

SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC
HEALTH

Drug Overdose Deaths South Carolina

2024

Prepared as of 6/4/2026



INTRODUCTION

This report describes fatal drug overdose deaths that occurred in South Carolina in 2024. Data were derived from death certificates registered with the Department of Public Health Vital Statistics and represent deaths that occurred in the state of South Carolina regardless of the residence of the decedent.

Drug overdose deaths are identified using underlying cause-of-death codes from the tenth revision of ICD (ICD-10): X40–X44 (unintentional), X60–X64 (suicide), X85 (homicide), and Y10–Y14 (undetermined). Drug overdose deaths involving selected drug categories are identified by additional multiple cause-of-death codes. The current "prescription drugs" category includes both opioid and non-opioid prescription drugs. The category "opioids" includes both legal and illegal opioids. Prescription drugs are identified by the following ICD-10 codes: T36.0–T39.9, T40.2–T40.4, T41.0–T43.5 and T43.7–T50.8. Opioids are identified by codes T40.0–T40.4, T40.6. Other codes used are: heroin T40.1, methadone T40.3, cocaine T40.5. Fentanyl is identified through a search of the literal cause of death. Psychostimulants with abuse potential, which include such drugs as methamphetamine, amphetamine, methylphenidate (Ritalin), and 3,4-methylenedioxy-methamphetamine (MDMA, Ecstasy) are identified by the code T43.6.

Drug overdose deaths may involve multiple drugs; therefore, a single death might be included in more than one category when describing the number of drug overdose deaths involving a specific drug. For example, a death that involved both heroin and fentanyl would be included in the following categories: deaths involving heroin, deaths involving fentanyl, deaths involving opioids, and deaths involving prescription drugs.

Due to privacy and confidentiality concerns, DPH will apply suppression rules for all reports containing 2023 data and forward. DPH's suppression rule is that values less than 5 will be suppressed on all Vital Statistics forms. This is reflected as "<5" in the report whenever the true value is 1-4. Additionally, in locations where only one number in a dataset is suppressed or if reidentification of the true value would still be possible, the report suppresses the next lowest number in the dataset. This is reflected as "#" in the report. For example, in the below sample dataset the rules would be applied in the following manner:

Unsuppressed Values:

Year	Total	Value 1	Value 2	Value 3
2023	25	12	9	4
2024	27	20	4	3
2025	30	12	7	11

Suppressed Values:

Year	Total	Value 1	Value 2	Value 3
2023	25	12	#	<5
2024	27	20	<5	<5
2025	30	12	7	11

2024 Vital Statistics Drug Overdose Death Report - Executive Summary

In 2024, there were 1,481 drug overdose deaths in South Carolina, which was a 31.3% decrease from the 2,157 drug overdose deaths in 2023 (Figure 1). This is the second year in a row that South Carolina saw a decrease in the number of drug overdose deaths. The rate of drug overdose deaths in 2024 was 27.6 per 100,000 population (Table 3A). Drug overdoses by unintentional intent continue to represent the highest proportion of drug overdose deaths (94.7%) in 2024 (Table 1). Deaths involving prescription drugs, opioids, psychostimulants with abuse potential, fentanyl, heroin, methadone, and cocaine decreased in 2024 as compared to 2023 (Table 2, Figure 2). In 2023, cocaine was the only drug category listed where there was an increase in overdose deaths from the previous year. However, in 2024, drug overdose deaths involving cocaine decreased by nearly 30% (Table 2, Figure 2).

Most counties in South Carolina showed a decrease in drug overdose deaths in 2024, with many seeing a statistically significant decrease of more than 50% from 2023 to 2024 (Table 4). Counties with more than a 50% decrease for total drug overdose and opioid-involved overdose deaths included Aiken (-50.0%; -53.7%), Georgetown (-59.0%; -57.6%), Jasper (-61.8%; -62.1%), and Spartanburg (-52.9%; -58.8%). Colleton County had a 50.0% decrease in total drug overdose deaths. Beaufort (-64.3%), Dorchester (-57.5%), and Oconee (-50.0%) counties had significant decreases in opioid-involved overdose deaths.

Among opioid-involved overdose deaths, people aged 35 to 44 continued to have the highest number of deaths (316 deaths) compared to those in other age groups in 2024 (Figure 6). All age groups experienced a decrease in opioid-involved overdose deaths in 2024 compared to 2023, with the 25-34 age group having the largest percent decrease (46.7%). The highest proportion of opioid-involved (49%) and psychostimulants with abuse potential-involved (57%) overdose deaths occurred among White males (Figure 7). The highest proportion (37%) of cocaine-involved overdose deaths occurred among Black and other males, followed by White males (34%). Those who were high school graduates maintained the highest proportion of opioid (47%), cocaine (49%), and psychostimulants with abuse potential-involved (49%) overdose deaths in 2024 (Figure 8).

All months in 2024 experienced a decrease in the number of drug overdose deaths compared to the same month in 2023 (Figure 9). June (-46.2%) and October (-48.6%) had the largest decreases from 2023 to 2024. In 2024, the highest number of drug overdose deaths occurred in January (162 deaths), March (144 deaths), and April (140 deaths). There was a decreasing trend in the number of drug overdose deaths by month in 2024.

