



## Cooperative Agreement Corner



Our Cooperative Agreement with the National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS) supports activities for jurisdictions. Upcoming opportunities are provided below.

### VSCP Directors Webinar

The VSCP Project Directors Webinar occurs on the second Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m. Eastern. You can forward this invitation to others in your office who might be interested, however, you cannot forward your approved registration, as each attendee must register separately. The next VSCP Project Directors Webinar will be June 12, 2024, at 2 p.m. Eastern. [Register Here](#) to join the webinar.

### Field Services & Data Quality Workshop

NAPHSIS and the Division of Vital Statistics within the National Center for Health Statistics are happy to announce that we will host the Field Services and Data Quality Workshop on August 19-21, 2024, in Providence, Rhode Island. The workshop is tailored for field services staff, statistical staff involved in identifying data quality issues, staff conducting quality queries, or anyone interested in improving the quality of birth, death, or fetal death data. Gain valuable insights, collaborate with experts, and enhance your skills in improving vital records data quality. This workshop provides an excellent opportunity to address challenges and share best practices. Please email NAPHSIS at [hq@naphsis.org](mailto:hq@naphsis.org) if you are interested in attending.

### Field Services Special Interest Group

What questions do you have regarding field services and data quality? Want to hear about best practices in training your data providers? Do you need guidance on quality assurance programs? If so, the Field Services Interest Group monthly meetings can be a great resource. Hear from jurisdictions sharing their experiences and lessons learned in working with

their internal and external partners on various field services, data quality improvement, and training topics. The next Field Services Interest Group meeting will be held on June 25, 2024, at 3 p.m. Eastern. Email [hq@naphsis.org](mailto:hq@naphsis.org) to join the monthly call.

### Systems Special Interest Group

Come ask your technical peers how they grapple with adjusting their vital records systems to meet the needs of vital records, data partners, and interoperability with other systems. The next Systems Special Interest Group meeting will be held on June 27, 2024, at 3 p.m. Eastern. Email [systems@naphsis.org](mailto:systems@naphsis.org) to join the monthly call.

### Statistics Interest Group

NAPHSIS is launching a new Statistics Interest group. This will be an opportunity to gather virtually on a monthly basis to discuss topics of interest related to statistics. Please email NAPHSIS at [hq@naphsis.org](mailto:hq@naphsis.org) if you are interested in participating.

### Birth Data Quality Workgroup (BDQW) and Fetal Death Subgroup

The BDQW meets on the first Thursday of every other month at 2:00 p.m. Eastern. If you are interested in assessing and improving the quality of vital statistics birth and fetal death data, contact NAPHSIS at [hq@naphsis.org](mailto:hq@naphsis.org).

### 2023 Data Year Close-Out

The following table includes the 2023 contract closeout and draft 2023 file release dates. Note that to include a jurisdiction's most current information in the file release, all corrections and final file deliverables are due no later than the target dates listed. The target dates are highlighted in red, as are the contract closeout dates and the dates for final updates. The dates for final updates are subject to change and may be earlier, depending on the quality of the national file.

### 2023 Death File

(States) Contract closeout for 2023 deaths	May 1, 2024
(States) Last date 2023 death file updates accepted	June 27, 2024
(DACEB) Pause medical processing for data quality review	July 25, 2024
(DACEB) Release final 2023 file to Hyattsville and resume medical processing	September 26, 2024

