

This report summarizes deaths of individuals experiencing homelessness reported to the BC Coroners Service (BCCS) between January 1, 2015, and December 31, 2022. The report does not include the deaths of individuals experiencing homelessness that did not meet the legal criteria of the [Coroners Act](#) for reporting.

**Caveats:** As the BCCS operates in a live database environment, the data are considered preliminary and subject to change as coroners' investigations conclude. These data were compiled by date of death, which may differ from the date of injury. In some cases, the death may occur days or weeks after injury. The data may be underreported as it is not always possible to determine a person's housing status.

**Inclusion Criteria:** The data presented in this report are based on suspected homelessness where: 'no fixed address' was given as the decedent's home address; the injury premise was identified as a homeless shelter; or the preliminary circumstances of death suggested homelessness based on the definition below.

**Definition:** An individual experiencing homelessness is defined as:

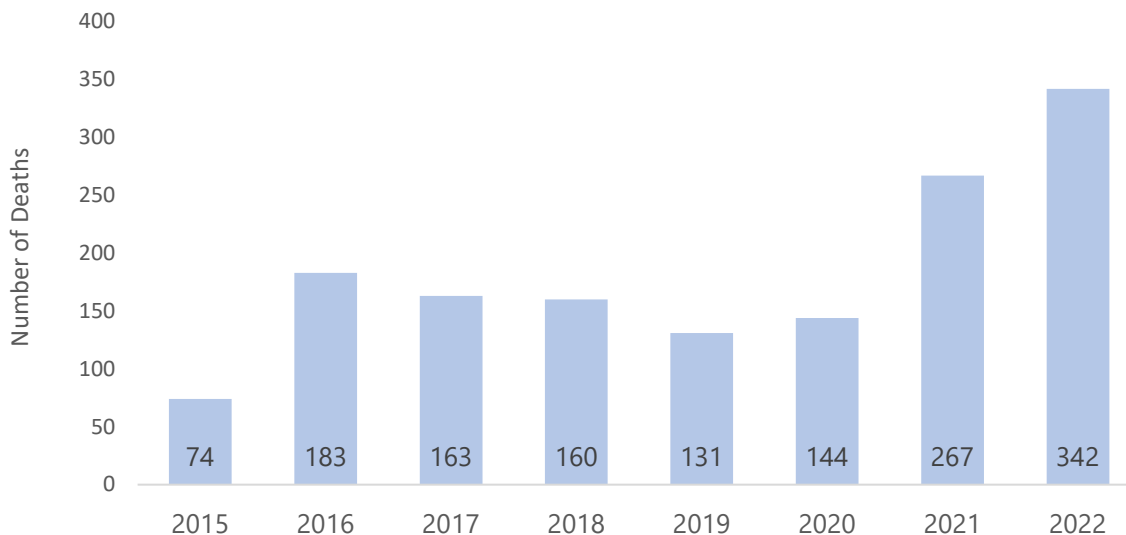
- A person living outdoors, in a make-shift shelter, a parked vehicle, a vacant home, or any other structure not intended for habitation.
- A person staying at an emergency shelter (overnight) or who is temporarily sheltered (suspected to be for less than 30 days) by friends or family, in a short-term shelter, safe house for youth, or transition house for women and children fleeing violence. Persons residing in short-term shelters, safe houses, or transition houses for an unknown length of time were also included.

Some individuals who do not meet the above definitions of homelessness may be considered homeless under other definitions. Examples of individuals who were not considered homeless for the purposes of this report include:

- People in correctional institutions, hospitals, or residential drug or alcohol treatment facilities
- People who have permanent residences but are considered at high risk of homelessness because of unemployment, domestic violence, or other factors.

