

Oakland County Medical  
Examiner's Office  
Pontiac, Michigan



Annual Report  
2016

## 2016 Oakland County Medical Examiner Annual Report

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To the Oakland County Board of Commissioners and to the citizens of Oakland County:

In accordance with Public Act 181 of 1953 commonly referred to as the Medical Examiners Act, the Oakland County Medical Examiner's Office is charged with determining the cause and manner of death in any violent, sudden, unexpected, suspicious or otherwise unexplained death, inclusive of all jail deaths and deaths in police custody occurring in Oakland County.

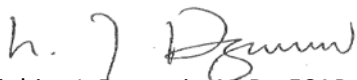
This report includes statistical data from the Oakland County Medical Examiner's Office for 2016 and the previous 3 years. The total number of cases as well as the number of autopsies increased for 2016. Oakland County experienced slight increases in the number of natural, accidental, and homicide deaths while seeing a significant decrease in the number of suicides. There were significantly more deaths in the "undeterminable" category, most of which were related to drug cases. The manner of death is deemed "undeterminable" when there is no information about the circumstances surrounding the death in question. The cause of death in most of these cases was drug abuse; however, the pathologist is unable to determine how death came upon the person. Deaths related to opiate addiction continue to plague not only Oakland County but Medical Examiners Offices around the country.

The Oakland County Medical Examiner's Office hosts several multi-jurisdictional meetings to discuss specific types of cases where deaths may have been preventable. A prime example is the child death review meeting held monthly. Any death involving a child under the age of 18 is reviewed by the forensic pathologists, prosecutor's office, law enforcement, protective services, forensic psychiatrists, area pediatricians, State Department of Public Health, a Consumer Product Safety Commission representative and any other appropriate specialty depending on the circumstances unique to that case. Similar teams review drug related deaths as well as any deaths resulting from domestic violence.

The Medical Examiner's Office continues to partner with educational as well as government organizations for instruction and training. Presentations on cause and manner of death and tours are conducted for: basic police academies, advanced police crime scene training, detective schools, auxiliary and reserve police academies, several community citizen police academies and more. Along with hosting dozens of medical students in 2016 the Medical Examiner's Office began a partnership with Wayne State University and the DMC. Each year several pathology residents will spend about a month here in the final stages of their training before testing to become board-certified pathologists.

I hope you find this report informative. It is my pleasure to present to you the 2016 Annual Report for the Oakland County Medical Examiner's Office.

Respectfully submitted,



Ljubisa J. Dragovic, M.D., FCAP, FAFS, FNAME  
Chief Forensic Pathologist/Medical Examiner

“Show me the manner in  
which a nation or a  
community cares for its  
dead and I will measure  
with mathematical  
exactness the tender  
mercies of its people, their  
respect for the laws of the  
land and their loyalty to  
high ideals”

**Gladstone**

## Medical Examiner Staff

### Forensic Pathologists

Ljubisa J. Dragovic, M.D.  
Chief Forensic Pathologist/Medical Examiner

Kanubhai Virani, M.D.  
Deputy Chief Forensic Pathologist

Ruben Ortiz-Reyes, M.D.  
Deputy Forensic Pathologist

Bernardino Pacris, M.D.  
Deputy Forensic Pathologist

### Toxicology

Li Wang, PhD.  
Diana Schell

### Autopsy Attendants

Christina Grammatico, Supervisor  
Danielle Jamieson  
April Leder  
Jennifer Guthrie  
Melissa Ohlrich

### Administrative

Thomas Hardesty, Administrator  
Corrine Runyan, ME Office Supervisor  
Dana Campbell, ME Office Assistant  
Joyce Alexander, ME Office Assistant  
Debbie Hall, ME Office Assistant  
Laura Alegre, ME Office Assistant

### Investigators

William Presley, Chief Investigator  
Marlene Rodgers  
Ralph Openshaw  
Dennis Jelley  
Arthur McNamara  
Raymond Jankowski  
Keith Batchelor  
James Martinez  
Mark Giroux

### Histology

Karen Goldsworthy-Darnell  
Georgine Whitman

The Oakland County Medical Examiner's Office serves nearly 1.3 million county residents by providing 24/7 services. Staffing is adjusted to handle most business, Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Autopsies are conducted 7 days a week and reports of death are taken 24/7.

