



# ALABAMA

## 2021 DRUG THREAT ASSESSMENT



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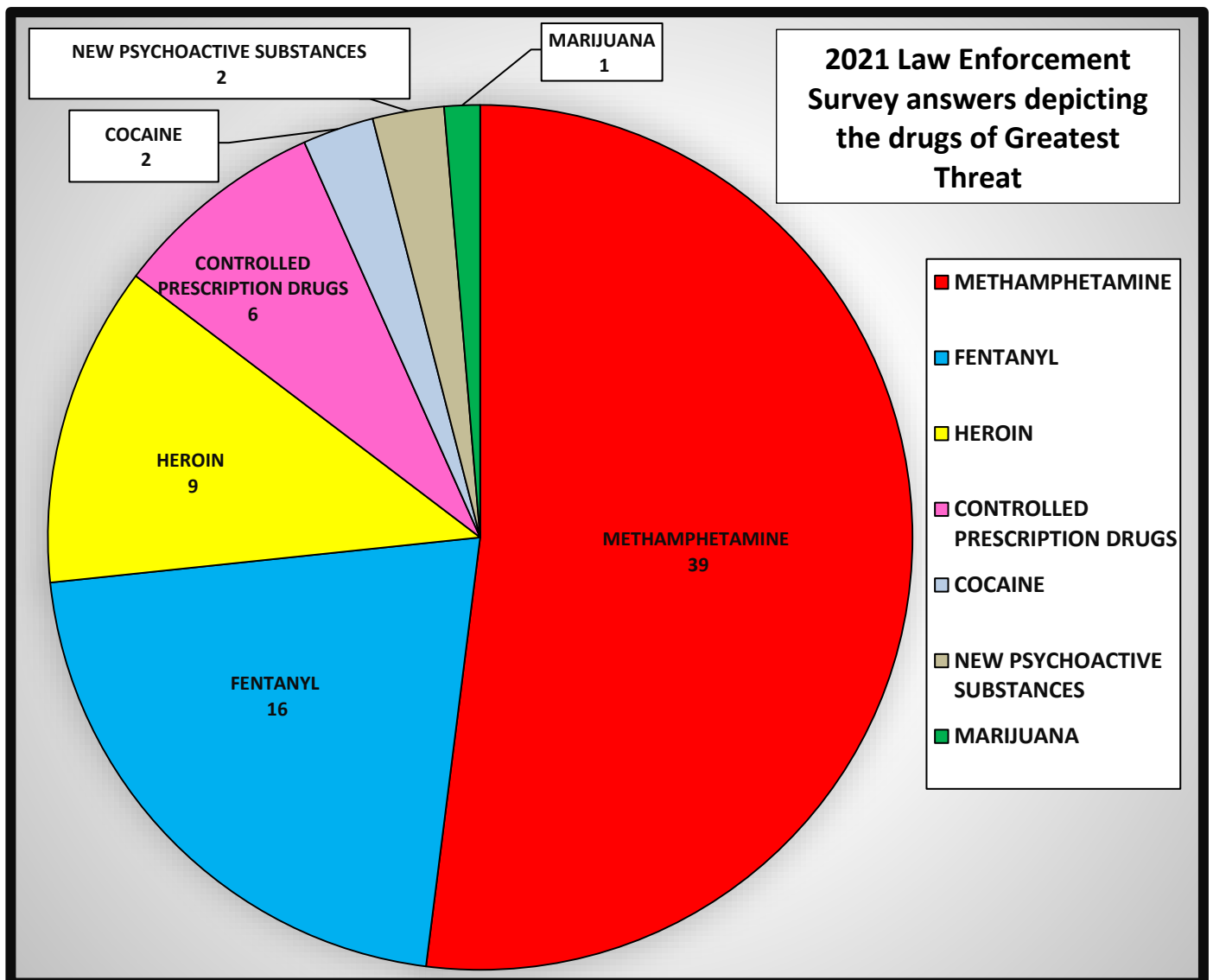
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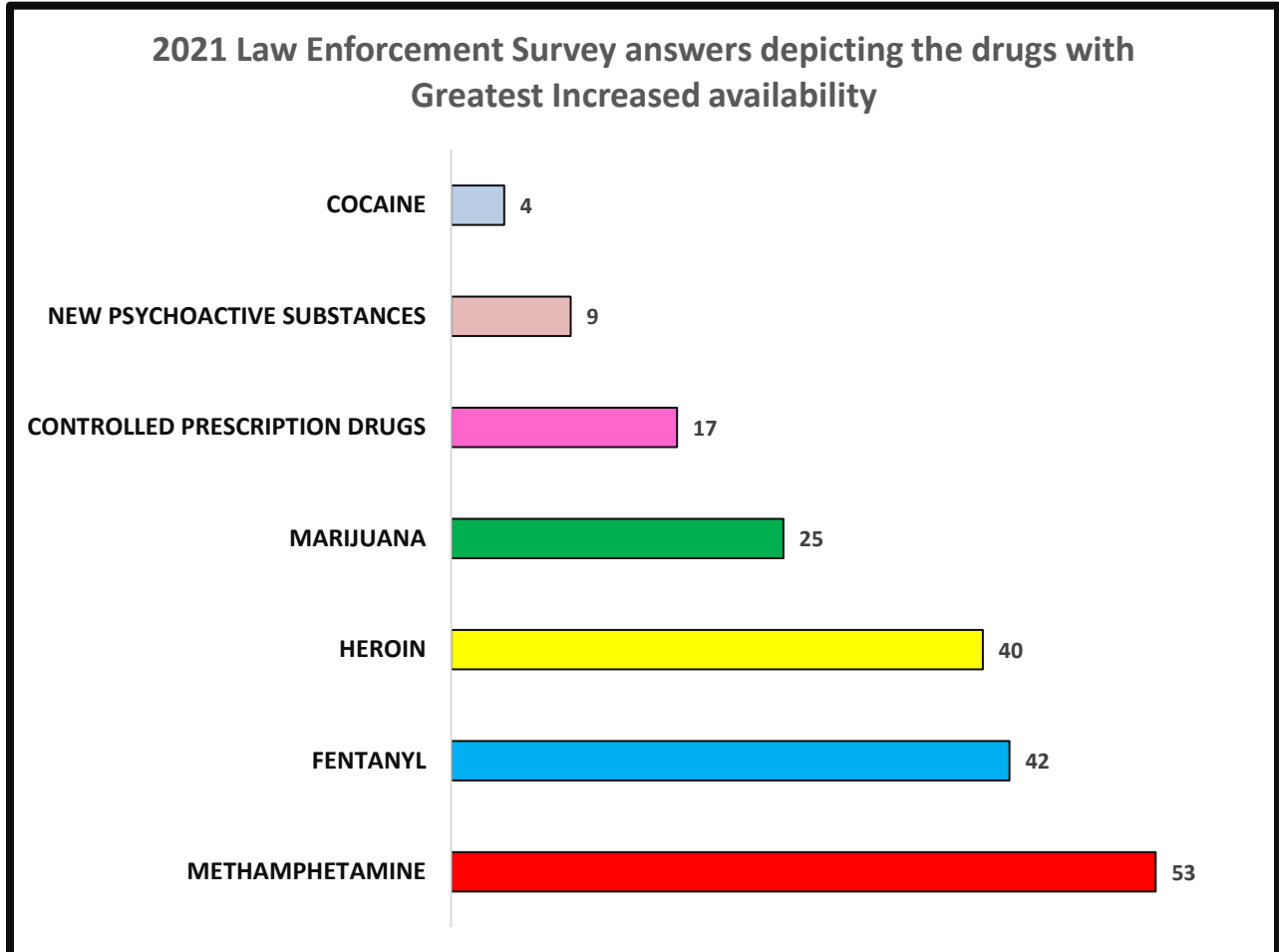
## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The State of Alabama is in a convenient location for illegal drugs that could be transported via highway, waterway, railway or airline. Interstate I-20, I-65 and I-85 which run through Alabama provides a close direct connection to Atlanta, which is still considered one of the main distribution points for illegal drugs in the Southeast. Interstate I-10 which runs across the bottom portion of Alabama provides another direct connection to illegal drugs via the State of Texas and the Mexican border. The Port of Mobile which moves around 54 million tons of cargo per year (vessel and railcar) is considered one of the largest in the nation, which makes it a very real option for illegal drugs entering especially with only a small percentage of the cargo being inspected. And lastly with over 300 airports (public, private) located in Alabama this final option becomes very possible for illegal drug trade as well.

Every year this assessment is written to inform law enforcement agencies of current and potential illicit drug concerns that exist in Alabama and to assist in the planning of enforcement strategies and effective utilization of available resources for future operations. The diagram below depicts the Greatest Drug Threat as documented by results from the 2021 GC HIDTA law enforcement survey respondents. The law enforcement agencies across Alabama once again depicted methamphetamine as their greatest drug threat for 2019. (A map showing responses per agency/location is listed in the appendix). This year instead of heroin being the number two drug the new number two drug according to law enforcement is fentanyl. Methamphetamine, fentanyl and heroin are continuing to show increases in abuse. Controlled prescription drugs are greatly on the rise with not only law enforcement but with treatment facilities as well.

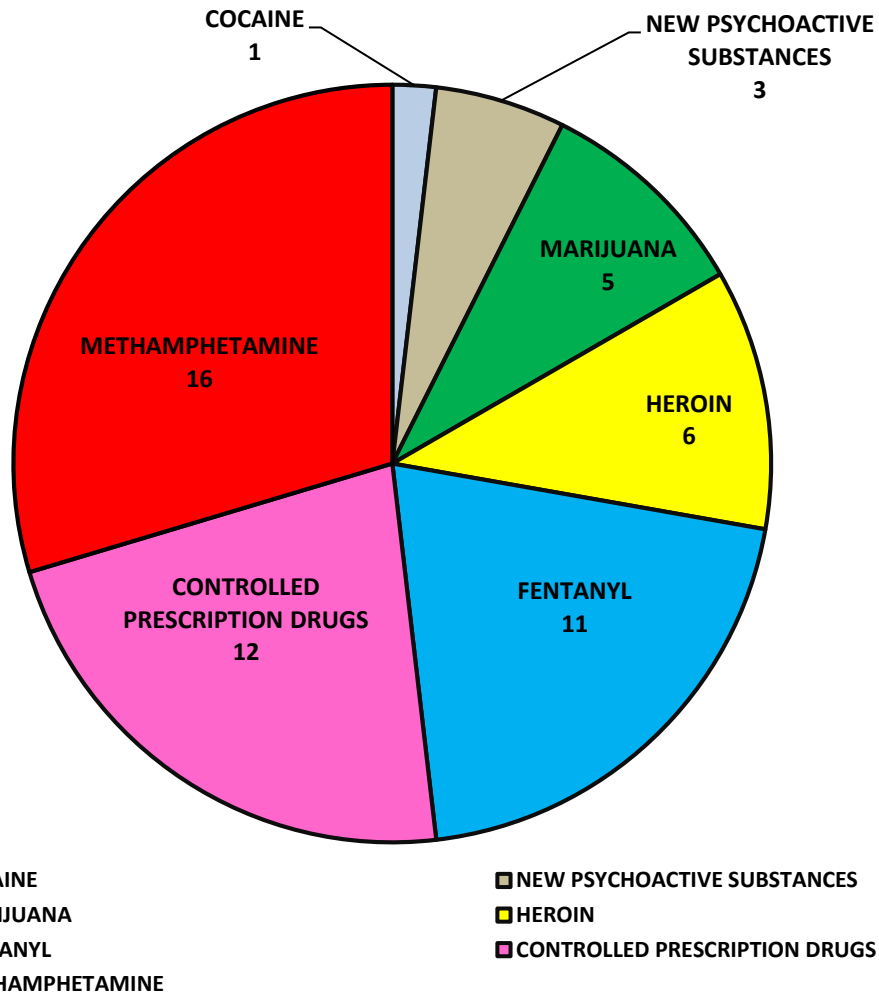


Law Enforcement respondents on the Survey listed the following as what they consider to be the drugs increasing as most available in their part of the State. This ranking is based on each drug and using only the increased category per drug and per law enforcement respondent. There were 75 respondents for each drug ranking.



