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## Press Release

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### **2015 Alaska Vital Statistics Annual Report Released**

The 2015 Alaska Vital Statistics Annual Report—the most recent year for which complete data are available—is now available to the public. The report summarizes Alaskan resident births, deaths, adoptions, as well as marriages and divorces that occurred in the state between 2006 and 2015. These figures provide key data for health planners, providers, researchers and others interested in Alaska public health.

In 2015, Alaskan mothers gave birth to 11,291 babies, resulting in a slightly increased fertility rate of 77 births per 1,000 women of childbearing age since 2006. In 2015, 5,478 marriages were performed and there were 1,590 divorces; both rates declining over the last decade. In total, 4,324 deaths occurred among Alaskan residents. The top 10 leading causes of death accounted for 73 percent of all deaths. They were, in ranked order:

1. Cancer
2. Heart Disease
3. Accidents and poisonings
4. Chronic lower respiratory diseases
5. Suicide
6. Stroke
7. Diabetes
8. Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis
9. Alzheimer's disease
10. Homicide

Age-adjusted rates of cancer and stroke have decreased over the past 10 years. Among factors that may be contributing to these declines are cancer screening and decreased use of tobacco products. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable deaths and is associated with several types of cancer and stroke.

The report also highlights some additional categories of death: drug-induced deaths, which includes drug overdoses, and firearm related deaths. Opioid overdoses accounted for 71 percent of drug-induced deaths in 2015. Also in 2015, 69 percent of all firearm deaths were suicides.

For more detailed information, the full report is available at [http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/VitalStats/Documents/PDFs/VitalStatistics\\_Annualreport\\_2015.pdf](http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/VitalStats/Documents/PDFs/VitalStatistics_Annualreport_2015.pdf)

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*The State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services promotes and protects the health and well-being of Alaskans. We help individuals and families create safe and healthy communities. For more information, visit <http://dhss.alaska.gov>.*