



# Opioid-Involved Overdose Deaths in Cook County, IL 2023

June 2025

Beginning in 2016, Cook County and Chicago Public Health Departments began working with the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office and Cook County Health to produce an annual joint report of the overall opioid overdose deaths throughout Cook County. This report describes opioid deaths from 2022 and 2023 that have gone through a fatality review process.

## OVERALL

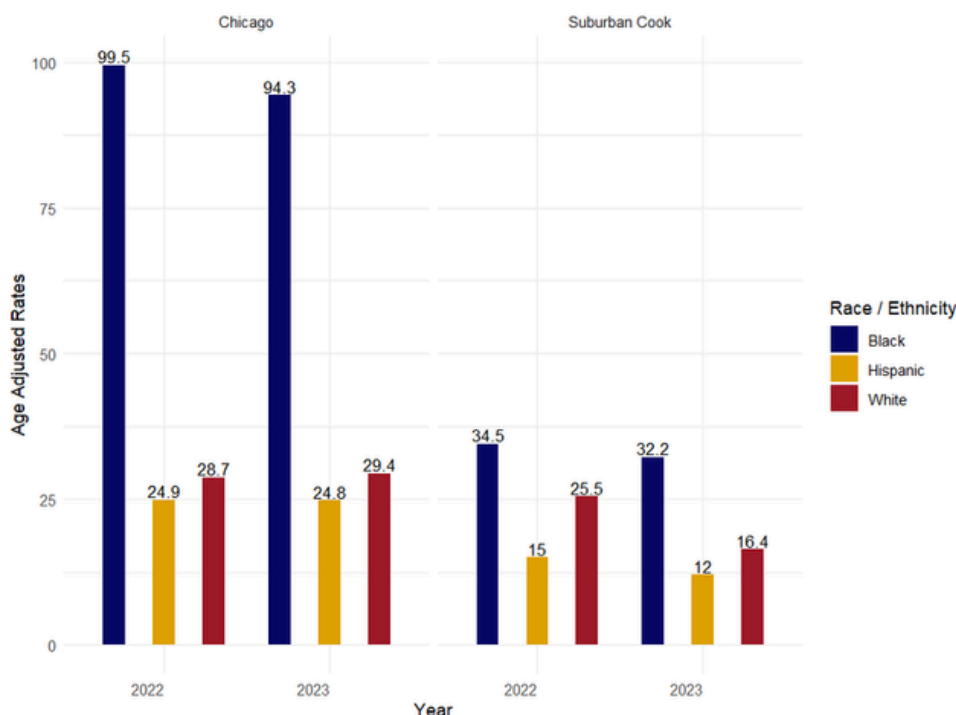
In 2023, Cook County recorded 1,783 opioid-involved overdose deaths including 1,339 in Chicago and 413 in Suburban Cook County (SCC). These reflect age-adjusted mortality rates of 45.7 per 100,000 in Chicago and 16.2 per 100,000 in SCC. By comparison, the overall rate for Illinois was 22.0 and the national rate was 24.0 per 100,000. Chicago's mortality rate was approximately 2.1 times the state rate.

Between 2022 and 2023, Chicago saw a slight decline in its death rate from 47.4 to 45.7 per 100,000 – a 3.9% decrease. Additionally, SCC saw a significant decline from 21.6 to 16.2 per 100,000 – a 25% decrease.

## RACE & ETHNICITY\*

As in prior years, Non-Hispanic Black residents experienced the highest age-adjusted opioid-involved mortality in both Chicago (94.3 per 100,000) and SCC (32.2 per 100,000) in 2023. While slightly lower than 2022, these rates continue to signal a major public health inequity rooted in systemic and structural racism, access to care, and under-resourced communities. Non-Hispanic White residents had a rate of 29.4 per 100,000 in Chicago and 16.4 per 100,000 in SCC. Hispanic residents reported 24.8 per 100,000 in Chicago and 12.0 per 100,000 in SCC.

Figure 1: Rates of Opioid Deaths in Suburban Cook by Race / Ethnicity (2022 - 2023)





## SEX & AGE GROUP

In 2023, males remained disproportionately affected by opioid-involved overdose deaths, with a mortality rate of 75.8 per 100,000 in Chicago compared to 17.5 per 100,000 for females. In suburban Cook County (SCC), the pattern persisted, though with lower overall rates (25.1 per 100,000) for males versus (7.7 per 100,000) for females. The highest age-specific death rates were concentrated among adults aged 35 to 64. In Chicago, the mortality rates for individuals aged 45–54 and 55–64 were 90.4 and 120.3 per 100,000, respectively. In SCC, these rates were also elevated, though comparatively lower, at 27.7 and 26.6 per 100,000 for the same age groups.

