



HamiltonCounted

2024 Q3 Report



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Table of Contents page McDonald Farm photo by photographer Robin Rudd / Chattanooga Times Free Press and the Tennessee River photo by William Vest and Jay Buchanan.

A Message from Mayor Wamp page photos contributed by Hamilton County Press Secretary, Haley Burton.

Hamilton Counted report created by Senior Data Analyst Jennifer Baggett.



A Message from Mayor Wamp

The creation of *Hamilton Counted* has undoubtedly shed light on the challenges many of our residents face. I am humbled by the vast and pressing needs facing our county, particularly facing young families. This awareness has not only strengthened my resolve but also sharpened my perspective on how to effectively allocate county resources.

Hamilton County Government has taken a creative and aggressive approach in combating our core challenges and pouring resources into programs we believe will transform lives—not just today, but ten to twenty years from now. There’s plenty to be hopeful about as we empower future generations.

While the perception of crime by residents remains high—overall crime countywide is down 10 percent over the past year. Murder within the city of Chattanooga remains unacceptably high, but has leveled out and remains in line with 2023 through the first nine months of the year. Hamilton County remains committed to assisting the city with a law enforcement presence in downtown Chattanooga as sheriff deputies continue to patrol downtown streets.

For the third consecutive quarter, fatal overdoses are declining—a testament to our community’s resilience and commitment to addressing the opioid crisis. Through the first nine months of the year, fatal overdoses are down 26 percent compared to last year. This progress is supported by the District Attorney’s office, who continues to aggressively prosecute those responsible for bringing deadly drugs into our communities. Additionally, the county was awarded nearly \$1.5 million to build out a Medication-Assisted Treatment Program at the jail, providing support for inmates battling opioid use disorder.

Enrollment in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program has steadily risen since the start of 2022. Average monthly enrollment is up five percent from last year and 25 percent since 2022. Additional resources have been invested in WIC, and the county continues to plan for the Center for Thriving Families to further assist new mothers and young families.

Despite our challenges, Hamilton County is one of the best places to raise a family in America and we will continue working to ensure a high-quality of life for all residents. Collecting and analyzing data gives us an opportunity for continued reflection on where we are strong and how we must improve moving forward.

Crime in Hamilton County



Per Capita is number of crimes per 10,000 residents.

East Ridge data is not available for 2022; therefore, the East Ridge population has been subtracted when computing overall crime rates in 2022. Their population and data have been included in the 2023 and 2024 data.

Data reflects numbers from January 1st - September 30th each year, unless otherwise noted (See Appendices A1-A3 for more detailed crime data that's outlined below).

Violent crime in Hamilton County decreased 10% ✓

Violent crime includes Aggravated Assault, Murder, Rape, and Robbery.
*2023 to 2024

Non-fatal shooting victims down 1.4% countywide ✓

Up 3% in the city of Chattanooga
*2023 to 2024

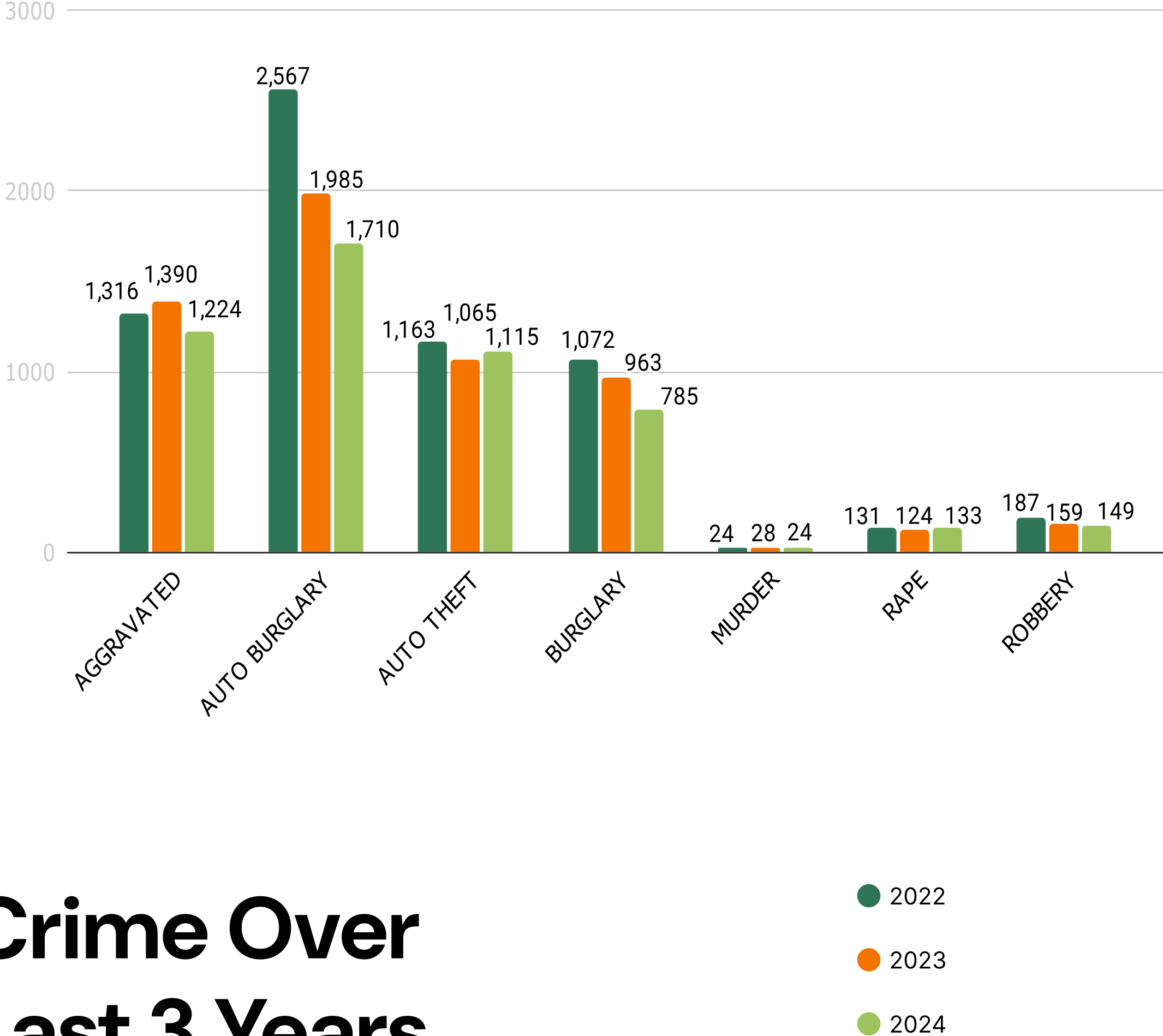
Murders in the city of Chattanooga remain unchanged from 2023 ✗

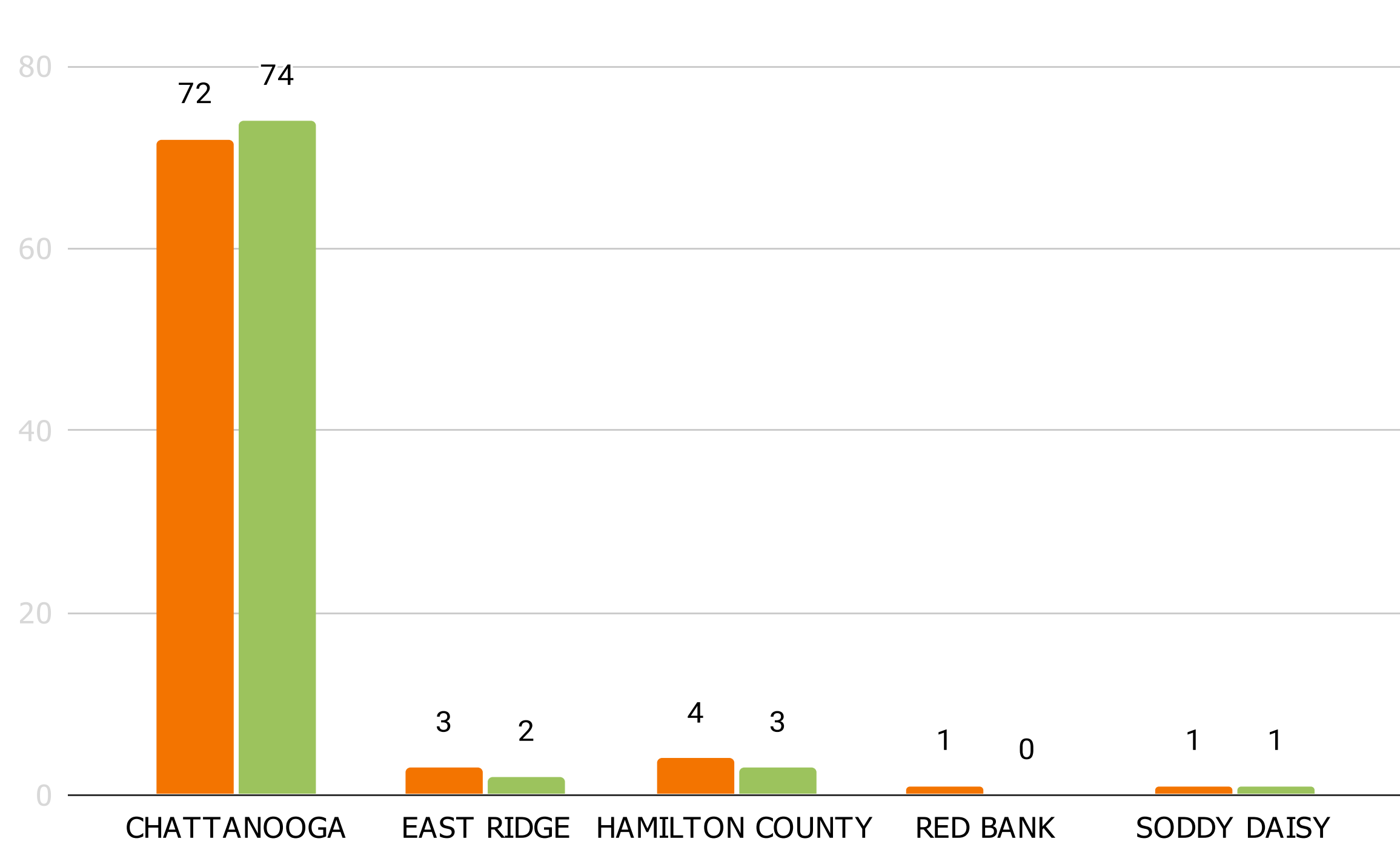
See Appendices A1-A3.

