

# CENSUS OF FATAL OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES ILLINOIS 2021



Illinois Department of Public Health  
Division of Epidemiologic Studies

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ILLINOIS 2021**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Introduction.....4

Methods.....4

Fatal Work Injuries in Illinois, 2021.....5

Fatal Event or Exposure.....6

Industry.....7

Occupation.....7

Additional Highlights.....7

**INDEX OF TABLES**

Table 1. Fatal Occupational Injuries by Industry, Illinois, 2021.....4

Table 2. Fatal Occupational Injuries by Occupation, Illinois, 2021.....5

Table 3. Fatal Occupational Injuries by Selected Demographics, Illinois, 2021.....6

**INDEX OF FIGURES**

Chart 1. Number of Fatal Occupational Injuries by Employee Status, Illinois, 2021  
.....5

Chart2. Percent Distribution of Total Fatal Occupational Injuries by Event,  
United States and Illinois, 2021.....6

## INTRODUCTION

The Illinois Department of Public Health, Division of Epidemiologic Studies, has conducted the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) with partial support from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) since 1993. The purpose of Illinois CFOI is to monitor, verify, and record all instances of work-related fatalities. After identifying a possible work-related fatality, CFOI staff work to verify the decedent was working at the time of the injury and obtain all relevant information and demographics. This report represents data collected through the Illinois CFOI program for calendar year 2021.

## METHODS

The Illinois CFOI collects data from a variety of public and confidential source documents. These documents include, but are not limited to, coroner and medical examiner's reports, death certificates, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports, news media articles, and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) reports.

To assure that accurate information is collected, a minimum of two source documents are required for each fatality to be included in the census. CFOI staff match source documents with cases using the decedent's name, place of employment, data and approximate time of death, or any other combination of identifying elements that can help differentiate existing cases from new ones. Fatalities may result from accidental injuries, deliberate self-inflicted injuries, injuries deliberately inflicted on others, and exposure to harmful substances and environments.

For an injury-related fatality to be included in this report, the case must meet the following criteria: the injury must have occurred in Illinois, the death must have occurred during the calendar year 2021, and injury must be work-related according to the BLS guidelines. This means that the injury:

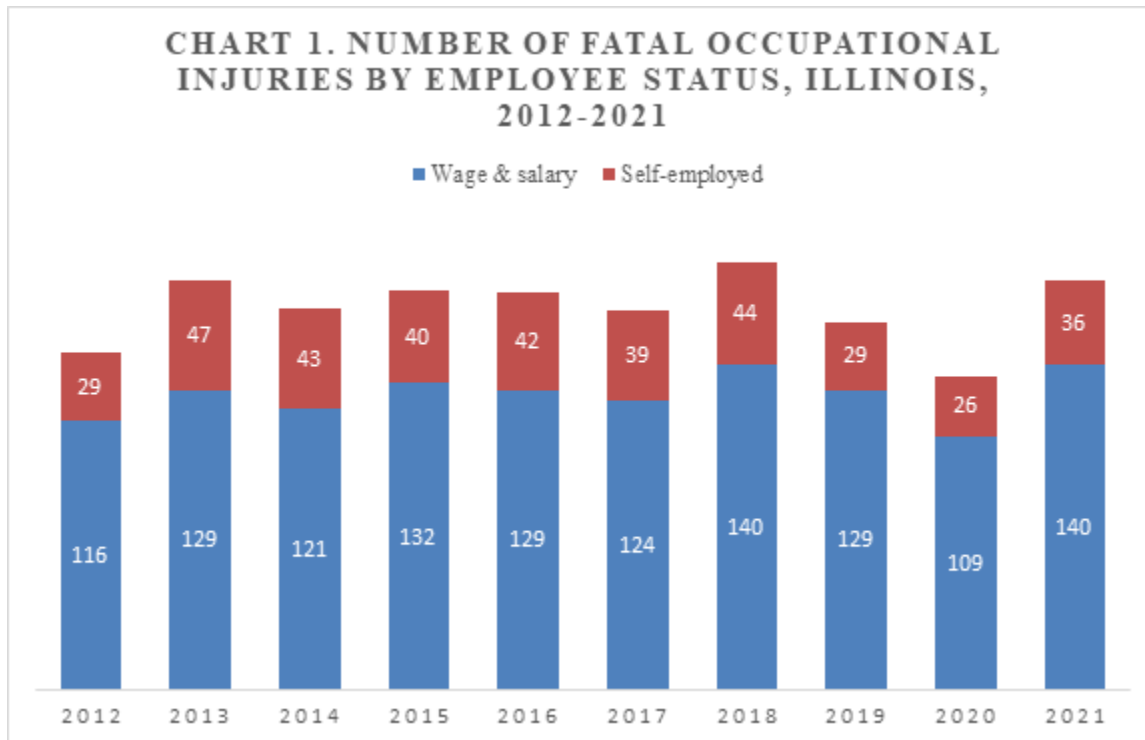
Occurred on the employer's premises while the person was there to work, or  
occurred elsewhere when the person was either there to do work, or  
was related to the person's work or employee status.

