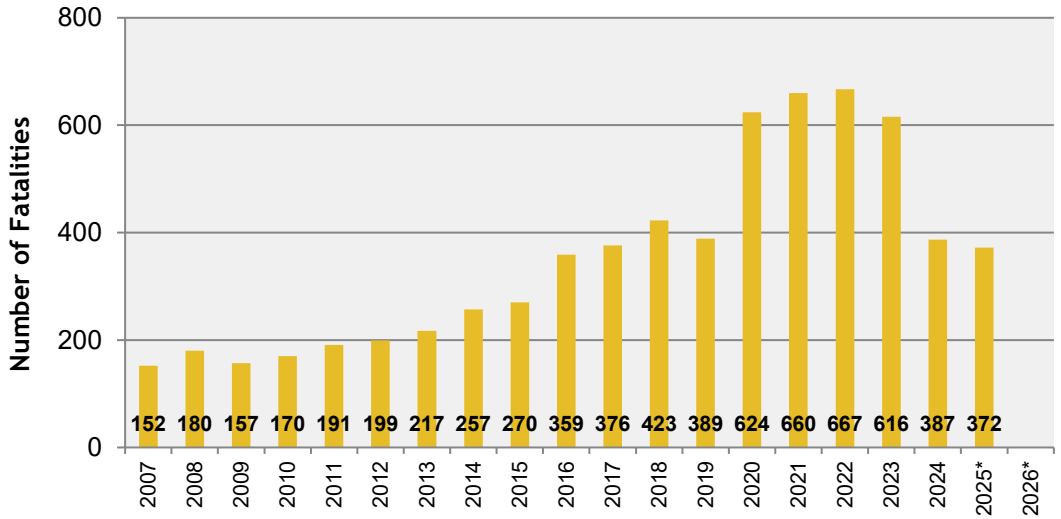
First Quarter, 2007-2026*



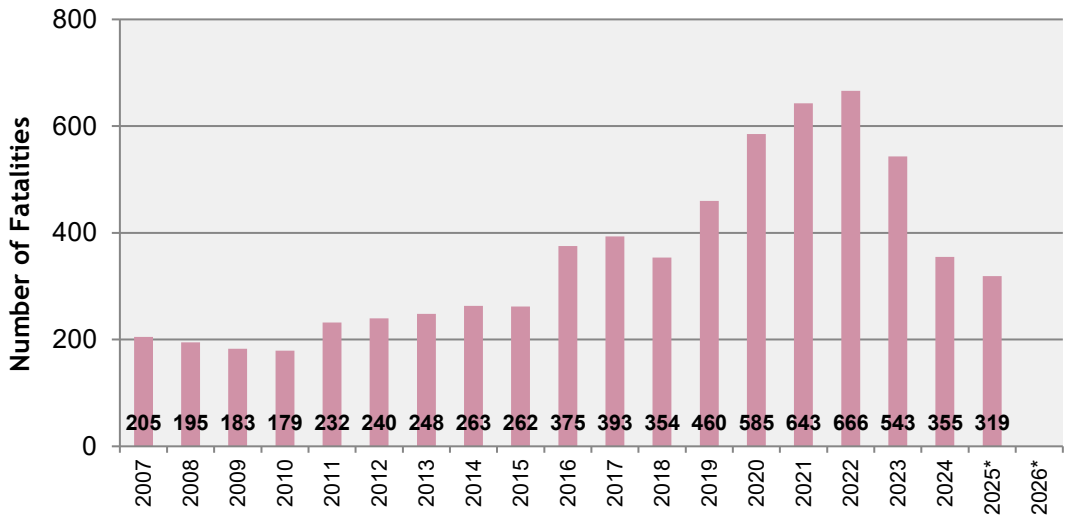
Second Quarter, 2007-2026*



Third Quarter, 2007-2026*

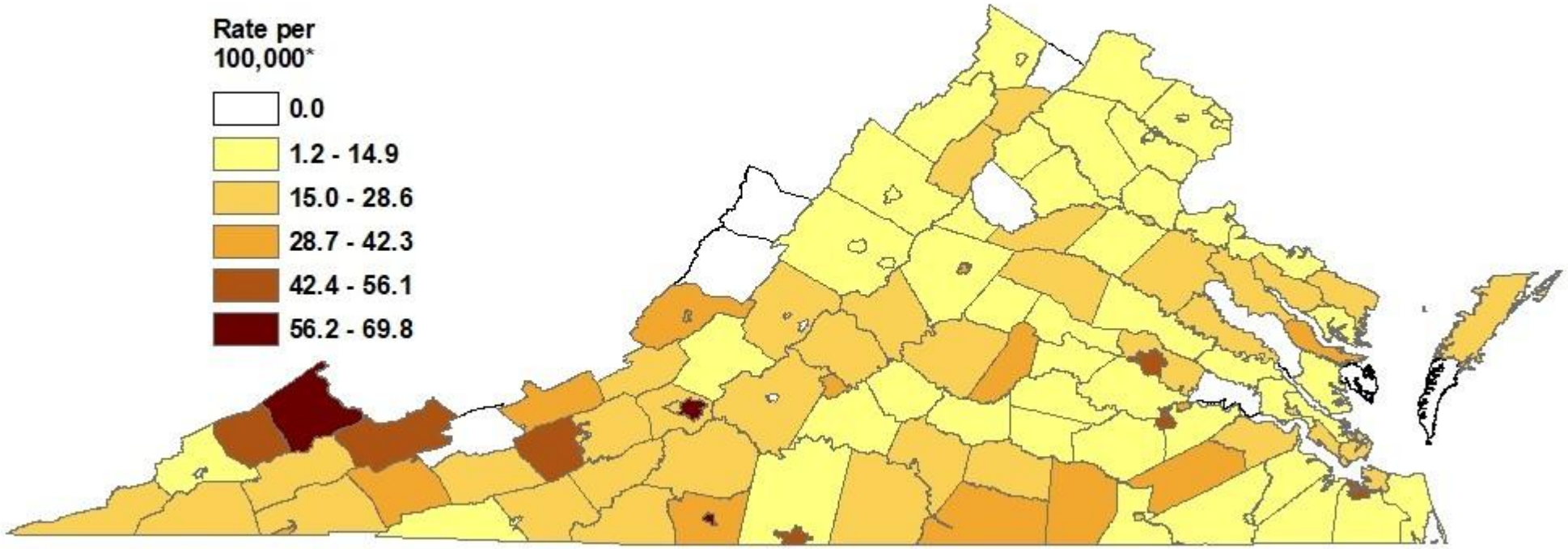


Fourth Quarter, 2007-2026*



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Rate of All Fatal Drug Overdoses, Any Substance, by Locality of Overdose, 2025*



Source: Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

* Data for 2025 is preliminary and subject to change

** Rate groupings are based upon equal numerical range categories; rates based on small case counts (<5 deaths) are not suppressed

Fatal Drug Overdoses by Name/Category

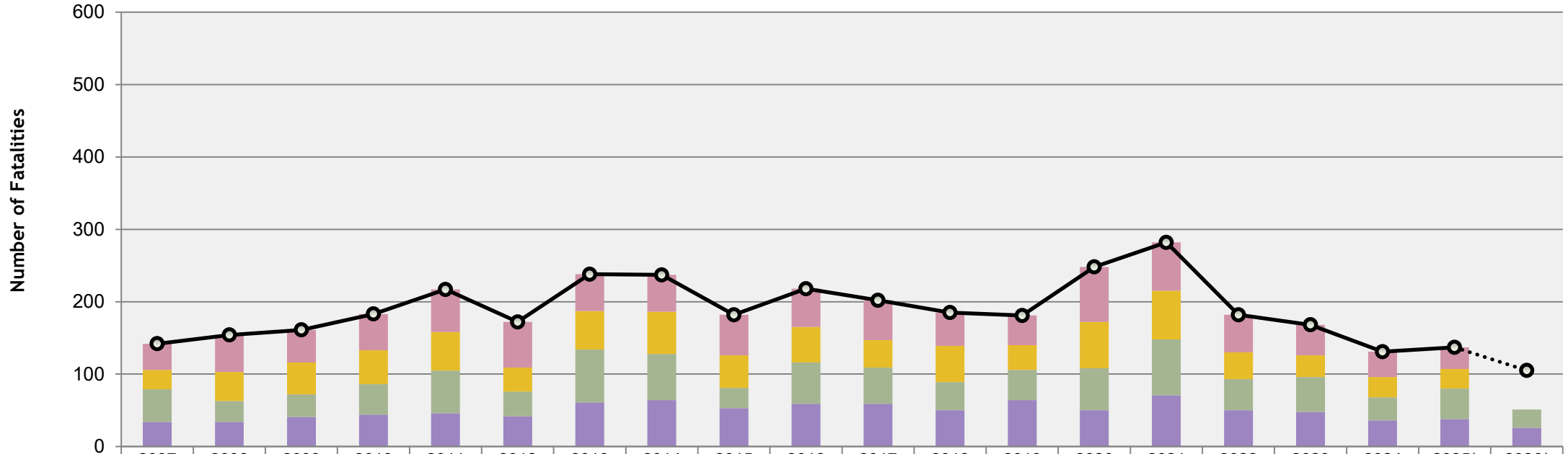


- Benzodiazepines
- Cocaine
- Fentanyl
- Heroin
- Prescription Opioids (Excluding Fentanyl)

Benzodiazepines

Total Number of Fatal Benzodiazepine Overdoses by Quarter and Year of Death, 2007-2026*

Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



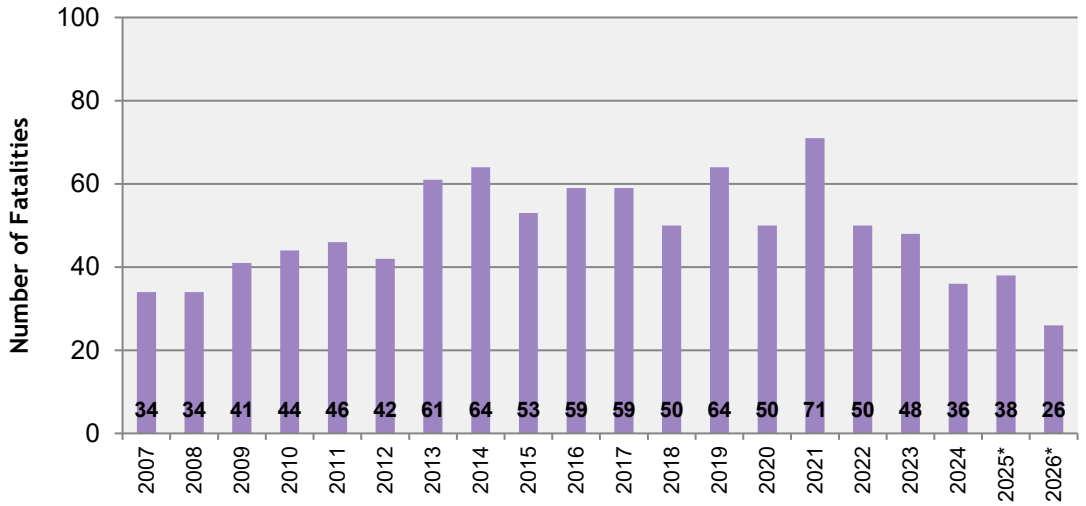
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
Q4	36	51	45	50	59	63	51	51	56	53	55	46	41	76	67	52	42	35	30	
Q3	27	40	44	47	53	33	53	58	45	49	38	50	34	64	67	37	30	28	27	
Q2	45	29	31	42	59	34	73	64	28	57	50	39	42	58	77	43	48	32	42	25
Q1	34	34	41	44	46	42	61	64	53	59	59	50	64	50	71	50	48	36	38	26
Total Fatalities	142	154	161	183	217	172	238	237	182	218	202	185	181	248	282	182	168	131	137	105

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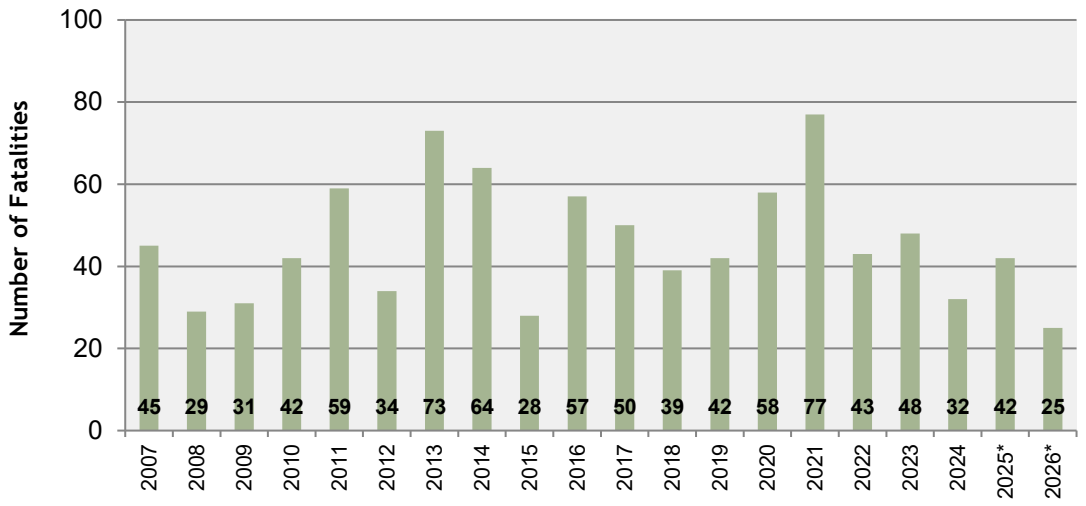
Benzodiazepines

The number of fatal benzodiazepine-related overdoses has fluctuated each year. It is very uncommon for a decedent to fatally overdose on one or more benzodiazepines alone. However, when a person ingests other substances (e.g. alcohol, opiates, methamphetamine) in addition to larger, nontherapeutic amounts of benzodiazepines, the user is potentially creating a lethal cocktail of mixed substances. Fatal benzodiazepine overdoses often had one or more prescription opioids (excluding fentanyl) causing or contributing to death; however, this proportion has slowly decreased in recent years from nearly 90% in 2007 to about 40% in 2025. Nearly 58% of benzodiazepine overdoses in 2025 also had fentanyl causing death.

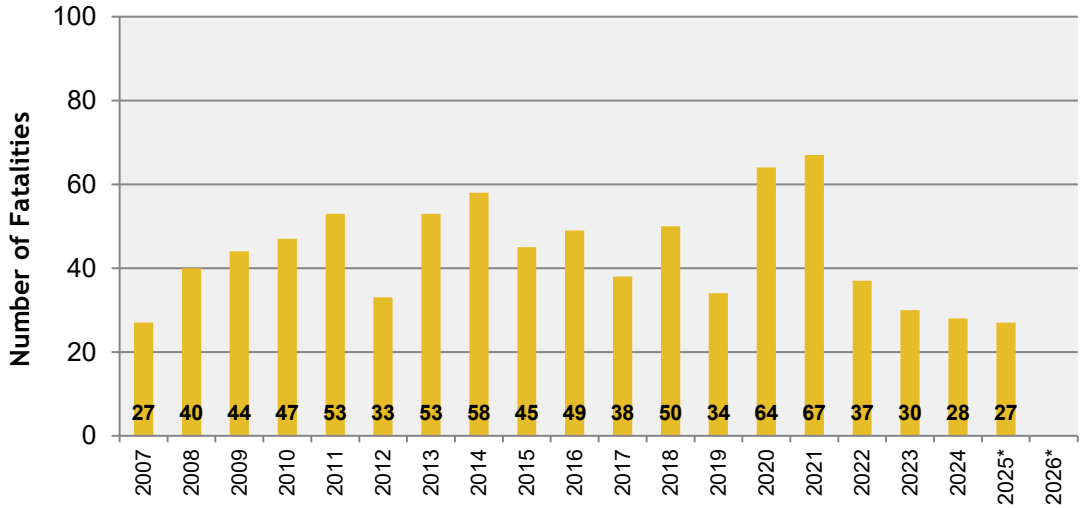
First Quarter, 2007-2026*



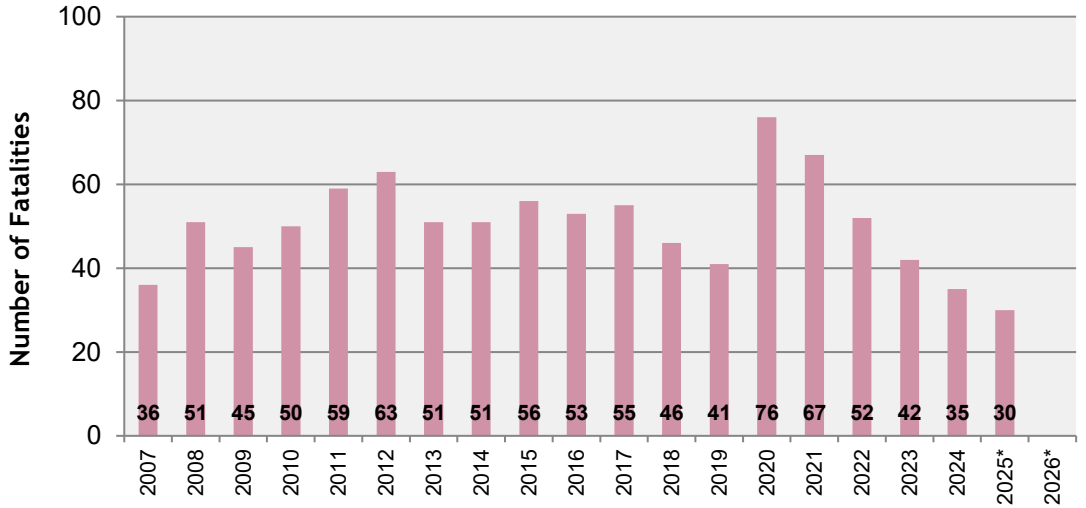
Second Quarter, 2007-2026*



Third Quarter, 2007-2026*



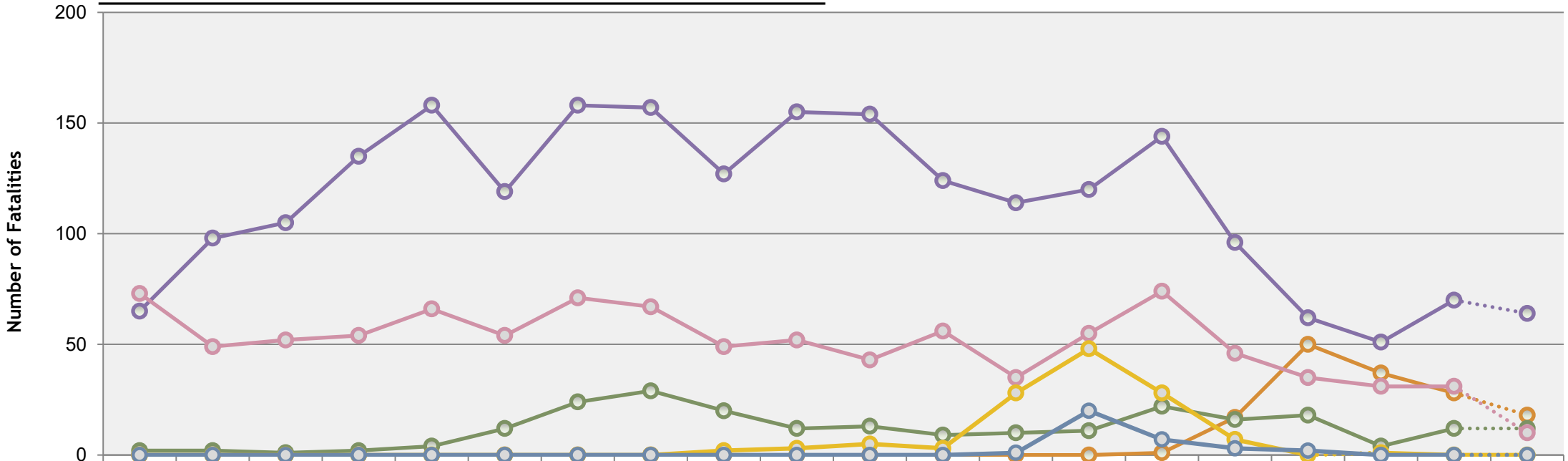
Fourth Quarter, 2007-2026*



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Total Number of Fatal Benzodiazepine Overdoses by Drug Name and Year of Death, 2007-2026*