## TYPE OF OPIOID INVOLVED

Fentanyl remained the most frequently involved substance in opioid-involved overdose deaths in 2023, accounting for 94.6% of fatalities in Chicago (n = 1,267) and 88.6% in Suburban Cook County (SCC; n = 366). Other opioids were less prevalent; heroin was involved in 23.3% in Chicago and 24.2% in SCC.

**Table 1: Percentage of all Opioid-involved Overdose Deaths by Opioid Type - Cook County, IL (2023)**

Opioid-Involved Types <sup>I</sup>	City of Chicago Population = 2,745,830 (n = 1,339)	Suburban Cook Population = 2,529,711 (n = 413)
Fentanyl-involved	1,267 (94.6%)	366 (88.6%)
Heroin-involved	312 (23.3%)	100 (24.2%)
Opioid pain reliever-involved <sup>II</sup>	79 (5.9%)	54 (13.1%)
Methadone-involved <sup>III</sup>	91 (6.8%)	17 (4.1%)

Data Source: Cook County Medical Examiner's Office, 2020 U S. Census Bureau

Note: Geographic designations are based on address of incident, regardless of decedent's residence address. Missing addresses were NOT accounted for in the calculations of frequencies and rates.

I Categories are not mutually exclusive as some deaths involved more than one type of opioid. Percentages will not add up to 100%.

II Opioid pain reliever: buprenorphine, codeine, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, meperidine, morphine, oxycodone, oxymorphone, or tramadol.

Buprenorphine is included in this category, but it is not possible to determine if it was prescribed for pain or opioid use disorder treatment or used illicitly.

III Methadone: it is not possible to determine if methadone was prescribed for opioid use disorder treatment or used illicitly.

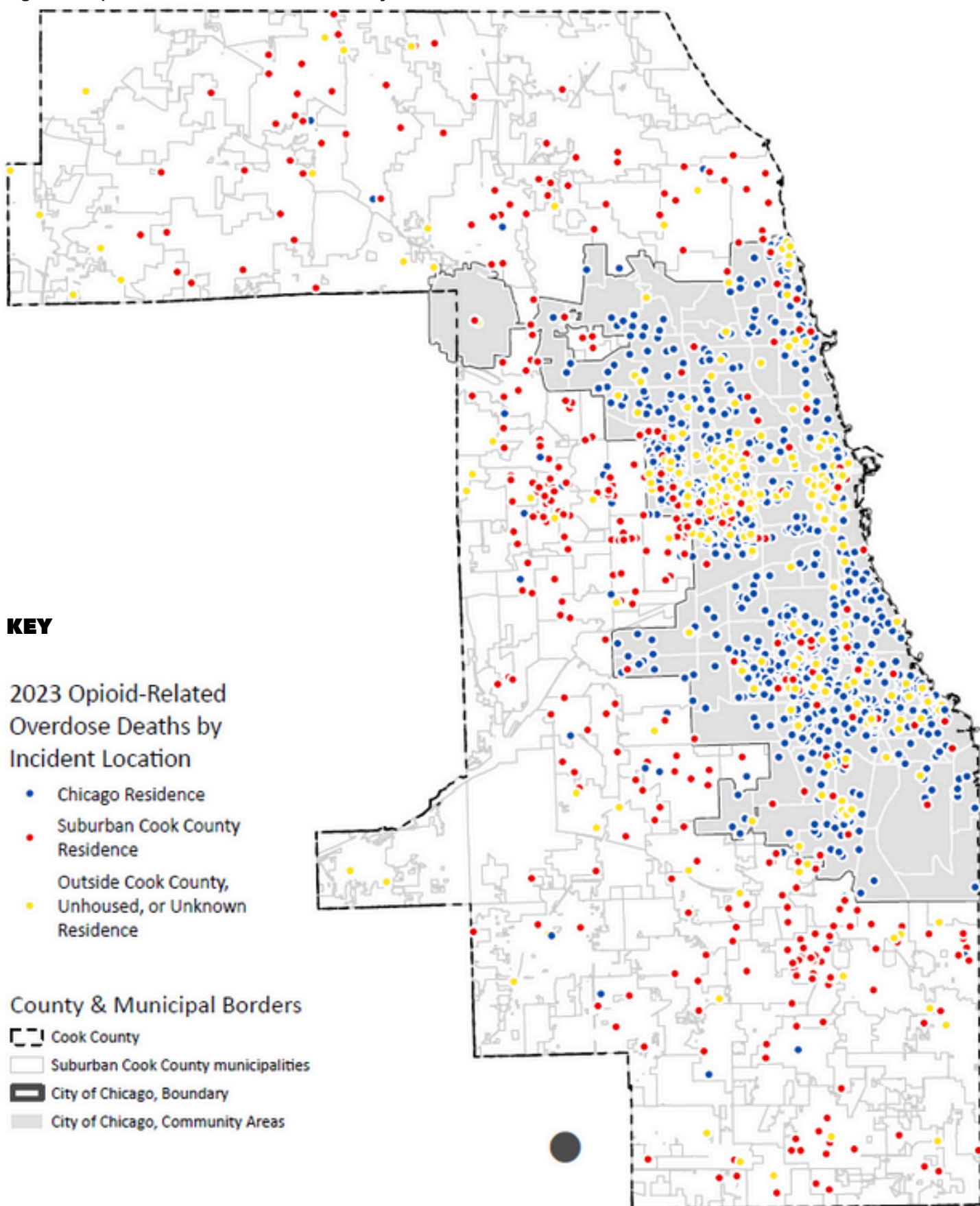
**Table 2: Opioid-Related Overdose Deaths by Residence - Cook County, IL (2023)**