All cremations occurring within Oakland County are approved by the Medical Examiner. Requests for cremation permits increased significantly (23%) from 2011 to 2014 but the number has stabilized since then with a slight increase for 2016.

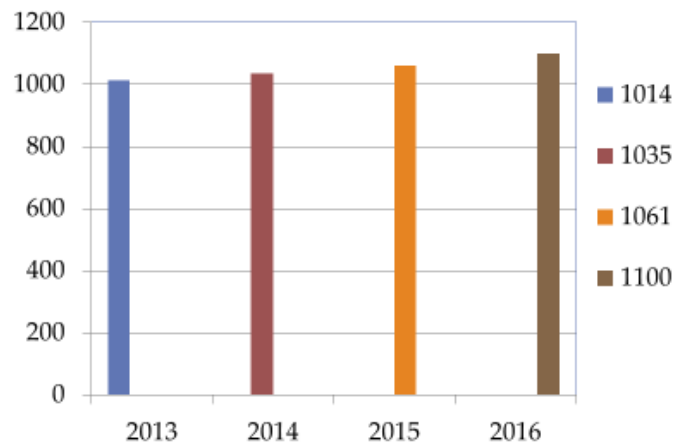
Autopsies are conducted to determine cause and manner of death for reported deaths occurring within Oakland County that meet the medical examiner case reporting criteria. This includes a complete internal and external examination, investigation, cytopathology and toxicological analysis when necessary. The final work product is the autopsy report.

Report turnaround time is case dependent. Normal turn around time can vary from 30 days to months depending on the specific merits and complexities of each case.

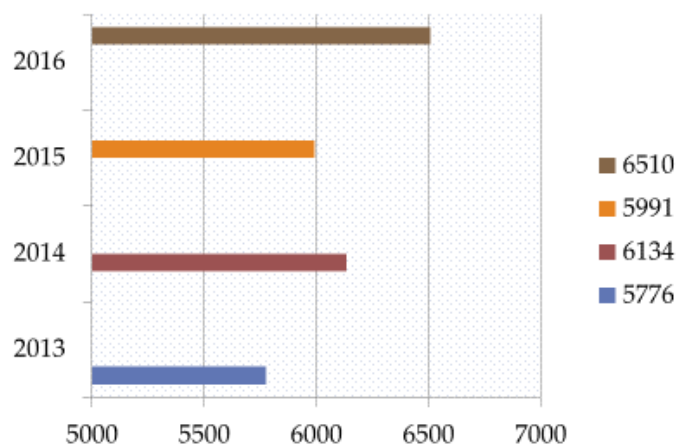
There is no charge for one copy of the autopsy report to the immediate Next of Kin. Autopsy reports are public record and requests to obtain copies of autopsy reports by parties who are not the immediate next of kin, are handled by Freedom of Information Act guidelines.

## Performance Measures

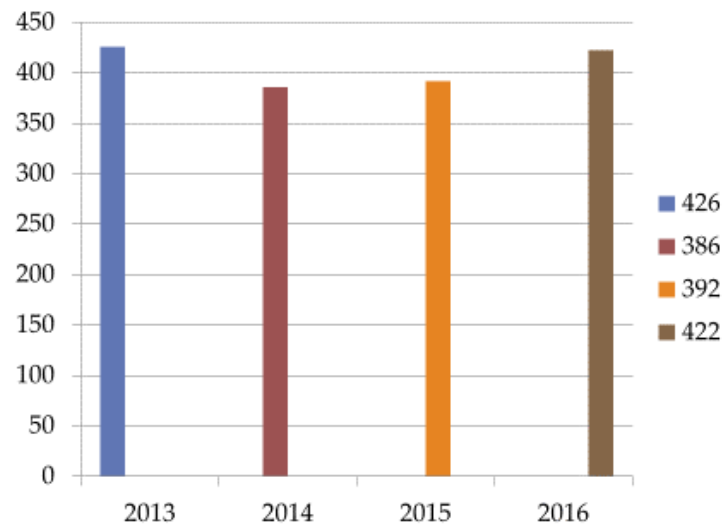
	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Total Cases</b>	6280	6,134	7093	7445
<b>Cases Reported &amp; Released</b>	5266	5802	5351	5615
<b>Inspections</b>	136	145	131	144
<b>Autopsies</b>	878	890	930	956