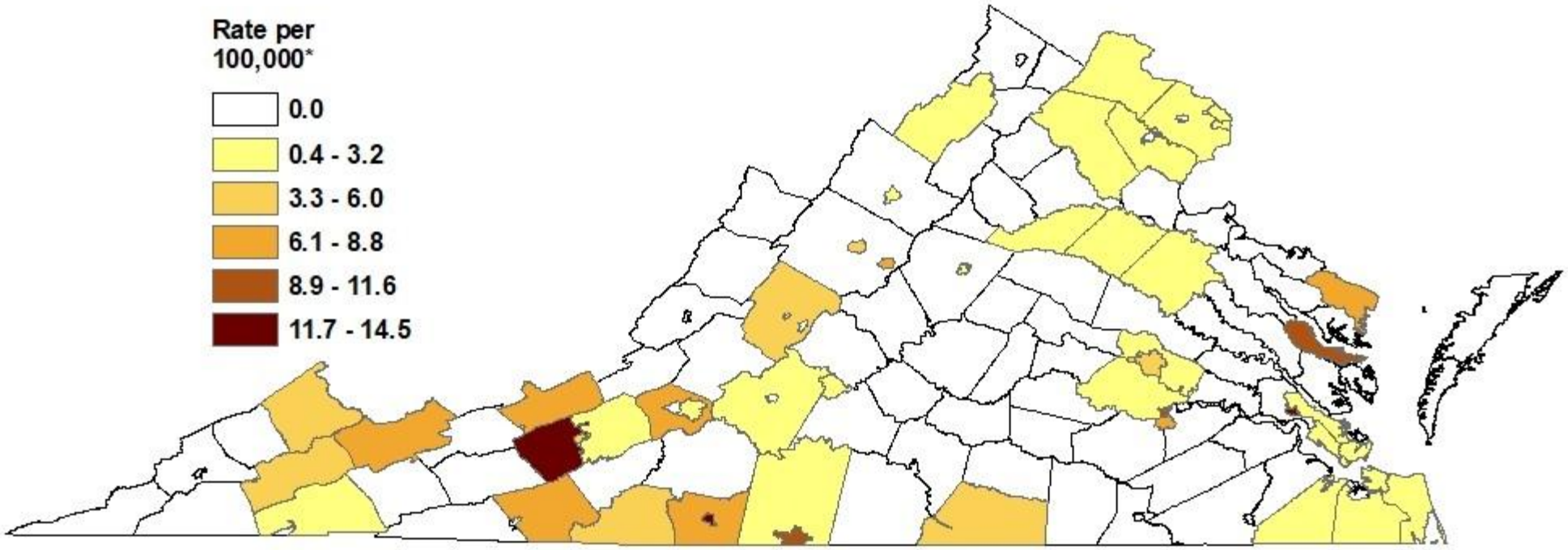
Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
Alprazolam	65	98	105	135	158	119	158	157	127	155	154	124	114	120	144	96	62	51	70	64
Bromazolam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	17	50	37	28	18
Clonzepam	2	2	1	2	4	12	24	29	20	12	13	9	10	11	22	16	18	4	12	12
Diazepam	73	49	52	54	66	54	71	67	49	52	43	56	35	55	74	46	35	31	31	10
Etizolam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	5	3	28	48	28	7	0	1	0	0
Flualprazolam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	20	7	3	2	0	0	0

1) Flurazepam, lorazepam, midazolam, nordiazepam, oxazepam, temazepam and triazolam were excluded from this analysis because of low annual case counts (<20 deaths per year)
2) Each benzodiazepine is tallied by each time it caused or contributed to death (analyzed from either toxicology or the cause of death statement) and therefore the total number of benzodiazepines will far exceed the actual number of fatalities

Rate of Fatal Benzodiapine Overdoses by Locality of Overdose, 2025*



Source: Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

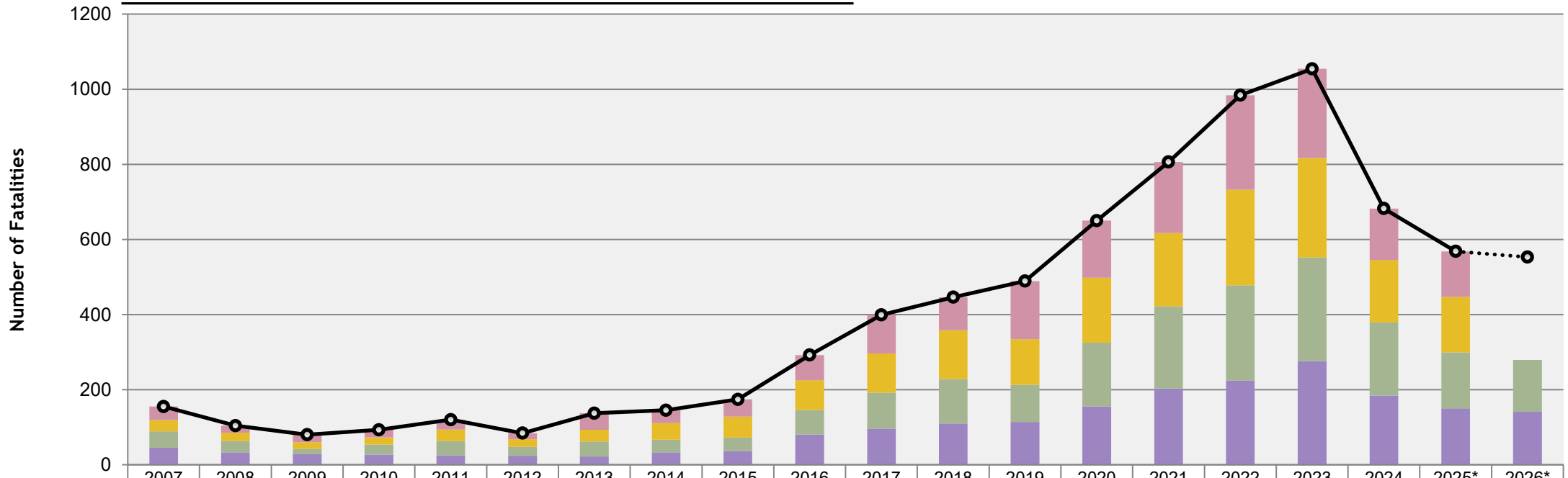
* Data for 2025 is preliminary and subject to change

** Rate groupings are based upon equal numerical range categories; rates based on small case counts (<5 deaths) are not suppressed

Cocaine

Total Number of Fatal Cocaine Overdoses by Quarter and Year of Death, 2007-2026*

Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



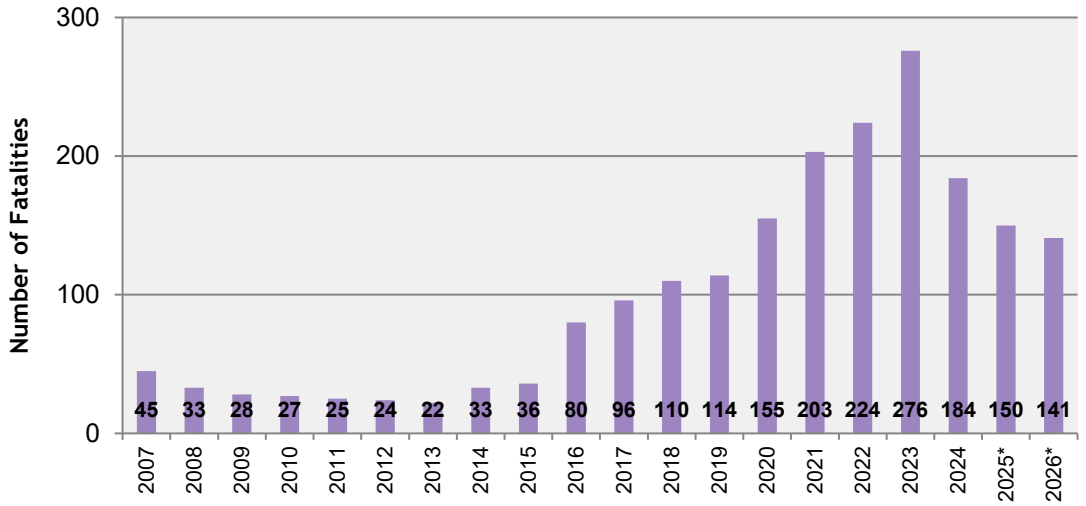
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
Q4	36	19	20	20	26	16	44	34	46	67	103	88	155	152	189	252	237	137	121	
Q3	30	22	18	19	31	20	31	44	56	79	104	130	121	173	195	254	265	166	148	
Q2	44	30	14	27	38	24	40	34	36	66	96	118	99	170	219	254	276	195	149	138
Q1	45	33	28	27	25	24	22	33	36	80	96	110	114	155	203	224	276	184	150	141
Total Fatalities	155	104	80	93	120	84	137	145	174	292	399	446	489	650	806	984	1054	682	568	553

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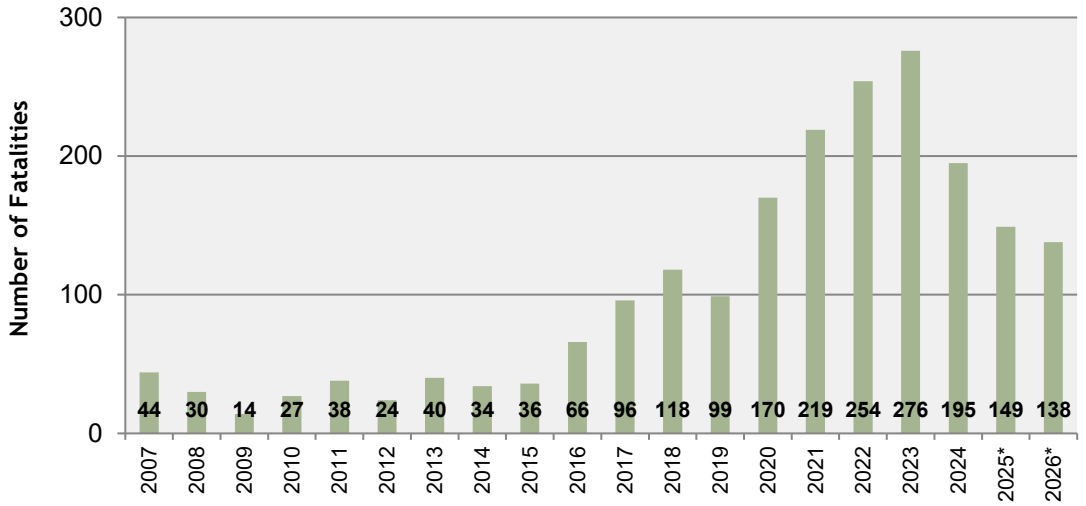
Cocaine

The total number of fatal cocaine overdoses statewide has been slowly increasing since 2013, peaked in 2023, but dropped substantially in 2024. Nearly 60% of the cocaine overdoses in 2025 also included fentanyl (prescription, illicit, or analogs). The preliminary number of fatal cocaine overdoses in 2025 decreased by 16.7% compared to 2024.

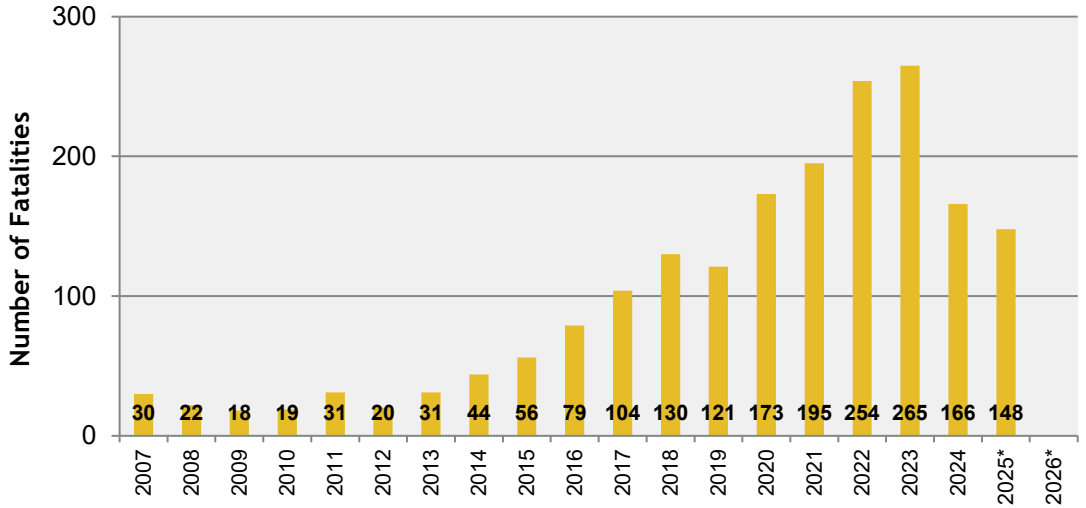
First Quarter, 2007-2026*



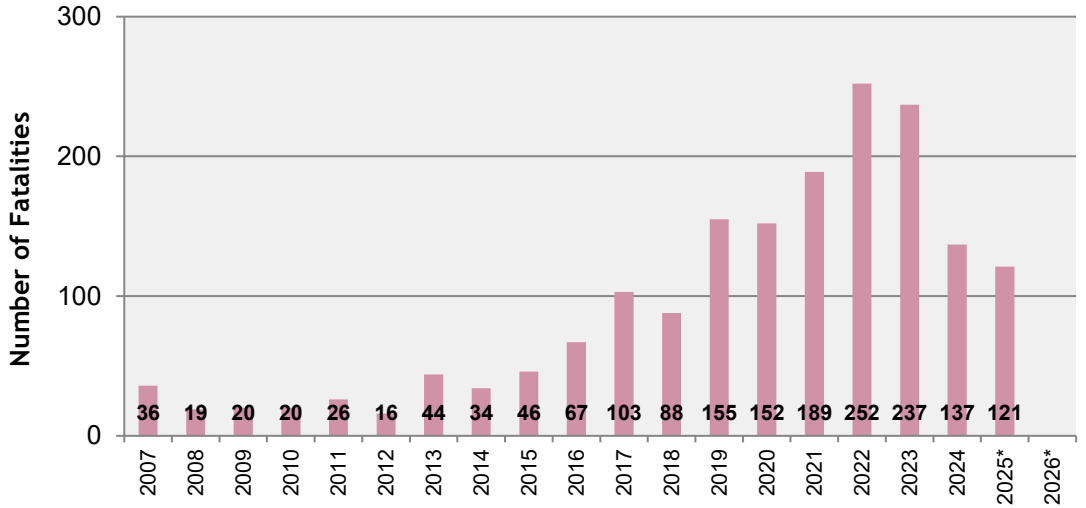
Second Quarter, 2007-2026*



Third Quarter, 2007-2026*

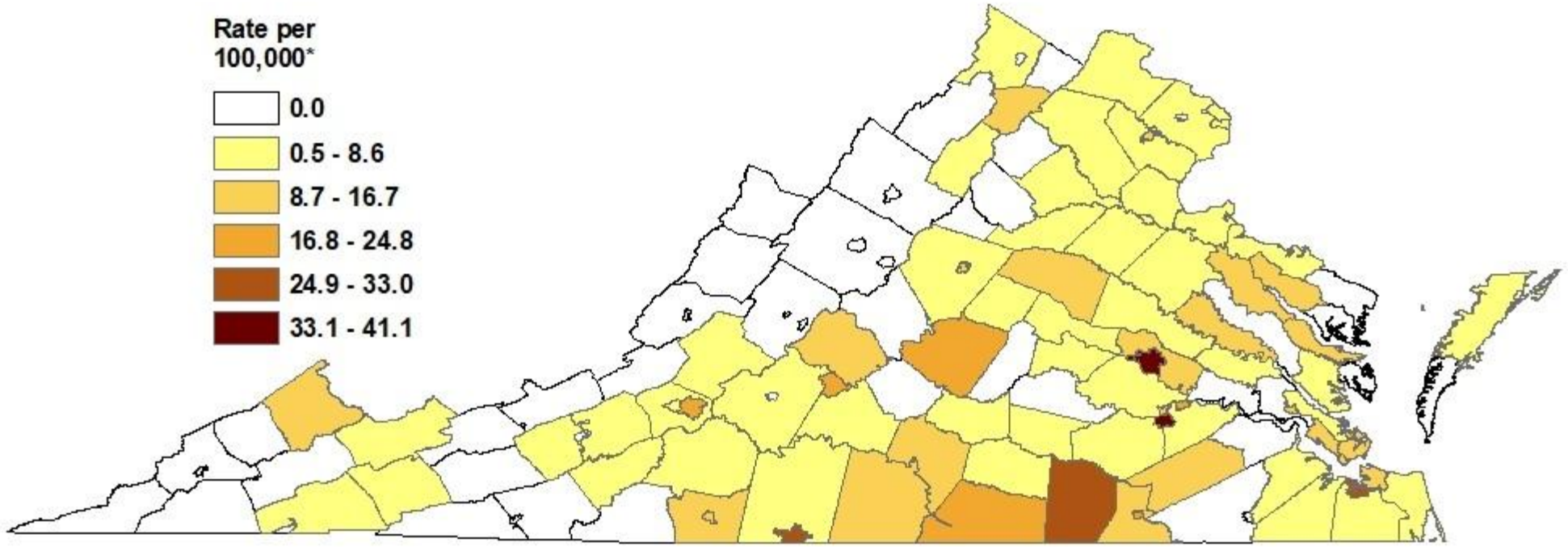


Fourth Quarter, 2007-2026*



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Rate of Fatal Cocaine Overdoses by Locality of Overdose, 2025*



