

# Dane County Medical Examiner

Budget Summary, 2021



# Decision Items

- MEDX-MEDX-1:
  - Increase in intergovernmental agreement (IGA) revenue
- MEDX-MEDX-2:
  - Increase in cremation permit revenue
- MEDX-MEDX-3:
  - Allowable increase in cremation permit revenue based on state statute 59.365 (Consumer Price Index, or CPI)
- MEDX-MEDX-4:
  - Increase funding to account for changes in contractual obligations
- MEDX-MEDX-5:
  - Adjustment to operational budget lines to more accurately reflect expenses



# 1. Increase in intergovernmental agreement revenue

- Minor adjustment reflecting increased revenue from the Rock and Brown County intergovernmental agreements for 2022 (\$132,700).
- IGAs allow for:
  - Sharing of limited, essential resources between counties
  - Allows Dane to continue to generate revenue to offset GPR dependency



## 2. Increase in cremation permit revenue

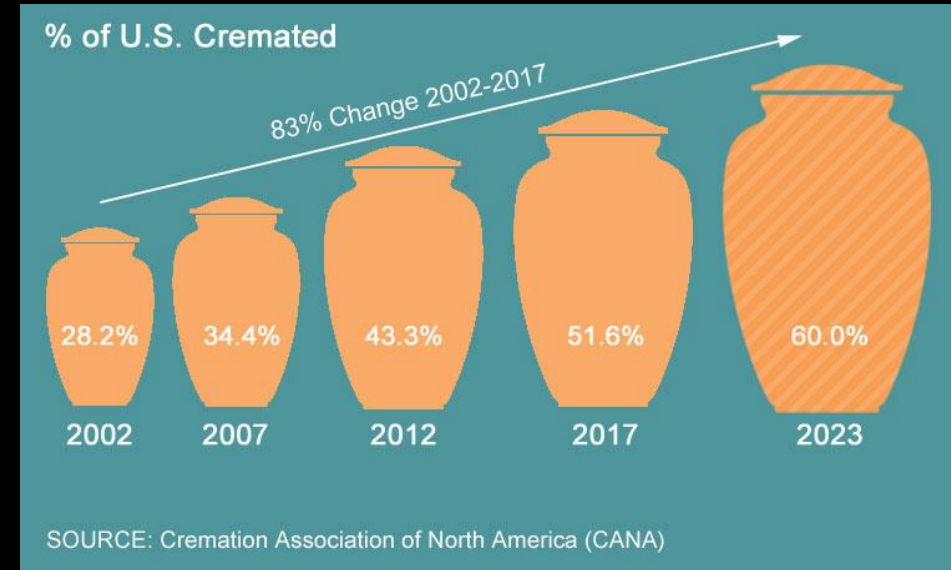
- Estimating an additional 117 paid cremation permits based on expected increases (approximately \$35,500.00).
- May be complicated by impact of COVID on overall mortality rate in Dane County in 2020 and 2021.





### 3. Allowable increase in cremation permit fee based on state statute

- Based on state statute enacted in 2015
- Allows a fee increase based on the increase or decrease in CPI (consumer price index).
- Current cremation permit fee is \$302.00.
- Allowable increase is \$4.11 (round down to \$4.00).
- We suggest raising the permit fee to \$306.00. This will generate approximately \$10,800.00 in revenue.



# 4. Increase funding to account for changes in contractual obligations.

- Increase cost of transportation of decedents
  - Increased 33% in conveyances budget line after the last budget was submitted.
    - Costs increased from \$300.00 to \$400.00 per transport
    - Caseload has also increased.
- Transcription services are also being used and with the increase in caseload, the cost of physician transcriptions has also increased
  - County did an RFP for these services.
- LODOX (low dose x-ray) warranty cost increased to reflect next warranty period



# 4. Increase funding to account for changes in contractual obligations.

- New budget line for COVID-related diagnostic services
  - Testing of postmortem nasopharyngeal swabs (previously done by the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene)
    - Necessary to control risk of exposure to physicians and autopsy technicians from COVID and variants
  - WSLH reducing testing to Monday through Saturday, with plans to completely exclude weekends and holidays.
    - This change would delay autopsies, results to law enforcement partners, and reunification of decedents with their loved ones.
  - DCME plans to use St. Mary's Laboratory to perform testing when WSLH not available.