Overall crime down 10% countywide ✓

*2023 to 2024

See Appendices A1-A3 for crime breakdown in each municipality.





Non-Fatal Shooting Victims

Collegedale, Lookout Mountain, and Signal Mountain are not shown, as there were no shooting victims during this time period in 2023 and 2024 (see Appendix B for detailed non-fatal shooting data).

- 2023
- 2024



Crime by Category

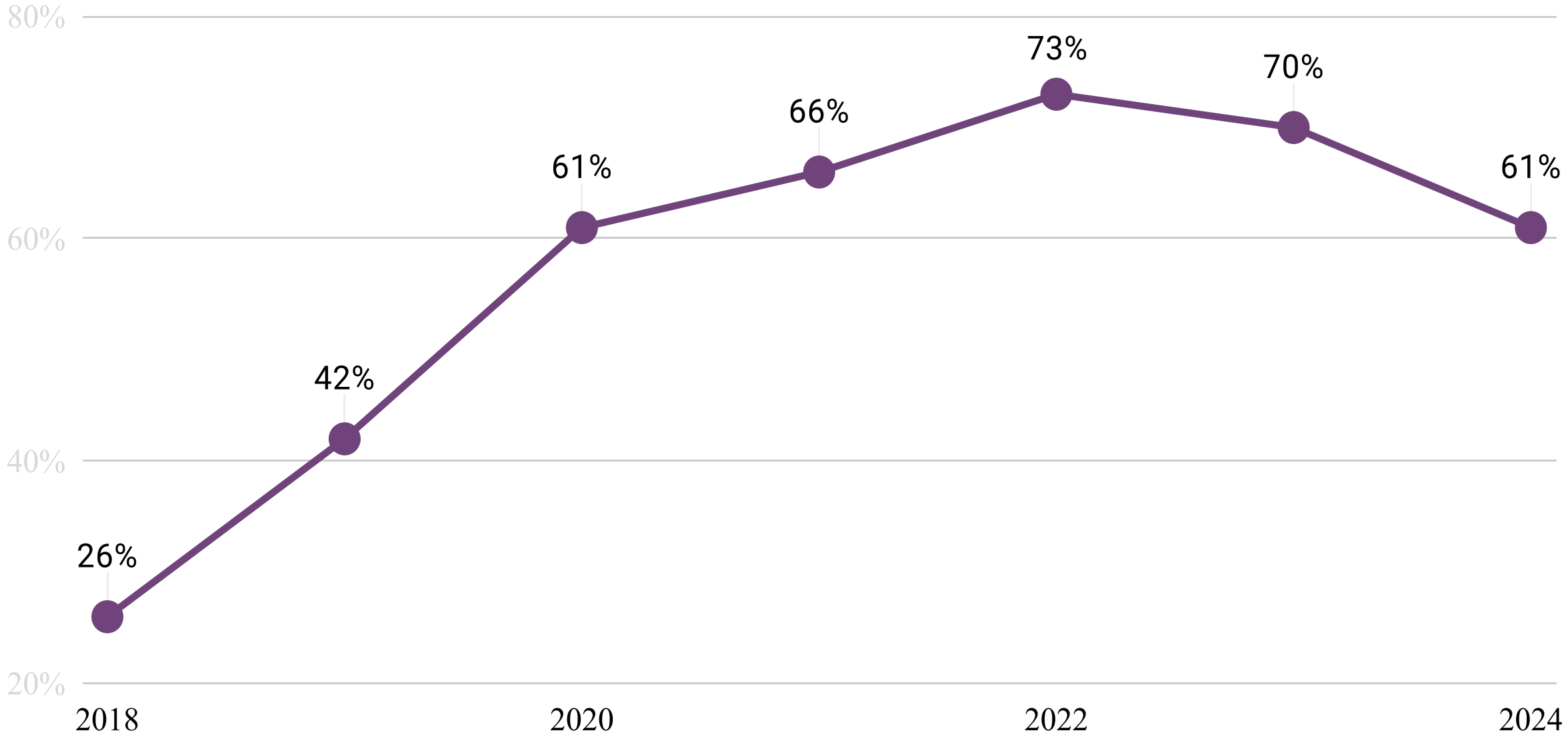
Substance Misuse and Overdoses



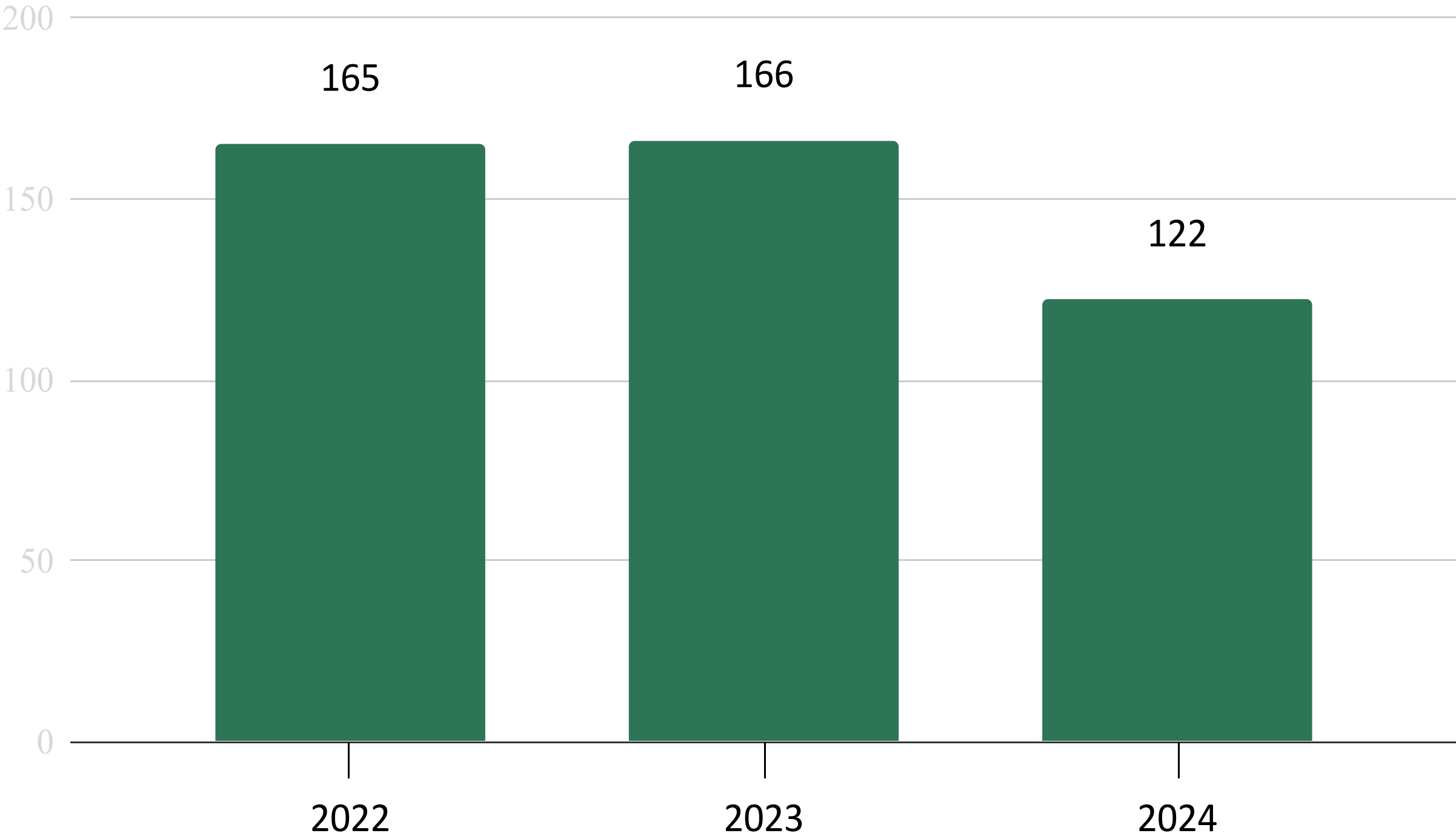
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Fentanyl-related Overdose Deaths

Data reflects numbers from January 1st - September 30th each year, unless otherwise noted.



Fatal Overdoses



Emergency room suspected overdose-related visits decreased 9% from last year.



See chart on next page.