Source: Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

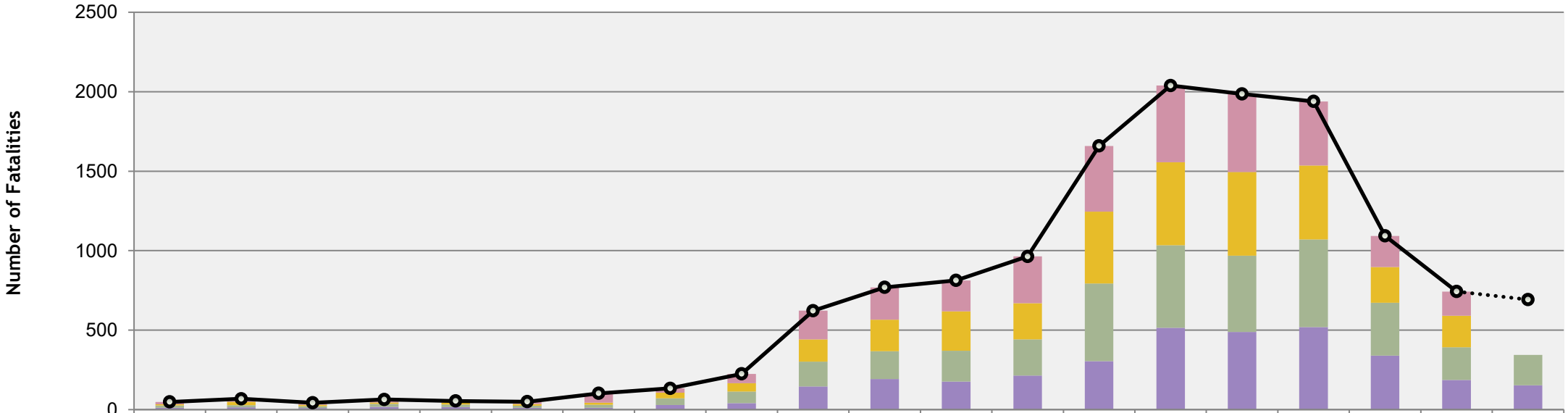
* Data for 2025 is preliminary and subject to change

** Rate groupings are based upon equal numerical range categories; rates based on small case counts (<5 deaths) are not suppressed

Fentanyl

Total Number of Fatal Fentanyl Overdoses by Quarter and Year of Death, 2007-2026*

Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



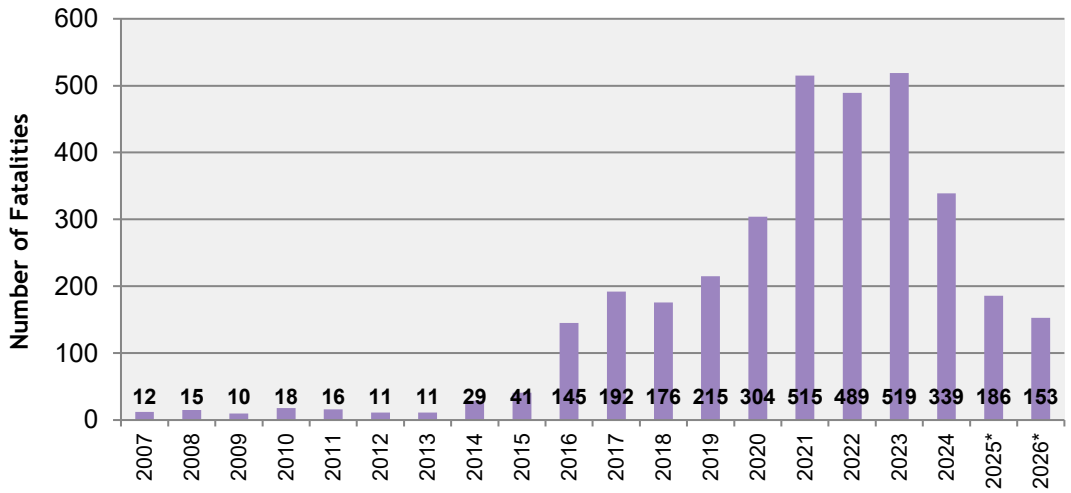
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
Q4	14	19	13	19	11	15	58	28	59	180	203	194	294	413	482	491	403	196	153	
Q3	8	22	8	9	11	11	14	35	53	140	199	248	228	453	523	526	466	224	198	
Q2	14	12	12	18	16	13	19	42	72	157	175	195	227	489	519	480	551	334	206	191
Q1	12	15	10	18	16	11	11	29	41	145	192	176	215	304	515	489	519	339	186	153
Total Fatalities	48	68	43	64	54	50	102	134	225	622	769	813	964	1659	2039	1986	1939	1093	743	692

1) Historically, fentanyl has been categorized as a prescription opioid because it is mass produced by pharmaceutical companies. However, recent law enforcement investigations and toxicology results have demonstrated that several recent fentanyl seizures have ***not*** been pharmaceutically produced but illicitly produced. This illicit form of fentanyl is produced by international drug traffickers who import the drug into the United States and often, mix it into heroin being sold. This illicitly produced fentanyl has been the biggest contributor to the significant increase in the number of fatal opioid overdoses in Virginia.
2) Illicit and pharmaceutically produced fatal fentanyl overdoses are represented in this analysis. This includes all different types of fentanyl analogs (acetyl fentanyl, furanyl fentanyl, etc.)

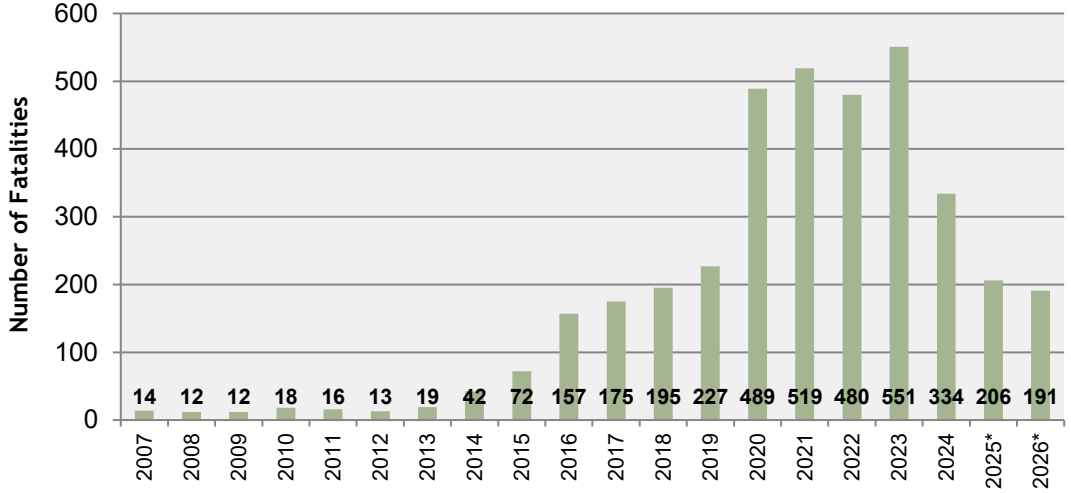
Fentanyl

The number of fatal fentanyl-related drug overdoses began increasing in 2013; which coincides with the dramatic increase in fatal heroin overdoses. Prior to 2013, most fentanyl-related deaths were due to illicit use of pharmaceutically produced fentanyl. However, in late 2013, early 2014, law enforcement investigations and toxicology testing demonstrated an increase in illicitly produced fentanyl. By 2016, most fatal fentanyl-related overdoses were due to illicitly produced fentanyl and fentanyl analogs, and not pharmaceutically produced fentanyl. For statistical purposes, ‘fentanyl’ includes all pharmaceutically produced fentanyl, illicitly produced fentanyl, and fentanyl analogs. The preliminary number of fatal fentanyl overdoses in 2025 compared to 2024 decreased by 32.0%. In 2025, fentanyl was involved in 53.1% of all drug overdose deaths.

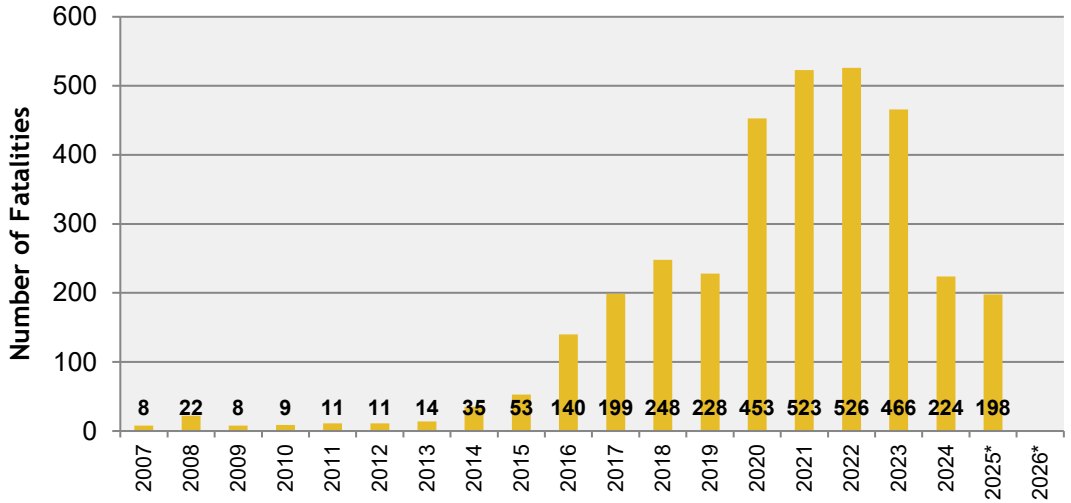
First Quarter, 2007-2026*



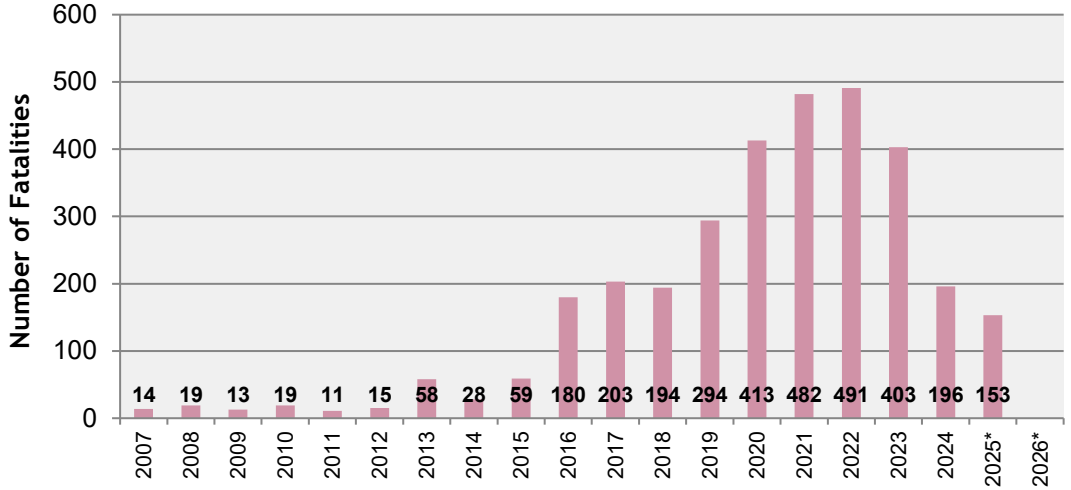
Second Quarter, 2007-2026*



Third Quarter, 2007-2026*

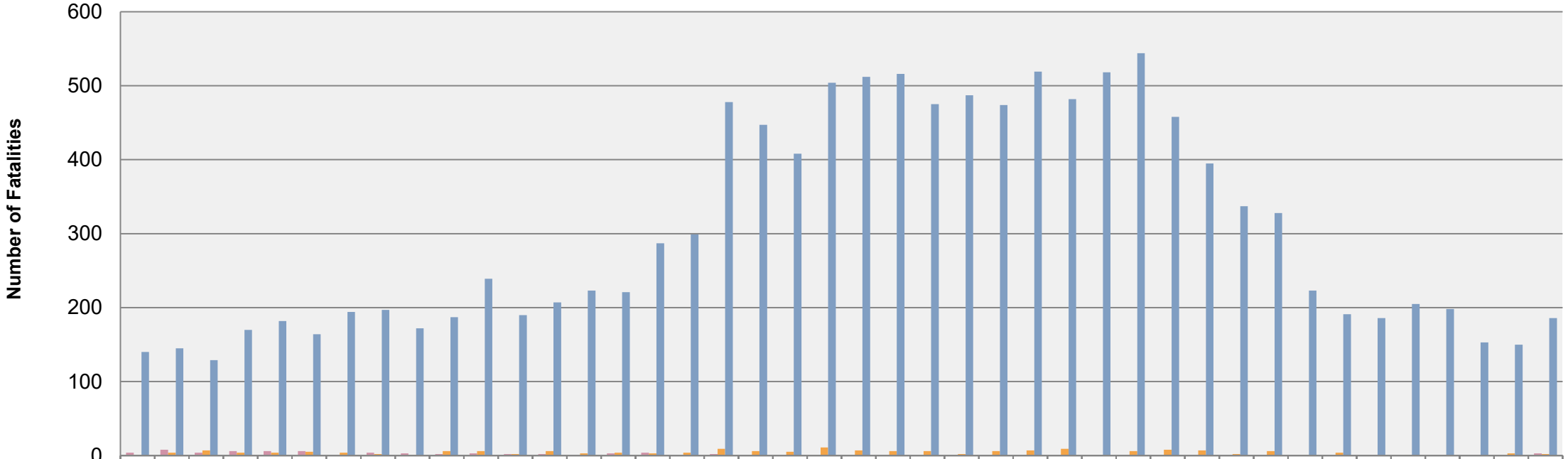


Fourth Quarter, 2007-2026*



VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Total Number of Fatal Fentanyl Overdoses by Fentanyl Origin and Quarter of Death, 2016-2026*



	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
	2016				2017				2018				2019				2020				2021				2022				2023				2024				2025*				2026*	
Prescription	4	8	4	6	6	6	1	4	3	2	3	2	2	1	3	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Unknown	1	4	7	4	4	5	4	2	1	6	6	2	6	3	4	3	4	9	6	5	11	7	6	6	2	6	7	9	0	6	8	7	2	6	1	4	0	1	0	0	3	2
Illicit	140	145	129	170	182	164	194	197	172	187	239	190	207	223	221	287	299	478	447	408	504	512	516	475	487	474	519	482	518	544	458	395	337	328	223	191	186	205	198	153	150	186

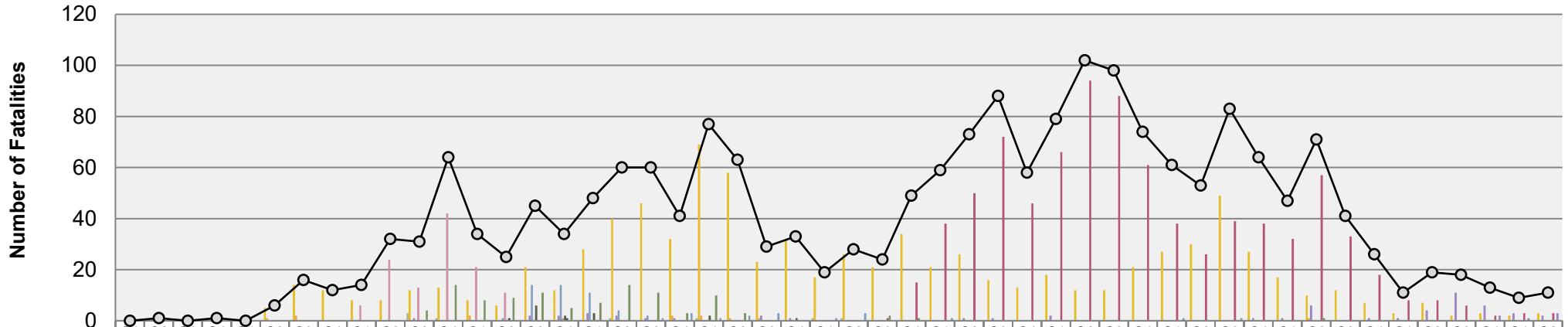
1) Historically, fentanyl has been categorized as a prescription opioid because it is mass produced by pharmaceutical companies. However, recent law enforcement investigations and toxicology results have demonstrated that several recent fentanyl seizures have ***not*** been pharmaceutically produced, but illicitly produced. This illicit form of fentanyl is produced by international drug traffickers who import the drug into the United States and often, mix it into heroin being sold. This illicitly produced fentanyl has been the biggest contributor to the significant increase in the number of fatal opioid overdoses in Virginia.
2) Illicit and pharmaceutically produced fatal fentanyl overdoses are represented in this analysis. This includes all different types of fentanyl analogs (acetyl fentanyl, furanyl fentanyl, etc.)