# 4. Increase funding to account for changes in contractual obligations.

- Diagnostics services line would also be increased for:
  - Additional specialized toxicology testing
    - Reflecting over-changing controlled substances population (esp. synthetic fentanyls)
  - Reading of computed tomography (CT scans) of decedents
    - Allows office to reduce the number of autopsies that must be performed
    - Estimated to improve caseload by more than 100 cases (important to maintain recommended physician workload)
  - Net cost to County: \$146,500.00





## 5. Adjustment to operational budget lines to more accurately reflect expenses

- Increase overtime budget to compensate for increased staff time and simultaneous call/shift coverage when LTEs are unavailable
- Increase in LTE budget line to more accurately budget LTE use for shift vacancies for medicolegal investigators (MLIs) and morgue technicians.
- Addition of smart phones resolves the use of personal phones by staff for county business.
  - Also allows sending and receiving of protected medical information and scene photos on a county system.
- Net cost to county: \$84,700.00



# Capital requests for year

- CT area remodel:
  - Planning and design for remodel of X-ray suite
  - DCME was able to obtain a portable CT unit to manage COVID volume, but unit is fragile and difficult to move
  - Initial plans for DCME building included design for stationary CT unit
  - CT area remodel request would allow for documents to be reviewed by architects and engineers to determine what is needed for interior expansion and then to add storage space in the garage area to replace space absorbed by X-ray suite expansion.
  - No modification to the footprint of the building.
  - Cost: \$60,000.00



# Capital Request for year

- Vehicle and Equipment Replacement
  - Replace one Ford Transit van used to transport decedents
    - Has more than 190,000 miles
    - Has become a maintenance burden
  - Replace two Ferno body cots in the other existing van purchased in 2020 budget with two Stryker Power Load cots
    - Power load cots remove requirement for staff to manually lift the cot and load the cot into and out of the transport vans.
    - Task prone to causing injuries to back and other muscle groups.
  - Cost: \$236,500.00



# Equity and Sustainability Initiatives

- Recruitment efforts are nationwide, drawing on candidates from NAME, AAFS, ABMDI, Neogov, and LinkedIn.
- Hiring of diversity candidates at all levels, including physician staff and management
- Nongendered bathrooms in building
- Hybrid vehicles (cruisers) used for department vehicles

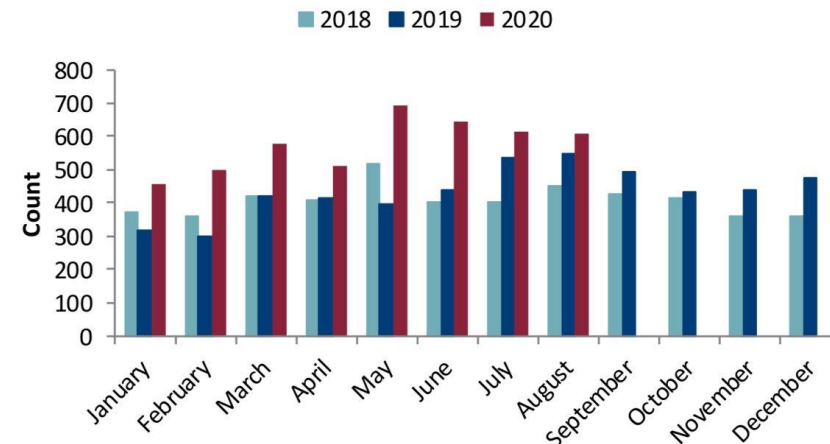




# What one thing do you wish members of the County Board better understood about the work of your department?

- Changing caseloads and populations in Dane County reflect changes in crime and epidemiologic patterns in our area.
- The office is working very hard to adapt and grow to meet the needs that have resulted from these dynamics.
- The opioid epidemic never went away, nor did crime decide to stop. We just added the COVID epidemic to it.