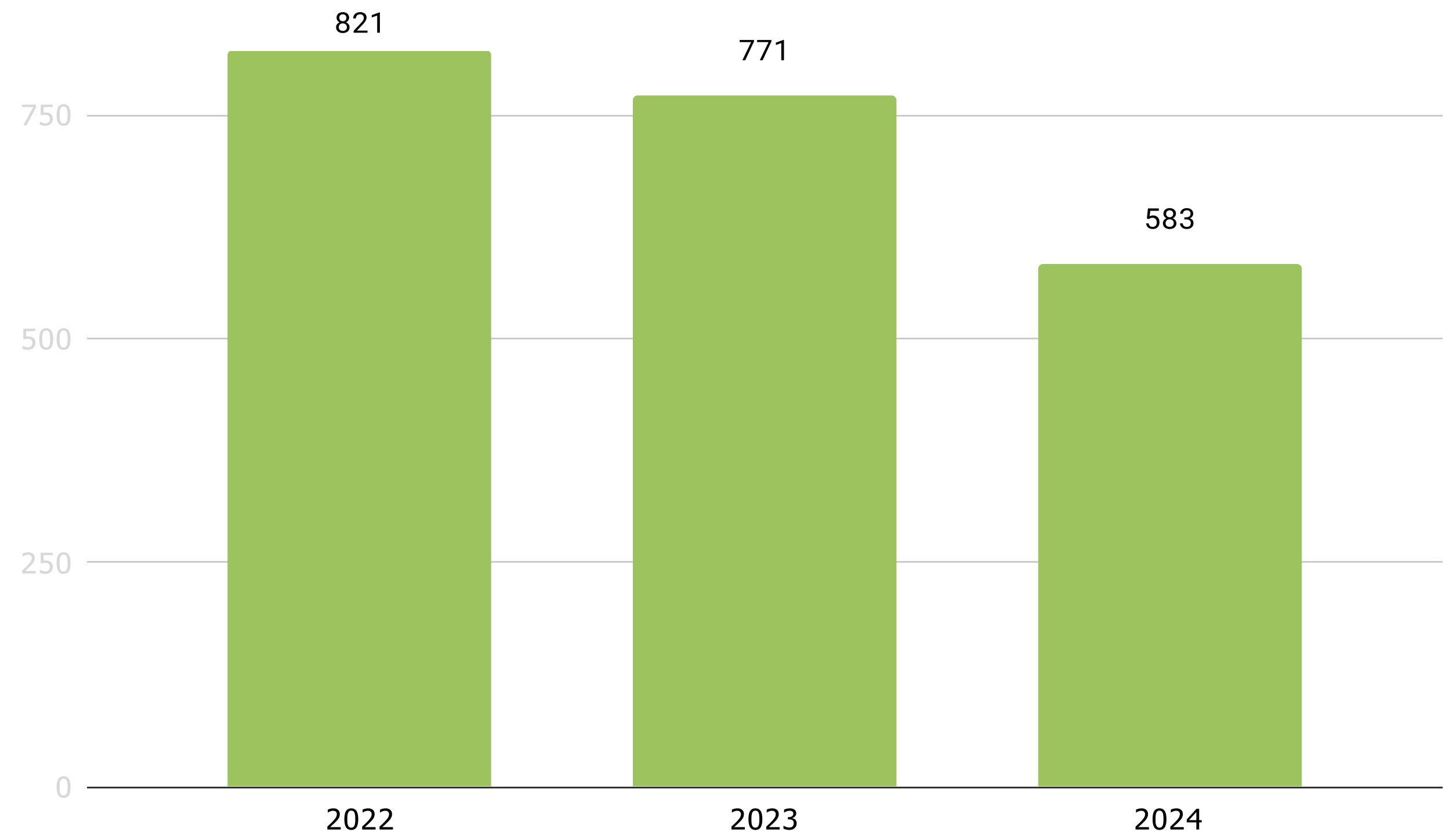
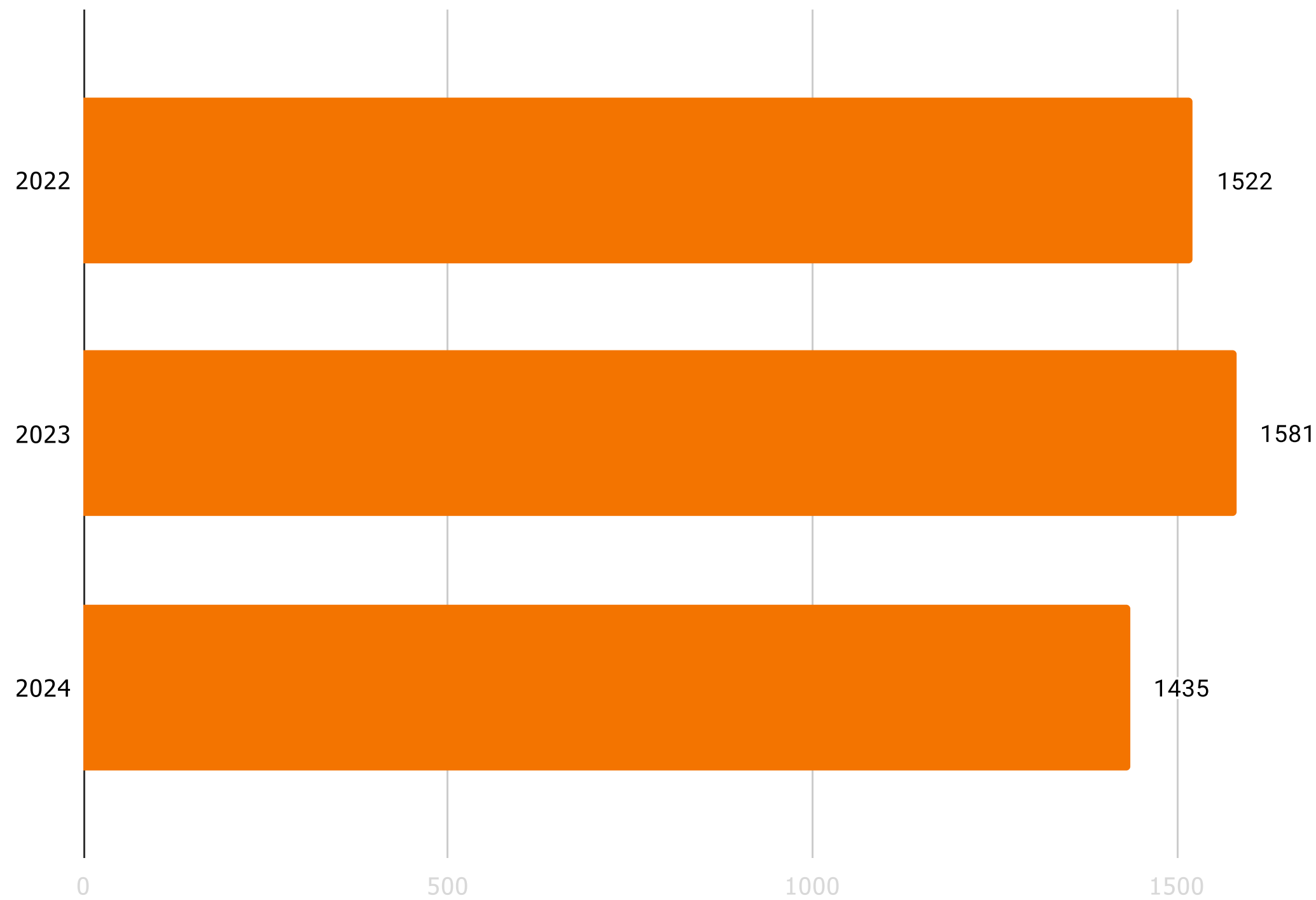
Fatal overdoses decreased 26% from last year.



See "Fatal Overdoses" chart

Emergency Room Visits: Suspected Overdose-Related

Visits are down **9% since 2023**.



Naloxone Report

This chart reflects the number of patients who were administered Naloxone by Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in Hamilton County.

Naloxone administrations by EMS are **down 24% since 2023** (see Appendix C).

Prosecution Data

- Convictions for 2nd degree murders or distribution of schedule II drug resulting in death: **5 convictions**
- Pending 2nd degree murder cases: **13 cases**
- Convictions for A or B felony drug cases: **15 convictions**
- Pending A or B felony drug cases: **Approximately 75 cases**

Innovative Response to Opioids Crisis Update

- Hamilton County has been awarded nearly \$1.5 million to build out a Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) program for inmates at the Hamilton County Jail & Detention Center. An initiative announced last fall by Mayor Wamp, Sheriff Austin Garrett, and District Attorney General Coty Wamp, the MAT program will provide medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) in tandem with therapeutic and behavioral support to incarcerated individuals suffering from substance abuse.
- Mayor Wamp and Sheriff Garrett announced the expansion of the reentry program at the Hamilton County Jail & Detention Center with the opening of electrical and cosmetology programs empowering inmates to be well-equipped to re-integrate into society.
- Hamilton County Alternative Sentencing was awarded nearly \$1 million in federal funding for the Recidivism Reduction Initiative (RRI), a new three-year project aimed at reducing recidivism rates and promoting positive outcomes for individuals in Alternative Sentencing's misdemeanor supervision programs. Researchers and professors at UTC will collect and analyze data produced by the RRI to measure the program's effectiveness.

See Appendix C1 for substance misuse and overdose resources.

Food and Nutrition Assistance



The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program is funded through the USDA. WIC services are provided through the Tennessee Department of Health in 126 entities across the state, including county health departments, stand-alone clinics, and hospital sites.

The program is designed to provide supplemental food assistance and nutrition education to low-income pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants, and children until age five.



The Chattanooga Area Food Bank partners with retailers, manufacturers, farmers, buying alliances, and individual donors to end hunger in the region.

Foxwood Food Center is Hamilton County's largest brick and mortar food pantry, and the only one operated by the Chattanooga Area Food Bank.