Fentanyl

In 2016, the OCME began collecting information on the suspected origin of fentanyl (pharmaceutical production, illicit production, or unknown) on all fatal overdoses involving fentanyl. The determination is made by reviewing the examination report, toxicology report, police report, and several other sources of information collected during the death investigation process. This classification is more subjective than objective but still provides detailed insight to the current proportion of illicitly produced fentanyl in Virginia that is contributing to fatal overdoses. In 2025, it was estimated that nearly 99% of fatal fentanyl overdoses were due to the illicitly produced versions of the drug.

Fentanyl Analogs

Total Number of Fatal Fentanyl Analog Overdoses by Quarter and Year of Death, 2014-2026*



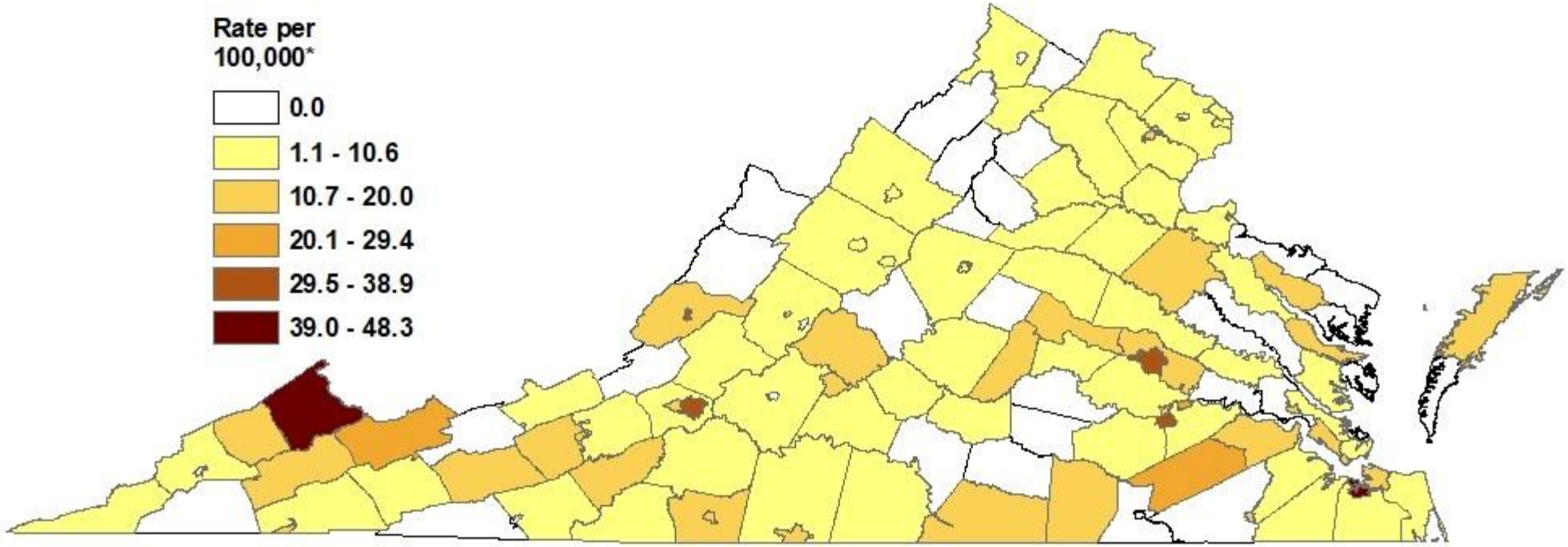
	Q1 2014	Q2 2014	Q3 2014	Q4 2014	Q1 2015	Q2 2015	Q3 2015	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016	Q1 2017	Q2 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Q1 2025*	Q2 2025*	Q3 2025*	Q4 2025*	Q1 2026*	Q2 2026*
3-Methyl Fentanyl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Acetyl Fentanyl	0	1	0	1	0	5	14	12	8	8	12	13	8	6	21	12	28	40	46	32	69	58	23	32	17	26	21	34	21	26	16	13	18	12	12	21	27	30	49	27	17	10	12	7	3	7	2	3	2	3
Butyryl Fentanyl	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carfentanil	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	3	2	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	6	0	1	1	4	11	6	3	2
Cyclopropyl Fentanyl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	14	14	11	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Furanyl Fentanyl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	24	13	42	21	11	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Methoxyacetyl Fentanyl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	2	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Para/Meta-fluorobutyrylfentanyl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Para/Meta-fluorofentanyl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	15	38	50	72	46	66	94	88	61	38	26	39	38	32	57	33	18	8	8	6	2	3	3
Para/Meta-fluoroisobutyrylfentanyl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	14	8	9	11	5	7	14	11	3	10	3	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ortho-Methylfentanyl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
Valerylfentanyl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	2	3	0	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Fentanyl Analog Fatalities	0	1	0	1	0	6	16	12	14	32	31	64	34	25	45	34	48	60	60	41	77	63	29	33	19	28	24	49	59	73	88	58	79	102	98	74	61	53	83	64	47	71	41	26	11	19	18	13	9	11

1) Each fentanyl analog is tallied by each time it caused or contributed to death (analyzed from either toxicology or the cause of death statement) and therefore the total number of analogs will exceed the actual number of fatalities

Fentanyl Analogs

Fentanyl analogs are a category of illicitly produced opioids very similar to fentanyl, but slightly different in their chemical structure. Fentanyl analogs began appearing in Virginia in 2014 and have fluctuated ever since. Fentanyl analogs are illicitly produced and vary in potency, and in part, attributed to the rise in fatal overdoses due to opioids. For statistical purposes, ‘fentanyl’ includes all pharmaceutically produced fentanyl, illicitly produced fentanyl, and fentanyl analogs.

Rate of Fatal Fentanyl (Rx, Illicit, and Analog) Overdoses by Locality of Overdose, 2025*



Source: Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

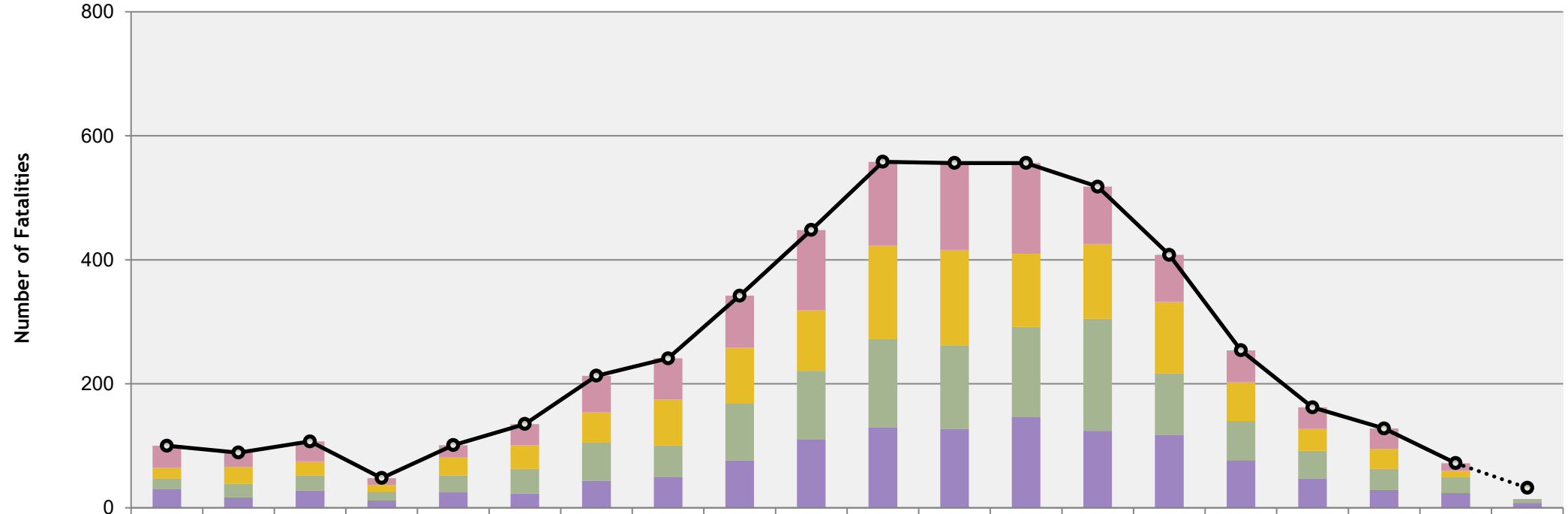
* Data for 2025 is preliminary and subject to change

** Rate groupings are based upon equal numerical range categories; rates based on small case counts (<5 deaths) are not suppressed

Heroin

Total Number of Fatal Heroin Overdoses by Quarter and Year of Death, 2007-2026*

Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



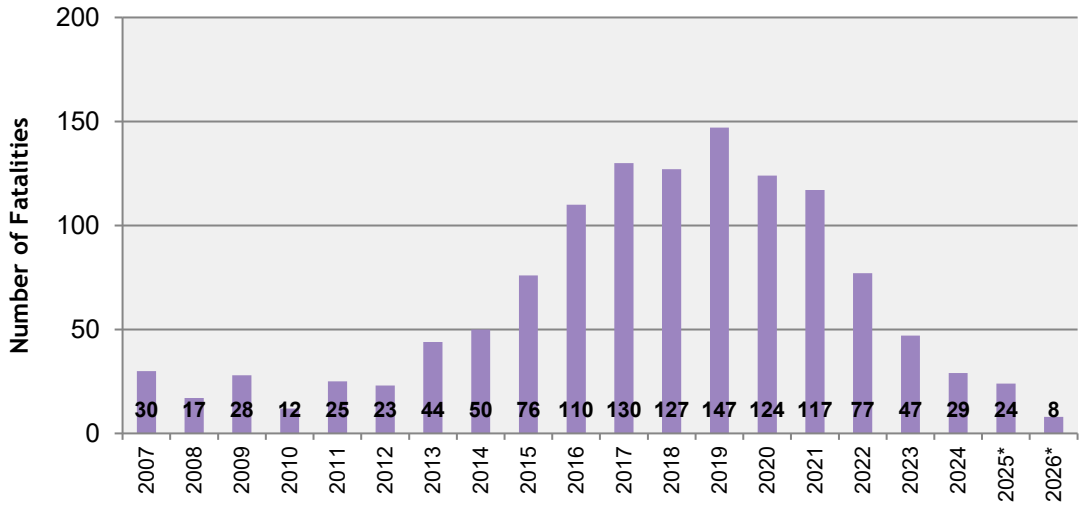
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
Q4	35	23	32	11	20	34	59	66	84	129	135	140	146	92	76	51	34	33	12	
Q3	18	27	23	11	29	38	48	74	90	98	151	154	118	121	115	63	36	32	10	
Q2	17	22	24	14	27	40	62	51	92	111	142	135	145	181	100	63	45	34	26	6
Q1	30	17	28	12	25	23	44	50	76	110	130	127	147	124	117	77	47	29	24	8
Total Fatalities	100	89	107	48	101	135	213	241	342	448	558	556	556	518	408	254	162	128	72	32

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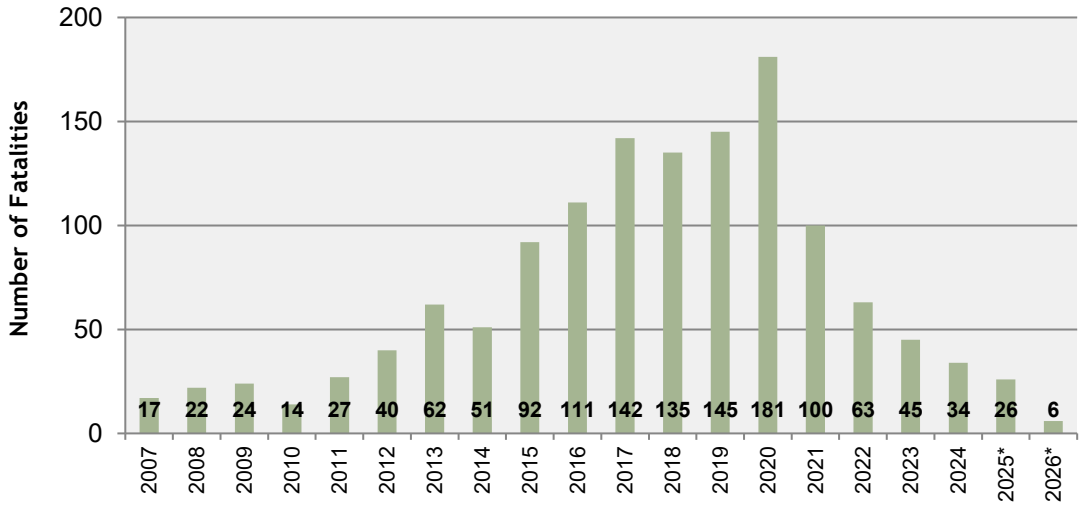
Heroin

The total number of fatal heroin-related overdoses began increasing in 2011. Fatal heroin overdoses often occurred as the primary drug causing death, but more recently, heroin and fentanyl and/or fentanyl analog combinations caused a large portion of fatal drug overdoses. The annual number of fatal heroin overdoses in 2017-2019 were nearly identical but began to decrease in 2020-2025. The preliminary number of heroin overdose deaths decreased by 43.8% in 2025 compared to 2024.

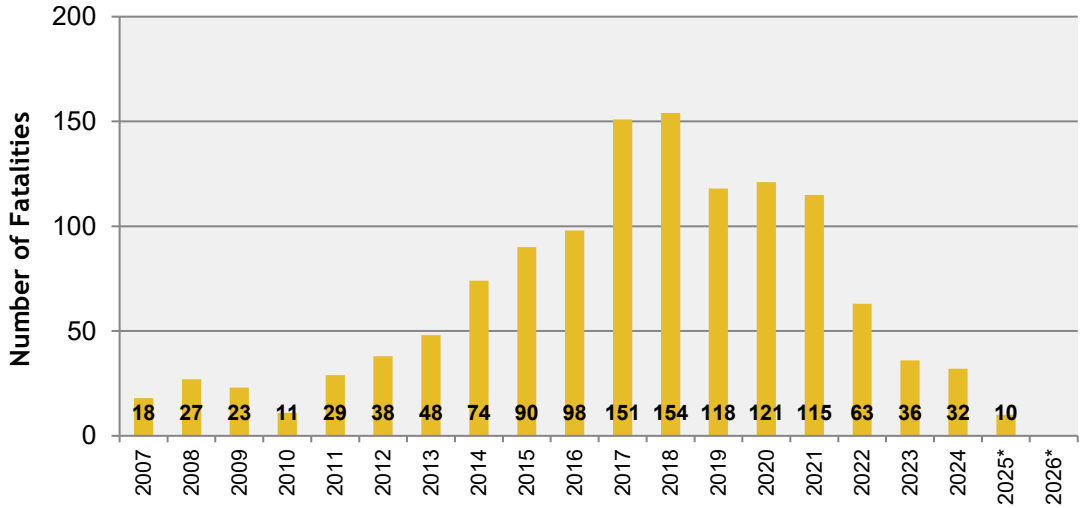
First Quarter, 2007-2026*



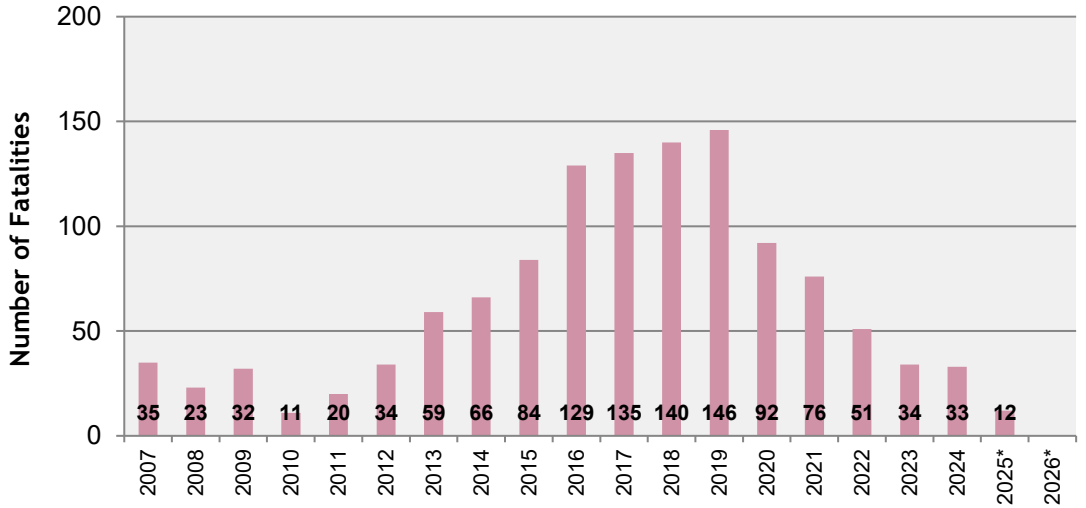
Second Quarter, 2007-2026*



Third Quarter, 2007-2026*

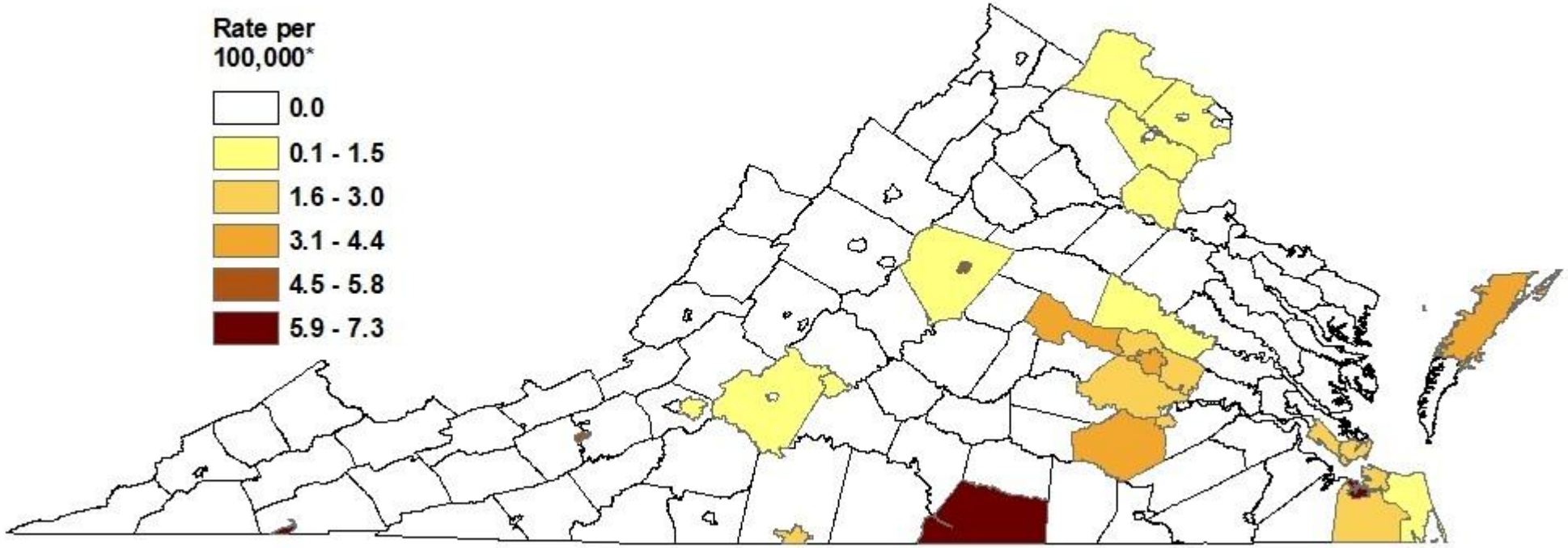


Fourth Quarter, 2007-2026*



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Rate of Fatal Heroin Overdoses by Locality of Overdose, 2025*