“Work” is defined by BLS guidelines as “duties, activities, or tasks that produce a product or result; that are done in exchange for money, goods, services, profit or benefit; and are legal activities in the United States.” If a fatality does not meet BLS' criteria, the case is marked out-of-scope and does not appear in the national aggregate data nor this report.

## FATAL WORK INJURIES IN ILLINOIS

There were 176 fatal work injuries in Illinois in 2021. Fatal occupational injuries in the state have ranged from a high of 262 in 1996 to a low of 135 in 2020.

Nationwide, a total of 5,190 fatal work injuries were recorded in 2021, a 9% increase from 4,764 in 2020, according to the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries.



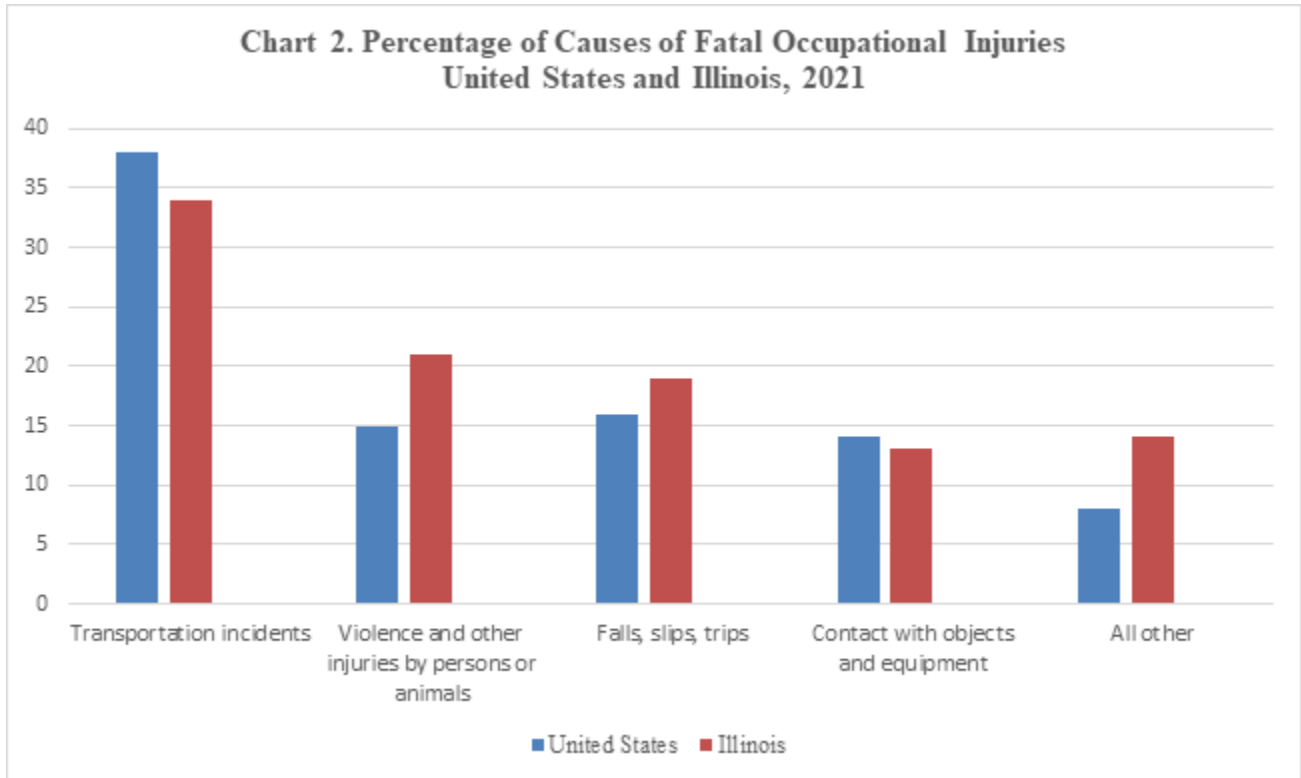
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021.