Figure 1.
 Number of Drug Overdose Deaths by Intent
 South Carolina, 2015-2024
 Occurrence Data

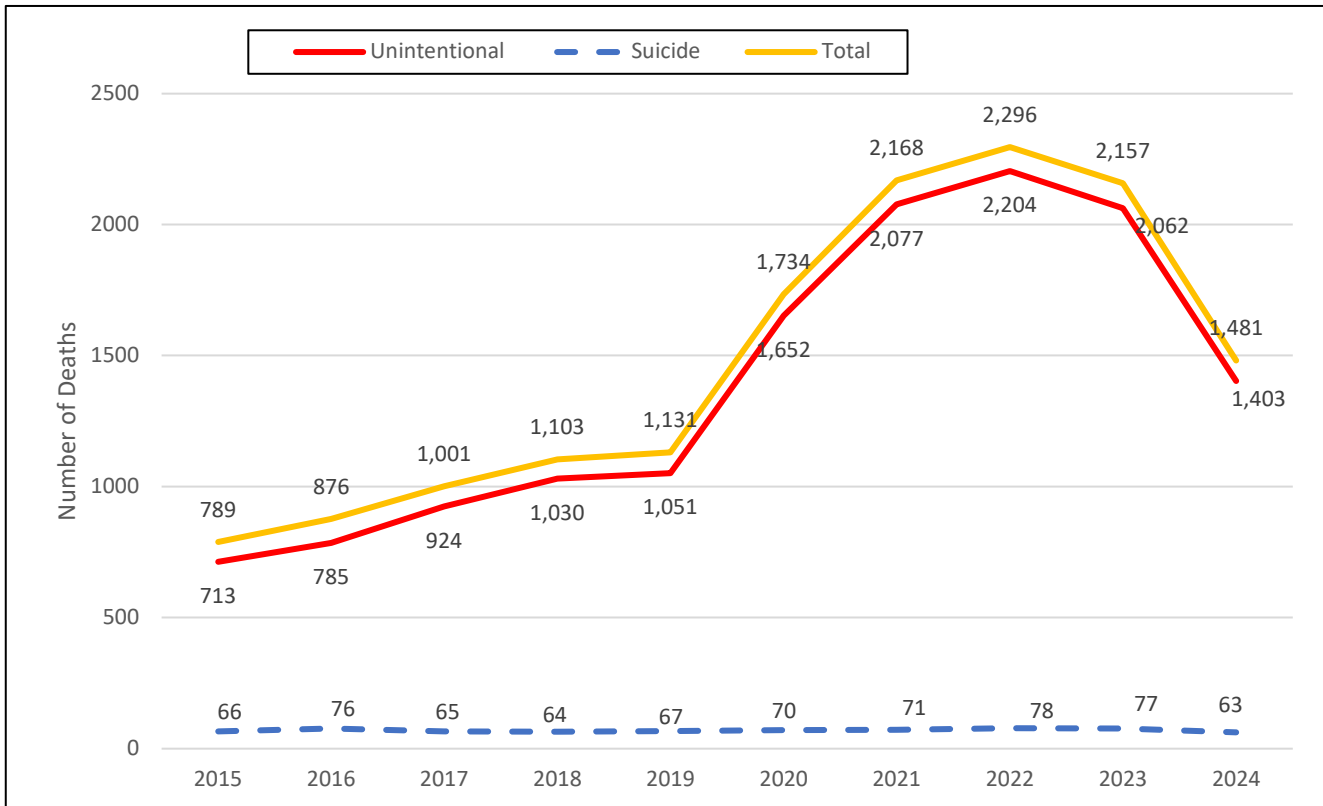


Table 1.
 Number of Drug Overdose Deaths by Intent
 South Carolina, 2015-2024
 Occurrence Data

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total	789	876	1,001	1,103	1,131	1,734	2,168	2,296	2,157	1,481
Unintentional	713	785	924	1,030	1,051	1,652	2,077	2,204	2,062	1,403
Suicide	66	76	65	64	67	70	71	78	77	63
Homicide	0	3	1	3	0	1	9	3	<5	<5
Undetermined	10	12	11	6	13	11	11	11	#	#

Table 2.
 Number of Drug Overdose Deaths by Category and Selected Drugs
 South Carolina, 2020-2024
 Occurrence Data

Year	Total Drug Overdose	Prescription Drugs	Opioids	Psychostimulants with Abuse Potential	Fentanyl	Heroin	Methadone	Cocaine
2020	1,734	1,463	1,400	551	1,100	244	46	352
2021	2,168	1,853	1,733	778	1,494	136	69	446
2022	2,296	1,982	1,864	794	1,660	54	58	562
2023	2,157	1,840	1,704	765	1,550	24	53	591
2024	1,481	1,166	1,049	521	914	18	43	414

Figure 2.
 Number of Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug Category
 South Carolina, 2020-2024
 Occurrence Data