Source: Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

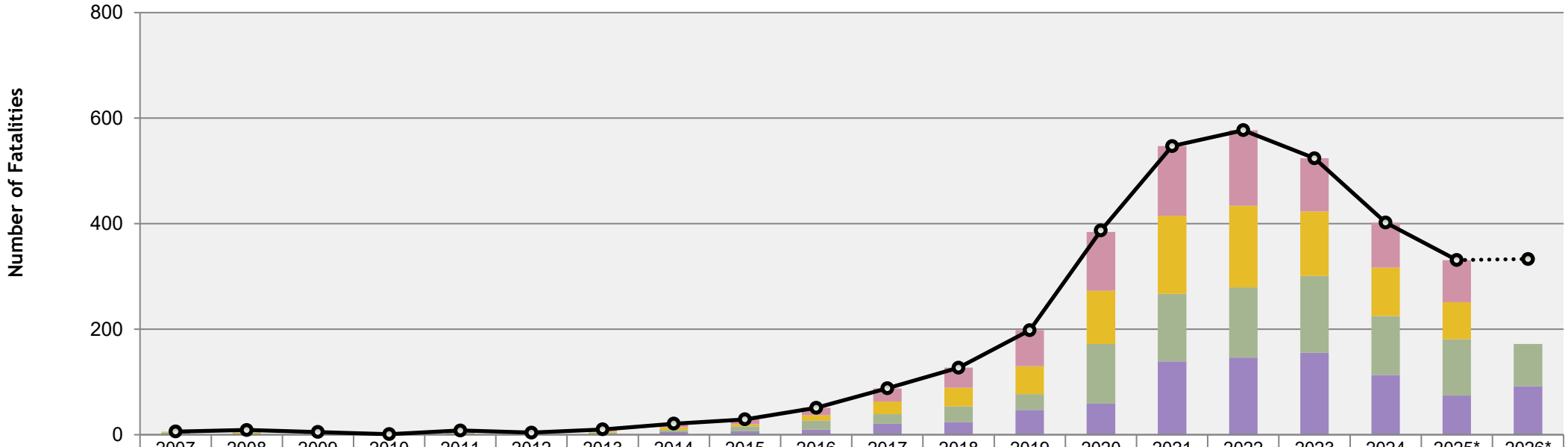
* Data for 2025 is preliminary and subject to change

** Rate groupings are based upon equal numerical range categories; rates based on small case counts (<5 deaths) are not suppressed

Methamphetamine

Total Number of Fatal Methamphetamine Overdoses by Quarter and Year of Death, 2007-2026*

Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



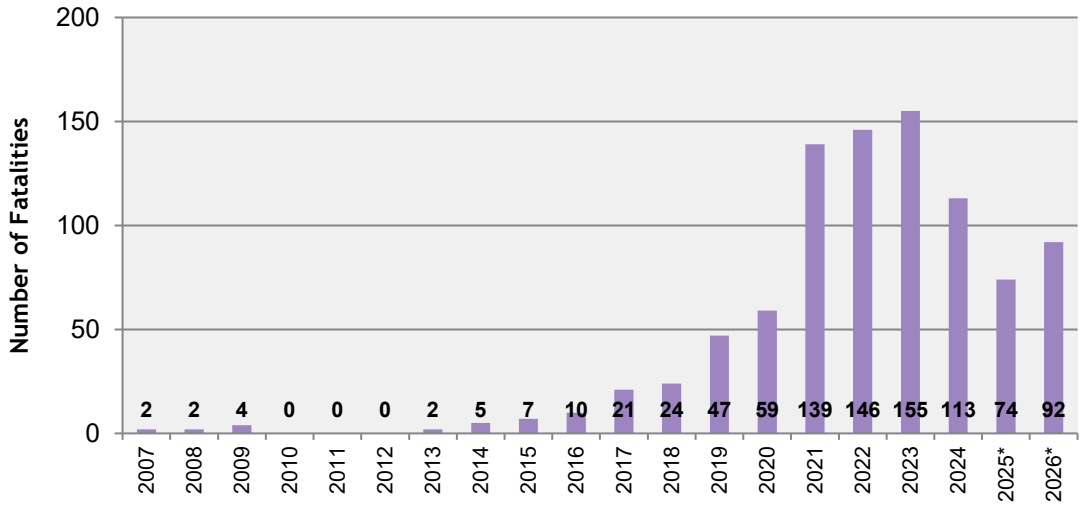
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
Q4	0	4	0	0	2	3	3	7	9	14	25	38	68	111	132	143	101	85	80	
Q3	2	2	0	1	0	0	3	5	4	10	24	35	53	101	148	155	122	92	70	
Q2	2	1	1	0	6	1	2	4	9	17	18	30	30	113	128	133	146	112	107	80
Q1	2	2	4	0	0	0	2	5	7	10	21	24	47	59	139	146	155	113	74	92
Total Fatalities	6	9	5	1	8	4	10	21	29	51	88	127	198	387	547	577	524	402	331	333

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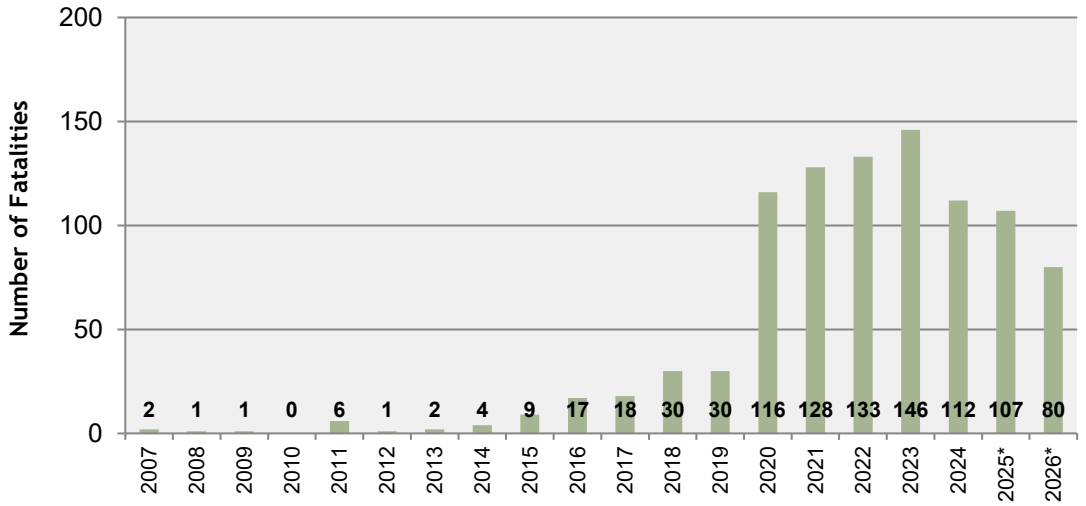
Methamphetamine

From 2007 to 2013, fatal methamphetamine overdoses were relatively uncommon compared to other drugs/drug categories, but in 2014, the number of fatal methamphetamine overdoses began to increase. Fatal methamphetamine overdoses peaked in 2022 and have since declined. In 2025, fatal methamphetamine overdoses most frequently had fentanyl (prescription, illicit, and/or analogs) causing or contributing to death (44.7%). The preliminary number of fatal methamphetamine overdoses decreased by 17.7% in 2025 when compared to 2024.

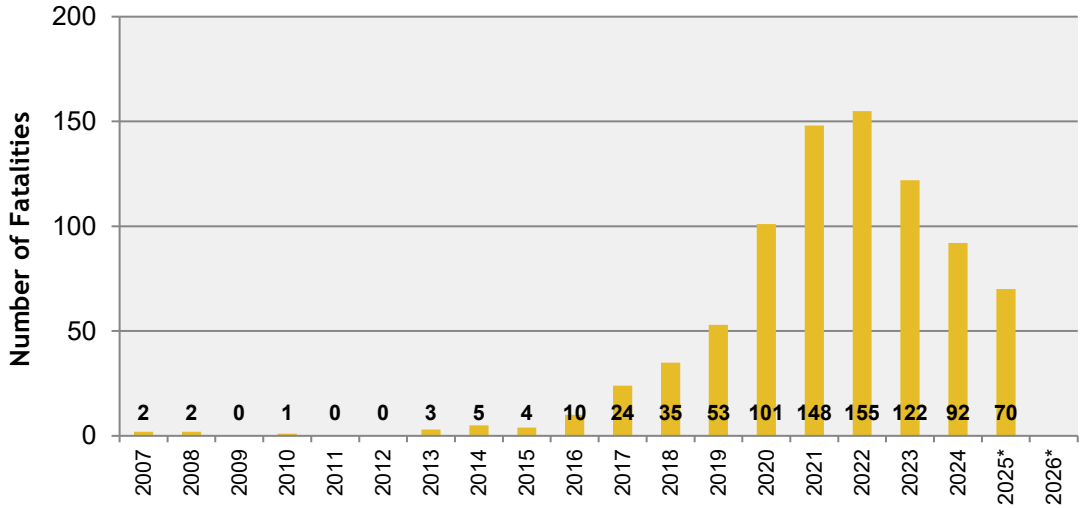
First Quarter, 2007-2026*



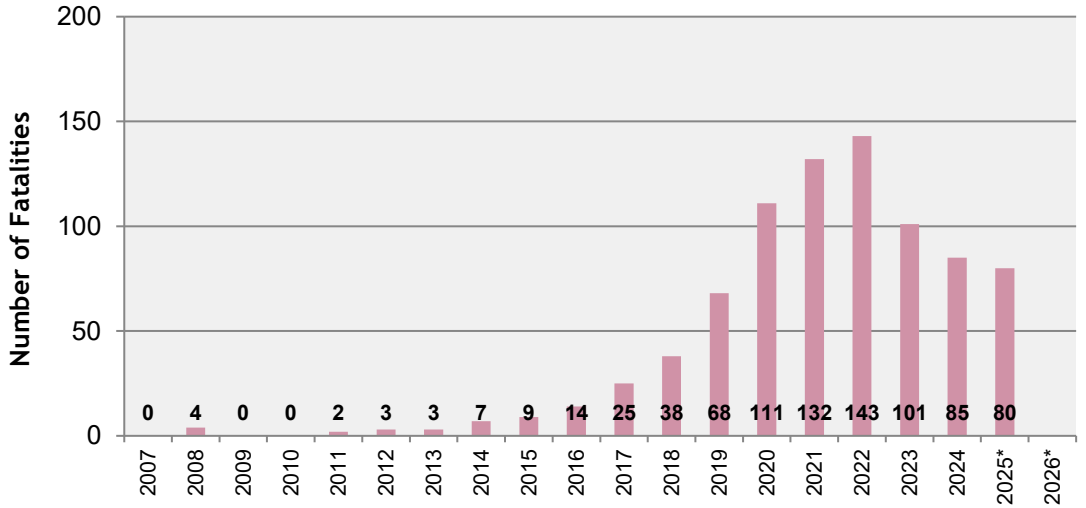
Second Quarter, 2007-2026*



Third Quarter, 2007-2026*

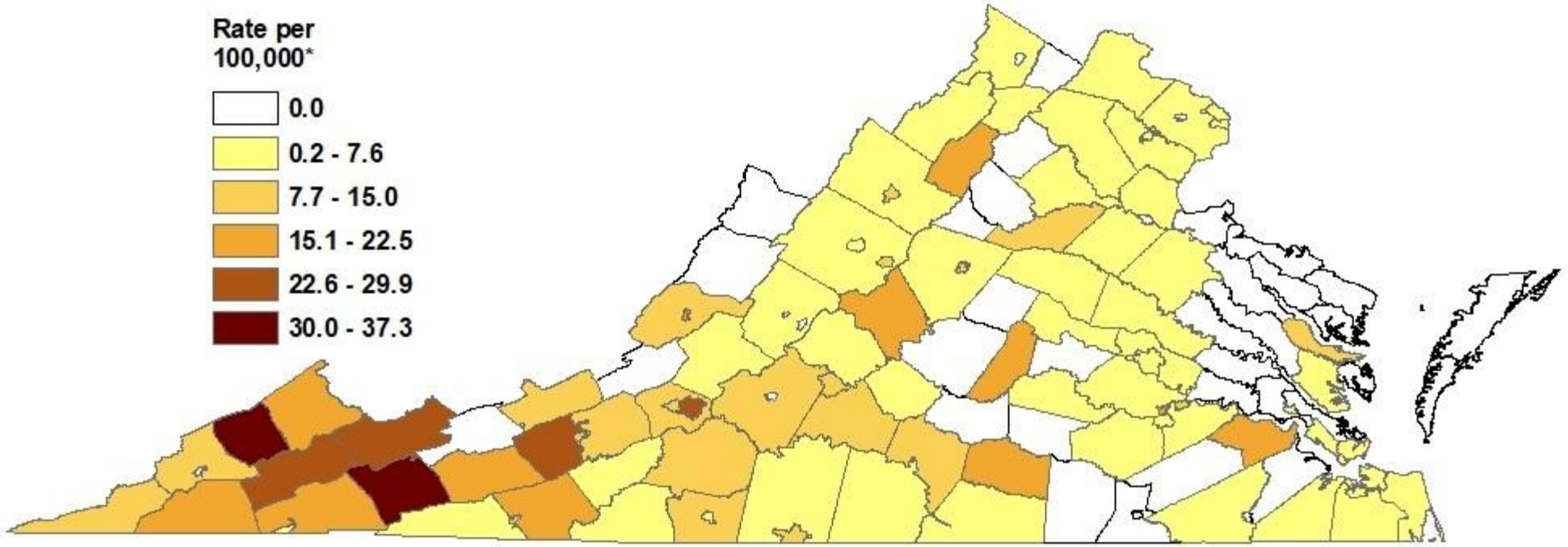


Fourth Quarter, 2007-2026*



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Rate of Fatal Methamphetamine Overdoses by Locality of Overdose, 2025*



Source: Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

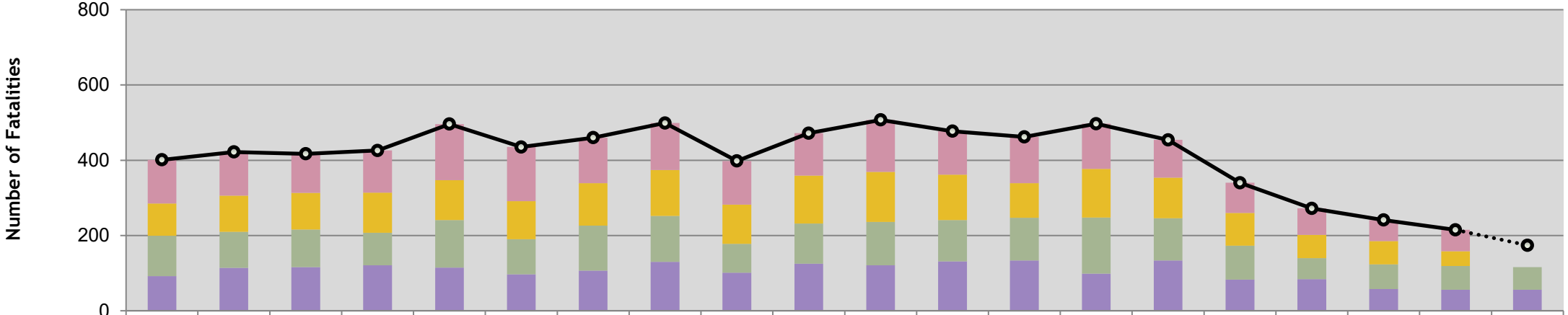
* Data for 2025 is preliminary and subject to change

** Rate groupings are based upon equal numerical range categories; rates based on small case counts (<5 deaths) are not suppressed

Prescription Opioids (Excluding Fentanyl)