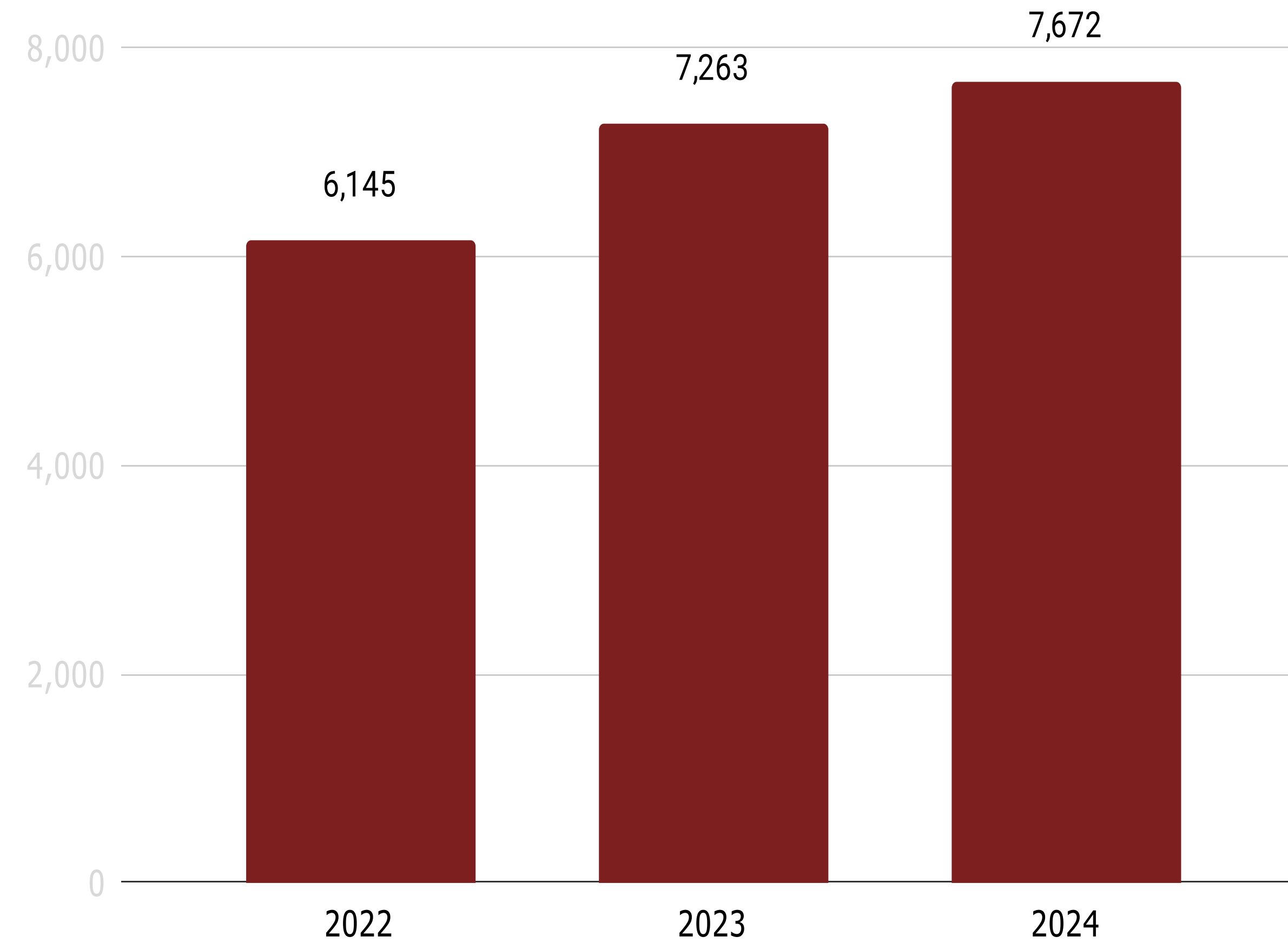
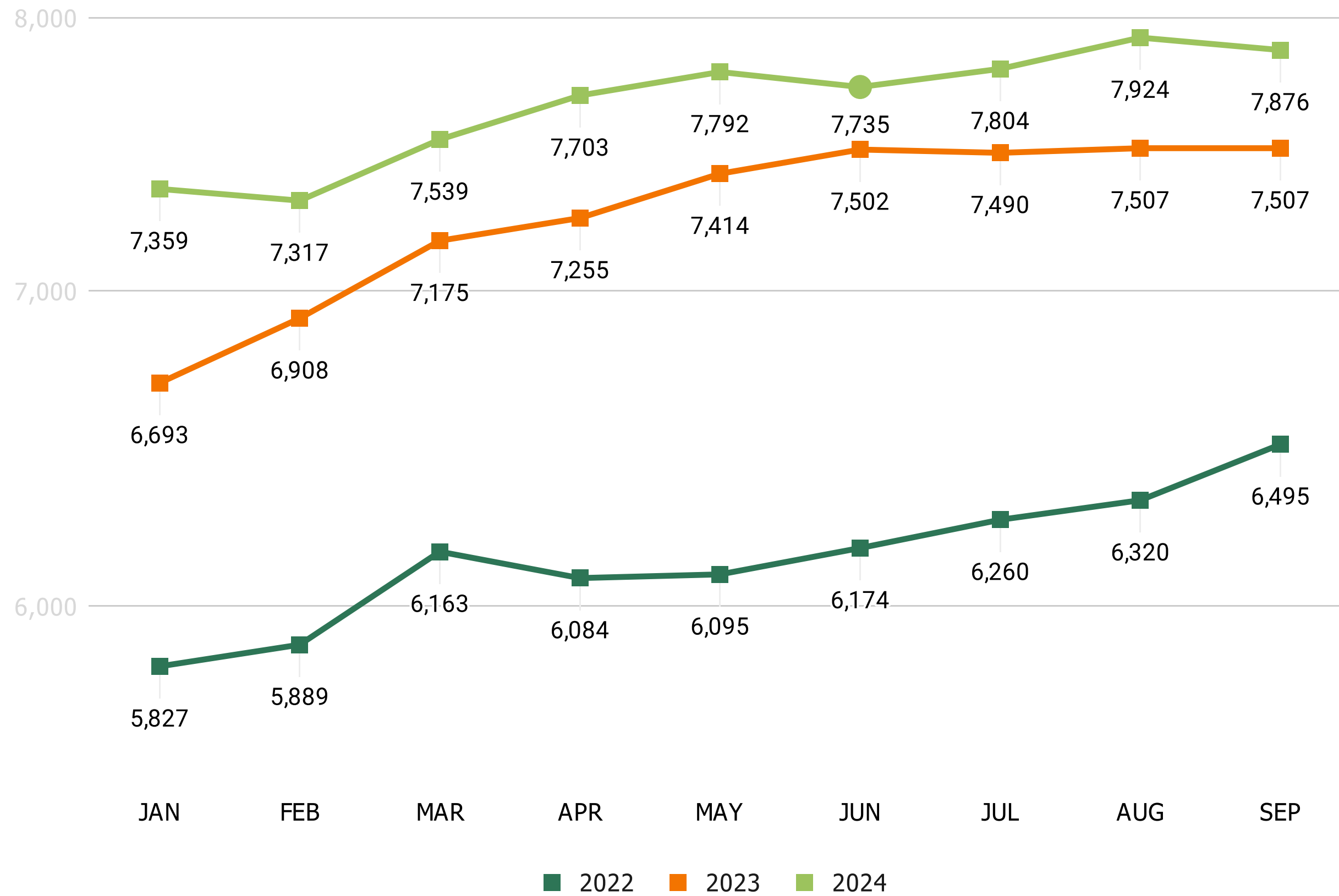


WIC Participants in Hamilton County

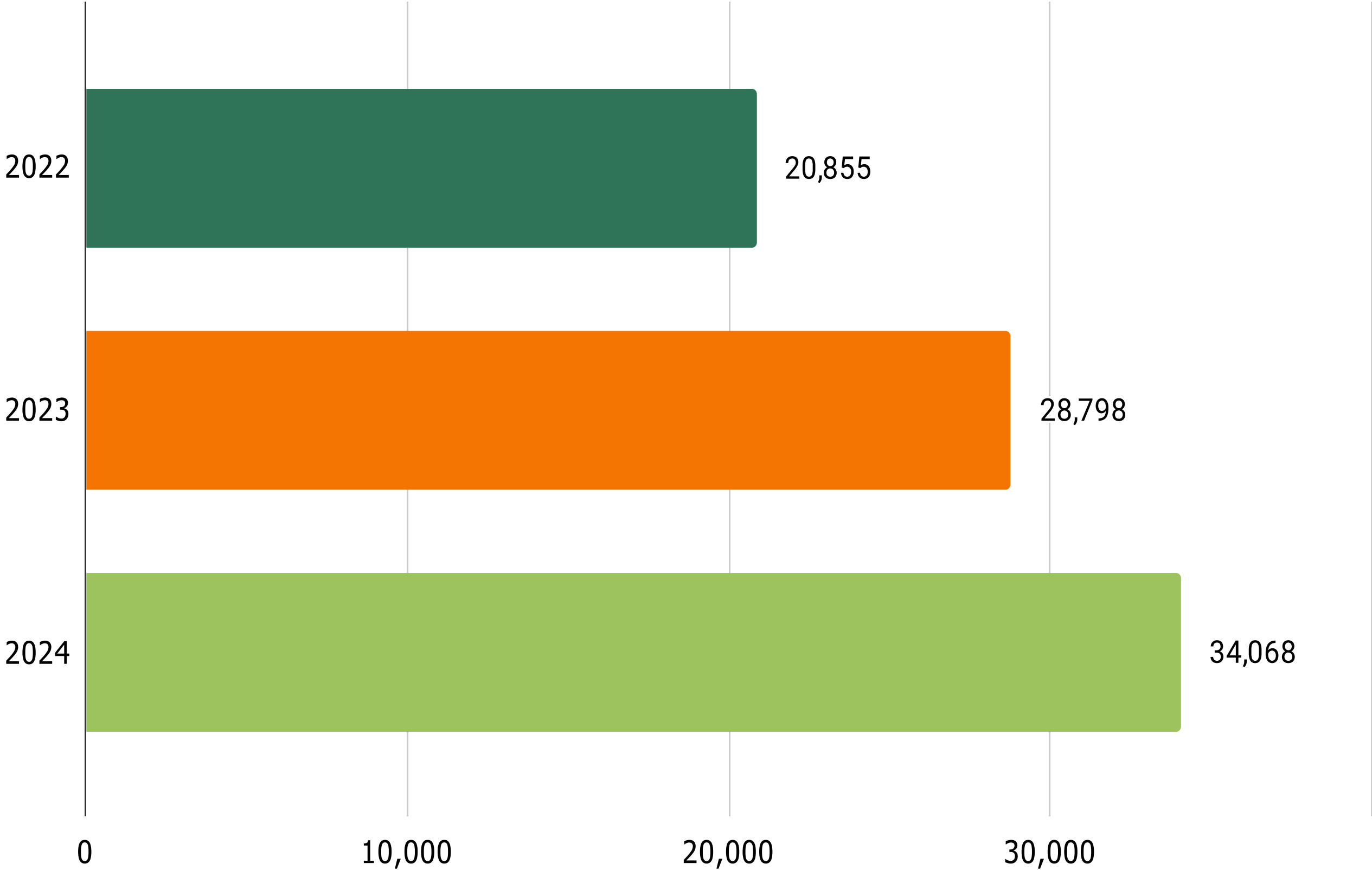


WIC participation has steadily increased over the past two years.