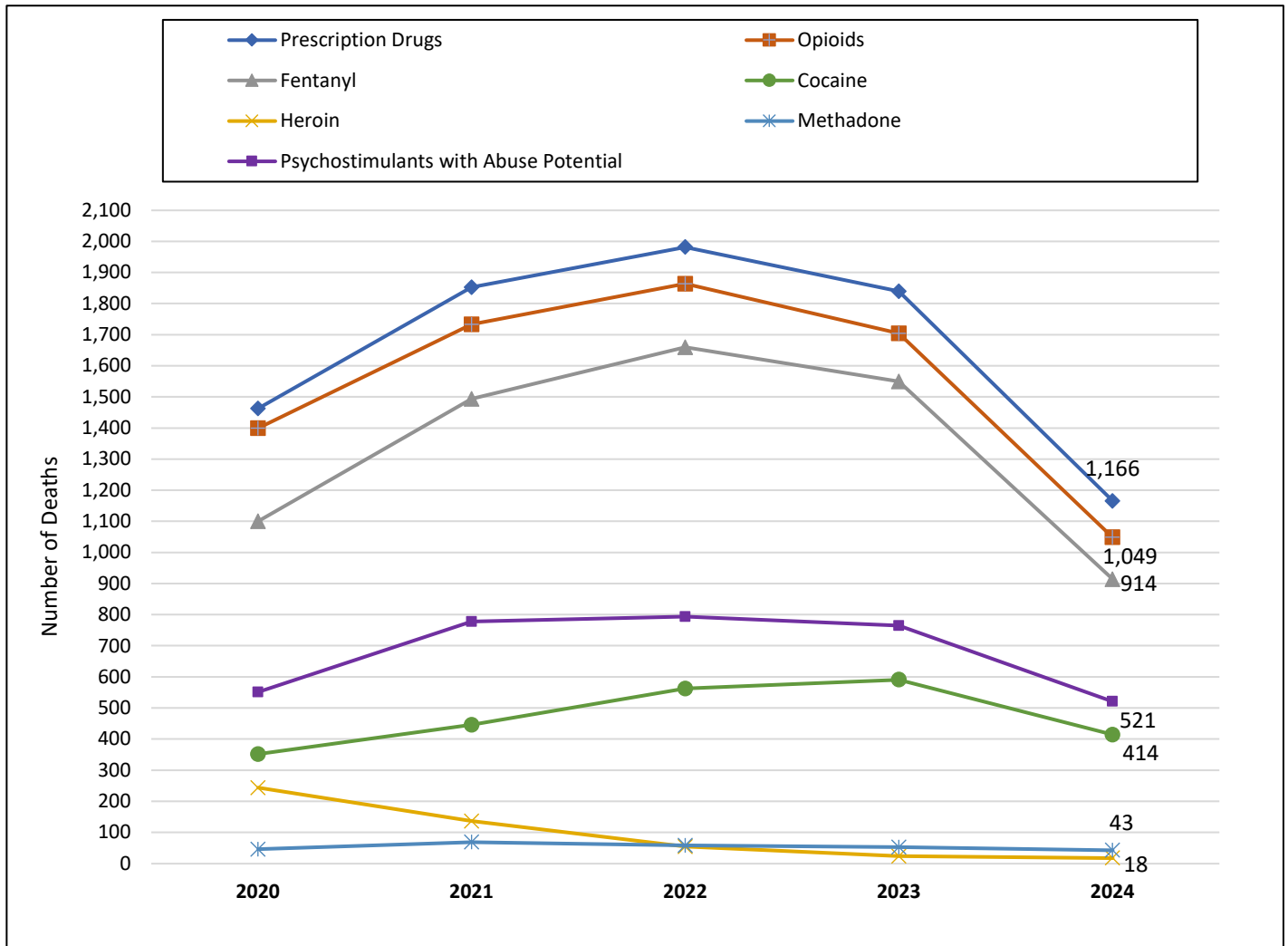


Table 3. A
Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug Category and County
South Carolina, 2024
Occurrence Data

County of Death	Total Drug Overdose		Prescription Drugs		Opioids		Psychostimulants with Abuse Potential	
	Number	Rate ¹	Number	Rate ¹	Number	Rate ¹	Number	Rate ¹
South Carolina	1,481	27.6	1,166	22.2	1,049	20.2	521	10.0
Abbeville	<5	#	<5	#	<5	#	<5	#
Aiken	50	27.0	42	22.9	38	21.5	14	7.5
Allendale	<5	#	-	-	-	-	-	-
Anderson	56	25.7	34	16.6	33	16.3	29	13.0
Bamberg	<5	#	<5	#	<5	#	-	-
Barnwell	5	29.1	<5	#	<5	#	<5	#
Beaufort	17	9.5	13	7.6	10	6.4	5	2.7
Berkeley	46	16.8	41	14.8	32	11.7	17	6.1
Calhoun	<5	#	-	-	-	-	<5	#
Charleston	178	38.9	139	30.9	128	28.6	45	10.4
Cherokee	18	35.7	12	24.2	10	20.6	7	13.3
Chester	15	42.4	10	28.4	9	26.5	6	17.6
Chesterfield	12	27.7	7	17.6	7	17.6	<5	#
Clarendon	<5	#	<5	#	-	-	-	-
Colleton	12	36.9	11	34.0	11	34.0	6	18.4
Darlington	18	35.4	14	27.0	14	27.0	9	17.0
Dillon	11	51.8	11	51.8	11	51.8	5	25.3
Dorchester	29	16.5	18	10.6	17	9.7	10	5.3
Edgefield	<5	#	<5	#	<5	#	-	-
Fairfield	5	26.5	5	26.5	5	26.5	-	-
Florence	48	36.2	36	27.3	33	25.4	12	9.8
Georgetown	16	30.5	15	28.6	14	27.7	6	12.0
Greenville	178	31.4	135	24.5	116	21.4	67	12.2
Greenwood	19	30.1	17	26.9	16	25.9	8	12.5
Hampton	<5	#	-	-	-	-	-	-
Horry	159	44.2	130	36.5	116	32.5	43	12.2
Jasper	13	39.0	12	34.4	11	31.3	7	21.1
Kershaw	16	23.8	14	21.5	12	18.5	<5	#
Lancaster	29	26.0	27	24.4	26	23.4	11	10.8
Laurens	19	27.6	11	16.7	11	16.7	12	18.9
Lee	<5	#	<5	#	<5	#	<5	#
Lexington	89	27.6	79	24.9	67	21.5	40	12.7
McCormick	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marion	12	45.5	10	39.2	11	41.6	<5	#
Marlboro	<5	#	<5	3.7	<5	#	<5	#
Newberry	11	30.1	8	25.6	8	25.6	<5	#
Oconee	16	18.3	14	16.1	11	13.5	7	9.9
Orangeburg	28	36.2	21	28.3	20	26.8	7	10.5
Pickens	41	28.8	27	20.8	24	18.6	25	17.1
Richland	92	21.7	70	16.7	59	14.5	29	7.6
Saluda	<5	#	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spartanburg	81	22.9	66	18.6	56	16.1	37	10.7
Sumter	25	27.5	20	22.8	20	22.6	7	7.4
Union	10	35.4	6	22.6	6	22.6	<5	#
Williamsburg	9	37.2	9	37.2	8	33.1	-	-
York	79	26.2	71	23.8	69	23.2	31	11.0

¹Age-adjusted rate per 100,000 population. Rates calculated with 20 or fewer deaths are unreliable and should be used cautiously.