Total Number of Fatal Prescription Opioid Overdoses (Excluding Fentanyl) by Quarter and Year of Death, 2007-2026*

Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



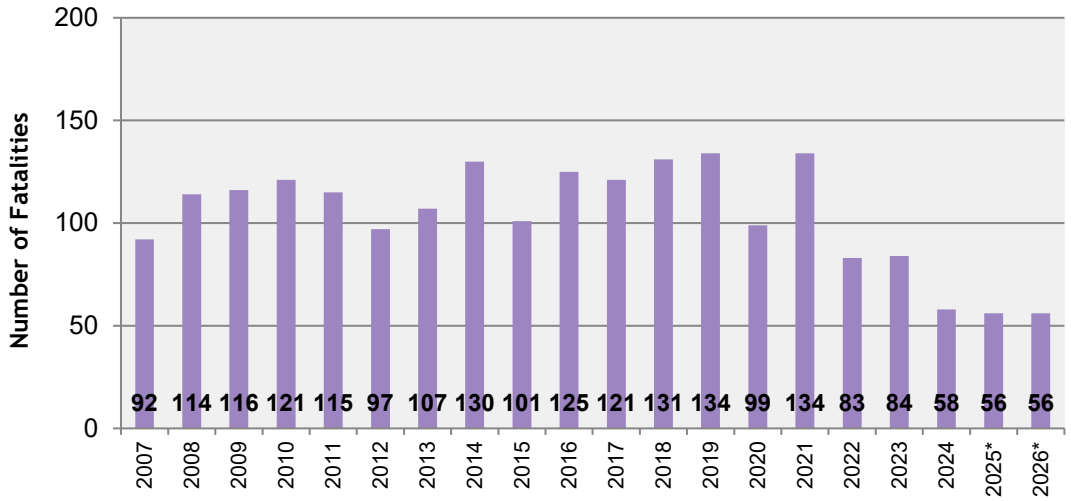
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
Q4	116	116	104	112	149	144	121	125	116	113	138	115	123	120	100	80	70	56	57	
Q3	86	96	97	107	106	101	113	122	104	127	133	121	92	129	108	87	62	62	39	
Q2	107	96	100	86	126	93	119	122	77	107	115	110	113	149	112	90	56	65	63	60
Q1	92	114	116	121	115	97	107	130	101	125	121	131	134	99	134	83	84	58	56	56
Total Fatalities	401	422	417	426	496	435	460	499	398	472	507	477	462	497	454	340	272	241	215	174

1) 'Prescription Opioids (excluding fentanyl)' calculates all deaths in which one or more prescription opioids caused or contributed to death, but excludes fentanyl from the required list of prescription opioid drugs used to calculate the numbers. However, given that some of these deaths have multiple drugs on board, some deaths may have fentanyl in addition to other prescriptions opioids, and are therefore counted in the total number. Analysis must be done this way because by excluding all deaths in which fentanyl caused or contributed to death, the calculation would also exclude other prescription opioid deaths (oxycodone, methadone, etc.) from the analysis and would thereby undercount the actual number of fatalities due to these true prescription opioids.

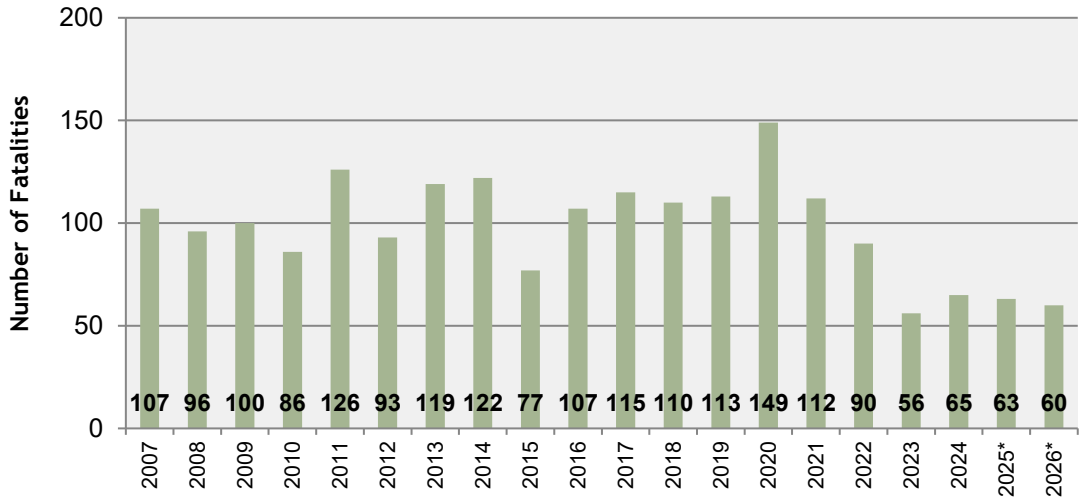
Prescription Opioids (Excluding Fentanyl)

Since 2007, fatal prescription (Rx) opioid overdoses have been the leading category of drugs causing or contributing to death in the Commonwealth, with historically, oxycodone being the most common drug. Given the transition in fatal fentanyl overdoses from pharmaceutically produced fentanyl (2007-2014) to nearly all illicitly produced fentanyl (2015-present), fentanyl needs to be removed from the Rx opioid category and analyzed separately. This allows one to see the significant impact the drug is having on fatal overdose numbers in Virginia. By removing fentanyl from this Rx category, it is to be expected that Rx opioid fatalities from 2007-2013 to be slightly undercounted because true Rx fentanyl overdoses are excluded and combined with all ‘fentanyl’ to capture recent trends of illicit fentanyl in Virginia.

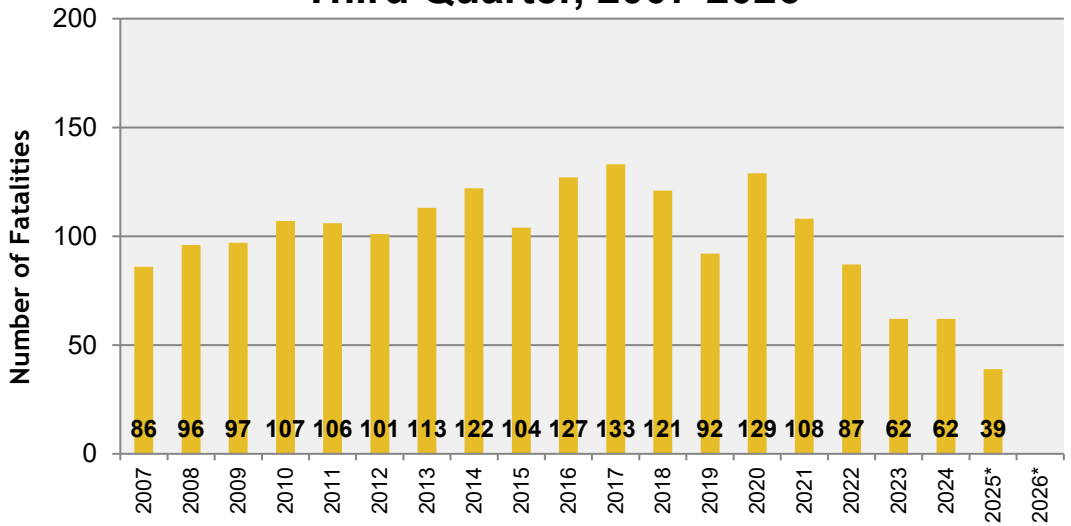
First Quarter, 2007-2026*



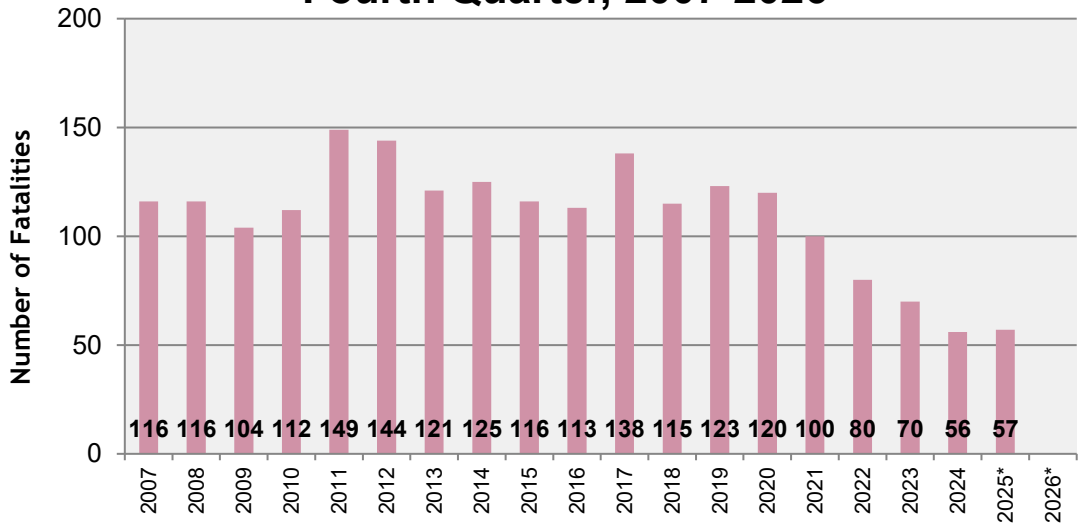
Second Quarter, 2007-2026*



Third Quarter, 2007-2026*

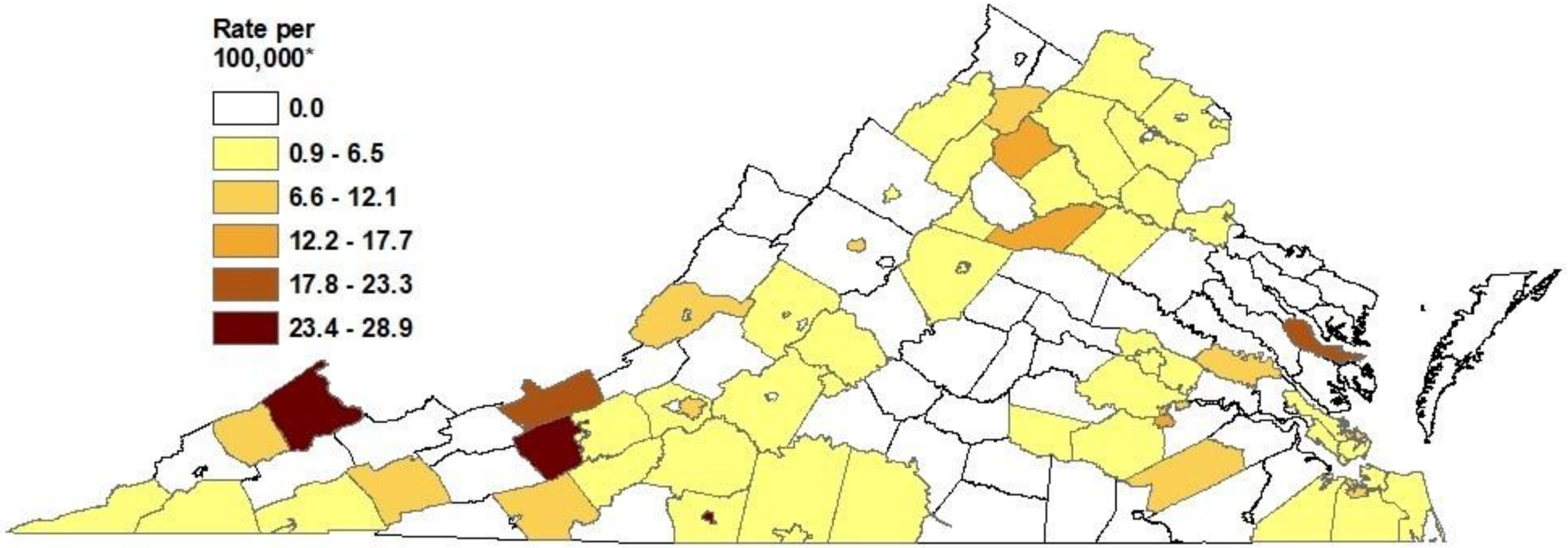


Fourth Quarter, 2007-2026*



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Rate of Fatal Prescription (Rx) Opioid Overdoses by Locality of Overdose, 2025*



Source: Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

* Data for 2025 is preliminary and subject to change

** Rate groupings are based upon equal numerical range categories; rates based on small case counts (<5 deaths) are not suppressed

Fatal Drug Overdoses of Special Interest

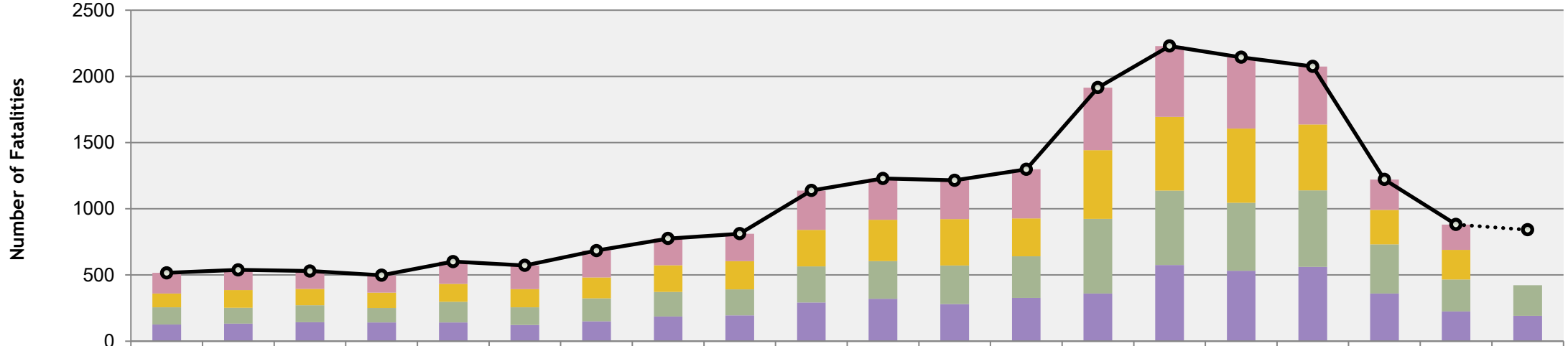


- All Opioids (Fentanyl, Heroin, and/or Prescription Opioids)
- Heroin and/or Fentanyl

All Opioids

Total Number of Fatal Opioid Overdoses by Quarter and Year of Death, 2007-2026*

Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



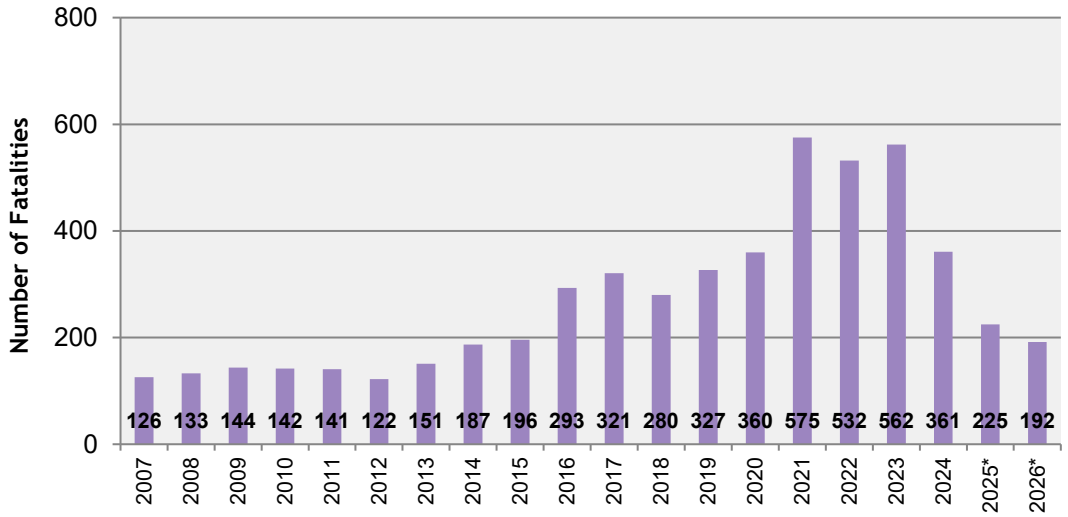
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
Q4	156	151	136	131	168	179	202	201	208	298	312	292	371	472	534	538	438	229	192	
Q3	104	134	122	116	136	137	158	202	213	275	312	351	286	519	557	560	497	260	223	
Q2	130	120	128	109	156	134	173	185	195	272	284	292	314	564	563	514	578	371	241	230
Q1	126	133	144	142	141	122	151	187	196	293	321	280	327	360	575	532	562	361	225	192
Total Fatalities	516	538	530	498	601	572	684	775	812	1138	1229	1215	1298	1915	2229	2144	2075	1221	881	841

1) 'All Opioids' includes all versions of fentanyl, heroin, prescription opioids, U-47700, nitazenes, and opioids unspecified
2) 'Opioids Unspecified' are a small category of deaths in which the determination of heroin and/or one or more prescription opioids cannot be made due to specific circumstances of the death. Most commonly, these circumstances are a result of death several days after an overdose, in which the OCME cannot test for toxicology because the substances have been metabolized out of the decedent's system.
3) Fatal opioid numbers have changed slightly from past reports due to the removal of fentanyl from the category of prescription opioids, as well as the addition of buprenorphine, levorphanol, meperidine, pentazocine, propoxyphene, and tapentadol added to the list of prescription opioids.