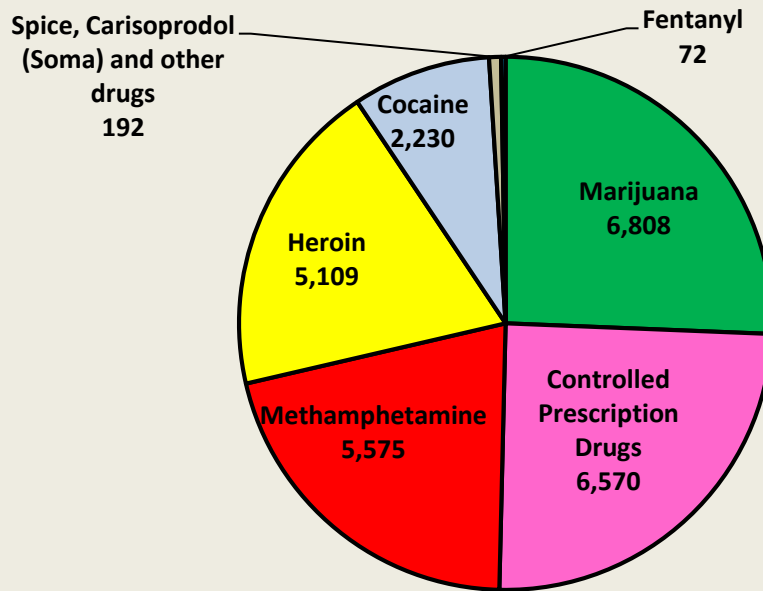
According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Treatment Survey, methamphetamine is still in the lead as being the drug with the greatest threat in Alabama. Controlled prescription drugs is next, followed by fentanyl and other opioids, heroin, marijuana, new psychoactive drugs, and cocaine. (See Chart below). This survey had 54 participants that responded to the Greatest Drug Threat in their area of the State.

**2021 Treatment Center Survey answers depicting the drugs of Greatest Threat**



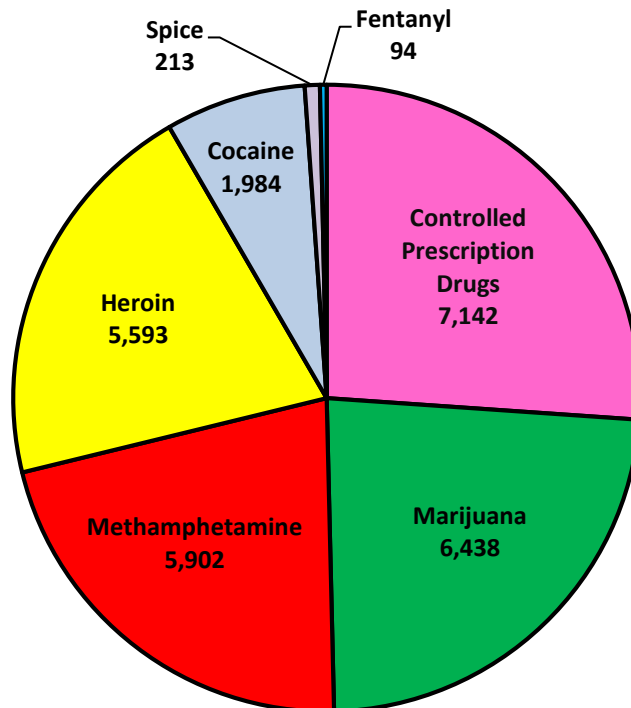
This year when tabulating the treatment admissions a more thorough category for Pharmaceuticals (Main Diverted) has been added. The specific drugs in this category can be found on Pages 30 in the chart for Mental Health admissions of pharmaceuticals. According to the Alabama Department of Mental Health, treatment admissions for 2018 did have marijuana as the highest drug, however, in 2019 controlled prescription drugs have outpaced marijuana to become the new number one drug in these drug categories for admissions. All of the drugs compared in the below charts from the admissions data for 2019 have increased since 2018 except for marijuana and cocaine. Pharmaceuticals admissions as well as Heroin treatment admissions and have shown the greatest increase as shown in the charts below. In the pharmaceutical admissions for 2019 there was an 8.71 percent increase from 2018 (6,570) to 2019 (7,142). In heroin admissions for 2019 there was a 9.47 percent increase from 2018 (5,109) to 2019 (5,593). The following diagrams depict the treatment admissions for 2018 and 2019.

## 2018 Mental Health Admissions



- Marijuana/Hashish
- Methamphetamine/Speed
- Heroin/Morphine
- Crack / Cocaine
- Fentanyl
- Controlled Prescription Drugs
- Spice, Carisoprodol (Soma), and other drugs

## 2019 Mental Health Admissions



- Controlled Prescription Drugs
- Marijuana/Hashish
- Methamphetamine/Speed
- Heroin/Morphine
- Cocaine
- Spice, Carisoprodol (Soma), etc.
- Fentanyl

- Methamphetamine**

Methamphetamine is still maintaining the position of greatest drug threat in the state according to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey according to law enforcement respondents as well as the treatment center respondents. Thirty-eight law enforcement respondents across Alabama listed methamphetamine as their greatest drug threat. The GC HIDTA Treatment Survey had 25 respondents put methamphetamine as their greatest threat. Methamphetamine laboratory seizures in Alabama have greatly declined according to the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) for 2019. This decrease in labs further points to methamphetamine increasingly being transported into the State rather than being locally produced.
- Fentanyl and other Opioids**

Fentanyl and the fentanyl derivatives continue to climb in ranking when it comes to the greatest drug threat. For the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, respondents ranked fentanyl behind methamphetamine as the drug of greatest threat. This year there have been increases in overdose deaths from fentanyl statewide. From fentanyl alone the death toll statewide went from 171 in 2018 to 242 in 2019. This increase is disturbing, and law enforcement must always use extreme care when confronting these opioids since they can be very dangerous.
- Heroin**

Respondents to the law enforcement part of the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey have listed heroin as the third greatest drug threat in Alabama. The treatment centers on the GC HIDTA Survey listed heroin as their number four drug of threat. The Alabama Department of Mental Health has ranked heroin as the fourth most abused illegal drug based on treatment admissions. Although heroin has dropped to the number three drug of greatest threat from number two last year, law enforcement respondents still responded to the GC HIDTA Survey with a 51% increase in demand in their jurisdiction.
- Controlled Prescription Drugs**

Hydrocodone (Lortab and Vicodin) and Oxycodone (Oxycontin, Roxycotin) continue to be the most abused pharmaceutical drugs in Alabama as reported by the Alabama Department of Mental Health. Alprazolam (Xanax) and hydromorphone (Dilaudid) are also heavily abused. Pharmaceutical diversion remains the primary method of obtaining pharmaceuticals; however, pharmaceuticals transported into the state by vehicle or postal packaging also exists. According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey respondents, 55% of law enforcement listed pharmaceuticals as highly available in their areas.
- Cocaine**

Cocaine has been up and down for several years as far as greatest drug threat is concerned. This year cocaine has dropped to the fifth greatest drug threat according to law enforcement respondents and dropped to number seventh greatest drug threat according to the treatment center respondents on the GC HIDTA Survey of 2021. Cocaine abuse according to the Alabama Department of Mental Health statistics show admissions as being below heroin for 2019. Black American DTOs continue to be the main transporters of cocaine into the Alabama.
- Other Dangerous Drugs**

The Alabama Department of Mental Health, as well as the Department of Forensic Sciences list gamma hydroxybutyric (GHB) and lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) as drugs that are not seen much in their capacity. The number one drugs in this category which are being seen more and more are the synthetic cannabinoids. The Department of Forensic Sciences is seeing more and more of the synthetic drug XLR-11 which has seen a huge intake in 2019 from 2018. The Alabama Department of Mental Health continues to see increases in admissions for spice, carisoprodol (Soma), and other drugs which increased from 192 individuals seeking treatment in 2018 to 213 individuals seeking treatment in 2019

- **Marijuana**

Marijuana is no longer the most abused or most available drug in Alabama. The Alabama Department of Mental Health lists marijuana as the number two illegal drug based on treatment admissions. This is the first time marijuana has dropped behind another drug in treatment admissions since the GC HIDTA has been tracking. Admissions into the mental health facilities for marijuana abuse went from 6,808 in 2018, to 6,438 in 2019. Marijuana has also dropped as being the most available drug in Alabama, it fell slightly behind methamphetamine for 2019. The Marijuana Eradication Program eradicated a total of 15,330 plants both indoor and outdoor. Law enforcement respondents to the GC HIDTA survey indicated the primary wholesale and retail distributors of marijuana are black American DTOs.

- **Money Laundering**

Law enforcement will continue to see various methods of money laundering across Alabama. According to FINCEN the most suspicious activity reports (SARs) filed in Alabama in for 2019 were from Depository Institutions. The second highest group of SARs were filed by the Money Service Businesses. The primary reason on the Depository Institutions was due to transactions with no apparent economic, business, or lawful purpose and the primary reason for Money Service Businesses was transactions below BSA recordkeeping threshold. Casino activity regarding SARs saw a slight increase from 217 in 2018 to 218 in 2019.



## **II. ENVIRONMENT AND OTHER RELATED RISKS**

### **A. Demographic Factors/Cultural Diversity**

The United States (U.S.) Census Bureau population estimate for Alabama in July of 2019 was 4,903,185 residents. This represents an upward estimated change in population of over 15,000 people from 2018 estimates. For the last two years Alabama has seen population increases each year of over 13,000. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, Alabama is still ranked as the 24th most populous, in the estimate for 2018. The last official population census was in 2015 but in 2019 estimates were documented for Alabama as seen in the chart below. The next official census should be completed in 2020.