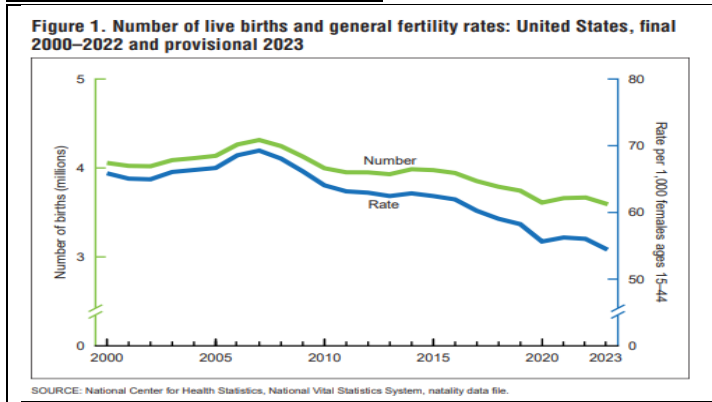
## 2023 Fetal Death File

(States) Contract closeout for 2023 fetal deaths	May 1, 2024
(States) Last date 2023 fetal death file updates accepted	July 25, 2024
(DACEB) Release final 2023 fetal death file to Hyattsville	August 22, 2024

As the 2023 files are closed, jurisdictions are encouraged to contact their assigned Data Acquisition, Classification and Evaluation Branch (DACEB) staff with any questions or feedback on the file closeout process.

## Notable Publications/Data Briefs

### Births: Provisional Data for 2023

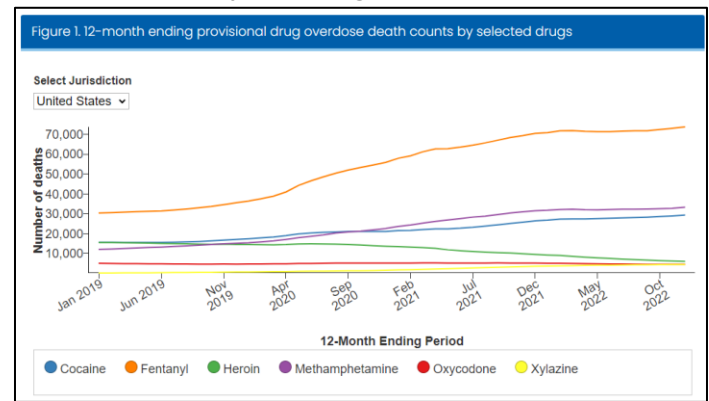


This report was published in April 2024 and can be found at this [link](#). The report presents 2023 provisional birth data based on 99.9% of all records. The provisional number of births for the United States in 2023 was 3,591,328, down 2% from 2022. The general fertility (births per 1,000 women ages 15–44) declined 3%. Rates declined for women in age groups 15–19 through 35–39. The cesarean delivery rate and the low-risk cesarean delivery rate both rose in 2023, to 32.4% and 26.6%, respectively. The preterm birth rate was essentially unchanged at 10.41%.

### Maternal and Infant Characteristics Among Women with Confirmed or Presumed Cases of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) During Pregnancy

Information regarding this April 2024 release can be found at this [website](#). This marks the final release of findings for this project, which tracked characteristics and outcomes for mothers with COVID-19 during pregnancy for 15 vital statistics jurisdictions over the pandemic years. We would like to acknowledge the maternal COVID-19 reporting areas for their essential contributions to this important project: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, the District of Columbia, Idaho, Maine, Maryland, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee and West Virginia.

## New surveillance dashboard on Provisional Drug Overdose Death Counts for Specific Drugs



The NCHS Vital Statistics Rapid Release Program is pleased to announce a new surveillance dashboard that can be found at this [link](#). This dashboard has information on specific drugs based on data from literal text of death certificates, unlike typical NVSS data releases for specific drugs that use ICD-10 coded death data. The surveillance site, “Provisional Drug Overdose Death Counts for Specific Drugs,” will report 12-month ending estimates for 6 drugs mentioned with involvement in drug overdose deaths. The specific drugs included in the surveillance site are *fentanyl*, *methamphetamine*, *cocaine*, *heroin*, *oxycodone*, and *xylazine*. The dashboard will be updated biannually, with the next update anticipated in July 2024.

## Collaborating Office of Medical Examiners and Coroners (COMEC)



The [Collaborating Office for Medical Examiners and Coroners](#) (COMEC) provides broad support for public health activities to professionals who conduct medicolegal death investigations (MDIs). COMEC was established this year at NCHS in recognition of the important role of medicolegal death investigation for public health and CDC. If you would like to receive monthly announcements from COMEC, please send a note to [MDI@CDC.GOV](mailto:MDI@CDC.GOV).