Figure 2. Wisconsin Suspected Opioid Overdoses by Month, YTD

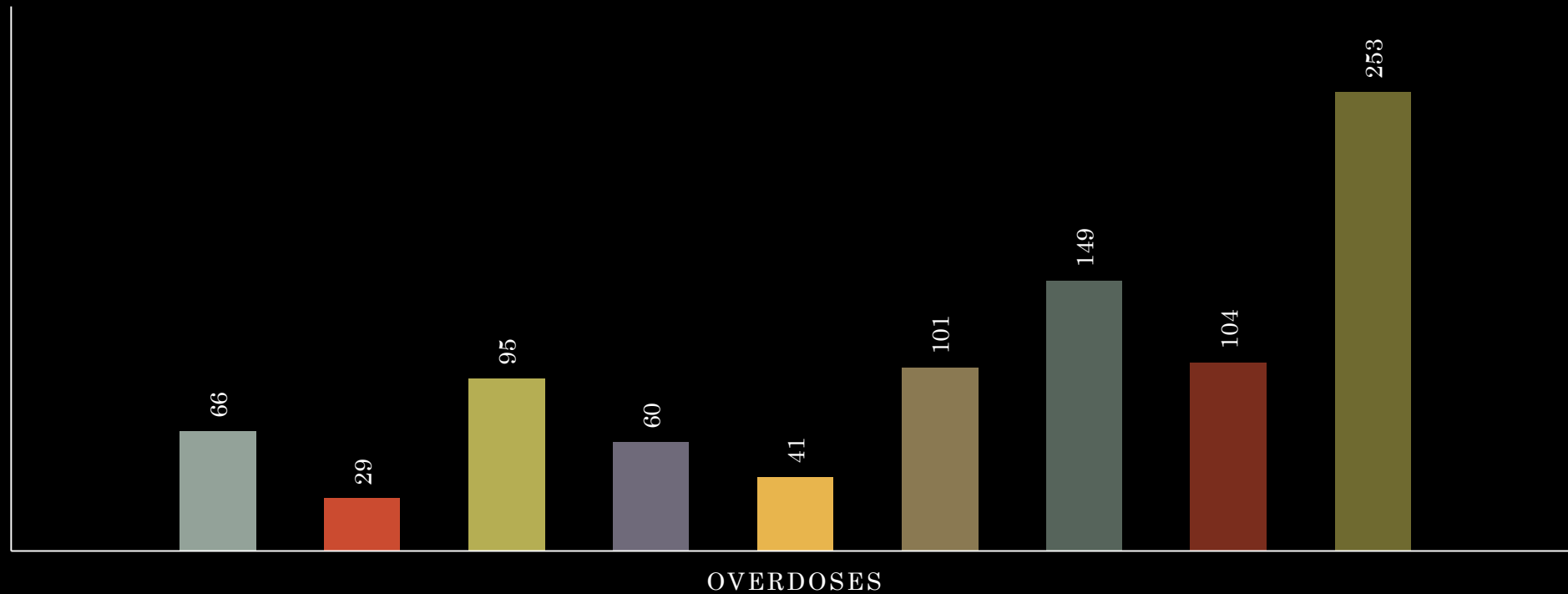


Source: Office of Health Informatics, Wisconsin Department of Health Services  
Data: Wisconsin Ambulance Run Data System (WARDS)

# What one thing do you wish members of the County Board better understood about the work of your department?

## OVERDOSES 2018-2019

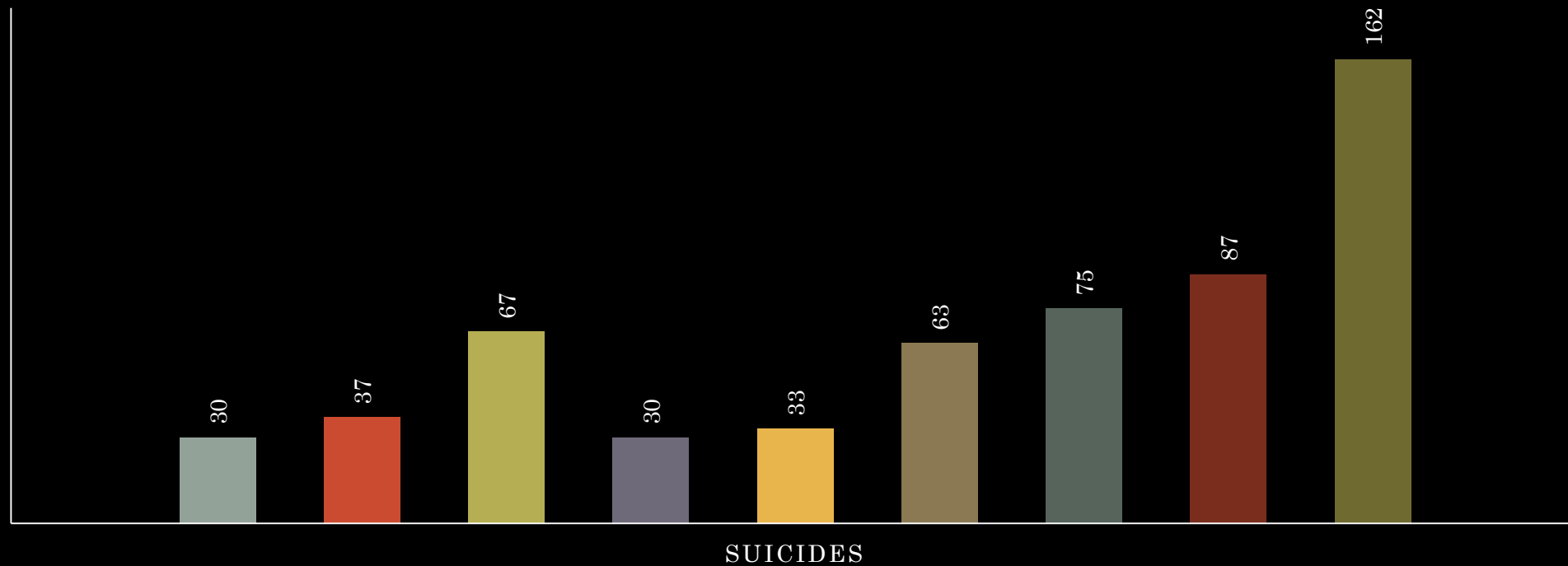
■ Dane 2018 ■ IGA 2018 ■ Total 2018 ■ Dane 2019 ■ IGA 2019 ■ Total 2019 ■ Dane 2020 ■ IGA 2020 ■ Total 2020