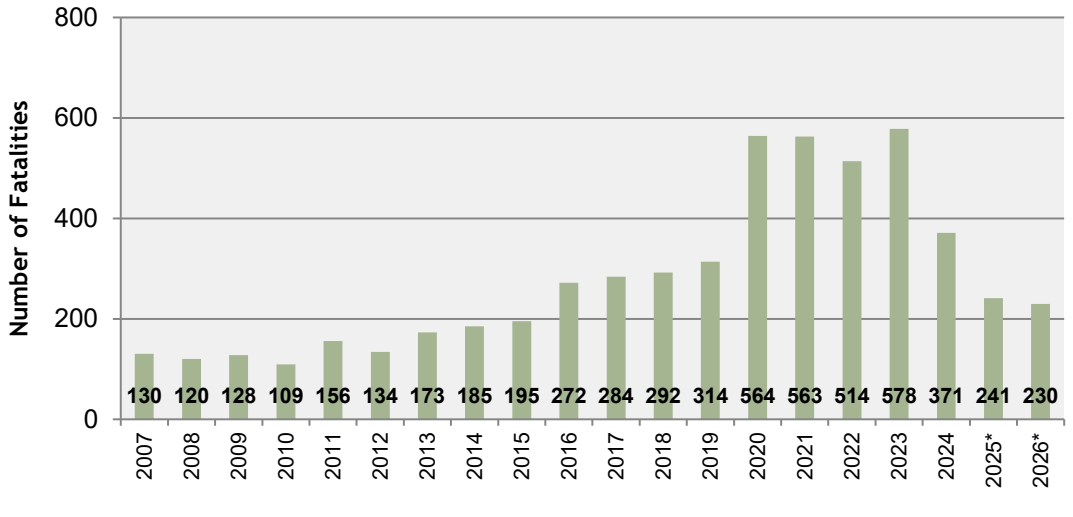
All Opioids

From 2007-2015, opioids (fentanyl, heroin, U-47700, and/or one or more prescription opioids) made up approximately 75% of all fatal drug overdoses annually in Virginia. However, this percentage is increasing each year due to the significant increase in fatal fentanyl and/or heroin overdoses which began in late 2013 and early 2014. Preliminary numbers for 2025 indicated that 62.9% of all fatal overdoses of any substance were due to one or more opioids. The preliminary number of fatal opioid overdoses in 2025 decreased 27.8% from the previous year.

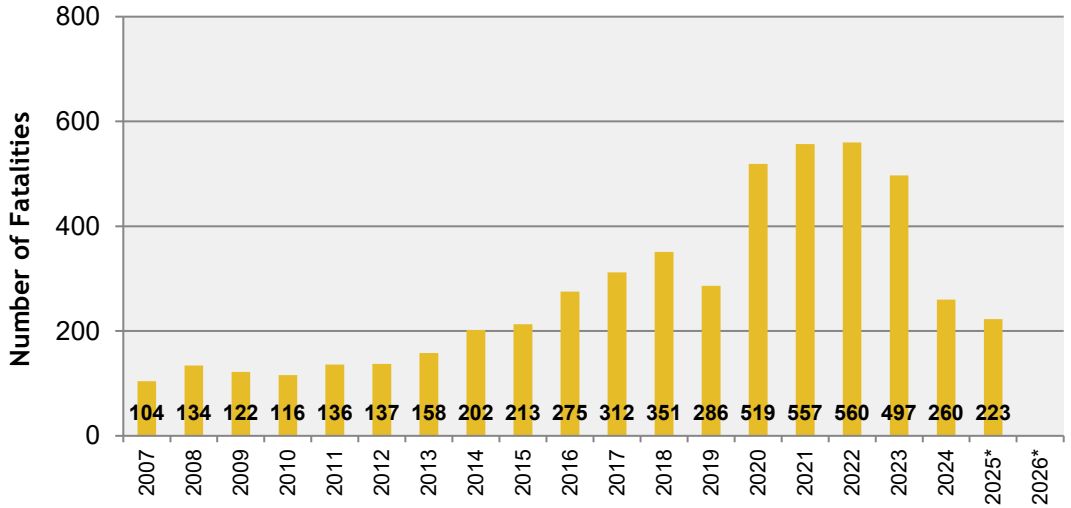
First Quarter, 2007-2026*



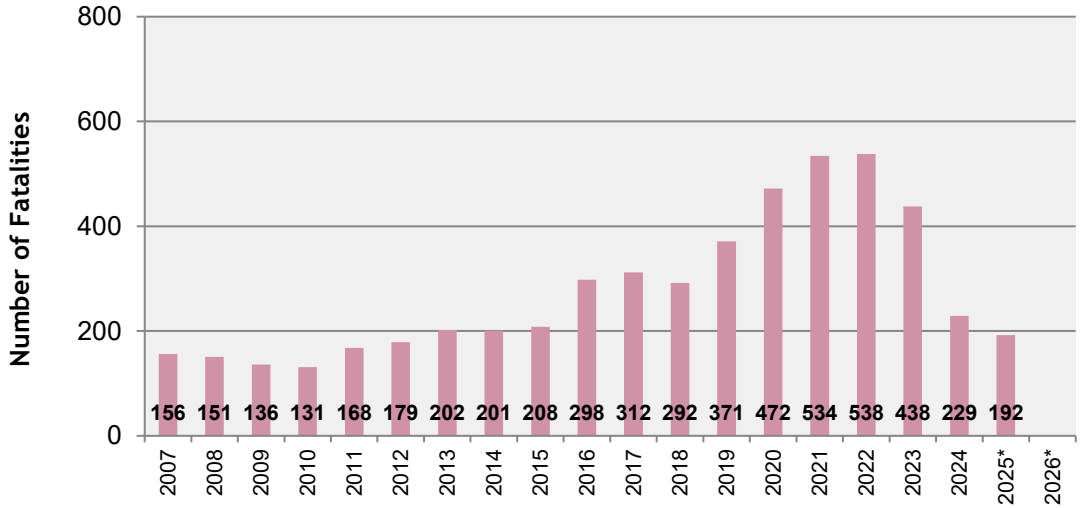
Second Quarter, 2007-2026*



Third Quarter, 2007-2026*



Fourth Quarter, 2007-2026*

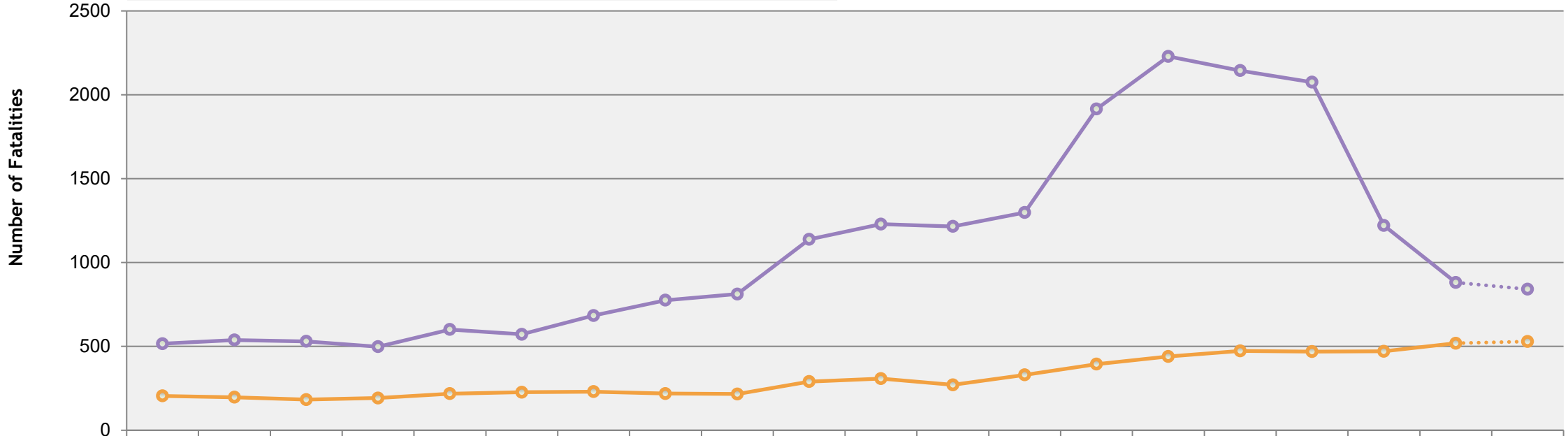


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Opioids vs. Non-Opioids

Total Number of Fatal Opioid Overdoses vs. Non-Opioid Overdoses by Year of Death, 2007-2026*

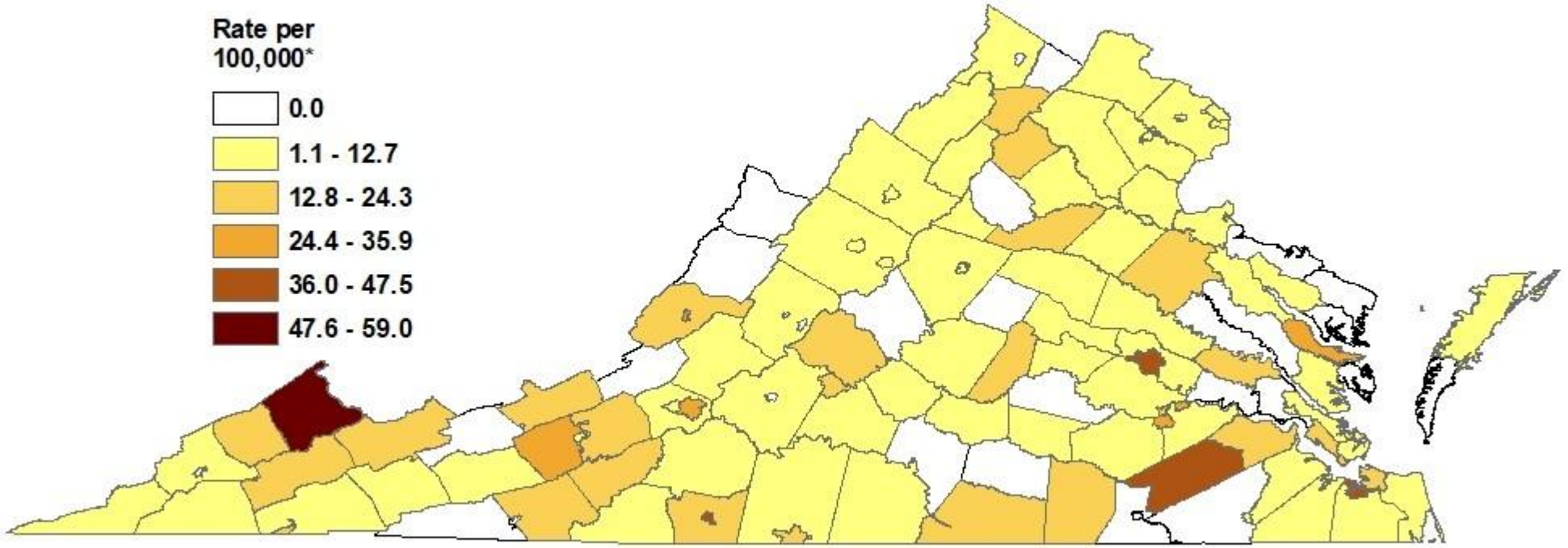
Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
Opioids	516	538	530	498	601	572	684	775	812	1138	1229	1215	1298	1915	2229	2144	2075	1221	881	841
Non-Opioids	205	197	183	192	218	227	230	219	216	290	308	271	330	394	440	473	469	471	519	529

1) ‘All Opioids’ includes all versions of fentanyl, heroin, prescription opioids, U-47700, nitazenes, and opioids unspecified
2) ‘Opioids Unspecified’ are a small category of deaths in which the determination of heroin and/or one or more prescription opioids cannot be made due to specific circumstances of the death. Most commonly, these circumstances are a result of death several days after an overdose, in which the OCME cannot test for toxicology because the substances have been metabolized out of the decedent’s system.

Rate of All Fatal Opioid Overdoses by Locality of Overdose, 2025*



Source: Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

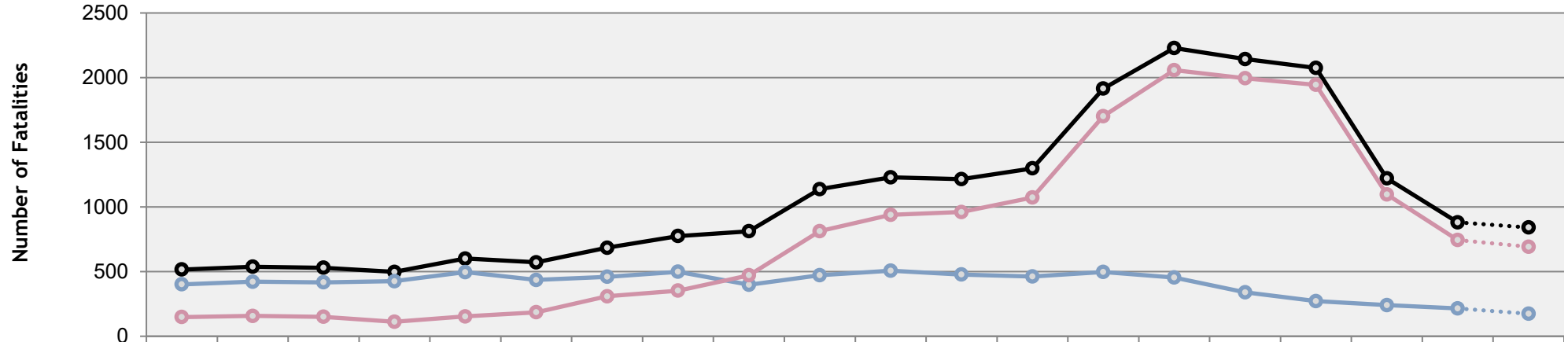
* Data for 2025 is preliminary and subject to change

** Rate groupings are based upon equal numerical range categories; rates based on small case counts (<5 deaths) are not suppressed

Opioids- A Different Perspective

Total Number of Prescription Opioid (Excluding Fentanyl), Fentanyl and/or Heroin, and All Opioid Overdoses by Year of Death, 2007-2026*

Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
All Opioids	516	538	530	498	601	572	684	775	812	1138	1229	1215	1298	1915	2229	2144	2075	1221	881	841
Prescription Opioids (excluding fentanyl)	401	422	417	426	496	435	460	499	398	472	507	477	462	497	454	340	272	241	215	174
Fentanyl and/or Heroin	148	157	150	112	153	185	309	353	471	813	939	961	1073	1702	2058	1995	1944	1097	744	692

1) 'All Opioids' includes all versions of fentanyl, heroin, prescription opioids, U-47700, nitazenes, and opioids unspecified
2) Illicit and pharmaceutically produced fatal fentanyl overdoses are represented in this analysis. This includes all different types of fentanyl analogs (acetyl fentanyl, furanyl fentanyl, etc.)
3) 'Prescription Opioids (excluding fentanyl)' calculates all deaths in which one or more prescription opioids caused or contributed to death, but excludes fentanyl from the **required list** of prescription opioid drugs used to calculate the numbers. However, given that some of these deaths have multiple drugs on board, some deaths may have fentanyl in addition to other prescriptions opioids, and are therefore counted in the total number. Analysis must be done this way because by excluding all deaths in which fentanyl caused or contributed to death, the calculation would also exclude other prescription opioid deaths (oxycodone, methadone, etc.) from the analysis and would thereby undercount the actual number of fatalities due to these true prescription opioids.

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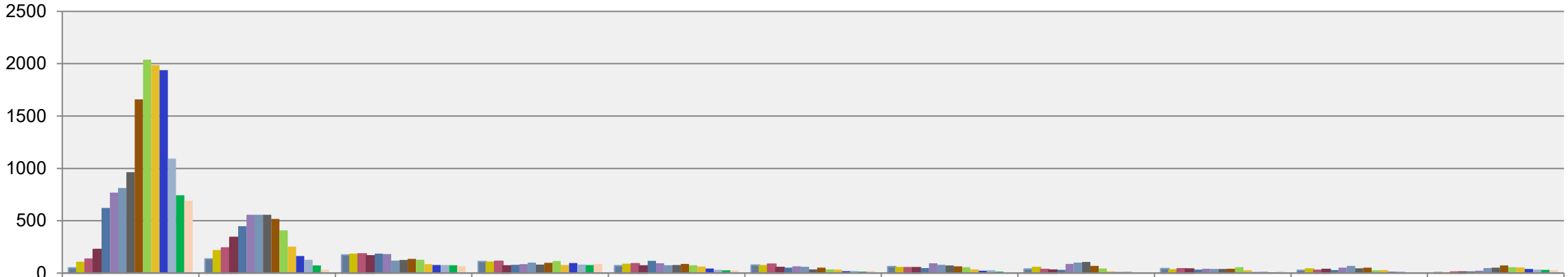
Opioids- A Different Perspective

Prescription opioids are a group of drugs that are commercially made by pharmaceutical companies in certified laboratories that act upon the opioid receptors in the brain. Historically, fentanyl has been one of these drugs. However, in late 2013, early 2014, illicitly made fentanyl began showing up in Virginia and by 2016, most fatal fentanyl overdoses were of illicit production of the drug. Separating fentanyl from the grouping of prescription opioids for this reason demonstrates a slight decrease in fatal prescription opioid overdoses in 2015 and a dramatic increase in the number of fatal fentanyl and/or heroin overdoses. This has caused the significant rise in all fatal opioid overdoses in the Commonwealth since 2012.