### Causes of Fatal Injuries

In Illinois, transportation incidents resulted in 59 fatal work injuries and accounted for 34% of all fatal workplace injuries in the state (See Table 1 and Chart 2). Worker deaths from transportation incidents were up from 55 last year.

Violence, including injuries by persons or animals, was the second most frequent cause of fatal work injuries with 37 fatalities, up from 22 in the prior year. Falls, slips, or trips resulted in 33 work-related fatalities, up from 24 the prior year. Contact with objects or equipment resulted in 23 work-related deaths compared to 17 in 2020.

As in Illinois, nationally, transportation incidents were the most frequent cause of fatal injuries in 2021, accounting for 38% of fatal work injuries. Falls, slips, and trips were the second-most common fatal event (16%), followed by both exposure to harmful substances or environments and violence and other injuries by persons or animal (15% each), and contact with objects or equipment (14%). Chart 2 compares U.S. and Illinois.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2021

### ***Sociodemographic Factors***

Men accounted for 89% of the work-related fatalities in Illinois while making up 49.8% of the state population, compared to the 91% national share for men (Table 2). Transportation incidents made up 34% of the fatalities for men in Illinois, whereas violence and other injuries by persons or animals was the leading cause of death for women with 37% of the total.

In Illinois, white non-Hispanics accounted for 61% of those who died from a workplace injury (and are 61.4% of the Illinois population); this is very similar to the 60% seen nationwide. The percentage of black or African Americans killed by work-related injuries was 19.9% (while making up 14.1% of the Illinois population), compared to the 12.6% nationally. The percentage of Asians killed by work-related injuries in Illinois was 3.4% (5.9% of the Illinois population) and 2.2% nationally.

Workers 55 years of age and older accounted for 41% of the state's work-related fatalities in 2021, compared to 35% of on-the-job fatalities nationally. Those in the 25-34 and 45-54 age ranges each suffered 17.6% of the fatalities. While it is possible for teenage workers and younger

to appear in the census, there were no fatal cases of persons younger than 20 during 2021 in Illinois.

Of the 176 fatal work injuries in Illinois, 80% worked for wages and salaries; the remainder were self-employed. The most frequent fatal event for wage and salary workers and self-employed workers was transportation incidents.