Table 3. B
Drug Overdose Deaths by Selected Drugs and County
South Carolina, 2024
Occurrence Data

County of Death	Fentanyl		Heroin		Methadone		Cocaine	
	Number	Rate ¹	Number	Rate ¹	Number	Rate ¹	Number	Rate ¹
South Carolina	914	17.8	18	0.3	43	0.8	414	7.4
Abbeville	<5	#	-	-	-	-	<5	#
Aiken	37	21.1	-	-	<5	#	9	4.3
Allendale	-	-	-	-	-	-	<5	#
Anderson	27	13.7	-	-	<5	#	15	6.2
Bamberg	<5	#	-	-	-	-	<5	#
Barnwell	<5	#	-	-	-	-	-	-
Beaufort	10	6.4	-	-	<5	#	7	3.7
Berkeley	30	11.2	<5	#	-	-	13	4.7
Calhoun	-	-	-	-	-	-	<5	#
Charleston	111	25.2	<5	#	6	1.3	71	14.8
Cherokee	10	20.6	-	-	-	-	<5	#
Chester	9	26.5	-	-	-	-	5	13.8
Chesterfield	7	17.6	-	-	-	-	5	10.1
Clarendon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Colleton	11	34.0	<5	#	-	-	-	-
Darlington	12	22.2	-	-	<5	#	<5	#
Dillon	10	46.7	-	-	-	-	5	22.4
Dorchester	12	7.1	-	-	-	-	6	3.2
Edgefield	<5	#	-	-	-	-	<5	#
Fairfield	<5	#	-	-	-	-	-	-
Florence	27	20.6	-	-	<5	#	16	12.2
Georgetown	13	27.1	-	-	<5	#	6	9.5
Greenville	97	18.1	<5	#	9	1.6	54	9.3
Greenwood	13	22.0	-	-	<5	#	6	9.6
Hampton	-	-	-	-	-	-	<5	#
Horry	107	30.4	<5	#	<5	#	42	12.0
Jasper	10	29.9	-	-	-	-	6	14.3
Kershaw	12	18.5	-	-	-	-	<5	#
Lancaster	25	22.4	-	-	<5	#	8	6.4
Laurens	8	12.7	<5	#	<5	#	<5	#
Lee	<5	#	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lexington	53	18.0	<5	#	5	1.7	7	2.2
McCormick	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marion	9	36.9	-	-	-	-	<5	#
Marlboro	<5	#	-	-	-	-	-	-
Newberry	8	25.6	-	-	-	-	<5	#
Oconee	8	11.7	<5	#	-	-	<5	#
Orangeburg	17	23.7	-	-	-	-	11	10.8
Pickens	20	15.2	-	-	<5	#	6	4.1
Richland	50	12.5	<5	#	<5	#	39	9.3
Saluda	-	-	-	-	-	-	<5	#
Spartanburg	43	12.3	-	-	<5	#	17	4.7
Sumter	15	17.4	-	-	<5	#	5	5.0
Union	5	20.3	-	-	-	-	<5	#
Williamsburg	8	33.1	-	-	-	-	6	24.7
York	66	22.2	-	-	<5	#	19	5.6

¹Age-adjusted rate per 100,000 population. Rates calculated with 20 or fewer deaths are unreliable and should be used cautiously.

Figure 3.
 Number of Opioid-Involved Overdose Deaths by County
 South Carolina, 2024
 Occurrence Data