Average monthly WIC participation is **up 5.6% from last year** and **nearly 25% since 2022.**



Emergency Food Box Distribution



The need for emergency food boxes in Hamilton County has continued to grow since 2022. The Chattanooga Area Food Bank is seeing numbers that mirror trends nationally. The increase in need is believed to be a combination of the end of COVID-assistance programs, increased awareness about the Foxwood Food Center, and inflation.

The total number of emergency food boxes distributed **increased 18% from 2023 and are up 63% since 2022**

Homelessness and Health

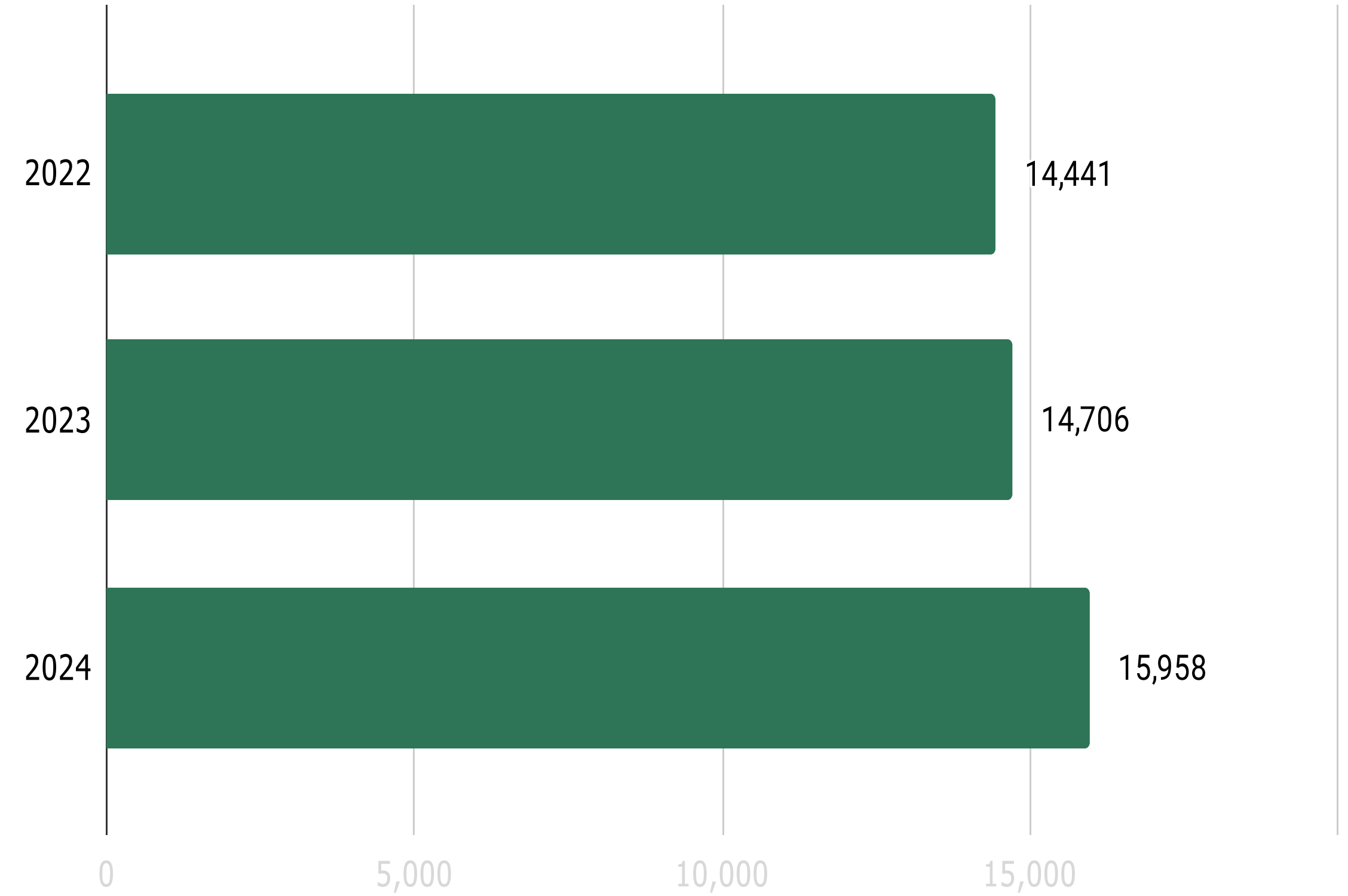
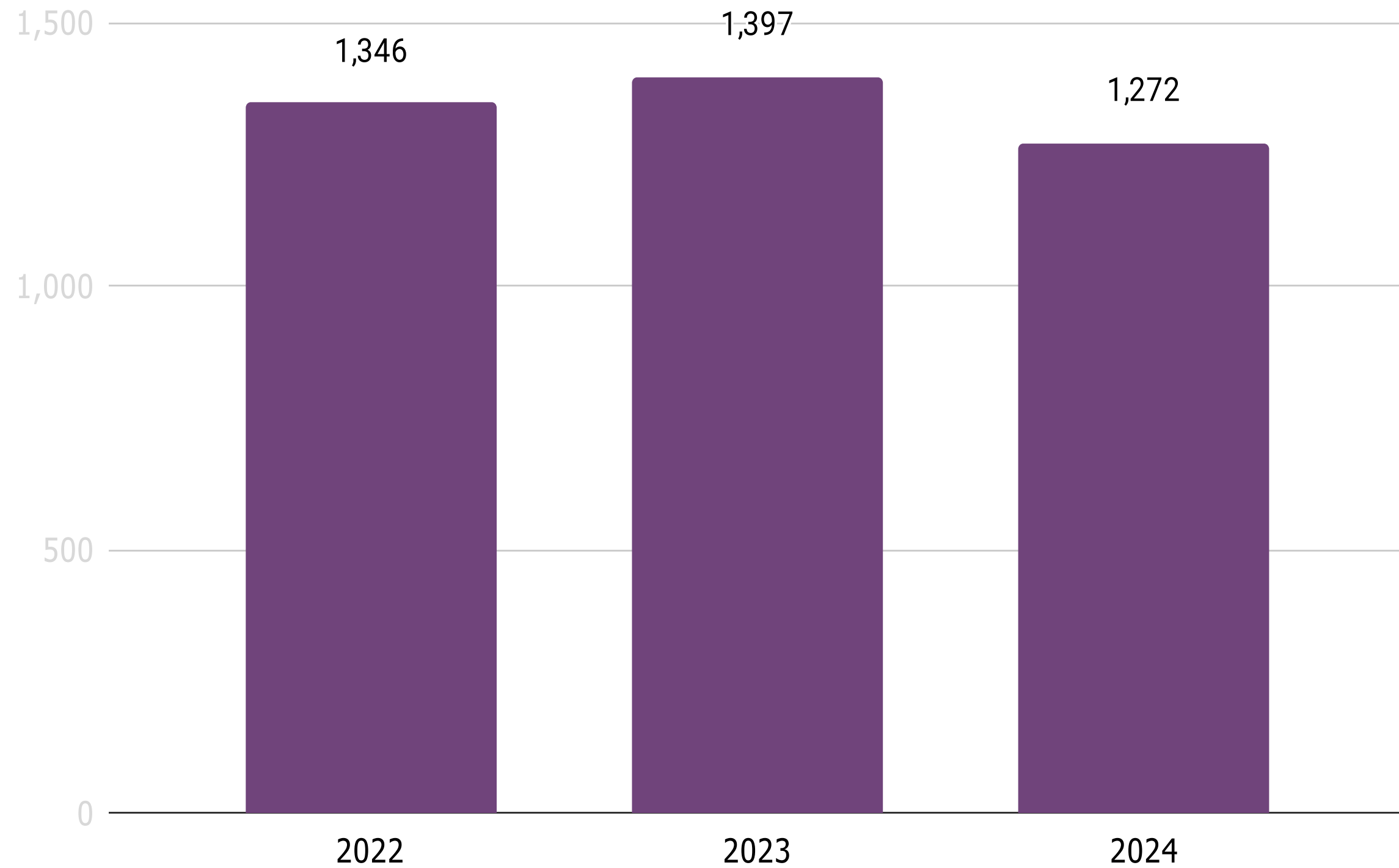
All data comes directly from the Hamilton County Homeless Health Care Center.

“Street patients” matches the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) definition of “unsheltered.”

An unsheltered person would meet the requirements to be considered “Category 1 - Literally Homeless.” In general, for purposes of the Point-In-Time (PIT) Count, HUD considers individuals and families sleeping in a place not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (i.e. abandoned buildings, train stations, or camping grounds) as “unsheltered” homeless.

“Street” Patients

The number of “street” patients seen by the Hamilton County Homeless Health Care Center **decreased nearly 9% from 2023.**



Clinic Visits

The chart above counts visits to the Homeless Health Care Center, not the number of patients visiting the clinic. A patient is counted every time they visit the clinic.

Clinic visits are **up 8.5% from 2023.**

Victim Services

24/7 Crisis Hotline - (423) 755-2700

Crisis Text Line - (423) 356-3620

Partnership's 24/7 Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Crisis Hotline is completely confidential.