**Table 1. Fatal Occupational Injuries by Selected Demographic Characteristics  
Illinois, 2021**

<b>Worker characteristics</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Percent of Illinoisans Population</b>	<b>Percent of U.S. Population</b>
Total	176	100		
<b>Employee status</b>				
Wage and salary <sup>1</sup>	140	80		
Self-employed <sup>2</sup>	36	20		
<b>Gender</b>				
Men	157	89	49.8	49.48
Women	19	11	50.2	50.52
<b>Age</b>				
20 to 24 years	14	8		
25 to 34 years	31	18		
35 to 44 years	27	15		
45 to 54 years	31	18		
55 to 64 years	42	24		
65 years and over	31	18		
<b>Race and ethnic origin</b>				
White, non-Hispanic	108	61	61.4	57.8
Black or African American, non-Hispanic	35	20	14.1	12.1
Hispanic or Latino	27	15	18.0	18.7
Asian, non-Hispanic	4	2	5.9	5.7

<sup>1</sup>May include volunteers and workers receiving other types of compensation. Fatalities where employment status is unknown are included in the counts of wage and salary workers.

<sup>2</sup>Includes self-employed workers, owners of unincorporated businesses and farms, paid and unpaid family workers, and may include some owners of incorporated businesses or members of partnerships.

### **Types of Industry Where Fatal Occupational Injuries Occurred**

The private transportation and warehousing industry sector had the highest number of fatalities in Illinois with 41 or 23% of the total, up from 27 the previous year. Nationally, this industry accounts for 18.9% of the fatalities. Transportation incidents resulted in 18 of the 41 state

fatalities in the industry. (Table 2). The truck transportation subsector accounted for 25 of the 41 state fatal work injuries in the transportation and warehousing industry.

**Table 2. Fatal Occupational Injuries by Industry, Illinois, 2021**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100</b>
Private industry <sup>1</sup>	154	88
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	14	8
Crop production	13	7
Animal production and aquaculture	1	1
Construction	19	11
Manufacturing	19	11
Service industry <sup>2</sup>		
Trade, transportation, and utilities	60	34
Wholesale trade	11	6
Retail trade	8	5
Transportation and warehousing	41	23
Truck transportation	25	14
Taxi and limousine service	3	2
Support activities for transportation	4	2
Couriers and messengers	1	1
Warehousing and storage	8	5
General warehousing and storage	8	5
Information – e.g., internet services, publishers, telecom	4	2
Financial services	5	3
Real estate rental and leasing	4	2
Professional and business services	14	8
Administrative and support services	11	6
Health care and social assistance	3	2
Leisure and hospitality	5	3
Accommodation and food services	5	3
Other services, except public administration	8	5
Repair and maintenance	5	3
Government <sup>3</sup>	22	13
Federal government	3	2
State government	4	2
Local government	15	9



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021

<sup>1</sup>Fatalities where ownership is unknown are included in private industry counts.

<sup>2</sup>Fatalities where the industry is unknown are included in the service sector counts.

<sup>3</sup>Includes fatal injuries to workers employed by government organizations regardless of area of employment.

### ***Types of Occupation with Fatal Injuries***

The state's transportation and material moving occupational group had the highest number of fatal workplace injuries with 64. (See table 3). Motor vehicle operators accounted for 42 of the 64 fatalities among transportation and material moving workers.

The protective service occupational group had the second-highest number of fatal workplace injuries with 20; followed by management occupations (17); construction and extraction occupations (16); and installation, maintenance, and repair occupations (14). Security guards suffered six of the work-related deaths within the protective service group.

**Table 3. Fatal Occupational Injuries by Occupation, Illinois, 2021**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100</b>
Management occupations	17	10
Farmers, ranchers, and other agriculture managers	10	6
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations	1	1
Protective service occupations	20	11
Security guards	6	3
Food preparation and serving related occupations	3	2
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	10	6
Barbers	2	1
Sales and related occupations	9	5
Office and administrative support occupations	4	2
Construction and extraction occupations	16	9
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	14	8
Electrical and electronic equipment mechanics, installers and repairers	4	2
Vehicle and mobile equipment mechanics, installers, repairers	6	3
Production occupations	8	5
Metal workers and plastic workers	4	2
Transportation and material moving occupations	64	36
Motor vehicle operators	42	24
Driver/sales workers and truck drivers	3	2
Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers	30	17
Light truck drivers	5	3
Passenger vehicle drivers	4	2
Taxi drivers	3	2

Material moving workers	19	11
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