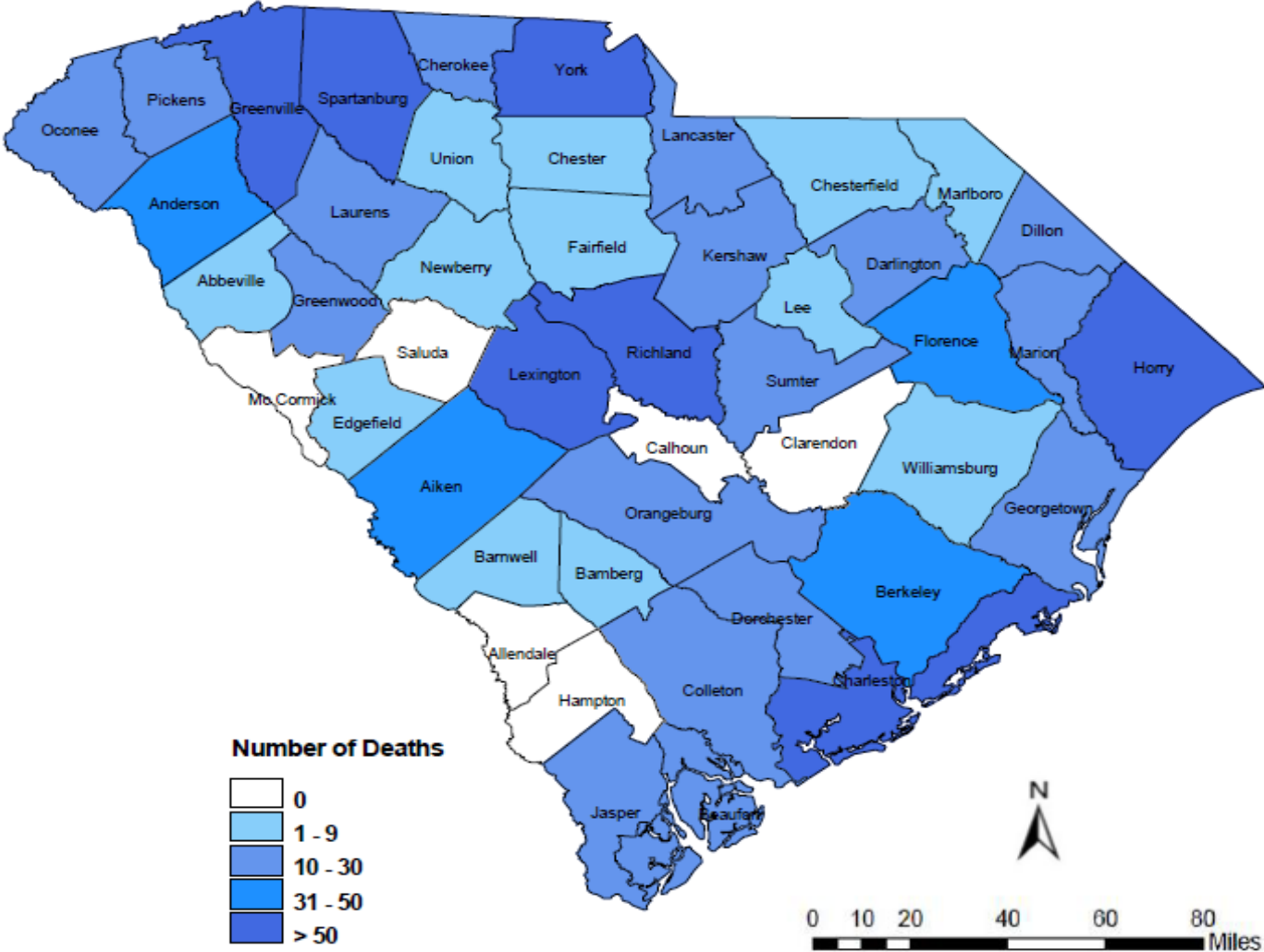
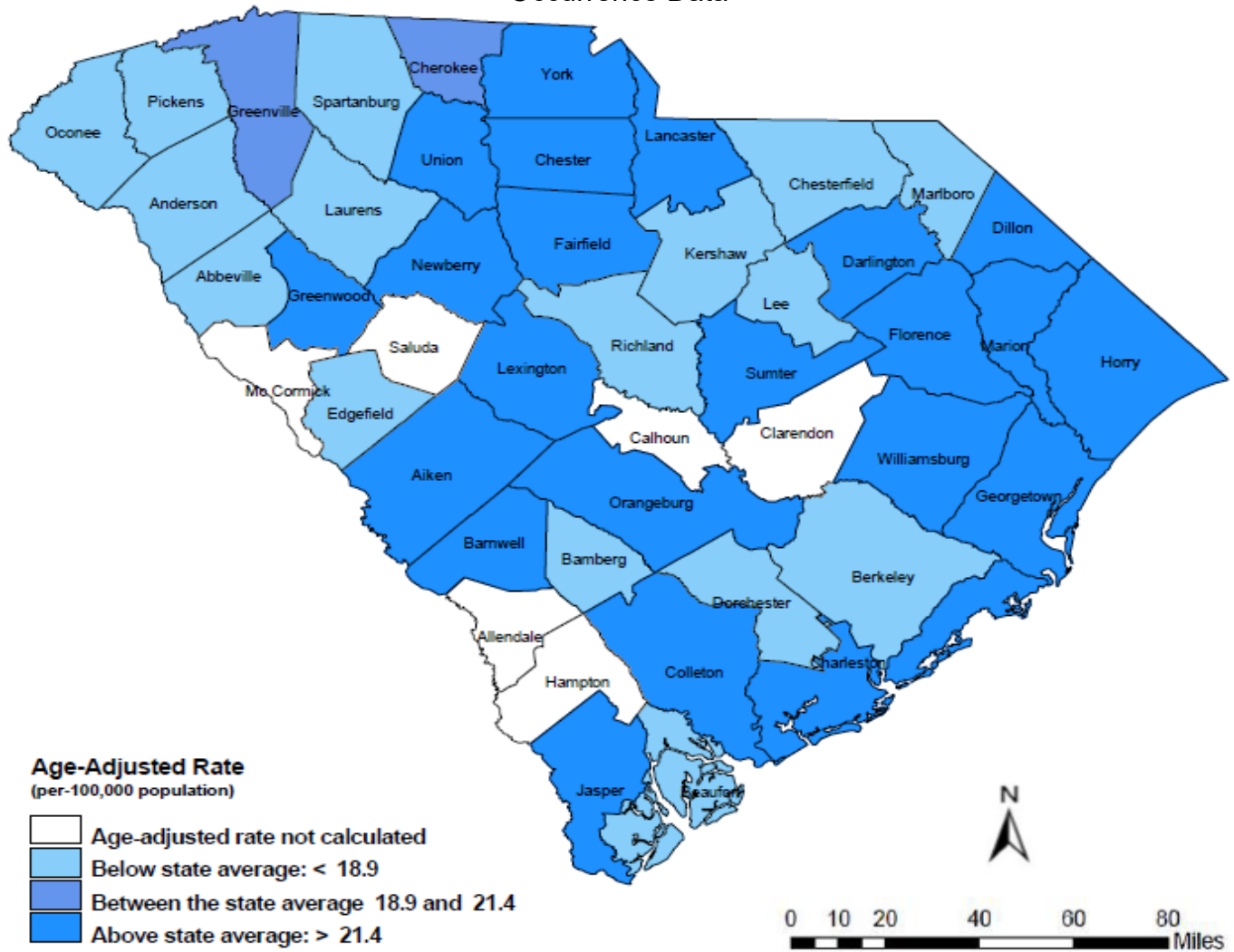


Figure 4.
 Age-Adjusted Rate for Opioid-Involved Overdose Deaths by County
 South Carolina, 2024
 Occurrence Data



State age-adjusted rate with 95% confidence interval: 20.2 (18.9, 21.4)

Age-adjusted rate per 100,000 population. Rates calculated with 20 or fewer deaths are unreliable and should be used cautiously.

Table 4.
Change in Drug Overdose Deaths by County
South Carolina, 2023-2024
Occurrence Data