Child Abuse Reporting Hotline - (877) 237-0004



Partnership
for Families, Children and Adults



Children's
Advocacy
Center
The Emmy Haney House

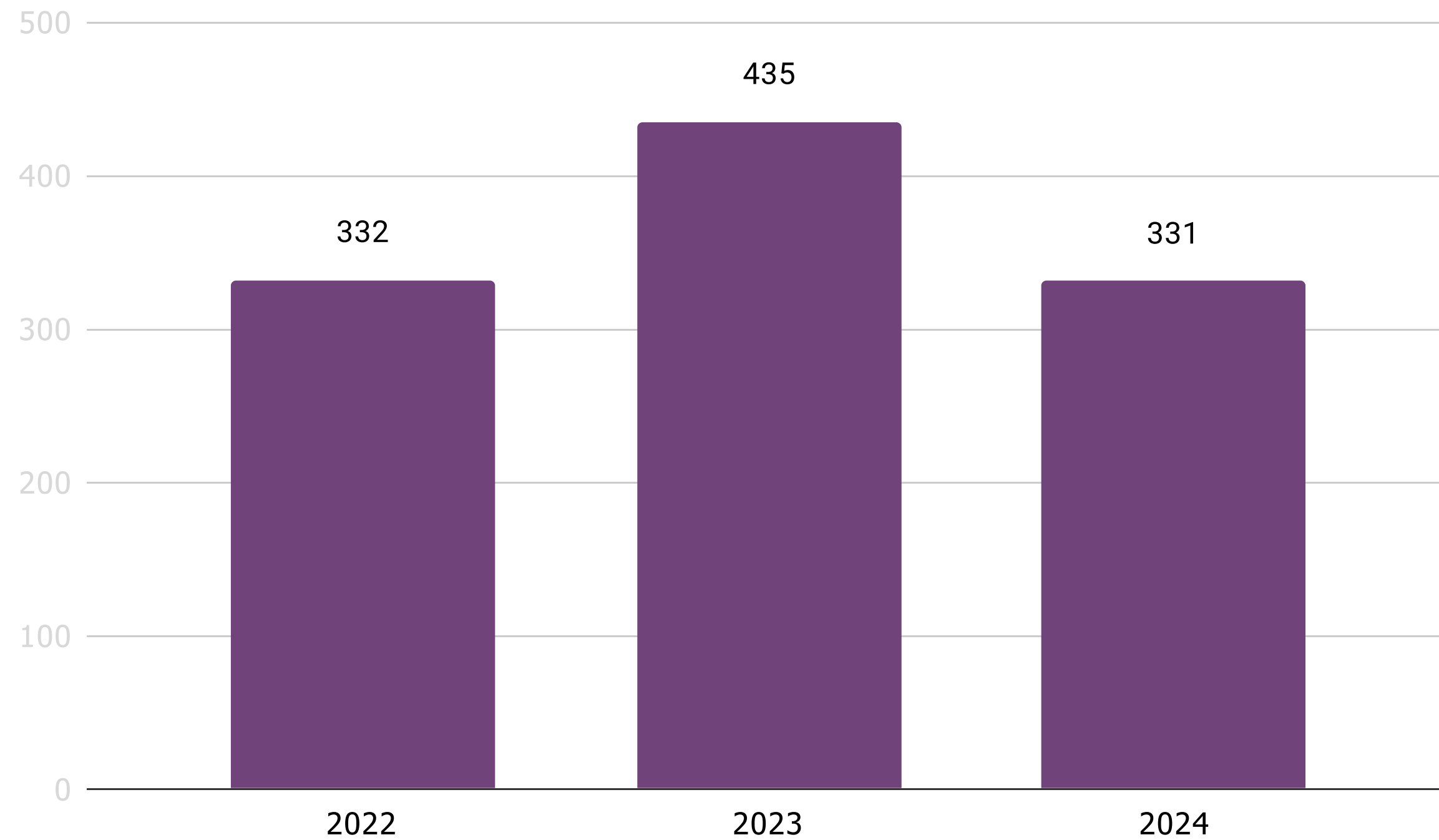


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Sexual Abuse Forensic Interviews

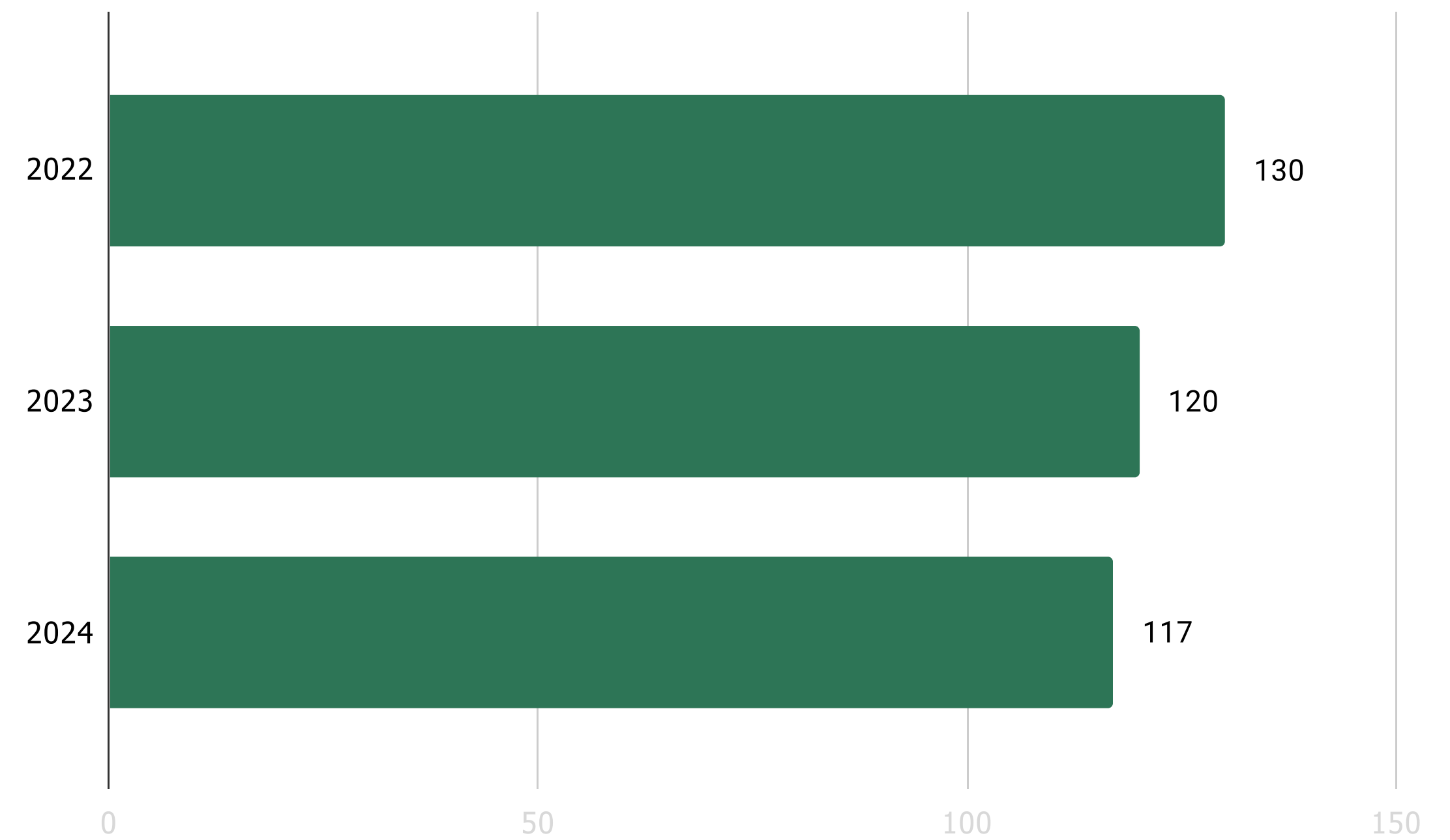
All referrals received by the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) come from the Department of Children's Services (DCS) or law enforcement in Hamilton County.

Sexual abuse forensic interviews have **decreased 24% from last year** after increasing in 2022.