### MDI Connect Launches New Website

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Collaborating Office for Medical Examiners and Coroners (COMEC) and the CDC Foundation have partnered to create

MDI Connect in order to enhance data sharing among medical examiners and coroners (MEC), public health departments, case management systems, toxicology, and other agencies. [MDI Connect's](#) mission is to modernize data systems to create a standardized process for exchanging medicolegal death investigation (MDI) data.

[MDI Connect](#) is comprised of MEC offices that are committed to modernizing MDI data systems. These offices, their key data sharing partners, information management system vendors, and subject matter experts work together to design, build and test FHIR®-enabled MDI data exchange practices. The MEC offices use standards-based approaches that are scalable and reusable across multiple locations with different data entities. [MDI Connect](#) recently launched a website to describe the project's mission and share progress and challenges of MEC offices funded to participate in this modernization initiative. The MDI Connect website also includes links to important tools and resources for any MEC office interested in data modernization.

### [Vital Statistics Modernization Community of Practice](#)



The National Vital Statistics System [Modernization Community of Practice \(NVSS CoP\)](#) is a shared space for learning and innovation and provides a forum for jurisdictions and their partners working in the modernization space.

**Phase IV of the NVSS CoP Jurisdictional Outreach** is officially underway, marking another significant step in our collective journey as we focus on jurisdictions completing pre-certification. We are thrilled to share that as of the completion of Phase III, an impressive 98% of the 57 jurisdictional Vital Records Offices have participated in an NCHS-organized testing event. We look forward to even more remarkable achievements as we transition into the next phase.

**The next formal NCHS-organized testing event**, another key milestone in the modernization journey, is scheduled for June 3rd-4th, 2024. In preparation for this event, observing and testing jurisdictional participants should ensure they have access to the NVSS API (test environment) through SAMS. If you

are not already in the process of getting access (or already have access based on past testing events), please reach out to [NVSSmodernization@cdc.gov](mailto:NVSSmodernization@cdc.gov) and make the request. The individuals doing the hands-on testing are the intended target audience for receiving access. In anticipation of the June testing event, NVSS has announced that May Weekly Optional Office Hours will serve as testing event prep meetings. Regular Office Hours will reconvene on June 11th. The NVSS CoP offers jurisdictions for the next testing event the ability to complete their FHIR mortality pre-certification steps during the testing event and attempt the new FHIR natality flow. Special thanks to the participating jurisdictions; your active involvement is critical to our collective success. Jurisdictions are encouraged to continue informal testing, accessing the NVSS API, between events, to post questions to Zulip for technical assistance, and to attend our weekly CoP Office Hours.

As the NVSS Modernization CoP continues to assist jurisdictions with their readiness for production with FHIR, we want to underscore the value of **Pre-Certification and Certification** in the NVSS Modernization Pathway. These steps are not only required, but also equip jurisdictions to handle FHIR data submissions and better prepare them for eventual production.

Artifacts from all NVSS CoP Main meetings, CoP Technical Subgroup meetings, and other resources and tools can be found on the [NVSS Modernization Community Practice SharePoint site](#). Users can also click the 'quick links' option to access the Pre-Certification and Certification guidance.

Special thanks to technical partners NAPHSIS, MITRE, Ruvos, and CTE for their ongoing collaboration in the modernization efforts. Their valuable contributions have been instrumental in our collective success.

### [Vital Staff Spotlights](#)

Jurisdictions may add as many names as they would like to our NCHS Newsletter mailing list! Just send a note to George Tolson at [gct1@cdc.gov](mailto:gct1@cdc.gov).

Chris Harrison departed his position as State Registrar and VSCP Project Director in Georgia and is now the new NVSS Modernization lead for the Division of Vital Statistics, NCHS.

Cynthia Buskey-Martin was appointed interim State Registrar and VSCP Project Director in Georgia.

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