<b>2019 Population Race Estimates</b>	
<b>White</b>	<b>69.10%</b>
<b>Black</b>	<b>26.80%</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>4.40%</b>
<b>Two or more races</b>	<b>1.70%</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>1.50%</b>
<b>American Indian, Alaskan native</b>	<b>0.70%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### **B. Economics**

According to the 2018 U.S. Census Bureau estimates, Alabama's median income is \$48,486 per year. Alabama's leading employers include manufacturing jobs, retail sales, and health care professions.

### C. Geography

Alabama covers 52,420 square water and land miles, making it the 30th largest state in the nation. It contains 1,775 miles of navigable waterways and approximately 53 miles of coastland on the Gulf of Mexico. The Alabama State Port Authority operates port facilities in Axis, Bridgeport, Claiborne, Columbia, Cordova, Demopolis, Eufaula, Mobile, Montgomery, Phenix City, Selma, and Tuscaloosa-Northport. The Port of Mobile is one of the larger ports in the country. In 2019 the Port of Mobile received federal authorization to modernize Mobile Harbor to accommodate larger vessels and to improve the efficiencies. With this modernization and expansion the Port will expand its capacity when finished to accommodate 650,000 TEUs. This will allow nearly \$500 million in container intermodal assets to be served.

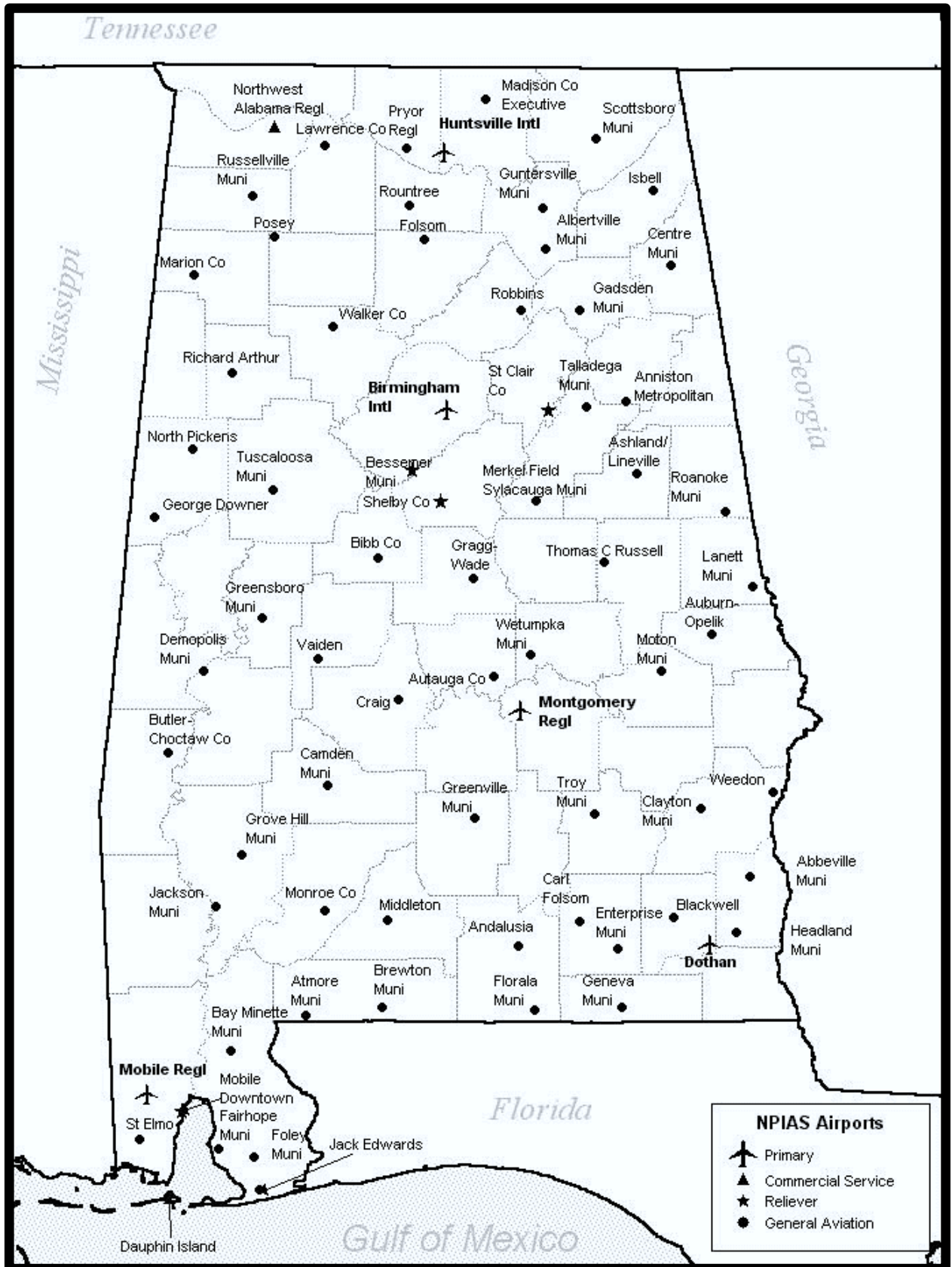


The primary interstates in Alabama include: I-10, I-20, I-59, I-65 & I-85, consisting of 904 miles of interstate highways. Alabama's Interstate Highway System, which includes two percent of all roadway lane miles in the state, carries 22 percent of all vehicle travel in the state. According to EPIC statistics, the top seizure interstate reported was I-10 with 22 stops. The interstates of I-65 showed 21 stops and I-20 showed 18 stops. Interstate I-59 had 11 stops reported with I-85 showing 5 stops.





Alabama has several commercial airports and multiple smaller airports which makes Alabama very accessible by air. According to the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems 2019 report there are 310 total Airports in Alabama with 220 being private use and 90 being of public use. The Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport in Birmingham is the largest airport in the state. The next airports in order of size are Huntsville, Mobile, Montgomery and Dothan. Some of the documented airports in Alabama are shown on the map below:



### III. DRUG THREATS AND OVERVIEW

#### A. Overall Scope of Drug Threat

According to the GC HIDTA Drug Survey law enforcement continues to rank methamphetamine as the primary drug threat in Alabama. Methamphetamine also had the number one ranking of drug of greatest threat amongst the treatment survey. With all the drugs that are measured on the GC HIDTA Survey the law enforcement respondents did rank methamphetamine as being the greatest available drug in the State. Methamphetamine continues to be the number one drug responsible in both property and violent crime. Methamphetamine is also the number one illegal drug showing in cases of exposure according to what has been reported to the Regional Poison Control Center (RPCC) at Children's of Alabama for 2019. Fentanyl has now moved into the number two spot behind methamphetamine as being the drug of greatest threat. Fentanyl has seen an increase as far as deaths go statewide and has overtaken heroin as overdose deaths are concerned. Fentanyl and the fentanyl analogues are a drug category that needs to be monitored and watched since it is proving to be a very dangerous drug. Heroin is now ranked third behind fentanyl according to law enforcement and treatment facilities as the drug of greatest threat. Heroin continues to show increases when it comes to mental health admissions. Heroin deaths have seen a decline statewide with 169 deaths in 2018 and 151 deaths in 2019. Controlled prescription drugs which are continuing to increase as far as mental health admission statistics are ranked are now considered the number four drug of greatest threat according to law enforcement. There were 7,142 individuals who sought treatment for controlled prescription drugs in 2019. Cocaine is now ranked as the number five drug threat according to law enforcement respondents and the number seven drug according to the treatment respondents, however, it is still ranked high as the drug responsible for property crime. The threat of synthetic cannabinoids, such as spice, synthetic cathinones, and other dangerous drugs are continuing to climb in numbers as far as mental health admissions are concerned and they will continue to be a danger to both the user and law enforcement. The Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences continues to analyze multiple variations of synthetic cannabinoids with the highest one being XLR-11. With the ever-changing chemical combinations that will appear in new drugs on the market, Alabama will need to continue to monitor them as they appear. Even with marijuana now showing below controlled prescription drugs as far as the treatment facilities are concerned, it is still considered highly available according to law enforcement.

According to the CJIS-FBI stats for Alabama there were 25,272 arrests in 2019 for Drug Possession compared to 24,716 Drug Possession charges for 2018. Showing an increase of 556 individuals arrested from 2018 to 2019.

The charts below show DEA statistics on arrests, cases, drugs seized, and asset values for all offices in Alabama for calendar year 2019. The drugs seized include Marijuana, Methamphetamine, Cocaine, Crack, Ice, Heroin, and Fentanyl only.

2019 BIRMINGHAM DEA (TF & DIVERSION)			
ARRESTS	CASE INITIATIONS	ASSEST VALUE	DRUGS SEIZED IN GRAMS
124	71	1,717,004.00	333.7

2019 MONTGOMERY DEA (TF)			
ARRESTS	CASE INITIATIONS	ASSEST VALUE	DRUGS SEIZED IN GRAMS
38	13	69,781.00	44.5

2019 MOBILE DEA (TF & DIVERSION)			
ARRESTS	CASE INITIATIONS	ASSEST VALUE	DRUGS SEIZED IN GRAMS
9	45	0	191.4

2019 MONTGOMERY-DOTHAN DEA			
ARRESTS	CASE INITIATIONS	ASSEST VALUE	DRUGS SEIZED IN KILOS
1	3	31,750.00	13.6

2019 HUNTSVILLE DEA			
ARRESTS	CASE INITIATIONS	ASSEST VALUE	DRUGS SEIZED IN KILOS
1	17	44,463.00	28.4

**\*\*The Huntsville DEA post began reporting in 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2019**

The charts below show the HIDTA statistics as reported on the quarterlies for calendar year 2019. The drugs seized include Marijuana, Methamphetamine, Cocaine, Crack, Ice, Heroin, and Fentanyl only.