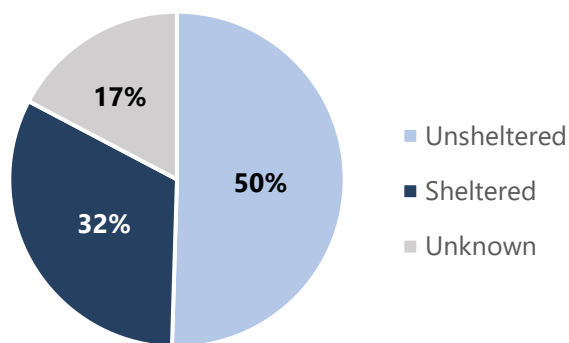
**Summary:**

- From 2015-2022, there were 1,464 deaths among individuals experiencing homelessness in British Columbia (*Fig. 1*).
- Between 2015-2020, the annual average was 143 deaths. In comparison, the annual average from 2021-2022 was 305 deaths.
- In 2022, there were 342 reported deaths among individuals experiencing homelessness (*Fig. 1*).
  - This equates to a 28% increase from the number of deaths reported in 2021 (267 deaths) and a 138% increase from 2020 (144 deaths).
- Half (50%) of individuals met the criteria for unsheltered homelessness and 32% for sheltered homelessness (*Fig. 2*). The sheltered or unsheltered status of the remaining 17% of individuals was unknown.
- Deaths occurred more often in the fall (27%) and winter (26%) months of the year. (*Fig. 3*).
- Overall, 82% were male. Fifty-two percent (52%) of males met the definition for unsheltered homelessness, compared to 45% of females (*Fig. 4*).
- Individuals aged 30 to 59 accounted for 74% of deaths (*Fig. 5*). The largest increases in the number of deaths were seen in the 30-39 age group (87 deaths in 2021 to 109 deaths in 2022) and the 50-59 age group (55 deaths in 2021 to 81 deaths in 2022) (*Table 4*).
- By classification, from 2015-2022, 81% of deaths were considered accidental, followed by 11% classified as natural and 5% as suicides. Suspected unregulated drug toxicity deaths accounted for 91% of all accidental deaths during this period.
  - Unregulated drug toxicity deaths remained the highest proportion of accidental deaths at 93% in 2022 (*Fig. 7*).
- Thirty-two percent (32%) of deaths occurred in the Fraser Health region, followed by Vancouver Coastal Health region (24%) (*Fig. 8*).
- The townships with the highest number of deaths were Vancouver (306), Surrey (146), and Victoria (118) (*Table 7*).



**Fig. 1.** Deaths of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Year, 2015-2022

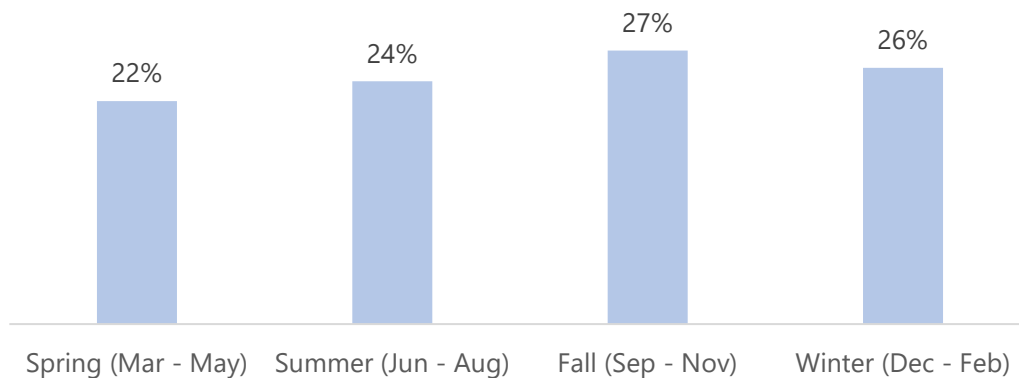
Table 1. Deaths of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Type of Homelessness, 2015-2022								
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Unsheltered	37	91	74	80	66	87	126	178
Sheltered	26	70	50	35	42	40	101	108
Unknown	11	22	39	45	23	17	40	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>342</b>



**Fig. 2.** Deaths of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Type of Homelessness as %, 2015-2022

**Table 2. Deaths of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Month, 2015-2022**

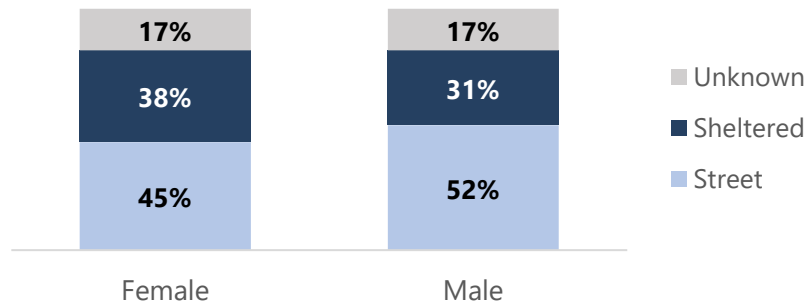
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
January	1	14	22	8	16	9	19	40
February	6	13	10	16	12	7	10	26
March	7	12	9	11	17	17	14	31
April	3	12	16	12	15	15	17	27
May	3	13	13	8	9	12	15	20
June	4	12	20	15	11	21	20	21
July	5	8	10	14	5	9	28	24
August	9	17	15	23	6	7	24	29
September	11	10	14	14	6	13	26	24
October	4	23	10	15	12	8	33	33
November	7	26	14	17	11	16	28	27
December	14	23	10	7	11	10	33	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>342</b>



