

MORTALITY IN TENNESSEE

General Mortality

- A total of 55,148 deaths occurred to Tennessee residents in 2001. The 2001 crude death rate in Tennessee was 961 deaths per 100,000 population. Higher mortality among males than females was reflected in their respective crude death rates of 966 and 956 deaths per 100,000 population. The crude death rate of whites, 1011 deaths per 100,000, exceeded that of blacks, 891 per 100,000. This differential is explained by the younger age composition of blacks as compared to whites. Once the death rate was adjusted for age differences¹, the death rate for blacks rose to 1,253 per 100,000 and that for whites declined to 961 per 100,000. Respective age-adjusted death rates for black males, white males, black females, and white females were 1,560, 1,182, 1,043, and 801 per 100,000 population.
- Crude death rates for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan residents of Tennessee were 929 and 983, respectively. After age-adjustment¹, the rate for the metropolitan population very slightly exceeded that for the nonmetropolitan population, 996 versus 981 per 100,000, with an overall rate of 987. Further differentiating the population by race and gender, black male residents in metropolitan areas exhibited the highest age-adjusted death rate, 1,601 per 100,000. The rate for black males in nonmetropolitan areas was second highest at 1,436 deaths per 100,000. By contrast, the lowest age-adjusted death rates were registered for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan white females, at 785 and 810 deaths per 100,000 population, respectively. Regardless of whether they resided in metropolitan or nonmetropolitan areas, black females had lower age-adjusted death rates (1,067 and 1,436) than white males (1,121 and 1,214 per 100,000, respectively).
- Annualized age-adjusted mortality rates for 1999-2001 were 982 statewide and were higher in metropolitan regions than nonmetropolitan regions of Tennessee at 1,001 and 968 per 100,000¹, respectively. Among Tennessee Health Department regions, the Mid-Cumberland Region (924) and Knox and Sullivan Counties (940 each) had the lowest annualized age-adjusted death rates, while Shelby County and Northwest Tennessee had the highest (1,068 and 1,055, respectively). Three rural counties had the highest 1999-2001 age-adjusted death rates -- Lake (1,338), Jackson (1,154) and Grundy (1,152) Counties -- while Cumberland (803), Williamson (787) and Moore (744) Counties had the lowest rates.

¹All age-adjusted rates use the year 2000 standard million population.