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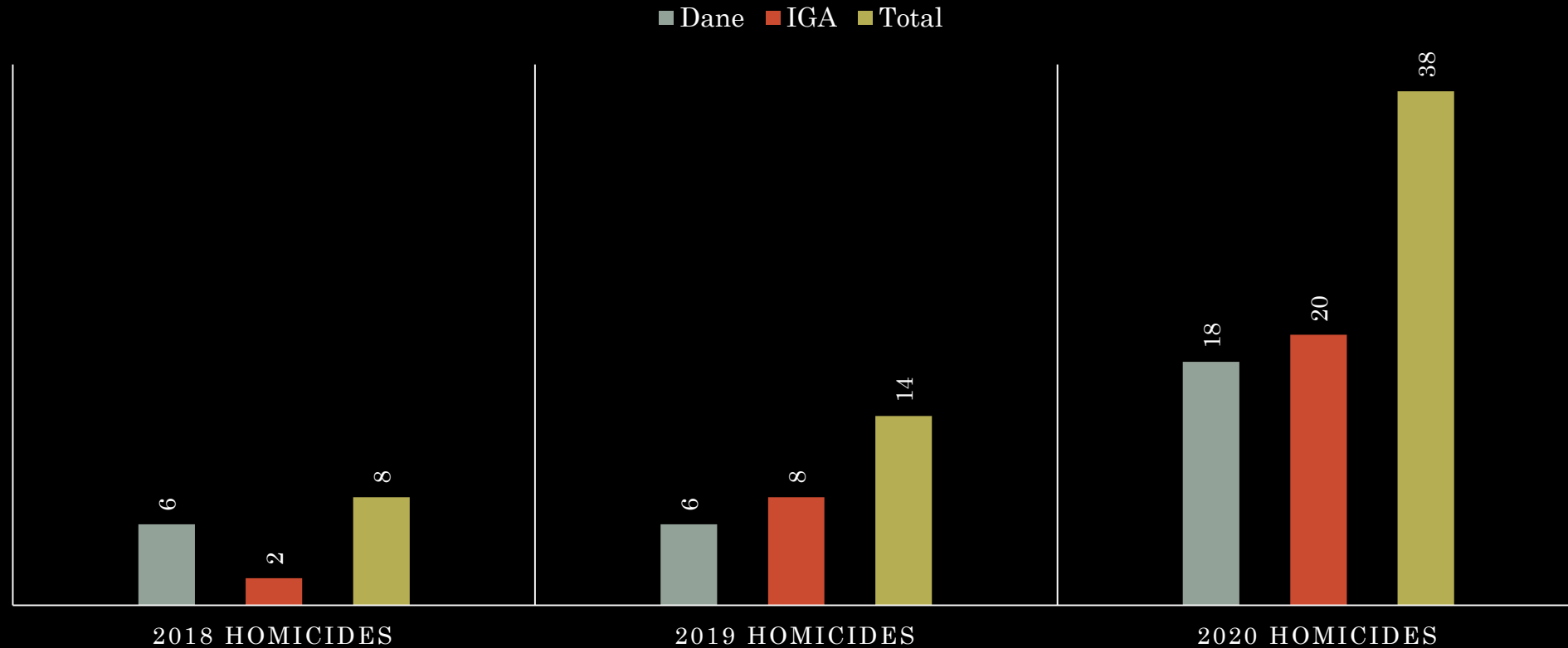
## SUICIDES 2018-2020