All Opioids

Total Number of Fatal Opioid Overdoses by Drug Name and Year of Death, 2012-2026*

Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



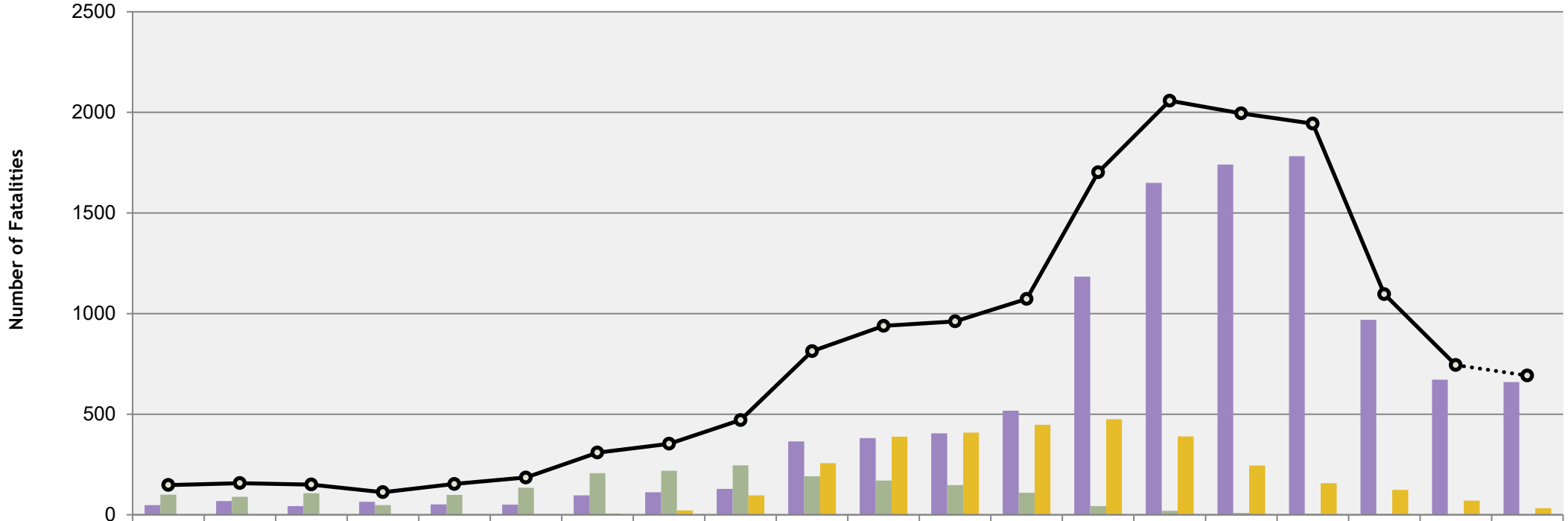
	Fentanyl	Heroin	Oxycodone	Methadone	Morphine	Hydrocodone	Oxymorphone	Codeine	Tramadol	Hydromorphone	Buprenorphine
2012	50	135	174	111	71	77	62	39	43	27	6
2013	102	213	180	104	84	70	52	54	31	40	1
2014	134	241	185	113	89	85	51	36	42	27	10
2015	225	342	166	68	69	55	53	28	40	35	11
2016	622	448	187	79	117	53	48	31	33	28	16
2017	769	558	181	85	94	65	93	87	41	52	22
2018	813	556	119	101	74	60	79	100	40	68	48
2019	964	556	126	82	77	36	72	106	40	46	51
2020	1659	518	135	98	88	51	64	68	42	52	73
2021	2039	408	127	114	75	35	56	44	57	27	57
2022	1986	254	86	77	63	34	35	17	26	29	55
2023	1939	162	77	95	43	19	22	11	10	13	40
2024	1093	128	78	82	30	21	27	14	14	14	33
2025*	743	72	74	77	26	14	14	2	8	2	32
2026*	692	32	67	87	25	20	2	2	16	7	28

1) Levorphanol, meperidine, pentazocine, propoxyphene, and tapentadol were excluded from this analysis due low annual case counts (<20 deaths)

Fentanyl and/or Heroin

Total Number of Fatal Fentanyl and/or Heroin Overdoses by Year of Death, 2007-2026*

Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
Fentanyl (No Heroin)	48	68	43	64	52	50	96	112	129	365	381	405	517	1184	1650	1741	1782	969	672	660
Heroin (No Fentanyl)	100	89	107	48	99	135	207	219	246	191	170	148	109	43	19	9	5	4	1	0
Fentanyl and Heroin	0	0	0	0	2	0	6	22	96	257	388	408	447	475	389	245	157	124	71	32
Total Fatalities	148	157	150	112	153	185	309	353	471	813	939	961	1073	1702	2058	1995	1944	1097	744	692

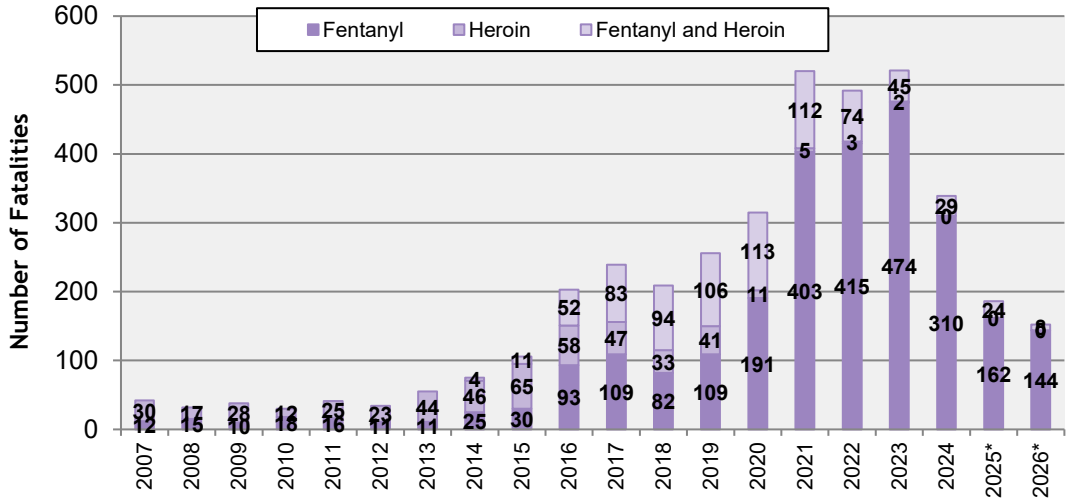
1) Illicit and pharmaceutically produced fatal fentanyl overdoses are represented in this analysis. This includes all different types of fentanyl analogs (acetyl fentanyl, furanyl fentanyl, etc.)

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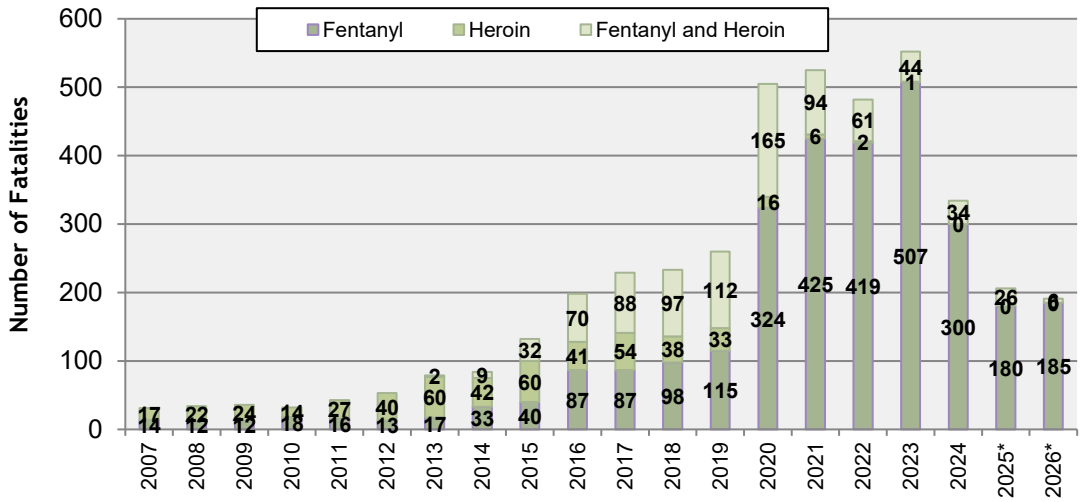
Fentanyl and/or Heroin

The total number of fatal fentanyl and/or heroin overdoses have significantly increased since late 2012. It is important to look at these two drugs together because as heroin became more popular in 2010, fentanyl occasionally began showing up as an additive to the heroin. By late 2013 and early 2014, some heroin being sold on the street was actually completely fentanyl, unbeknownst to the user. It is essential to look at these fentanyl (no heroin), heroin (no fentanyl), and fentanyl and heroin combination deaths together because users never know exactly what is in the illegal drugs purchased off the streets. The preliminary number of fatal fentanyl and/or heroin overdoses decreased 32.2% in 2025 compared to 2024.

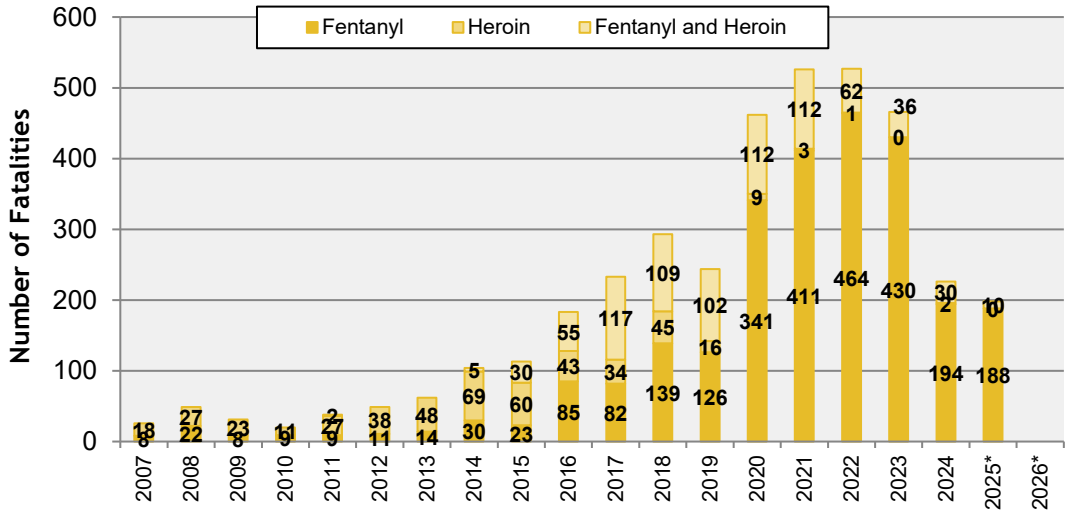
First Quarter, 2007-2026*



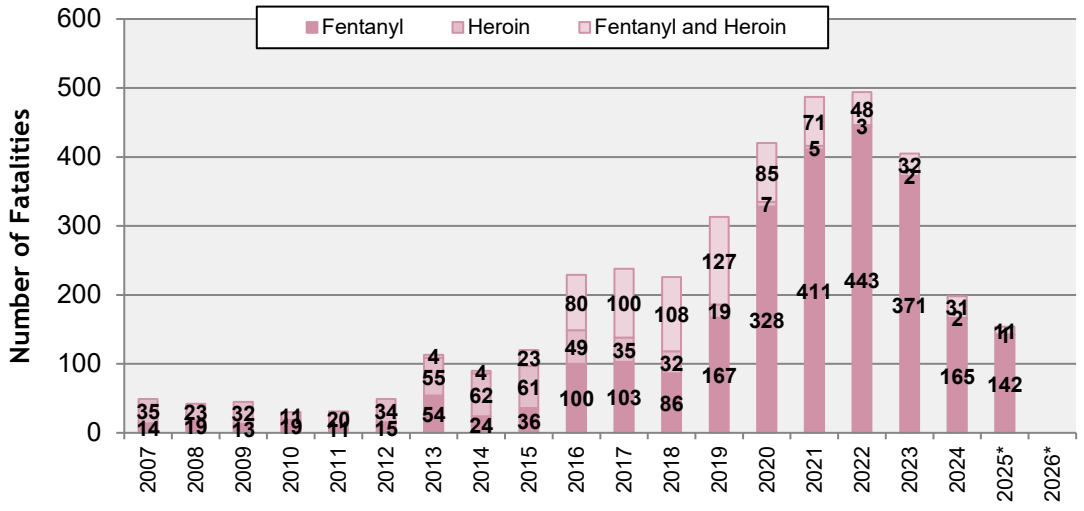
Second Quarter, 2007-2026*



Third Quarter, 2007-2026*

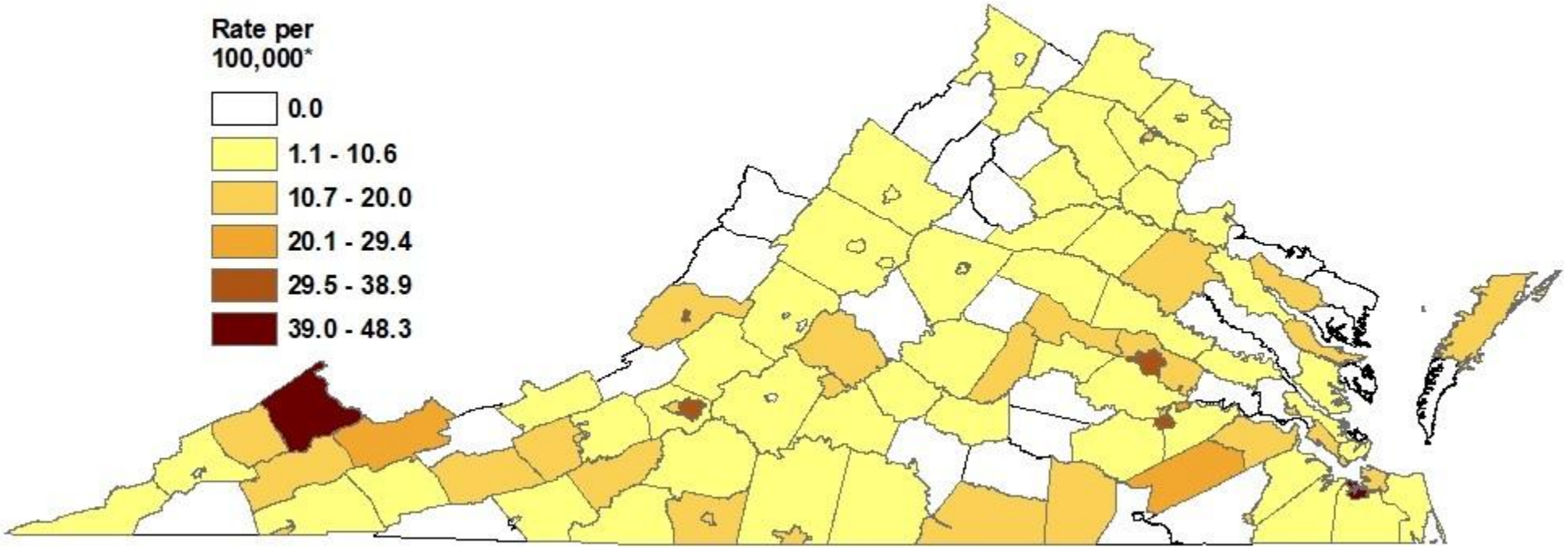


Fourth Quarter, 2007-2026*



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Rate of Fatal Fentanyl and/or Heroin Overdoses by Locality of Overdose, 2025*



Source: Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

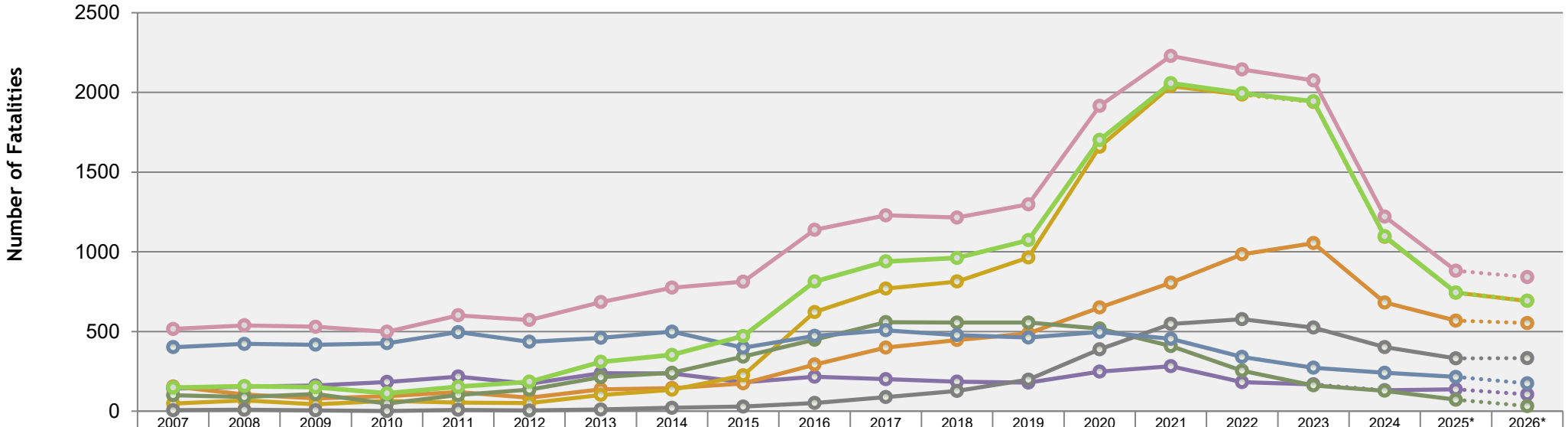
* Data for 2025 is preliminary and subject to change

** Rate groupings are based upon equal numerical range categories; rates based on small case counts (<5 deaths) are not suppressed

All Drugs

Total Number of Fatal Drug Overdoses Drug Name/Category and Year of Death, 2007-2026*

Data for 2026 is a Forecasted Total for the Entire Year



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*	2026*
Benzodiazepines	142	154	161	183	217	172	238	237	181	216	201	185	179	248	282	182	168	131	137	105
Cocaine	155	104	80	93	120	84	137	145	174	292	399	446	488	650	806	984	1054	682	568	553
Fentanyl	48	68	43	64	54	50	102	134	225	622	769	813	964	1659	2039	1986	1939	1093	743	692
Heroin	100	89	107	48	101	135	213	241	342	448	558	556	556	518	408	254	162	128	72	32
Methamphetamine	6	9	5	1	8	4	10	21	29	51	88	127	198	388	547	577	524	402	331	333
Prescription Opioids (excluding Fentanyl)	401	422	417	426	496	435	460	499	398	472	507	477	462	497	454	340	272	241	215	174
All Opioids	516	538	530	498	601	572	684	775	812	1138	1229	1215	1298	1915	2229	2144	2075	1221	881	841
Heroin and/or Fentanyl	148	157	150	112	153	185	309	353	471	813	939	961	1073	1702	2058	1995	1944	1097	744	692

1) Deaths may be represented in more than one category due to groupings of drug categories (e.g. heroin)

Contact Information

This report is compiled by the Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. For additional information regarding these or other statistics, please contact:

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This report and associated spreadsheets of various types of drug deaths by locality and year are available on the OCME website: https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/medical-examiner/forensic-epidemiology/