JEFFERSON COUNTY TF HIDTA OFFICE (DEA) 2019			
ARRESTS	CASE INITIATIONS	ASSEST VALUE	DRUGS SEIZED IN KILOS
48	42	4,177,242.00	353

ALABAMA OPERATIONS HIDTA OFFICE (DEA) 2019			
ARRESTS	CASE INITIATIONS	ASSEST VALUE	DRUGS SEIZED IN KILOS
23	16	260,587.00	30.3

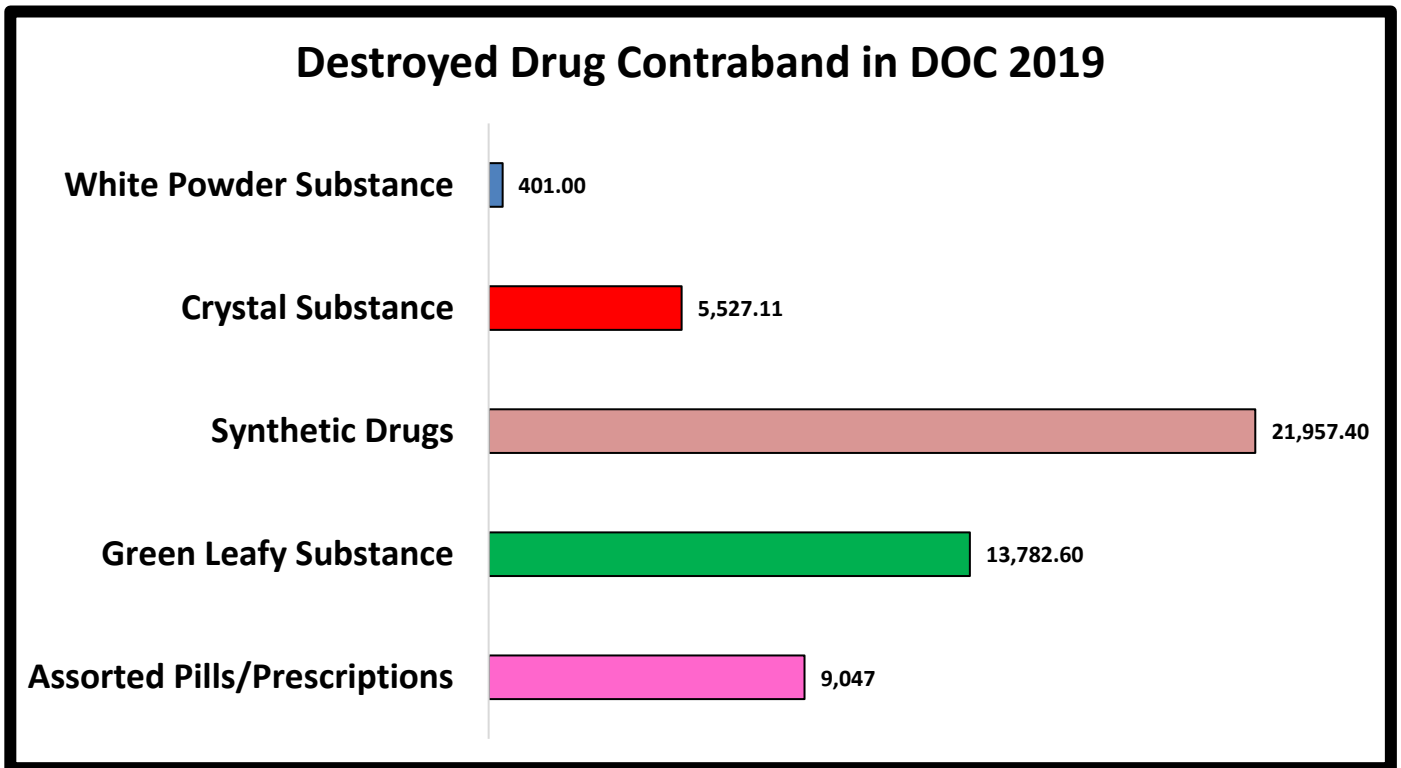
MOBILE-BALDWIN MIT HIDTA OFFICE (DEA) 2019			
ARRESTS	CASE INITIATIONS	ASSEST VALUE	DRUGS SEIZED IN KILOS
37	39	1,618,417.00	62.5

MOBILE-BALDWIN BEST HIDTA OFFICE (HSI) 2019			
ARRESTS	CASE INITIATIONS	ASSEST VALUE	DRUGS SEIZED IN KILOS
186	328	497,818.00	607.82

NORTH ALABAMA DTF HIDTA OFFICE (HPD) 2019			
ARRESTS	CASE INITIATIONS	ASSEST VALUE	DRUGS SEIZED IN KILOS
270	1954	1,022,820.15	243.27

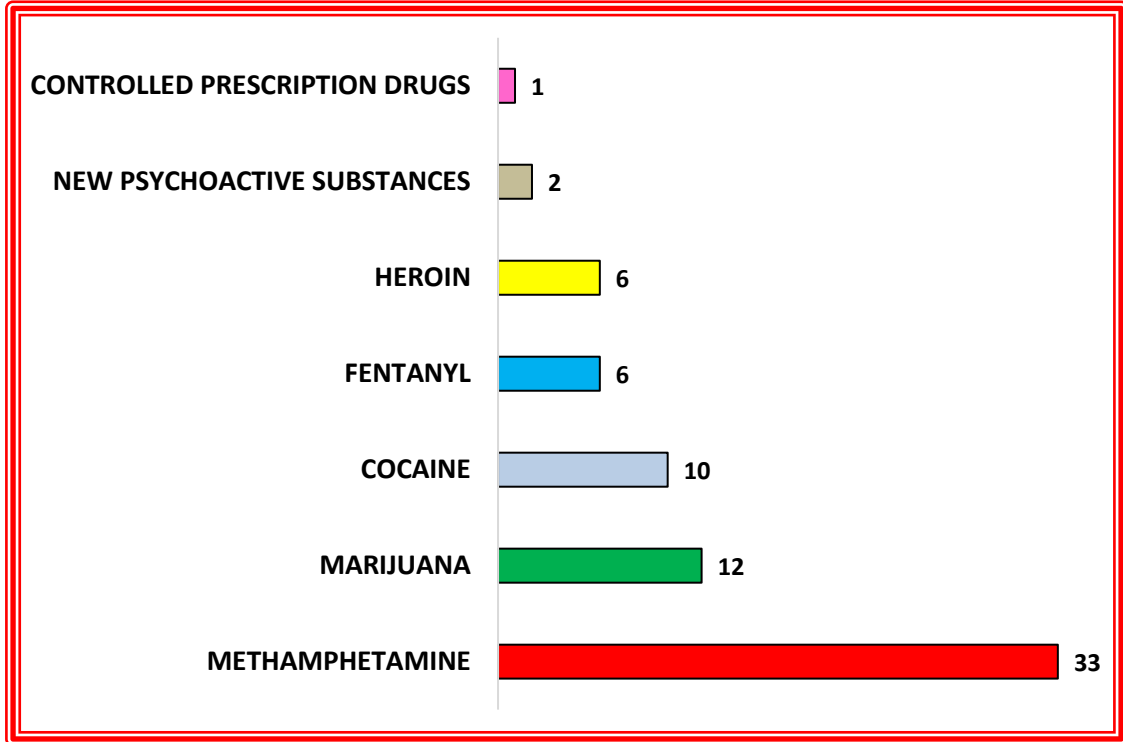
Drug abuse in Alabama becomes a serious senseless problem when it directly affects innocent children. According to the Alabama Department of Human Resources the report from **AFCARS (The Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System)**, there were 1605 children removed from residences in Alabama in 2019 which shows a decrease of 184 from 2018. This statistic continues to show a slight decline each year which is a good report for Alabama’s children.

Multiple drugs are confiscated daily in the prison system of Alabama. According to the Department of Corrections the chart below depicts several types of substances that were seized in the prison system in 2019. (The amounts are in grams)

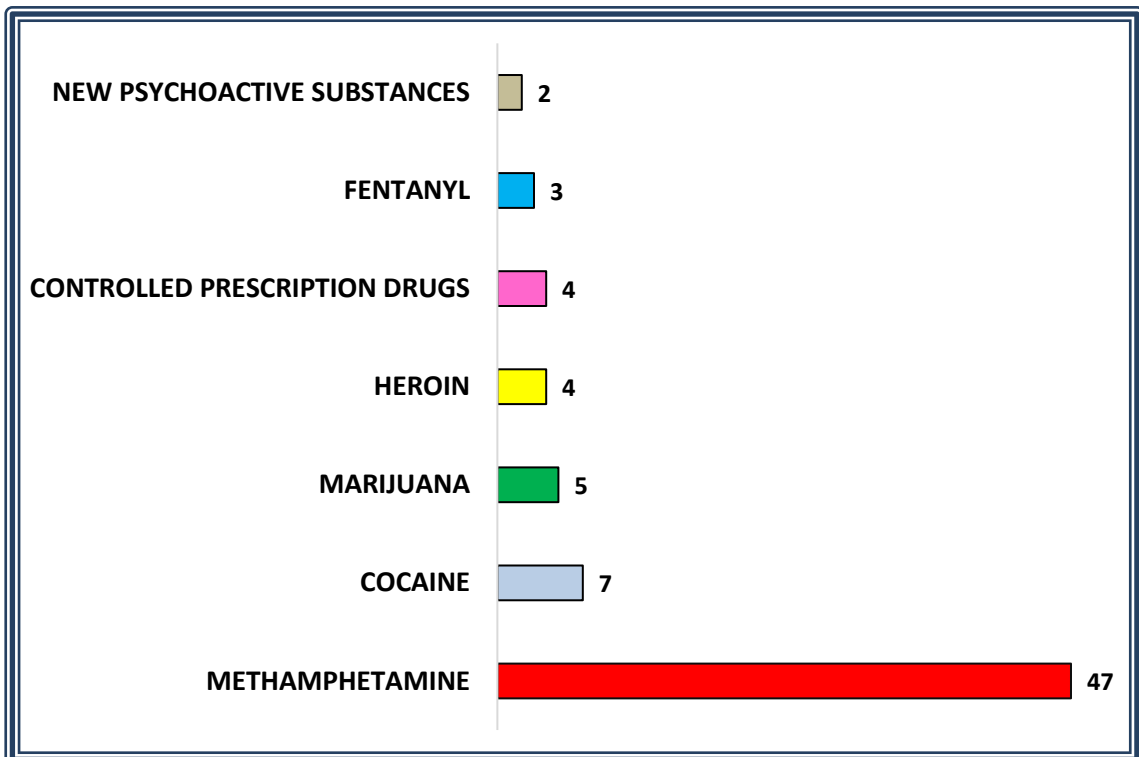


Based on data gathered from the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, the graphs below depict how Alabama law enforcement respondents answered the questions of what drugs most contribute to violent and property crimes. Most of the respondents indicated that both violent and property crime is most closely associated with methamphetamine abuse within their jurisdictions.

**DRUG MOST OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH **VIOLENT** CRIME in ALABAMA**



**DRUG MOST OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH **PROPERTY** CRIME in ALABAMA**





## B. Methamphetamine

### 1. Assessment of Threat

According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, methamphetamine is the greatest drug threat in the state. According to law enforcement survey respondent's methamphetamine is still the drug that is the greatest threat with property crime and violent crime for 2019. The EPIC lab seizures show a total of 6 labs disrupted for Alabama in 2019 which is a huge decrease from the 27 labs reported in 2018. The investigation seizures according to EPIC show 233.41 kilograms of methamphetamine seized for Alabama in 2019.



The Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences analyzed the following methamphetamine-related drugs and chemicals in 2019:

	<b>Items/Results</b>	<b>Grams</b>
• <b>Amphetamine</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>434.93</b>
• <b>Methamphetamine</b>	<b>13,199</b>	<b>140,901.32</b>
• <b>Pseudoephedrine</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>840.05</b>
• <b>Ephedrine</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>113.58</b>
• <b>Methamphetamine Hydrochloride</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### 2. Abuse

According to the Alabama Department of Mental Health, 5,902 individuals sought treatment at state operated or funded institutions for abuse of methamphetamine in calendar year 2019. This total shows an increase of 327 people from last year, of individuals seeking help with methamphetamine addiction. The results and amount of methamphetamine analyzed from the Department of Forensic Science showed a massive increase in number from 9,321 results totaling 34,941.28 grams in 2018 to 13,199 results totaling 140,901.32 grams for 2019.