Home Residence Locations	City of Chicago Population = 2,745,830 (n = 1,339)	Suburban Cook Population = 2,529,711 (n = 413)
Residence in Chicago	1,036 (77.4%)	47 (11.4%)
Homeless	9 (0.6%)	1 (0.2%)
Residence outside of Cook County	129 (9.6%)	41 (9.9%)
Residence in SCC	105 (7.8%)	312 (75.5%)
Residence Unknown	60 (4.5%)	7 (1.7%)

Beginning in 2016, the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office provided decedent's address of residence and of overdose incident. The address of residence is obtained from a variety of sources including the hospital records, police records, family, and government ID. Missing addresses were not accounted for in the calculations of frequencies and rates.



Figure 2: Opioid-Related Overdose Deaths by Incident Location



Data Source: Cook County Medical Examiner, US Census Bureau.  
Note: Dots do not represent exact incident addresses.



Table 3: Opioid Involved Overdose Deaths, Chicago and SCC, IL (2022 & 2023)

Opioid-involved overdose deaths by demographics								
INDICATOR	CHICAGO				SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY			
	2022		2023		2022		2023	
	#	RATE <sup>II</sup>	#	RATE <sup>II</sup>	#	RATE <sup>II</sup>	#	RATE <sup>II</sup>
<b>DRUG TYPE<sup>I</sup></b>								
All Opioids	1,397	47.4	1,339	45.7	537	21.6	413	16.2
Fentanyl-involved	1,317	44.6	1,267	43.3	494	19.9	366	14.3
Heroin-involved	370	12.4	312	10.7	117	4.8	100	3.9
Opioid-pain- reliever-involved <sup>III</sup>	93	3.0	79	2.6	62	2.4	54	2.1
Methadone- involved <sup>IV</sup>	91	3.1	91	3.1	22	0.9	17†	0.6
<b>SEX<sup>V</sup></b>								
Male	1,091	76.5	1,073	75.8	408	33.5	312	25.1
Female	306	20.0	266	17.5	129	10.2	101	7.7
<b>RACE/ETHNICITY</b>								
Black	908	99.5	851	94.3	154	34.5	144	32.2
White	269	28.7	272	29.4	289	25.5	195	16.4
Hispanic	203	24.9	205	24.8	86	15	66	12.0
Asian or Pacific Islander	12†	5.2	9†	3.9	<5	++	7†	3.1
<b>AGE</b>								
0-14	<5	++	9†	2.0	-	-	<5	++
15-24	56	15.3	65	17.8	48	15	20	6.2
25-34	207	37.6	199	36.2	120	39.3	83	27.2
35-44	251	63.2	250	63.0	123	37.5	97	29.6
45-54	314	96.2	295	90.4	120	36.5	91	27.7
55-64	414	136.4	365	120.3	101	28.9	93	26.6
65-74	142	67.3	144	68.3	25	9.7	28	10.9
75+	11†	7.9	12†	8.6	-	-	-	-

Note: Geographic designations are based on address of incident, regardless of decedent's residence address. Due to differing methods used by CCDPH and CDPH to adjudicate fatality in their jurisdiction, the joint report's counts may differ from those reported by the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office. Missing addresses were NOT accounted for in the calculations of frequencies and rates.

I Categories are not mutually exclusive as some deaths involved more than one type of opioid.

II Rates express the number of overdose deaths per 100,000 people of corresponding population. Denominators are based on the 2020 census population. Rates are age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

III Opioid pain reliever: buprenorphine, codeine, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, meperidine, morphine, oxycodone, oxymorphone, or tramadol.

Buprenorphine is included in this category, but it is not possible to determine if it was prescribed for pain or opioid use disorder treatment or used illicitly.

IV Methadone: it is not possible to determine if methadone was prescribed for opioid use disorder treatment or used illicitly.

V Gender categories are not accounted for.

† Rates for counts less than 20 (although reported) should be interpreted with caution. Counts less than 5 are suppressed.