County of Death	Total Drug Overdose			Opioids Overdose		
	2023	2024	Percent Change	2023	2024	Percent Change
South Carolina	2,157	1,481	-31.3 *	1,704	1,049	-38.4 *
Abbeville	<5	<5		<5	<5	
Aiken	100	50	-50.0 *	82	38	-53.7 *
Allendale	<5	<5		<5	-	
Anderson	64	56	-12.5	41	33	-19.5
Bamberg	5	<5		<5	<5	
Barnwell	<5	5		<5	<5	
Beaufort	33	17	-48.5	28	10	-64.3 *
Berkeley	63	46	-27.0	51	32	-37.3
Calhoun	<5	<5		<5	-	
Charleston	255	178	-30.2 *	204	128	-37.3 *
Cherokee	20	18	-10.0	18	10	-44.4
Chester	16	15	-6.3	14	9	
Chesterfield	22	12	-45.5	20	7	
Clarendon	<5	<5		<5	-	
Colleton	24	12	-50.0	18	11	-38.9
Darlington	20	18	-10.0	19	14	-26.3
Dillon	19	11	-42.1	18	11	-38.9
Dorchester	45	29	-35.6	40	17	-57.5 *
Edgefield	10	<5		7	<5	
Fairfield	8	5		5	5	
Florence	71	48	-32.4	58	33	-43.1
Georgetown	39	16	-59.0 *	33	14	-57.6 *
Greenville	215	178	-17.2	166	116	-30.1 *
Greenwood	22	19	-13.6	20	16	-20.0
Hampton	5	<5		<5	-	
Horry	237	159	-32.9 *	196	116	-40.8 *
Jasper	34	13	-61.8 *	29	11	-62.1 *
Kershaw	20	16	-20.0	16	12	-25.0
Lancaster	55	29	-47.3 *	47	26	-44.7
Laurens	27	19	-29.6	18	11	-38.9
Lee	<5	<5		<5	<5	
Lexington	107	89	-16.8	82	67	-18.3
McCormick	<5	-		<5	-	
Marion	<5	12	#	<5	11	#
Marlboro	11	<5		9	<5	
Newberry	14	11	-21.4	9	8	
Oconee	26	16	-38.5	22	11	-50.0
Orangeburg	37	28	-24.3	18	20	11.1
Pickens	40	41	2.5	24	24	0.0
Richland	111	92	-17.1	74	59	-20.3
Saluda	7	<5		<5	-	
Spartanburg	172	81	-52.9 *	136	56	-58.8 *
Sumter	38	25	-34.2	32	20	-37.5
Union	11	10	-9.1	10	6	
Williamsburg	19	9		13	8	
York	111	79	-28.8	99	69	-30.3

¹Percent change not calculated for counties with fewer than 10 deaths in 2024.

* Statistically significant at 95% confidence interval

Figure 5.
 Change in Opioid-Involved Overdose Deaths by County
 South Carolina, 2023-2024
 Occurrence Data

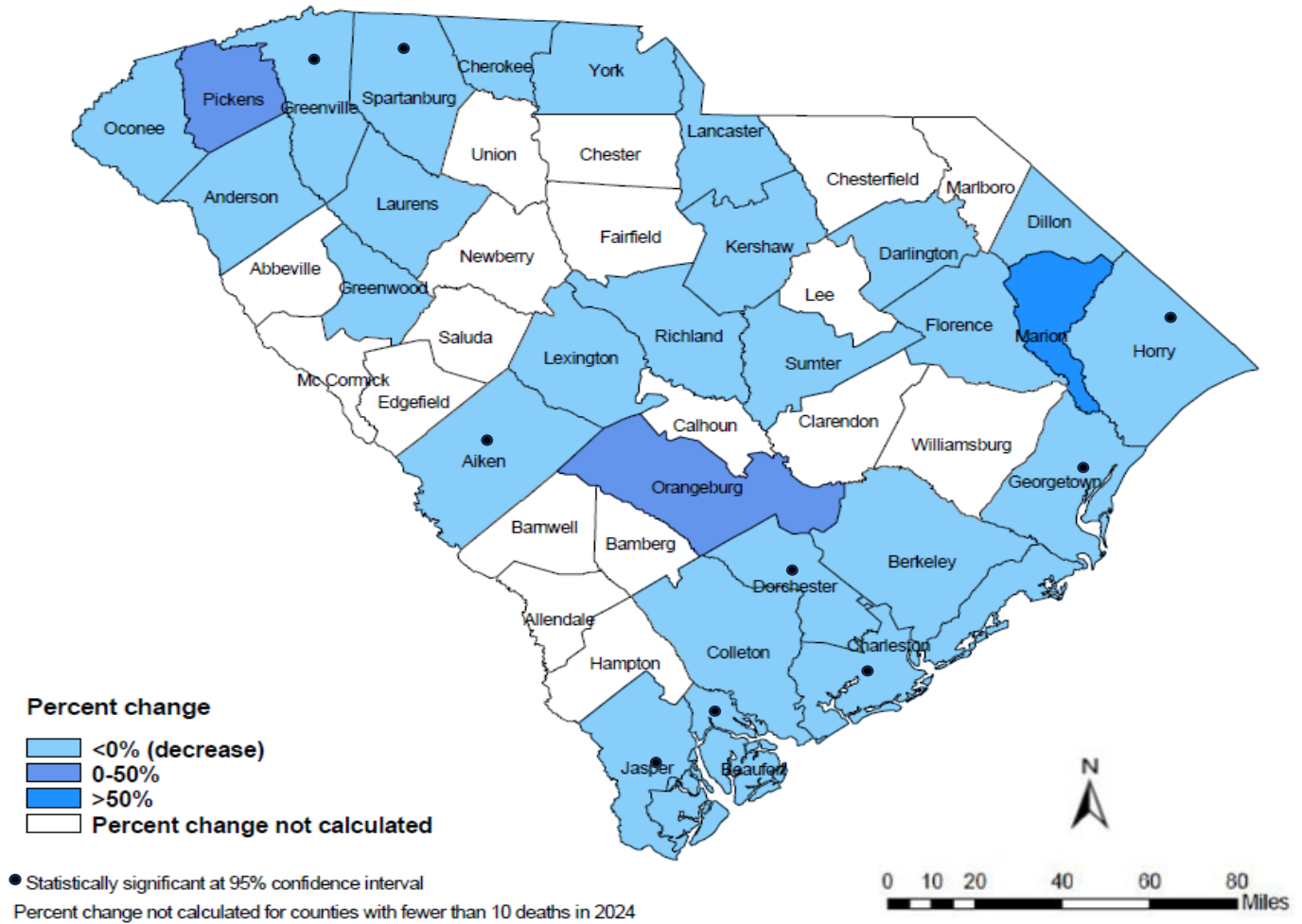


Figure 6.
 Opioid-Involved Overdose Deaths by Age
 South Carolina, 2020-2024
 Occurrence Data