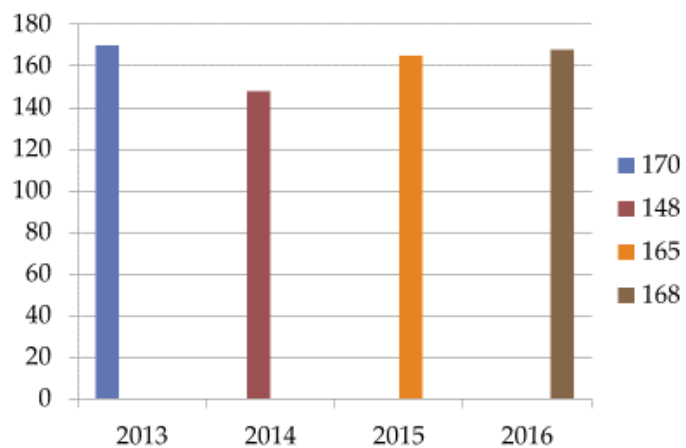
## Autopsies and Inspections



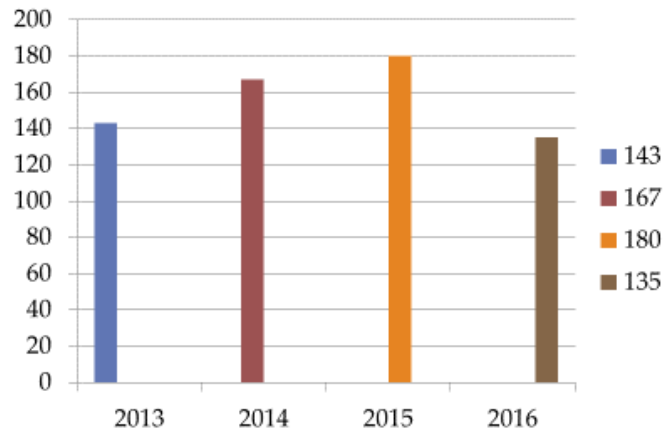
## Cremations



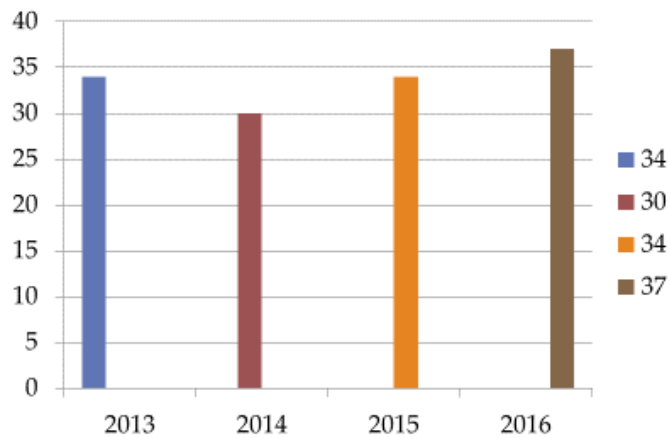
Natural Deaths



Accident