**Fig. 3.** Deaths of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Season as %, 2015-2022

**Table 3. Deaths of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Sex, 2015-2022**

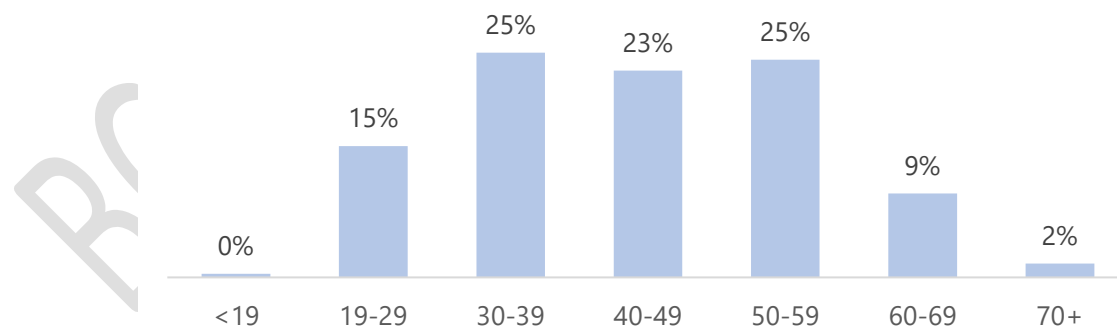
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Female	9	30	33	29	16	22	54	73
Male	65	153	130	131	114	122	213	269
Unknown	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>342</b>



**Fig. 4.** Deaths of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Type of Homelessness and Sex as %, 2015-2022

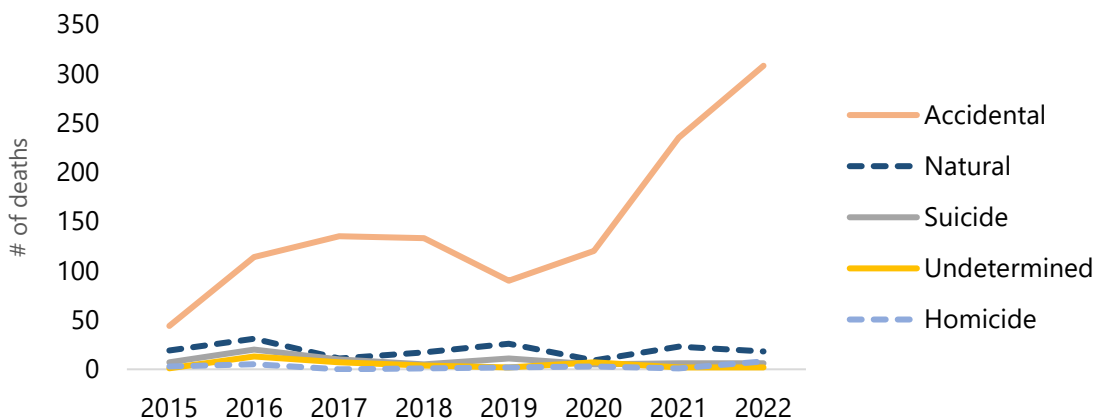
**Table 4. Deaths of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Age Group, 2015-2022**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<19	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
19-29	11	36	27	27	17	23	35	42
30-39	14	30	36	34	27	36	87	109
40-49	25	38	57	33	34	31	54	71
50-59	16	57	36	47	33	36	55	81
60-69	5	18	4	18	18	13	29	34
70+	3	3	1	1	1	4	6	4
Unknown	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>342</b>