■ Dane 2018 ■ IGA 2018 ■ Total 2018 ■ Dane 2019 ■ IGA 2019 ■ Total 2019 ■ Dane 2020 ■ IGA 2020 ■ Total 2020



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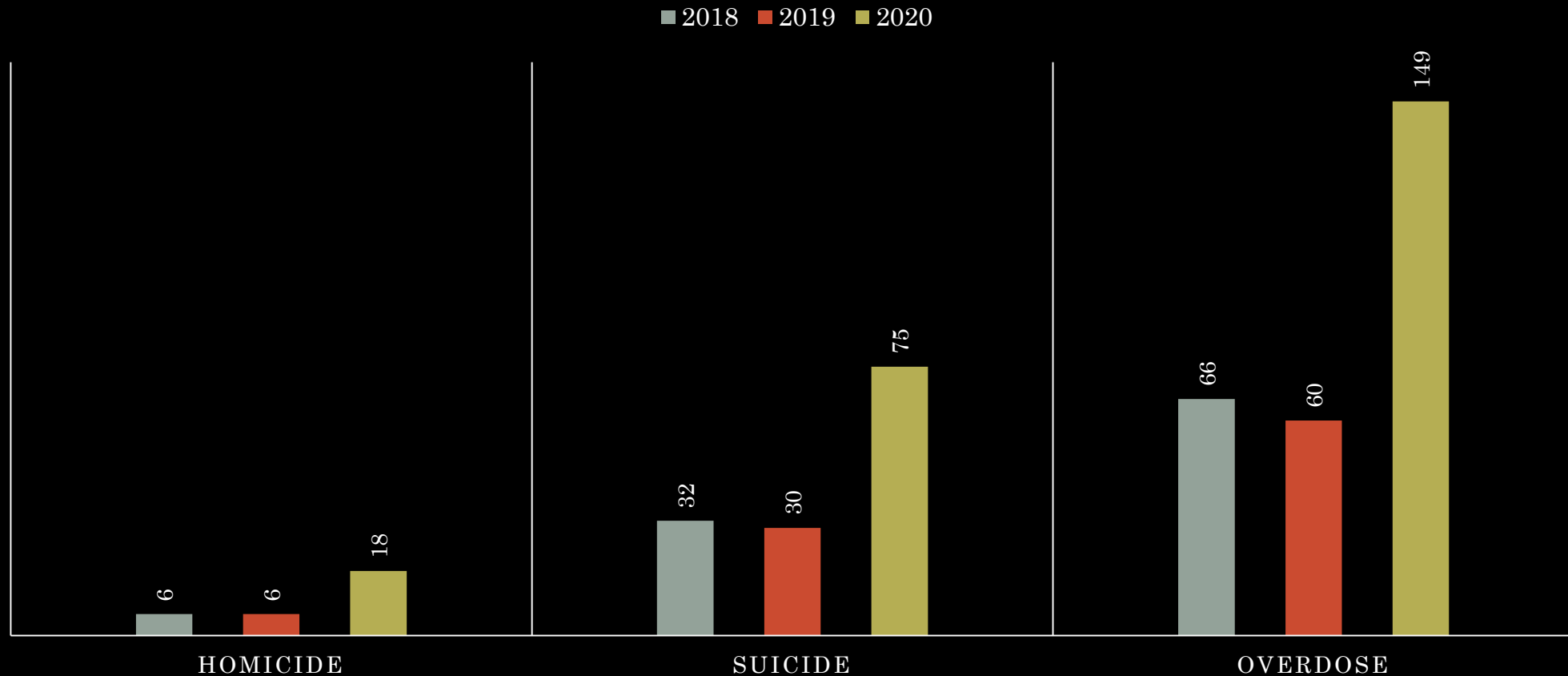
## HOMICIDES DANE + IGA 2018-2020





# What one thing do you wish members of the County Board better understood about the work of your department?

## DANE COUNTY 2018-2020



Thank you