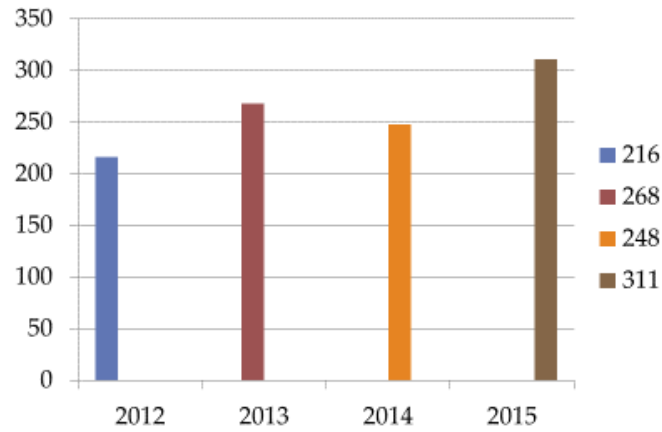


**Suicide**

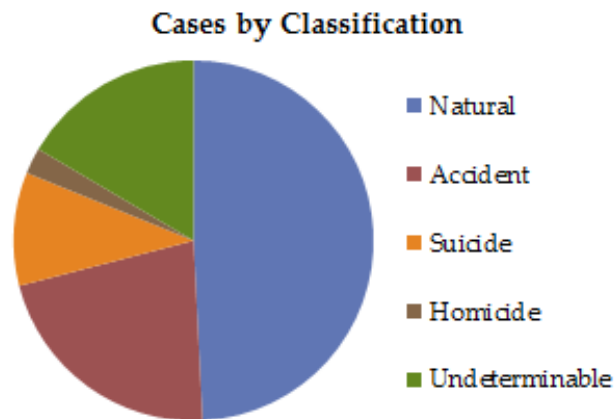


**Homicide**

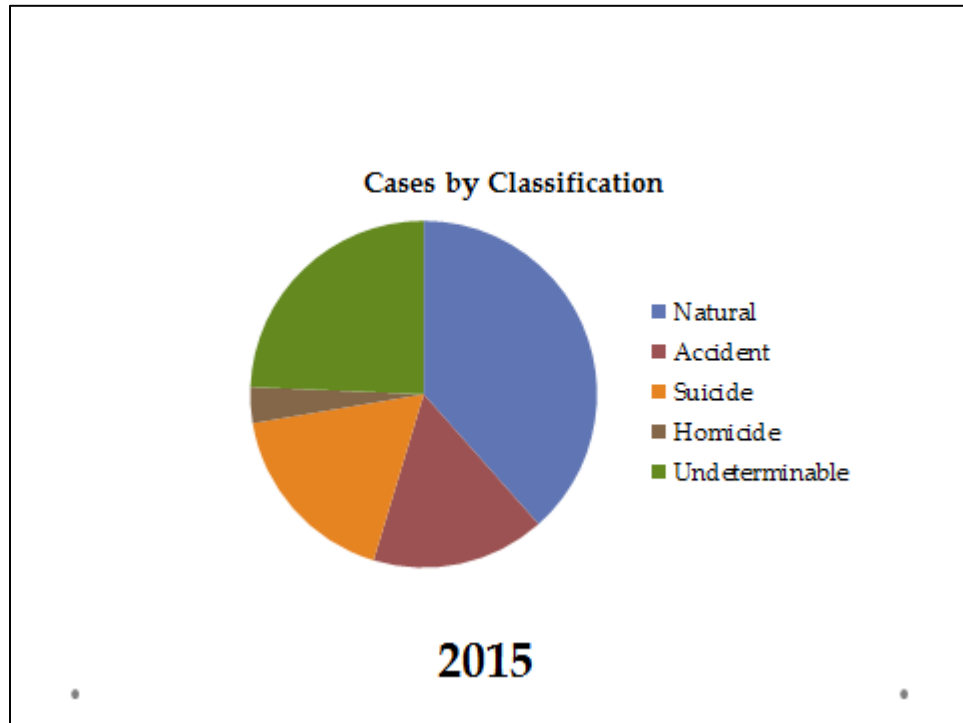
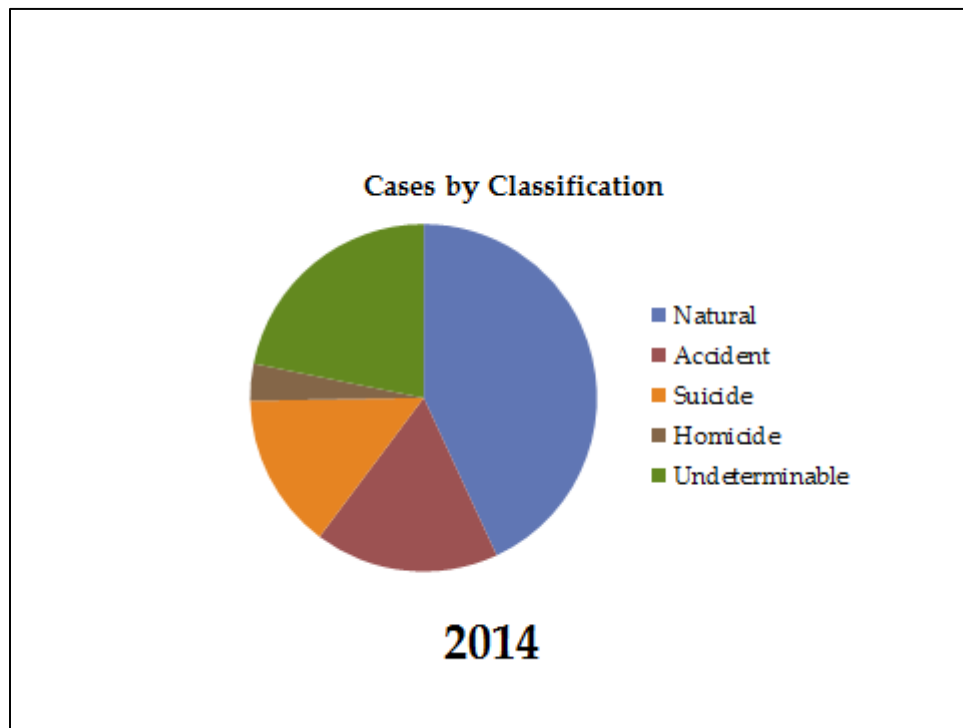