In the chart below it shows the exposures reported to the Regional Poison Control Center (RPCC) at Children’s of Alabama<sup>1</sup>, for 2019<sup>2</sup>, in selected drug categories.

Year 2019	Total Number of Exposure Reports <sup>3</sup>	Emergency Department Evaluation and Discharge <sup>4</sup>	Hospital Admission <sup>5</sup>
Amphetamine	335	89	86
Methamphetamine	183	54	92
Ephedrine	1	1	0

1. The Regional Poison Control Center (RPCC) serves the entire state of Alabama and is fully accredited by the American Association of Poison Control Centers <https://www.childrensal.org/rpcc>, 1-800-222-1222.

2. The data presented are the number of exposure reports to RPCC. Reports made to the RPCC may be from the general public or from healthcare providers. These data should be interpreted with caution and used only to review the general volume of exposure reports in the context of other data sources to describe drug threats. Data is not presented for counts less than ten.

3. Total number of exposure reports concerning the drug category; does not sum to total as exposure reports concerning multiple drugs are represented in each drug category (i.e., may be counted in more than one drug category).

4. Number of exposure reports for each drug category for which the patient was known to be evaluated and discharged from an emergency department; does not sum to total as exposure reports concerning multiple drugs are represented in each drug category (i.e., may be counted in more than one drug category).

5. Number of exposure reports for each drug category for which the patient was known to be admitted to a hospital; does not sum to total as exposure reports concerning multiple drugs are represented in each drug category (i.e., may be counted in more than one drug category).

The NPLEX (National Precursor Log Exchange) reports the following data for Alabama in years 2018 and 2019 concerning the precursors used in methamphetamine production. A continued reduction is being seen in purchase activity, and grams blocked. With this downward trend continuing it is promising to think legislation and more pharmacies taking part in the NPLEX system is possibly helping reduce the illegal use of these substances.

Data Years	Total Purchase Activity	Total Grams Sold	Total Boxes Sold	Blocked Purchases	Total Grams Blocked
2018 NPLEX total of amphetamine/products	776,752	1,649,027	795,906	21,172	65,731
2019 NPLEX total of amphetamine/products	746,052	1,539,119	760,965	22,707	59,928

According to the NPLEX system in Alabama, there are over 1100 registered pharmacies within the NPLEX system.

### 3. Availability

Methamphetamine is available from two sources: locally produced methamphetamine, and methamphetamine transported into the area via the Interstate Highway System. Most of what is seen in Alabama is generally from the Southwest Border. The availability of methamphetamine continues to remain high in Alabama.

The 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey responses indicate methamphetamine has a high availability with over 70 percent reporting an increase according to the survey.

<b>Methamphetamine Availability</b>	
Increased	53
Same	19
Decreased	3

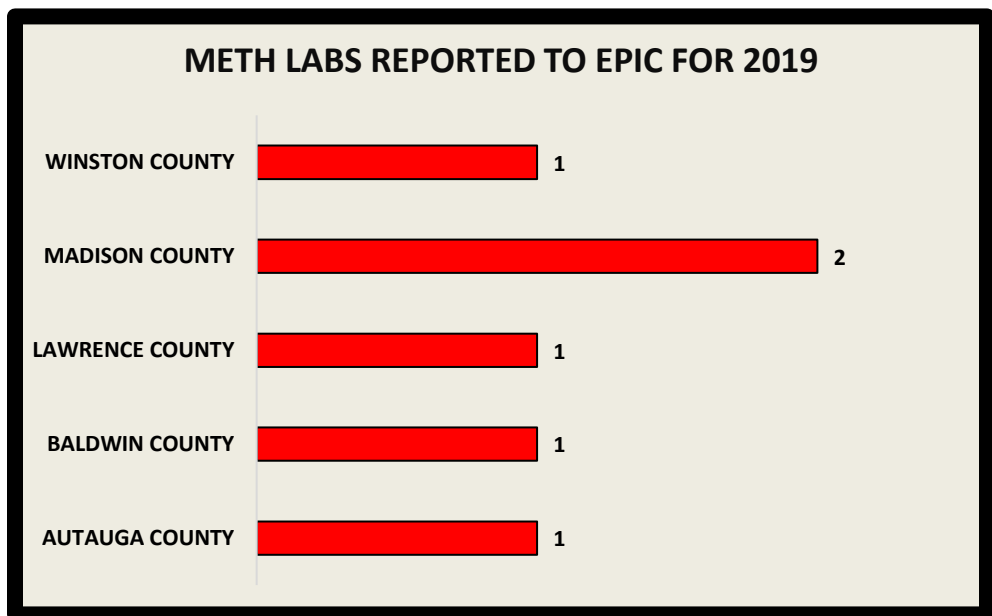
Methamphetamine price is most often determined based on location within the state. According to law enforcement, methamphetamine prices have dropped in most areas of the State. The average price for a gram is \$74 and \$350 per ounce.

### 4. Associated Crime and Violence

In 2019 methamphetamine was identified by law enforcement as the leading drug contributing to property crime, and violent crimes.

### 5. Production

Methamphetamine labs are not something that is found often in Alabama according to local law enforcement. The 6 labs that were documented were in the Madison, Baldwin, Winston, Lawrence, and Autauga county areas of the State. Locally produced methamphetamine, produced using the “one pot” method or the “nazi/birch” method continues to be the method seen by area law enforcement. Most of the methamphetamine seized on the highways and in drug trafficking organization investigations is Mexico-produced methamphetamine which is transported into the state. The following charts show the counties that reported laboratory seizures to EPIC in 2019.



**6 LABS FOR ALABAMA IN 2019 as reported by EPIC**

## **Transportation**

According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, Caucasian American DTOs are primarily responsible for the transportation of powder and ice methamphetamine via overland transportation methods into Alabama. The GC HIDTA Watch Center reported a total of 30 pounds of methamphetamine seized on Alabama highways in 2019. EPIC reported 106 kilograms of ice methamphetamine taken in Alabama traffic stops in 2019.

## **6. Distribution**

Results from the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey indicate Caucasian American are still the DTOs that are the primary wholesale and retail distributors of methamphetamine.

### **Example of Methamphetamine seizure in/to Alabama during 2019:**

- On February 13, 2019, the MBMIT and the Baldwin County SO seized approximately 15.48 kilograms of methamphetamine concealed inside two duffle bags. The drugs were found in the spare tire wheel well. Two subjects were arrested. The drugs originated in Los Angeles, CA and were bound for Orlando, FL.



## C. Fentanyl and other Opioids



### 1. Assessment of the Threat

In 2019, according to the Alabama Department of Mental Health, there were 94 admissions into treatment centers for the abuse of fentanyl compared to 72 in 2018. This category of drug is continuing to see an increase, and this is very concerning since this drug can be very dangerous. Fentanyl has been found in pills and mixed as a powder with heroin and other drugs. This drug is probably the most dangerous for not only the illicit user but for law enforcement. The death rate from fentanyl alone is showing an increase in Alabama. This would account for the threat level amongst law enforcement moving this drug up to the second greatest threat. According to the department of Forensic Sciences excluding the Jefferson County coroner, the total fentanyl only all case type deaths as reported statewide by the Department of Forensic Sciences are listed below:

Category	2018	2019	% Change
Fentanyl	171	242	34.38%

\*Blood only, all concentrations

In the fentanyl analogues in overdose cases you have the following totals as seen in 2018 and 2019 which also shows a total increase.

Designer Opioids Reported in OD Case types	2018	2019
Acetyl Fentanyl	17	47
Butyryl Fentanyl	3	2
Carfentanil	2	1
Cyclopropyl Fentanyl	10	0
Fluoroisobutyryl Fentanyl (FIBF)	0	2
Methoxyacetyl Fentanyl	10	0
U-47700	5	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>53</b>

## **2. Abuse**

According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, Black Americans are the primary street level dealers of fentanyl and other opioids as reported by 33 Alabama law enforcement respondents.

## **3. Availability**

According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, law enforcement states fentanyl and other opioids are increasing in availability. With 74 respondents ranking fentanyl's availability 30 of them ranked it as high. With these same respondents 43 of them ranked fentanyl as increasing in availability.

## **4. Associated Crime and Violence**

Fentanyl and the other opioids category ranked fourth according to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey for violent crime, however, the rank was very small in the property crime category.

## **5. Production**

Fentanyl and other opioids are not produced here in Alabama. Most of these opioids abused in Alabama are transported in from out of state or are obtained from internet sources and shipped via parcel postal routes.

## **6. Transportation**

Fentanyl and other opioids have been a little more difficult to classify which mode of transportation is dominant in it coming to Alabama, however, vehicle and parcel postage seem to be the main routes. Caucasian Americans have been identified as transporting the majority of fentanyl and other opioids. EPIC investigations reported over 7 kilograms of fentanyl and other opioids seized in Alabama for 2019.

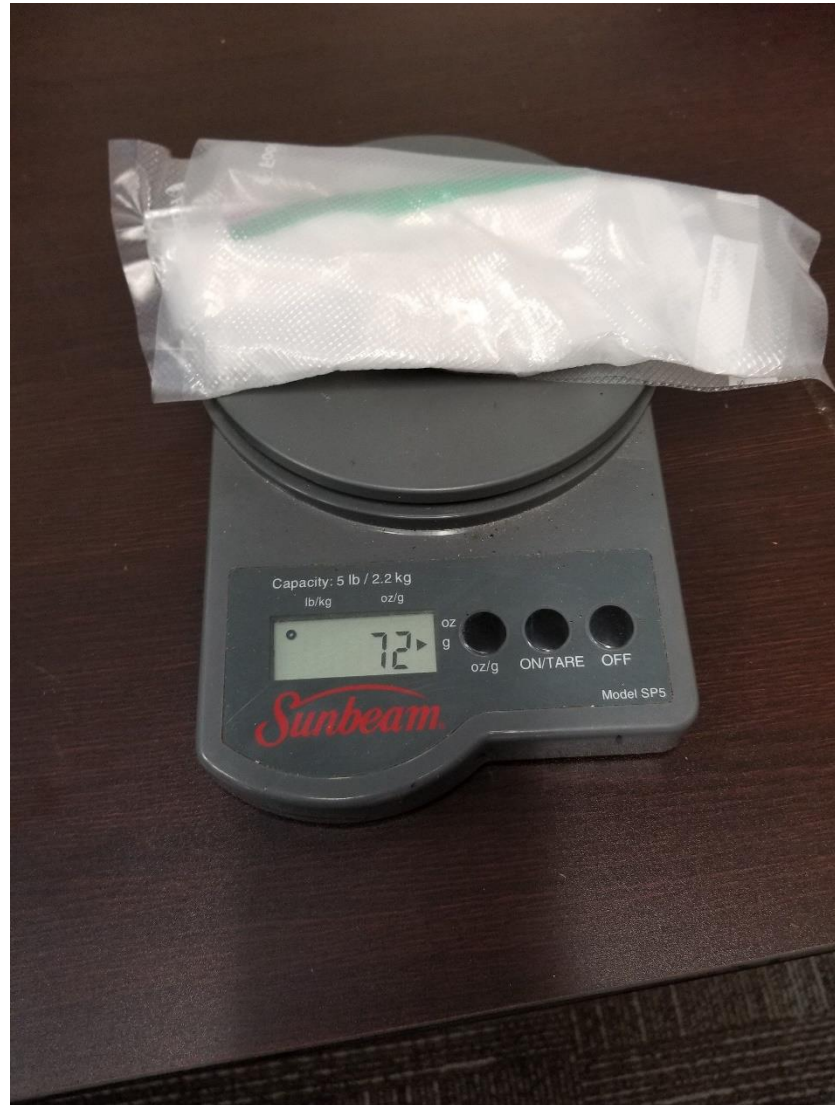
## **7. Distribution**

The majority of respondents of the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey listed Black American DTOs as the main distributors of Fentanyl and other Opioids.