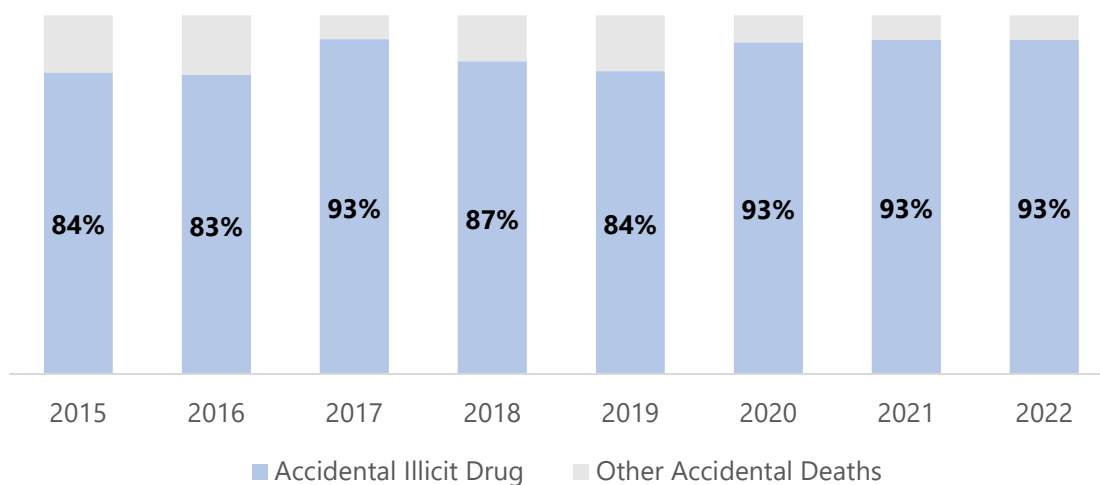


**Fig. 5.** Deaths of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Age Group as %, 2015-2022

Table 5. Deaths of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Classification of Death, 2015-2022								
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Accidental	44	114	135	133	90	120	235	308
Unregulated Drug Toxicity	37	95	126	116	76	111	219	287
Natural	19	31	11	17	26	9	23	18
Suicide	7	20	10	5	11	5	6	6
Undetermined	1	13	7	4	2	7	2	2
Homicide	3	5	0	1	2	3	1	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>342</b>



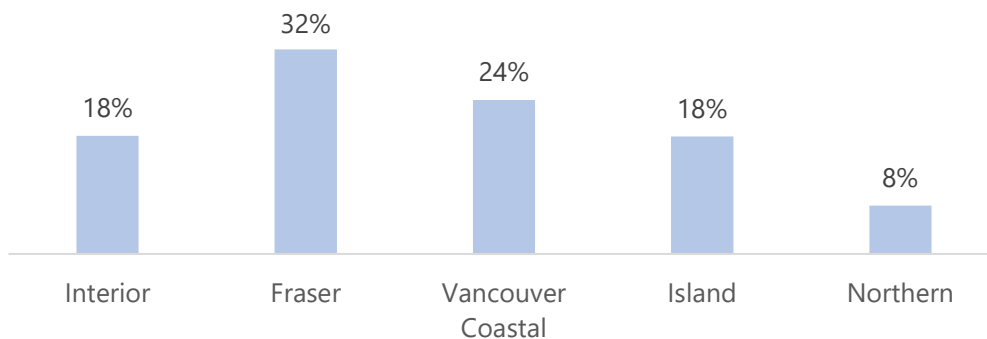
**Fig. 6.** Deaths of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Year and Classification, 2015-2022



**Fig. 7.** Unregulated Drug Toxicity Deaths among Individuals Experiencing Homelessness as % of Accidental Deaths, 2015-2022

**Table 6. Deaths of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Health Authority of Injury, 2015-2022<sup>[1,2]</sup>**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Interior	7	35	31	28	22	26	46	74
Fraser	32	60	53	49	40	48	83	101
Vancouver Coastal	16	51	38	40	28	36	67	75
Island	15	28	29	30	32	23	47	64
Northern	4	9	12	13	9	11	24	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>342</b>



**Fig. 8.** Deaths of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Health Authority as %, 2015-2022<sup>[1, 2]</sup>

**Table 7. Accidental Deaths of Homeless Individuals by Top Townships of Injury, 2015-2022**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Vancouver	11	44	32	38	24	31	57	69
Surrey	12	17	15	19	12	15	31	25
Victoria	5	18	14	8	14	12	19	28
Abbotsford	3	8	13	6	10	12	14	17
Kelowna	3	10	12	7	4	5	11	14
Kamloops	1	8	7	7	5	8	6	20
Prince George	2	5	8	12	3	7	13	11
Chilliwack	1	7	6	6	5	5	7	11
Nanaimo	3	1	5	4	5	3	9	15
Langley	3	5	8	2	1	2	3	11
Vernon	2	5	1	7	1	2	4	13
Other Township	28	55	42	44	47	42	93	108
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>342</b>

**Notes:**

1. Health Region breakdowns can be found at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/geographic-data-services/land-use/administrative-boundaries/health-boundaries>
2. Health authority is derived from injury township. Death township is used in cases of unknown or out-of-province injury township.

BC CORONERS SERVICE