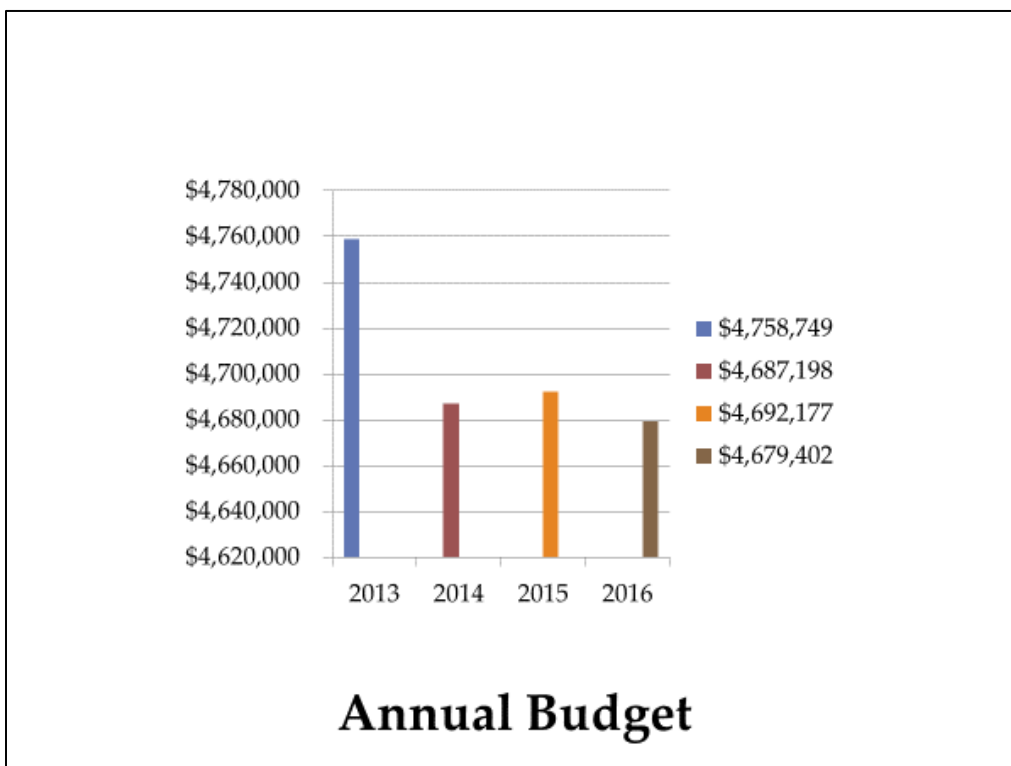
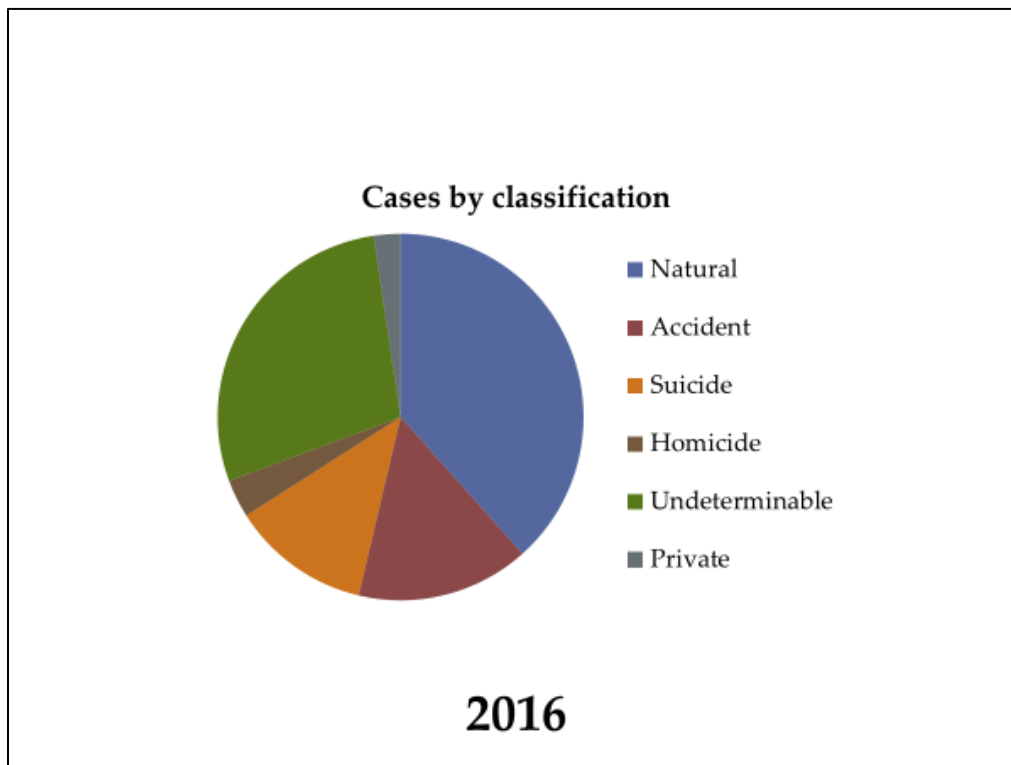