Sexual Abuse Medical Exams

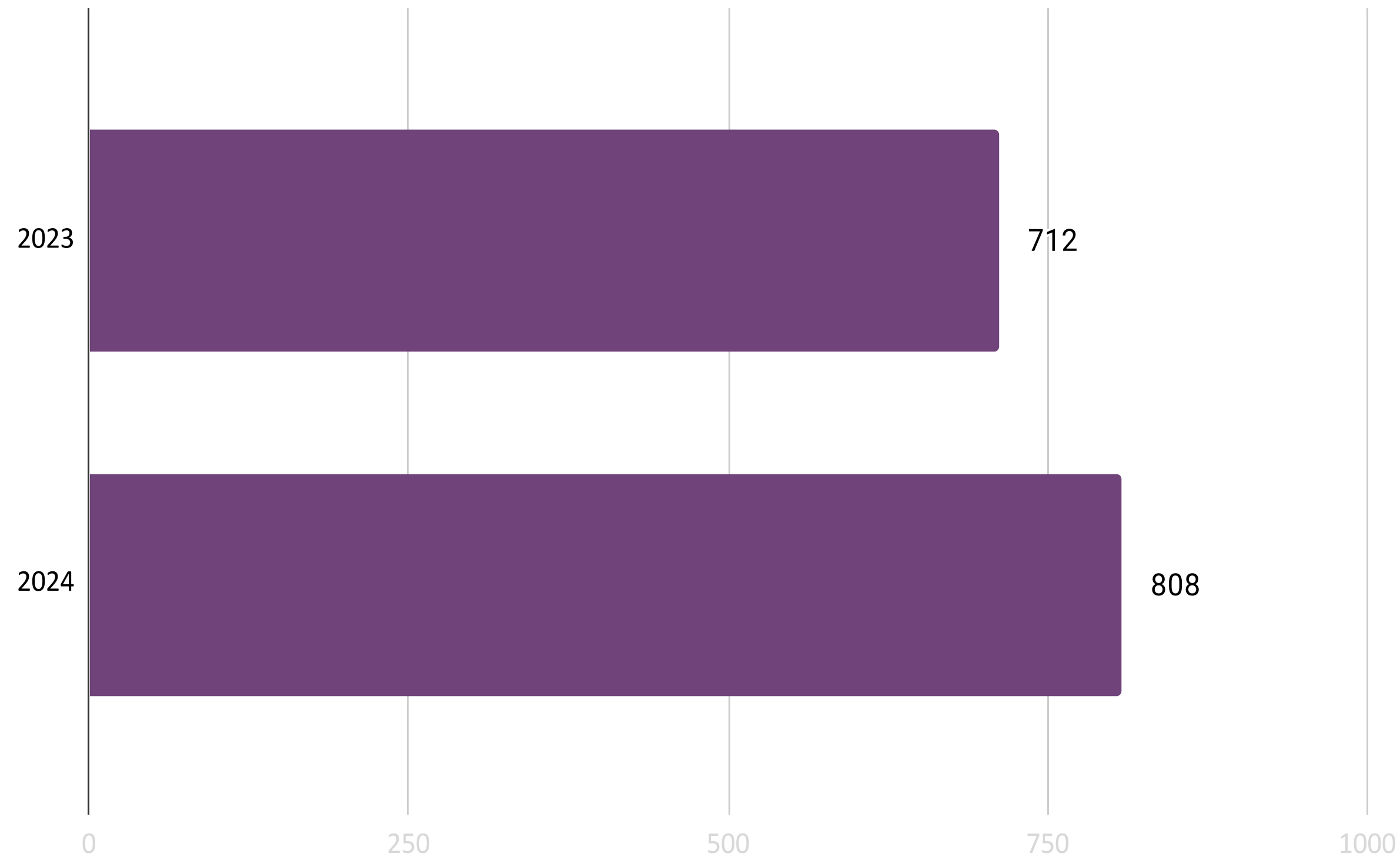
Every child with an allegation is forensically interviewed, but not all are recommended for a medical exam. The child may not be dealing with acute abuse, rather an incident that occurred years ago, which might not qualify the child for an exam. All services are provided at no cost to clients for as long as services are needed.



Domestic Violence Hotline Calls

Partnership began tracking their data differently in July 2022; therefore, 2022 data is not available.

DV hotline calls **increased 13%** this year.

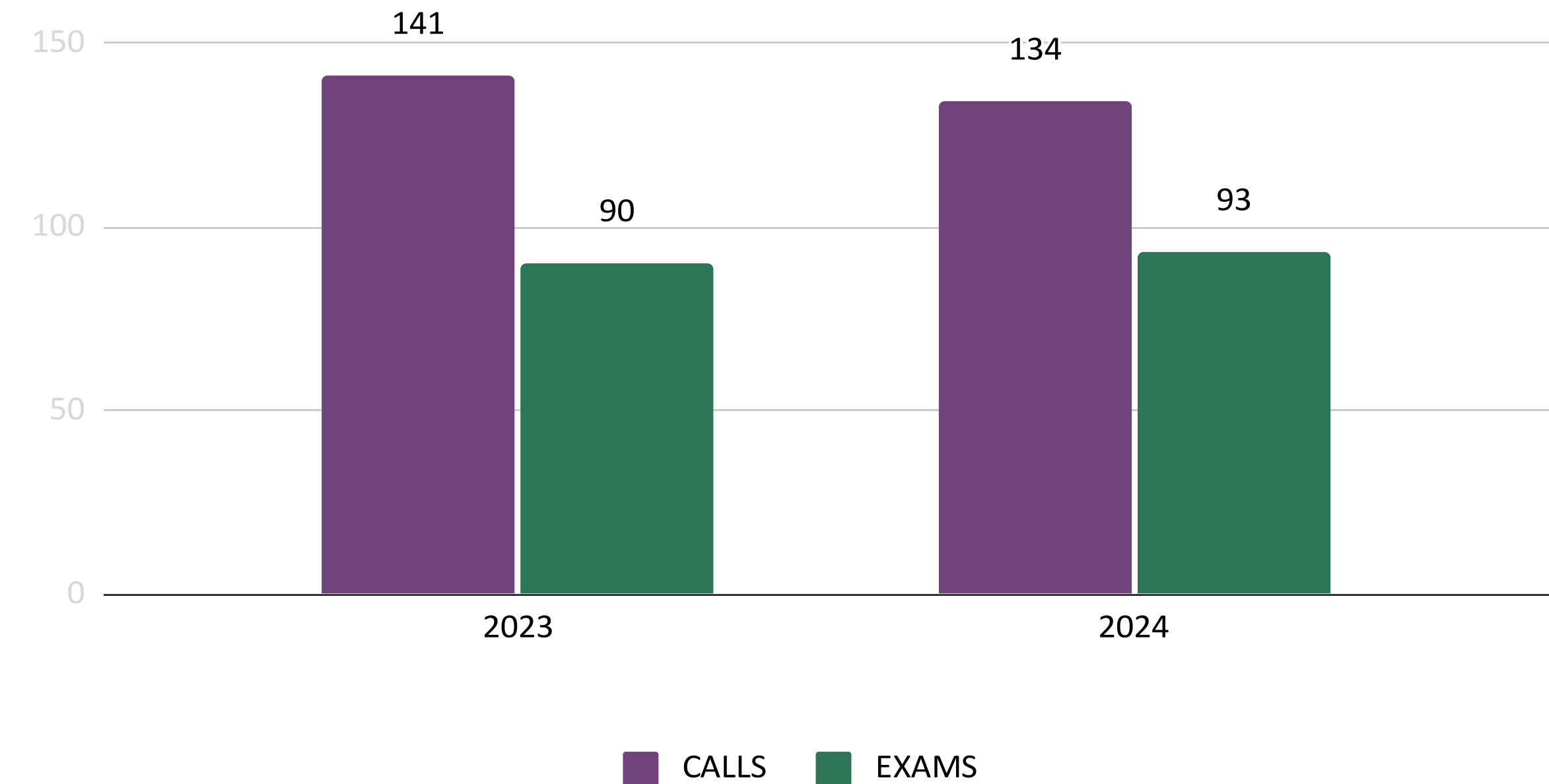


Sexual Assault Hotline Calls and Exams



Sexual assault exams are reflective of assaults that occurred in Hamilton County. Hotline calls for sexual assault and domestic violence came from Hamilton County residents (*see Appendix D for totals*).

Sexual assault hotline **calls decreased 5% from 2023**, while **exams saw a 3% increase**.



Sources and Appendices



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Sources

Crime in Hamilton County

- Population is a current estimate from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/hamiltoncountytennessee>. All populations are an estimation. Hamilton County population, less East Ridge (21,936), is 352,746.
- All crime data is provided by the respective Hamilton County municipal agency using their Records Management System. 2024 data is considered "operational" and subject to change as each agency finalizes their data.
- Violent Crimes: The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program defines violent crimes as those offenses that involve force or threat of force and is composed of four offenses: murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.
Source: <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2019/crime-in-the-u.s.-2019/topic-pages/violent-crime>
- Property Crimes: The FBI's Uniform Crime Report (UCR) Program includes the offenses of burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. The object of the theft-type offenses is the taking of money or property, but there is no force or threat of force against the victims. Source:
<https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2019/crime-in-the-u.s.-2019/topic-pages/property-crime#:~:text=Definition,of%20force%20against%20the%20victims>
- Part 1 Crime is defined by the National Uniform Crime Reporting Program and refers to serious crime that occur with regularity in all areas of the country and are likely to be reported to police. Part 1 violent crimes include homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Part 1 property crimes include burglary, theft, and auto theft.
Source: <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2019/crime-in-the-u.s.-2019/topic-pages/offense-definitions>
- East Ridge Police Department changed Records Management Systems in August 2022; therefore, 2022 data is not available and will not be included in crime counts, rates, and percent changes.
- Non-fatal shooting incident definition and information can be found here: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9187788/>

Substance Misuses and Overdoses

- Fatal overdose data provided by the Hamilton County Medical Examiner's Office and the Hamilton County Health Department's Epidemiologists. You can find the epidemiologists overdose surveillance reports here: <https://health.hamiltontn.org/en-us/communityhealth/overdoseprevention.aspx>
There may be additional suspected drug-related death data reported over this time period in subsequent reports as data is finalized.
- Drug-related deaths are those deaths that the Hamilton County Health Department receives from the Hamilton County Medical Examiner's Office with a cause of death listed as an acute overdose or a death resulting from chronic drug abuse.
- Acute overdose deaths are those deaths in which the Hamilton County Medical Examiner listed drugs (either an overdose or a toxicity) as a primary cause of death or contributing cause of death on the death certificate and in the medical examiner report. The Medical Examiner determines the cause of death and contributing cause of death following a thorough investigation, including (as appropriate): scene investigation, medical records review, external examination, autopsy, histology, and postmortem toxicology reports. Some deaths may have substances listed on the toxicology report in concentrations that are not high enough to result in or contribute to a death, and are therefore, not a cause of death; in these cases, these deaths do not count as an acute overdose death. Chronic drug abuse deaths are those deaths in which the cause of death is due to chronic substance abuse and the individuals did not overdose at the time of death.
- Jurisdiction: Currently, the Hamilton County Medical Examiner Office (which is also the Southeast Tennessee Regional Forensic Center) primarily handles deaths that occur within Hamilton County with occasional cases referred from adjoining counties. Those referred cases do not count in the Hamilton County statistics. Individuals who are injured or overdose in other counties, transported to a medical facility in Hamilton County and die in Hamilton County, will have their death certificate done by the Hamilton County Medical Examiner Office. Those cases are included in Hamilton County statistics. The converse also holds: an injury or overdose occurring in Hamilton County, with death in a different county or state, will be included in that jurisdiction's statistics, not Hamilton County.