**Example of a Fentanyl seizure in Alabama during 2019:**

- On November and December of 2019, packages containing 72 grams and 82 grams of fentanyl was seized in an ongoing investigation with the DEA Mobile office.



## D. Heroin

### 1. Assessment of the Threat

Heroin is a highly addictive drug processed from morphine, a naturally occurring substance extracted from the seed pod of certain varieties of poppy plants grown in Southeast Asia (Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar, Burma), Southwest Asia (Afghanistan and Pakistan), Mexico and Colombia.

Heroin comes in several forms, the main forms being “black tar” from Mexico (found primarily in the western United States) and white heroin from Colombia (primarily sold on the East Coast). Some of the common street names are: Big H, Black Tar, Chiva, Hell Dust, Horse, Negra, Smack, Hair and Thunder. Heroin is typically sold as a white or brownish powder, or as a black sticky substance known on the streets as “black tar heroin.” Heroin can be injected, smoked, or sniffed/snorted. High purity heroin is usually snorted or smoked. Because it enters the brain so rapidly, heroin is particularly addictive, both psychologically and physically. Most of the heroin being seen in Alabama is of the powder form.



Heroin abuse and death is continuing to be seen throughout Alabama; however, the death rate has seen a slight decline over this past year. The deaths in 2018 and 2019 as reported by the coroner in Jefferson County and Department of Forensic Sciences statewide:

Category	2018	2019	% Change
Heroin	160	140	-14.28%

\*All specimen types

The overdose deaths in heroin alone in Jefferson County for 2019 was 89. For calendar year 2019 the Department of Forensic Sciences analyzed 829 results of heroin at an amount of 976.91 grams which shows a 44 percent increase from 2018 analyzed. The charts listed on the following page show documented heroin deaths statewide.

HEROIN OVERDOSE DEATHS 2019	
All Counties (excluding Jefferson County)	51
Jefferson County	89
<b>TOTAL STATEWIDE</b>	<b>140</b>

HEROIN OVERDOSE DEATHS 2018	
All Counties (excluding Jefferson County)	57
Jefferson County	103
<b>TOTAL STATEWIDE</b>	<b>160</b>

\*6-MAM Present in OD Cases from 2018-2019. All specimen types



**2. Abuse**

More and more individuals are seeking treatment for heroin abuse. According to the Alabama Department of Mental Health, 5,593 individuals sought treatment for heroin abuse in 2019. According to Regional Poison Control Center (RPCC) of Children’s of Alabama, there were 27 exposure reports for fentanyl in Alabama with 13 admissions to Alabama hospitals for 2019. According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey data, respondents indicated that Black Americans are now considered the primary group responsible for retail distribution of heroin in Alabama.

**3. Availability**

Law enforcement agencies who ranked heroin as their greatest drug threat are listed below.

Agencies that listed Heroin as the Greatest Drug Threat 2019
Huntsville PD
Hoover PD
Pelham PD
Foley PD
7 <sup>th</sup> Judicial Major Crimes Unit
Madison County SO

Heroin is now being seen in the northern part of the State as well as in the southern sections. Heroin prices can show a very wide range of prices which can be determined from what area of the State you are in. In Birmingham alone, the price can range from \$64,974-159,984 per kilogram. In other parts of the State the price is generally around \$100-200 per gram and \$1,800-3,500 per ounce.

**4. Associated Crime and Violence**

According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, heroin is still not listed as a drug that most contributes to violent or property crime statewide.

**5. Production**

Opium is not cultivated nor is heroin produced in Alabama. Heroin is produced primarily in Mexico, South America, Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Southwest Asia.

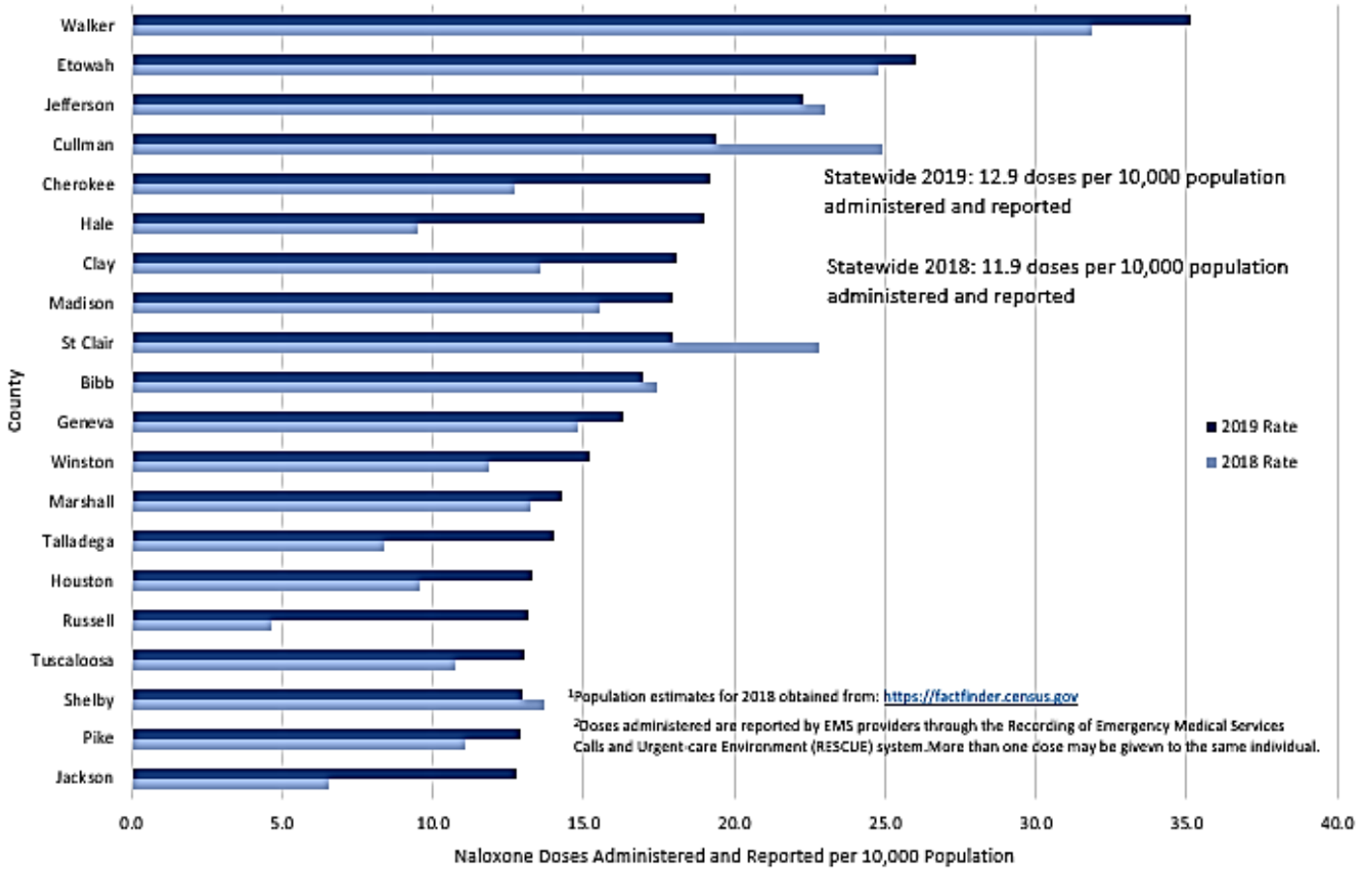
**6. Transportation**

Black American DTOs have taken over as being the primary transporters of heroin to Alabama. Heroin is primarily transported to Alabama overland via private, commercial, and rental vehicles. The GC HIDTA Watch Center reported a total of 5 pounds of heroin seized on Alabama highways in 2019. EPIC reported a total of 3.48 kilograms seized from traffic stops in Alabama.

**7. Distribution**

The 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey respondents indicated that Black American DTOs are the primary distributors of heroin. With heroin availability and abuse continuing to rise in Alabama, Naloxone treatment will most certainly increase. Naloxone is a pure opioid antagonist which is used to counter the effects of an opioid, in overdoses. The chart below documents the naloxone doses administered and reported by EMS.

## Naloxone Doses per 10,000 Population<sup>1</sup> Administered and Reported by Emergency Medical Services Providers<sup>2</sup>, by County - Top 20 Counties, Alabama, 2018 and 2019