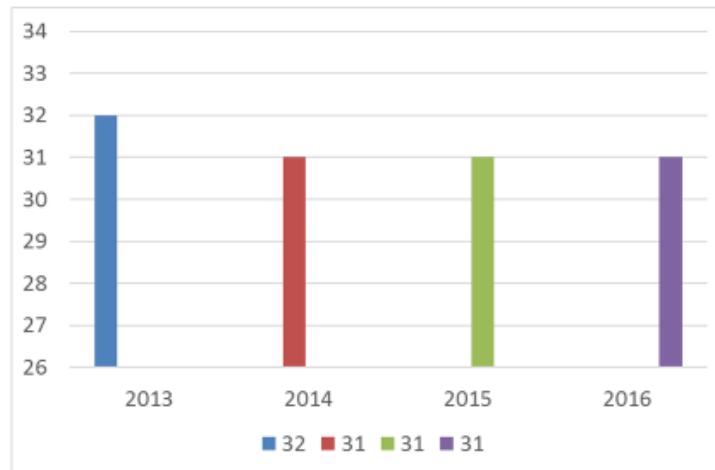
## Undeterminable



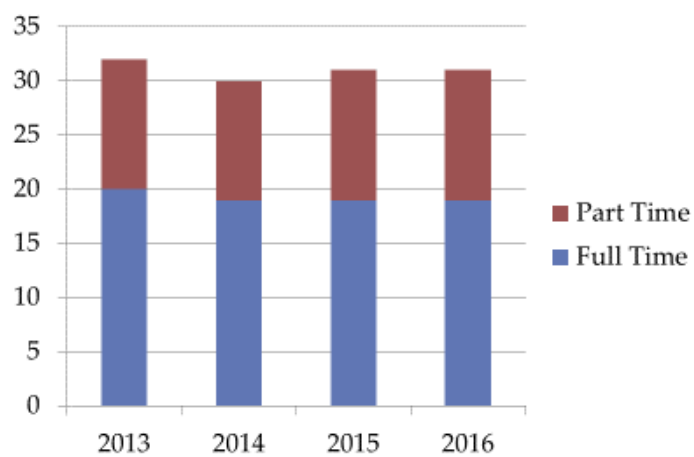
## 2013







**Total Personnel**



**Positions**