Sources

Substance Misuses and Overdoses Cont.

Individuals who are injured or overdose in other counties, transported to a medical facility in Hamilton County and die in Hamilton County, will have their death certificate done by the Hamilton County Medical Examiner Office. Those cases are included in Hamilton County statistics. The converse also holds: an injury or overdose occurring in Hamilton County, with death in a different county or state, will be included in that jurisdiction's statistics, not Hamilton County.

- Non-fatal data: All non-fatal overdose-related emergency department visits from Hamilton County hospitals were included in this data, regardless of the patient's county of residence. Data was pulled from ESSENCE - NSSP using the CDC All Drug Overdose (version 2) query, which includes relevant ICD-10-CM codes, ICD-9-CM codes, SNOMED codes, and relevant terms in the chief complaint free text field.
There may be additional suspected nonfatal overdose-related emergency department visit data reported over this time period in subsequent reports as data is finalized.
- Hamilton County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Naloxone data provided by EsoSuite.
- Narcan is the brand name for Naloxone, the medication designed to reverse an opioid overdose. This means that it attaches to opioid receptors and reverses and blocks the effects of other opioids. Naloxone can quickly restore normal breathing to a person if their breathing has slowed or stopped because of an opioid overdose. But, Naloxone has no effect on someone who does not have opioids in their system, and it is not a treatment for opioid use disorder. Examples of opioids include heroin, fentanyl, oxycodone (OxyContin®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), codeine, and morphine." Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse; National Institutes of Health; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://nida.nih.gov/publications/drugfacts/naloxone>
- Prosecutor data came directly from the prosecutor's office.

Food and Nutrition Assistance

- All WIC data is provided by the Hamilton County Health Department and the TN Department of Health WIC Program.
- All Food Bank data is provided by the Chattanooga Area Food Bank.

Homelessness and Health

- Hamilton County's Homeless Health Care Center data provided by eClinicalWorks from the Hamilton County Health Department.
- Homelessness Housing Status Definitions
 - Homeless Shelter – Patients who are living in an organized shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness. Shelters that generally provide meals and a place to sleep are regarded as temporary and often limit the number of days or the hours of the day that a resident may stay at the shelter.
 - Transitional Housing – Transitional housing units are generally small units (six people is common) where people transition from a shelter and are provided extended, but temporary, housing stays (generally between 6 months and 2 years).
 - Doubled Up – Patients who are living with others. The arrangement is considered to be temporary and unstable, though a patient may live in a succession of such arrangements over a protracted period.
 - Street – Patients who are living outdoors, in a vehicle, in an encampment, in makeshift housing/shelter, or in other places generally not deemed safe or fit for human occupancy.
 - Permanent Supportive Housing – Permanent supportive housing usually is in service-rich environments, does not have time limits, and may be restricted to people with some type of disabling condition.
 - Other – Patients who were housed when first seen during the year and were no longer homeless, but who were still eligible for the program because they experienced homelessness during the previous 12 months.
 - Unknown – Patients known to be experiencing homeless whose housing arrangements are unknown.
- HUD's definitions and categories of homeless can be found here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coc-esg-virtual-binders/coc-esg-homeless-eligibility/four-categories/category-1/>

Victim Services

- Sexual assault exams are counted by the county in which the assault occurred, not necessarily where the victim lives.
- The following child maltreatment data counts children as 18 years old and younger.
- A child may disclose more than one type of violence but are categorized by the type of violence from their initial intake from the Department of Children's Services.

Appendix A1: Crime by Municipality

January 1 - September 30	UNINCORPORATED HAMILTON COUNTY Includes Lakesite and Walden Pop. 121,334				CHATTANOOGA Pop. 184,086				COLLEGEDALE Pop. 11,255			
CRIME	2022	2023	2024	% Change 2023 to 2024	2022	2023	2024	% Change 2023 to 2024	2022	2023	2024	% Change 2023 to 2024
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	153	166	197	18.67%	1,091	1,075	905	-15.81%	12	16	9	-43.75%
AUTO BURGLARY	174	129	106	-17.83%	2,292	1,688	1,454	-13.86%	31	21	26	23.81%
AUTO THEFT	101	87	54	-37.93%	1,025	886	992	11.96%	12	4	4	0.00%
BURGLARY	151	102	120	17.65%	847	744	577	-22.45%	26	20	21	5.00%
MURDER	2	2	0	-100.00%	20	23	23	0.00%	1	2	0	-100.00%
RAPE	30	10	9	-10.00%	96	98	104	6.12%	3	2	1	-50.00%
ROBBERY	6	7	7	0.00%	177	145	137	-5.52%	1	1	0	-100.00%
TOTALS:	617	503	493	-1.99%	5,548	4,659	4,192	-10.02%	86	66	61	-7.58%

Appendix A2: Crime by Municipality (Cont)

January 1 - September 30	EAST RIDGE Pop. 21,936				LOOKOUT MTN Pop. 2,070				RED BANK Pop. 11,959			
CRIME	2022	2023	2024	% Change 2023 to 2024	2022	2023	2024	% Change 2023 to 2024	2022	2023	2024	% Change 2023 to 2024
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	-	54	52	-3.70%	0	0	0	N/C	30	33	35	6.06%
AUTO BURGLARY	-	89	78	-12.36%	1	6	1	-83.33%	30	25	25	0.00%
AUTO THEFT	-	47	35	-25.53%	0	0	0	N/C	14	29	17	-41.38%
BURGLARY	-	45	34	-24.44%	1	1	0	-100.00%	28	16	12	-25.00%
MURDER	-	1	0	-100.00%	0	0	0	N/C	0	0	0	N/C
RAPE	-	10	17	70.00%	0	1	0	-100.00%	1	1	0	-100.00%
ROBBERY	-	5	4	-20.00%	0	0	0	N/C	3	1	1	0.00%
TOTALS:	-	251	220	-12.35%	2	8	1	-87.50%	106	105	90	-14.29%

Appendix A3: Crime by Municipality (Cont)

January 1 - September 30	SIGNAL MTN Pop. 8,883				SODDY DAISY Pop. 13,159			
CRIME	2022	2023	2024	% Change 2023 to 2024	2022	2023	2024	% Change 2023 to 2024
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	15	23	2	-91.30%	15	23	24	4.35%
AUTO BURGLARY	9	4	5	25.00%	30	23	15	-34.78%
AUTO THEFT	0	0	0	N/C	11	12	13	8.33%
BURGLARY	1	4	2	-50.00%	18	31	19	-38.71%
MURDER	0	0	0	N/C	1	0	1	N/C
RAPE	0	0	0	N/C	1	2	2	0.00%
ROBBERY	0	0	0	N/C	0	0	0	N/C
TOTALS:	25	31	9	-70.97%	76	91	74	-18.68%

Appendix B

Shooting Incidents and Victims by Municipality

Quarters 1 - 3: January 1 - September 30						
Hamilton County Non-Fatal Shootings	2023		2024		% Change Incidents	% Change Victims
	Incidents	Victims	Incidents	Victims		
COLLEGEDALE	0	0	0	0	N/C	N/C
CITY OF CHATTANOOGA	63	72	64	74	1.59%	2.78%
EAST RIDGE	3	3	2	2	-33.33%	-33.33%
HAMILTON COUNTY	3	4	3	3	0.00%	-25.00%
LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN	0	0	0	0	N/C	N/C
RED BANK	1	1	0	0	-100.00%	-100.00%
SODDY DAISY	1	1	1	1	0.00%	0.00%
SIGNAL MOUNTAIN	0	0	0	0	N/C	N/C
TOTAL	71	81	70	80	-1.41%	-1.23%

Appendix C

Naloxone Report

While there is no concrete answer as to why Naloxone distributions by EMS are down, medical professionals believe it could be attributed to Naloxone more readily available and laws enacted to force providers to prescribe Naloxone when prescribing opioid-based medications. Fatal overdoses have started to decrease, which may be a factor in these numbers as well.

Appendix C1 (Cont)

Substance Misuse & Overdose Resources

1. Hamilton County Coalition

The Hamilton County Coalition works to prevent overdose deaths, promote addiction recovery, and reduce underage drinking and tobacco use. They have a number of community partners who stand ready to connect individuals and families with resources, training, and recovery programs to combat the opioid epidemic.

2. Tennessee REDLINE

Tennessee REDLINE serves as a 24/7/365 referral service to addiction treatment that connects individuals and their families looking for help with substance use disorder.

Anyone can call or text 800-889-9789 for confidential referrals. The service is provided by the Tennessee Association for Alcohol, Drug, and other Addiction Services (TAADAS) through a contract with the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS).

3. SAMHSA

SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) offers a free, confidential, 24/7/365 treatment referral and information service in English and Spanish for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations. Anyone can call their national helpline at 1-800-662-4357.

4. 988 Lifeline

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline provides 24/7/365, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for individuals and their loved ones, and best practices for professionals in the United States.

5. Find Help Now

FindHelpNowTN.org features a near real-time treatment opening locator for substance misuse that guides individuals to available treatment opening based on factors such as the type of treatment needed, insurance programs and payment methods, gender identity, in-or-out-patient treatment options, and location. Facilities on the site are asked to update the availability of their residential, in-patient, and out-patient services regularly to ensure the most current information is available.

6. United Way Chattanooga

United Way of Greater Chattanooga unites individuals and families with resources allowing people to reach their full potential through education, stability, and health and well-being. Individuals with a 423 area code can call or text 211 for support during a crisis Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Appendix D

Partnership for Families, Children, and Adults

While there is no definitive answer as to why calls to the domestic violence hotline have risen, Partnership has done a better job of collecting data, particularly from the homeless population in Chattanooga. Additionally, they have focused on educating the community on resources available to victims through community events.

Total Calls and Exams: Q1 - Q3			
Jan - Sep	2023	2024	% Change
DV CALLS	712	808	13.48%
SA CALLS	141	134	-4.96%
SA EXAMS	90	93	3.33%