
INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
2021PSSG0043-000929
May 18, 2021

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
BC Coroners Service

No increase in suicide deaths during pandemic

VICTORIA – In response to concerns about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of British Columbians, the BC Coroners Service has released preliminary data confirming there has been no increase in the number of lives lost to suicide since the pandemic was declared last year.

From April 2020 to February 2021, there were 534 confirmed deaths by suicide in the province, 12% fewer than reported between April 2019 and February 2020.

A total of 609 deaths by suicide were reported in the 2020 calendar year, an average of approximately 51 per month. That figure is consistent with the number recorded in January and February 2021 (98 total deaths), and is a 9% decrease from the 652 deaths recorded in 2019.

Four of the province's five health authorities recorded fewer deaths between April 2020 and February 2021 than between April 2019 and February 2020.

Data and trends for 2020 and 2021 should be interpreted with caution as the data require time to settle. The final classification of suicide is not confirmed until the coroner's investigation is complete.

Learn More:

Knowledge update on suicides (to Feb. 28, 2021) report:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/birth-adoption-death-marriage-and-divorce/deaths/coroners-service/statistical/suicide_knowledge_update.pdf

Suicide deaths (2007-18) report:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/birth-adoption-death-marriage-and-divorce/deaths/coroners-service/statistical/suicide.pdf>

BC Coroners Service: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/coroners/>

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