



OFFICE OF THE CORONER

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I am pleased to release the 2024 annual report data for El Paso County—Colorado’s largest and busiest coroner’s office. Just as the practice of medicine has long learned from post-mortem examinations, our community benefits from the death investigations this office provides. Although the 2024 report features multiple positive data points, it is important to remember that the individuals represented in this report are each grieved by family and friends.

This report revealed several encouraging trends:

- We observed an approximately 17% decrease in all accidental deaths and a 27% reduction in accidental drug overdose deaths. Fentanyl deaths in particular diminished by 44% from the prior year. However, methamphetamine exhibited a resurgence with a 7% increase from 2023.
- Suicides in our community decreased roughly 18% in 2024, and suicidal deaths among minors dropped by 60%.
- Drug-related fatalities in our unhoused population decreased 37%, and the amount of deaths requiring autopsies fell by 25% for this group.

Unfortunately, these positive gains are undercut by a few factors. Despite performing 13% fewer autopsies on El Paso County decedents, our office saw a nearly 34% increase in fatal motor vehicle incidents. In 41% of these fatalities, reckless driving and/or excessive speed were considered the primary cause of the crash at the time of autopsy. Additionally, 41% of these decedents were operating or riding a motorcycle.

I want to extend my gratitude to all who have worked so hard over the past year to improve life in our special community—and remind everyone that each person we’re sharing the road with is someone’s child, parent, partner, or friend.

With kind regards,
Dr. Russell-Kinsley