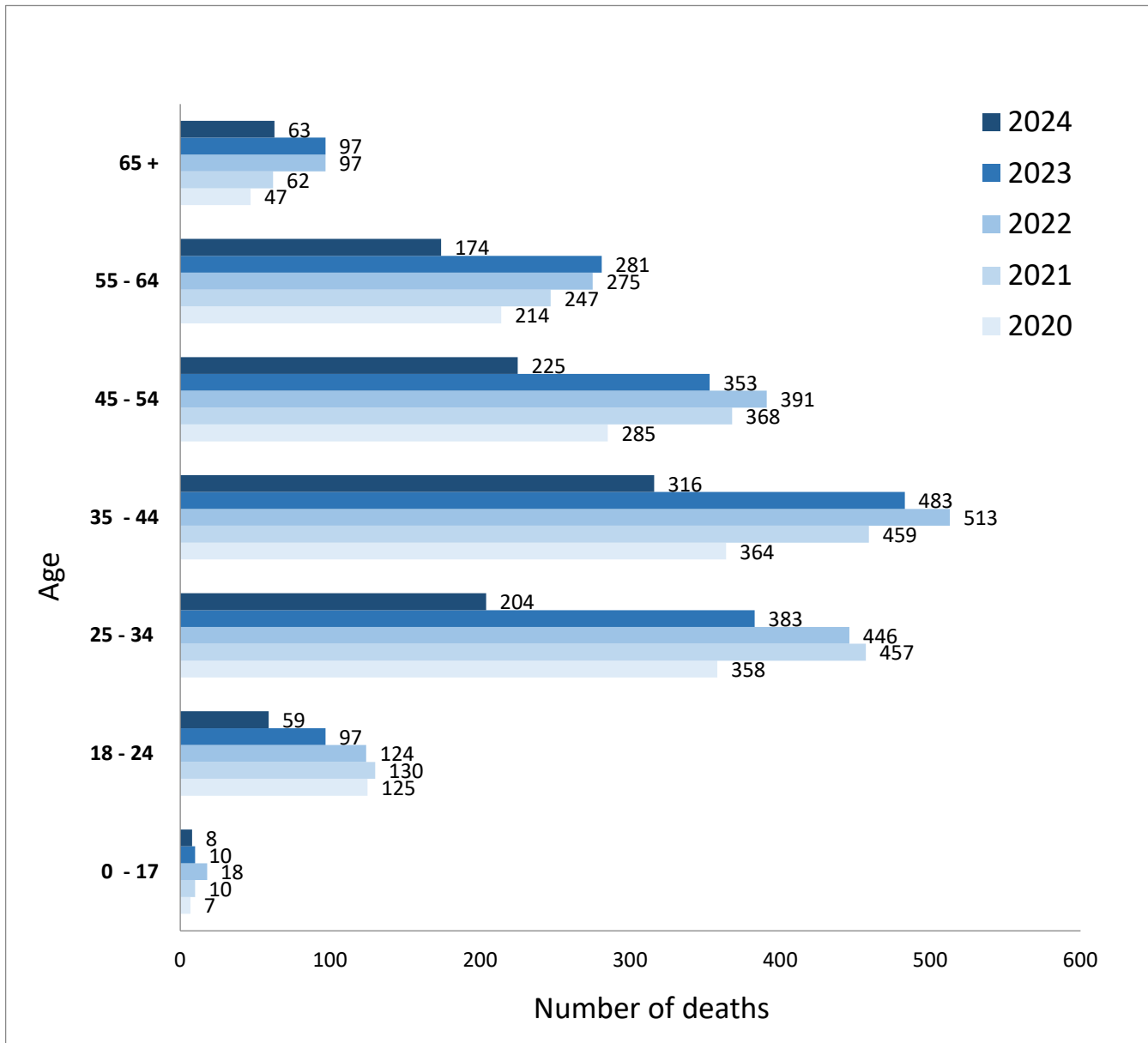


Figure 7.
Select Drug Categories by Race/Sex
South Carolina, 2024
Occurrence Data