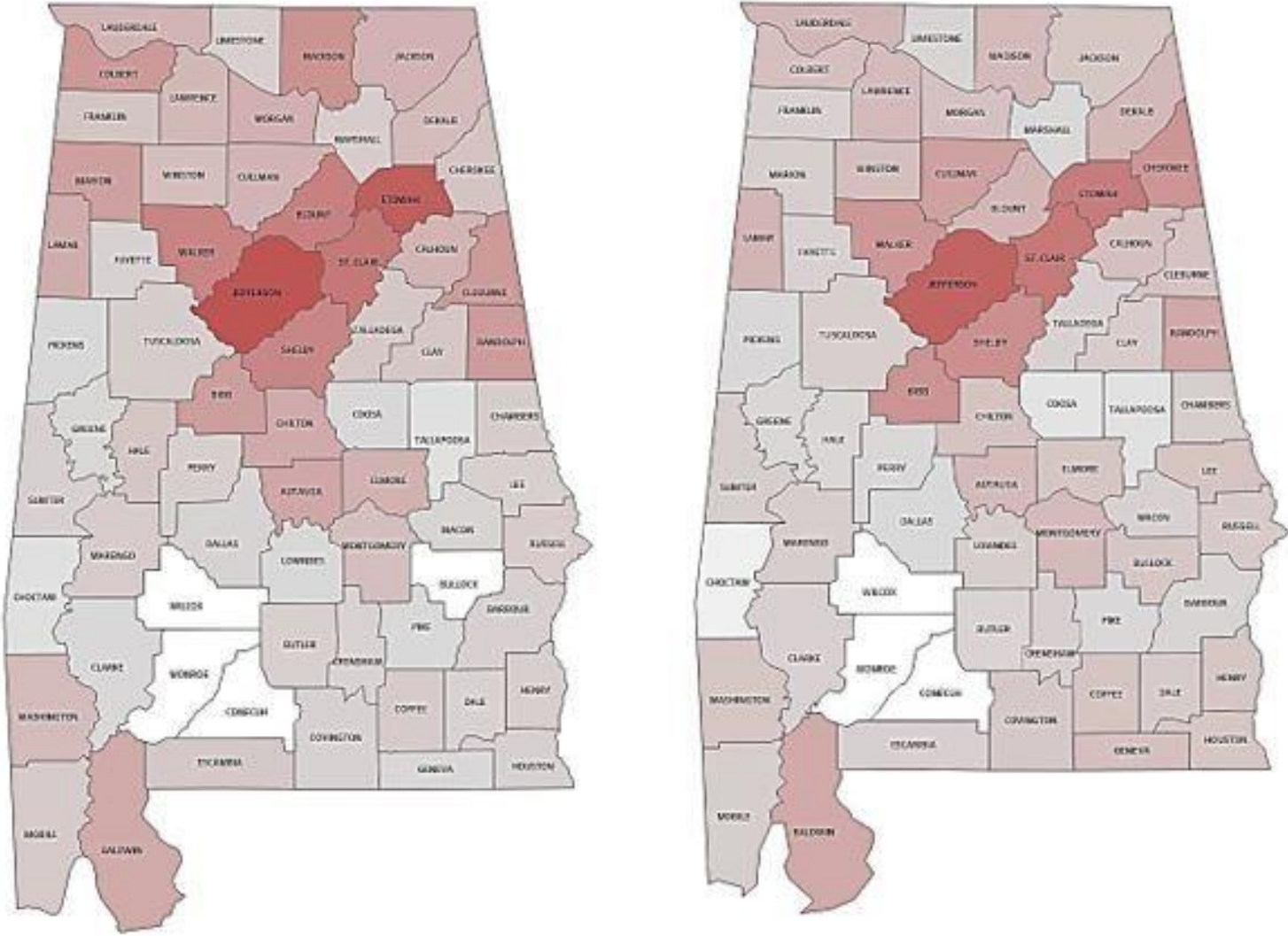
Of the counties represented in the chart above, the largest increases showing from 2018 are:

- Russell County**
- Hale County**
- Jackson County**

Of the counties represented in the chart above, the largest decreases showing from 2018 are:

- Cullman County**
- St. Clair County**

# PERCENTAGE OF **OPIOID** OVERDOSE-RELATED EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS BY COUNTY OF RESIDENCE, ALABAMA, 2018-2019



Note: One emergency department (ED) visit does not necessarily translate to one person. Therefore, trends are monitored by calculating the percentage of ED visits for overdose among the total number of ED visits.



**Example of a Heroin seizure in Alabama during 2019:**

- On July 7, 2019 Agents with the Birmingham DEA Group seized three kilos of heroin in an ongoing investigation.



## E. Controlled Prescription Drugs

### 1. Assessment of the Threat

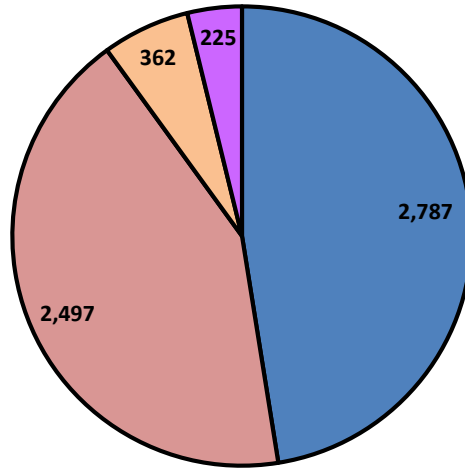
Over the past several years the two highest controlled prescription drugs according to Mental Health statistics have been oxycontin and hydrocodone. This year is no different except hydrocodone is still ahead for 2019 admissions. The Mental Health statistics in Alabama have 2,992 admissions to treatment centers for hydrocodone in 2019 which is an increase from the 2,787 admissions for 2018. The number of admissions for oxycontin drastically increased from 2,497 in 2018 to 2,750 admissions in 2019. The number of Mental Health admissions for each of the pharmaceutical drugs listed in the charts on the next page has increased from 2018 with the exception of Alprazolam (Xanax). According to Poison Control there were 149 exposure reports, with 71 hospital admissions for oxycodone. For hydrocodone, Poison Control documented 262 exposure reports, with 110 admissions to hospitals.(see chart definitions on page 31 for full disclosure) According to the Alabama Department of Mental Health, hydrocodone, oxycodone, and alprazolam were identified as being among the most commonly abused pharmaceuticals in Alabama.

Data from the drug survey indicates controlled prescription drugs are now ranked ahead of marijuana according to law enforcement and they are ranked second behind methamphetamine according to the treatment answers on the survey.



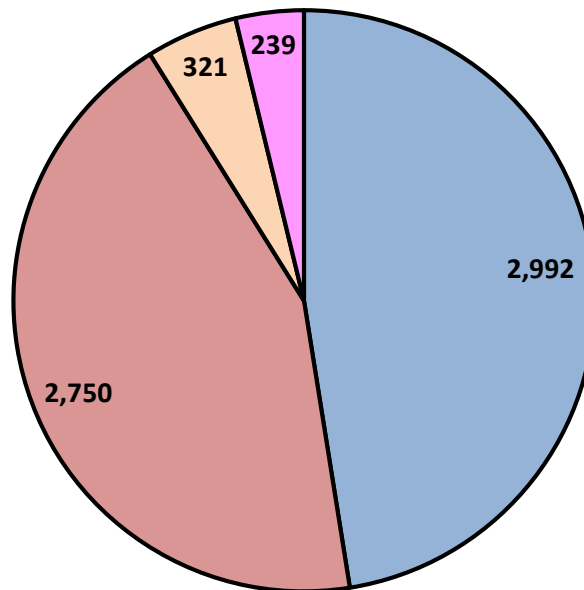


## 2018 Mental Health Admissions



■ Hydrocodone (Vicodin, Lortab)      ■ Oxycodone (Oxycontin, Roxycontin)  
■ Alprazolam (Xanax)                      ■ Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)

## 2019 Mental Health Admissions



■ Hydrocodone (Vicodin, Lortab)                      ■ Oxycodone (Oxycontin, Roxycontin)  
■ Alprazolam (Xanax)                                      ■ Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)

In 2019, the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences analyzed the following pharmaceuticals:

**GRAMS/TABLETS**

- Alprazolam (Xanax): 17363 (Gms) 390 (Tab)
- Carisoprodol 0 (Tab)
- Clonazepam 51 (Tab)
- Codeine 1,579.46 (Gms)
- Diazepam 10 (Tab)
- Dihydrocodeinone (Hydrocodone) 44 (Tab)
- Ephedrine 113.58 (Gms)
- Fentanyl 126.41 (Gms)
- Oxycodone 1,255.63 (Gms) 21 (Tab)
- Phentermine 1.18 (Gms)

**2. Abuse**

According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey respondents, Caucasian Americans are the primary street level dealers of pharmaceuticals as reported by 75 percent of participating law enforcement agencies. In the chart below it shows the exposures reported to the Regional Poison Control Center (RPCC) at Children’s of Alabama<sup>1</sup>, for 2019<sup>2</sup>, in selected drug categories.

Year 2019	Total Number of Exposure Reports <sup>3</sup>	Emergency Department Evaluation and Discharge <sup>4</sup>	Hospital Admission <sup>5</sup>
Hydrocodone	262	69	110
Oxycodone	149	30	71
Hydromorphone	4	1	1
Fentanyl	27	10	13

1. The Regional Poison Control Center (RPCC) serves the entire state of Alabama and is fully accredited by the American Association of Poison Control Centers <https://www.childrensal.org/rpcc>, 1-800-222-1222.
2. The data presented are the number of exposure reports to RPCC. Reports made to the RPCC may be from the general public or from healthcare providers. These data should be interpreted with caution and used only to review the general volume of exposure reports in the context of other data sources to describe drug threats. Data is not presented for counts less than ten.
3. Total number of exposure reports concerning the drug category; does not sum to total as exposure reports concerning multiple drugs are represented in each drug category (i.e., may be counted in more than one drug category).
4. Number of exposure reports for each drug category for which the patient was known to be evaluated and discharged from an emergency department; does not sum to total as exposure reports concerning multiple drugs are represented in each drug category (i.e., may be counted in more than one drug category).
5. Number of exposure reports for each drug category for which the patient was known to be admitted to a hospital; does not sum to total as exposure reports concerning multiple drugs are represented in each drug category (i.e., may be counted in more than one drug category).

According to the Alabama Department of Public Health, Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, there were 10,872,027 prescriptions written in 2019 for Schedule 2-4, which does show a decrease from 2018 which had 11,372,088 prescriptions written. Over the past several years the number of prescriptions written for these schedule drug categories as a whole does show an overall decline, however, the schedule 3 drugs individually do still show an increase in prescriptions written, and quantity as well as an increase in days of supply. The chart listed on the following page will show the statistics as broken down by the Category/Schedule of drugs.

As listed on the DEA website the following controlled substance definitions describe the basic or parent chemical and do not necessarily describe the salts, isomers and salts of isomers, esters, ethers and derivatives which may also be classified as controlled substances. These lists are intended as general references and are not comprehensive listings of all controlled substances.

YEAR	CATEGORY	RECIPIENT COUNT	RX COUNT	QTY DISPENSED	DAYS OF SUPPLY
2019	C2	1,410,880	5,404,500	304,911,712	121,460,607
2019	C3	198,021	1,000,169	32,727,020	23,471,522
2019	C4	1,023,873	4,467,358	227,842,614	122,546,677

**Schedule II (C2 on chart below)** substances, or chemicals are defined as drugs with a high potential for abuse, less abuse potential than Schedule I drugs, with use potentially leading to severe psychological or physical dependence. These drugs are also considered dangerous. Some examples of Schedule II drugs are:

**Hydrocodone, Cocaine, methamphetamine, methadone, hydromorphone (Dilaudid), meperidine (Demerol), oxycodone (OxyContin), fentanyl, Dexedrine, Adderall, and Ritalin**

**Schedule III (C3 on chart on chart below)** substances, or chemicals are defined as drugs with a moderate to low potential for physical and psychological dependence. Schedule III drugs abuse potential is less than Schedule I and Schedule II drugs but more than Schedule IV.

**Products containing less than 90 milligrams of codeine per dosage unit (Tylenol with codeine), ketamine, anabolic steroids, testosterone**

**Schedule IV (C4 on chart on chart below)** substances, or chemicals are defined as drugs with a low potential for abuse and low risk of dependence. Some examples of Schedule IV drugs are:

**Xanax, Soma, Valium, Ativan, Talwin, Ambien**

### 3. Availability

According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, controlled prescription drugs are listed as highly available by 42 of the 76 law enforcement respondents. According to the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program for Alabama, there has been decreases in the number of Schedule II prescriptions written over the past year, however the Schedule III prescription drugs continue to show an increase.

### 4. Associated Crime and Violence

According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Survey, only 4 respondents indicated that controlled prescription drugs are the greatest contributor to property crime while 1 stated they are the greatest contributor to violent crime.