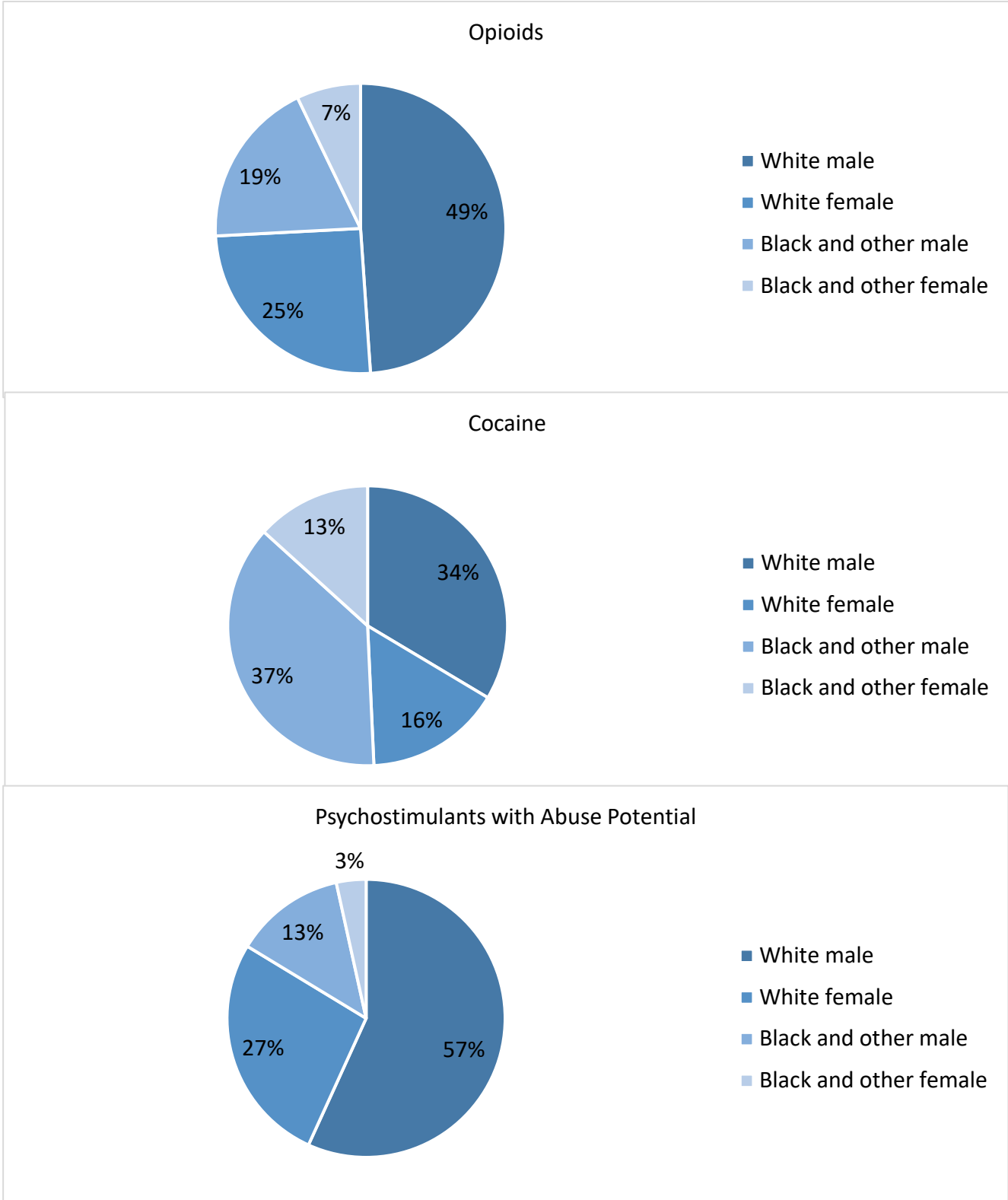


Figure 8.
 Select Drug Categories by Education
 South Carolina, 2024
 Occurrence Data

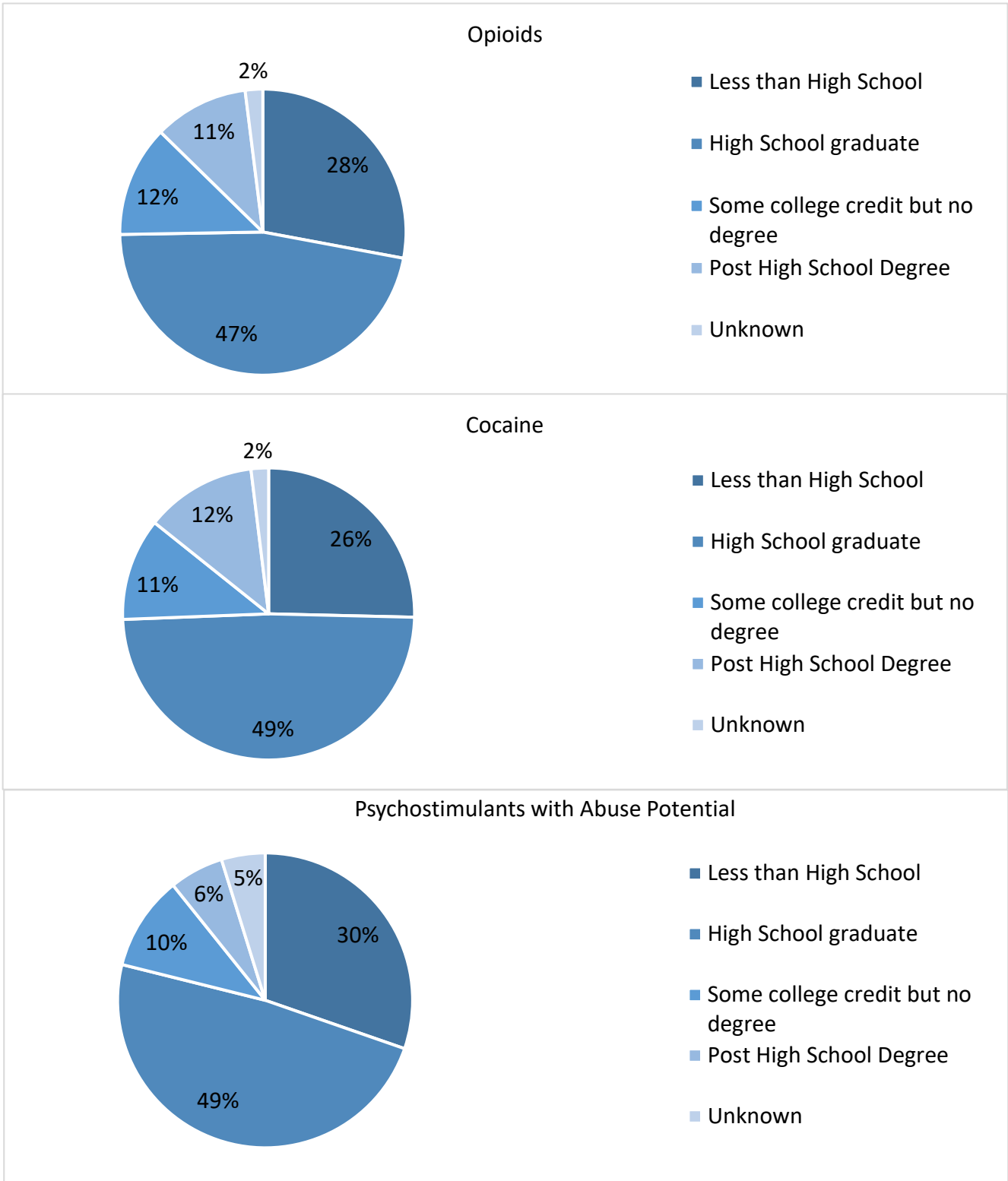


Figure 9.
 Number of Drug Overdose Deaths by Month
 South Carolina, 2021-2024
 Occurrence Data