## 5. Production

There are a couple of pharmaceutical companies located in Alabama. Generics Bidco I, LLC, dba Qualitest Pharmaceuticals, Inc. which manufactures, and sells prescription and over-the-counter products is located in Huntsville and Oxford Pharmaceuticals which manufactures generic drugs is located in Birmingham. The majority of the pharmaceuticals abused in Alabama are transported in from out of state or are obtained from forged prescriptions or Internet pharmacies.

## 6. Transportation

Pharmaceuticals are primarily transported via private and commercial vehicles, however some pharmaceuticals are shipped to the state via mail services. Caucasian Americans have been identified as transporting the majority of diverted pharmaceuticals into Alabama. EPIC (traffic stops and investigations) reported 10,267 pills seized and 8.07 kilograms seized in Alabama for 2019.

## 7. Distribution

The majority of respondents of the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey listed Caucasian American DTOs as the primary distributors of pharmaceuticals. Of those same respondents, for both wholesale and retail distribution Caucasian DTOs were the main abusers.

### Example of controlled prescription drug seizure in Alabama during 2019:

- On February 6, 2019 in Auburn, AL Agents with ALEA and Postal Inspectors seized a package containing 1000 xanax pills. The subject whom the package was being sent to admitted to obtaining the drugs via ordering from the dark web with crypto-currency.



## F. Cocaine

### 1. Assessment of Threat

Cocaine, both powder and crack, has seen a drop in this year's ranking according to the GC HIDTA law enforcement survey respondents. Cocaine is now ranked as number five drug of threat in Alabama. Cocaine has also dropped in regards to the mental health admissions, going from 2,230 admissions in 2018 to 1,984 admissions in 2019. Cocaine is ranked within the top three drugs relating to both violent and property crimes in the state. In 2019, the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences analyzed 10,044.91 grams of cocaine.



### 2. Abuse

According to the Alabama Department of Mental Health, 1,984 individuals sought treatment for cocaine abuse in 2019, showing a decrease of 246 individuals from 2018.

### 3. Availability

Cocaine is readily available across the state, however, according to the survey, the majority of respondents report cocaine availability as high or moderate for 2019. The most common form of cocaine being seen in the state is in the form of crack and is most commonly sold in rocks. The 2021 GC HIDTA law enforcement survey responses indicated cocaine availability in Alabama is as follows:

Cocaine Availability	
	Number of Respondents
High	34
Moderate	34
Low	5

Cocaine pricing as reported by law enforcement indicate that cocaine ranges from \$50 to \$120 per gram. Prices for ounce quantities of cocaine are between \$800 to \$1,300 per ounce.

### 4. Associated Crime and Violence

The crime and violence associated with crack cocaine continues to be high according to law enforcement in Alabama. As seen in the previous charts, cocaine ranks high as a leading contributor to both violent and property crimes.

## 5. Production

Coca is not cultivated nor is cocaine produced within Alabama, but rather originates in South America and is transported into Alabama via hub cities along the Southwest Border and through Atlanta. Wholesale levels of cocaine are generally sold in powder form with street level retailers converting the powder cocaine to crack cocaine prior to retail.

## 6. Transportation

Black American DTOs are primarily responsible for most of the powder and crack cocaine transported into Alabama. Cocaine is transported to the area overland in private and commercial vehicles. Bulk quantities of cocaine are usually transported in powdered form to local DTOs who convert the powder cocaine into crack prior to retail distribution. According to the GC HIDTA Watch Center, 303 pounds of cocaine were seized in Alabama during highway interdiction in 2019. EPIC reports 704 kilograms of cocaine taken from Alabama traffic stops and investigations.

## 7. Distribution

According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, black American DTOs are the almost exclusive distributors of crack and powder cocaine.

### Example of Cocaine seizure in Alabama during 2019:

- On July 7, 2019 A Talladega County deputy executed a traffic stop which resulted in the seizure of approximately 15 kilos of cocaine.



## G. Other Dangerous Drugs (ODDs)

### 1. Assessment of the Threat

Other dangerous drugs such as PCP, LSD, GBL, and GHB are not seen as a major threat in Alabama at this time, however, synthetic cannabinoids which are listed in this category have seen an increase over this past year. The synthetic cannabinoids are drugs that are made up of mind-altering substances intended to produce a high like that of marijuana. These types of drugs act on the same brain receptors as THC and CBD do, however, since they are man-made and are a conglomeration of multiple chemicals they can become very dangerous once ingested.



### 2. Abuse

The presence of LSD and MDMA continue to appear in Alabama according to the Department of Forensic Sciences, however, the Synthetic cannabinoids are seen in a much greater capacity. These drugs are becoming the drug of choice and the younger generations are quickly finding access to these drugs mainly via the internet. Several law enforcement agencies statewide have seen an increase in Spice and Spice Analogs. According to Regional Poison Control at Children's of Alabama there were 47 exposure reports for the categories of synthetic cathinones and synthetic cannabinoids combined with 27 combined hospital admissions for Alabama in 2019. The Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences has seen large amounts of synthetic cannabinoids over the past several years (*see chart below*). These synthetic substances have seen both a decline and increase in Alabama according to the results examined by Forensics. According to EPIC 11.06 kilograms and 5,247 pills of other dangerous drugs were seized in Alabama from investigations and 1.12 kilograms and 248 pills from traffic stops in 2019.

### 3. Availability

The majority of respondents from the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey indicated ODD availability as being moderate, this shows an increase from last year where law enforcement ranked it as low. With availability of these drugs being easier with the internet the access to these drugs may continue to rise.

2018 SYNTHETIC CANNABINOIDS ANALYZED BY ALABAMA FORENSIC SCIENCES		
DRUG	NUMBER OF RESULTS	GRAMS
XLR-11	194	4,263.36
5-FLUORO-ADB	557	11,780.77
AM-2201	10	131.21
5-FLUORO-AMB	92	330.4
AB-PINACA	43	522.21
AB-FUBINACA	77	2,057.28

2019 SYNTHETIC CANNABINOIDS ANALYZED BY ALABAMA FORENSIC SCIENCES		
DRUG	NUMBER OF RESULTS	GRAMS
XLR-11	81	37,143.45
5-FLUORO-ADB	695	9,704.49
AM-2201	18	9.91
5-FLUORO-AMB	25	74.90
AB-PINACA	14	100.30
AB-FUBINACA	25	163.68

#### 4. Associated Crime and Violence

ODDs are not a primary contributor to crime; however, they were listed as possibly contributing in a small factor to violent crime.

#### 5. Production

Although most other dangerous drugs are not produced within Alabama the ability to obtain these drugs has become very easy with the internet and the dark web.

#### 6. Transportation

According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, Caucasian American DTOs are the primary transporters of MDMA and New Psychoactive drugs. These DTOs transport ODDs via the highways and mail as the main source of transportation.

#### 7. Distribution

The most prominent areas for ODDs distribution continue to be social gatherings of the younger generation; however, there are the individual dealers that sell ODDs on the street as well. The Internet has also become an easy way to obtain these drugs for a drug abuser.



**Example of other dangerous drug seizure in Alabama during 2019:**

- On September 17, 2019 Agents with the Madison-Morgan DTF seized over 1500 ecstasy pills during an execution of a search warrant in the Huntsville area.



## H. Marijuana

### 1. Assessment of the Threat

Marijuana is the number two most abused drug throughout the state. Alabama has not legalized marijuana for recreational use but there are measures for medical use CBD in place. Marijuana is grown indoors, outdoors, and hydroponically in Alabama and according to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, is primarily distributed and abused by black Americans. In 2019, the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences analyzed 10,610 samples of marijuana with a total weight of 342,472.42 grams. EPIC reports that in the investigations for 2019 in Alabama there was 317.1 kilograms of regular marijuana seized and 232.8 kilograms of high grade marijuana seized.



### 2. Abuse

Marijuana over the past years has always been the most widely abused drug in Alabama, however, this year marijuana dropped to the number two most abused drug. Methamphetamine had the highest reports of abuse by Treatment respondents (82 percent) while marijuana had the second highest reports of abuse (77 percent). Marijuana is not specific to any one particular location in the state. High grade marijuana is available throughout the state. The Alabama Department of Mental Health reported 6,438 individuals seeking treatment from marijuana as opposed to 6,808 in 2018. Survey respondents indicate black Americans are the primary street level dealers, followed by Caucasian Americans. In August 2019 the U.S. Surgeon General issued a warning on marijuana use in adolescence and during pregnancy. The warning stated that no amount of marijuana use during pregnancy or adolescence is known to be safe. This comes after research on how the brain in adolescence changes after marijuana use by affecting attention, memory, decision-making, and motivation. Research also documented concern of marijuana use during pregnancy affecting the developing fetus negatively.

### 3. Availability

Marijuana is available from three primary sources: locally produced marijuana, marijuana produced in states that allow the production, and Mexican produced marijuana. Most marijuana taken in Alabama is transported via the interstate highway system. Marijuana has been previously rated the most available drug in Alabama: however, in 2019 a greater percentage of law enforcement respondents reported a high availability of methamphetamine (90 percent) than marijuana (86 percent). For 2019, the prices for high grade marijuana ranged from \$175 to \$500 per ounce, while prices for a pound ranged from \$1800 to \$5000.

#### 4. Associated Crime and Violence

Based on the 2021 drug survey data, marijuana is not considered a major leading contributor to violent crime or property crime.

#### 5. Production

The temperatures in Alabama certainly allow for marijuana to be grown easily outdoors. According to the Marijuana Eradication team coordinated by ALEA the indoor grows are very well established too. According to EPIC stats for 2019 there were 8,240 high grade marijuana plants seized in Alabama. The below tables show the results of the marijuana eradication team seizures and hours flown for 2019.

FLIGHT HOURS FLOWN	COUNTIES
338.3	46

MARIJUANA ERADICATION 2019		
OUTDOOR		
GROW SITES	PLANTS SEIZED	ARRESTS
34	10,120	18
INDOOR		
GROW SITES	PLANTS SEIZED	ARRESTS
2	5,210	2

#### 6. Transportation

Most marijuana seized in Alabama occurs during traffic stops via highway interdiction. According to the GC HIDTA Watch Center the total quantity of marijuana seized in traffic stops for Alabama in 2019 was 2,681 pounds. EPIC reported a total of 1,360.5 kilograms seized in traffic stops for Alabama not including edible marijuana or synthetic marijuana. According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, the majority of bulk marijuana is transported by Black American DTOs with the origination points mainly from the states of California and Colorado. Marijuana has been seized from all over the state and is not therefore considered concentrated to one particular area.

#### 7. Distribution

According to the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, marijuana is distributed primarily by Black American DTOs.



**Example of a marijuana seizure in Alabama during 2019:**

- On March 5, 2019, an Alabama Police Officer, conducted a traffic stop on a tractor trailer on I-59/I-20 in Greene County. The stop resulted in a seizure of over 471 kilograms of marijuana.



## IV. DRUG TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATION

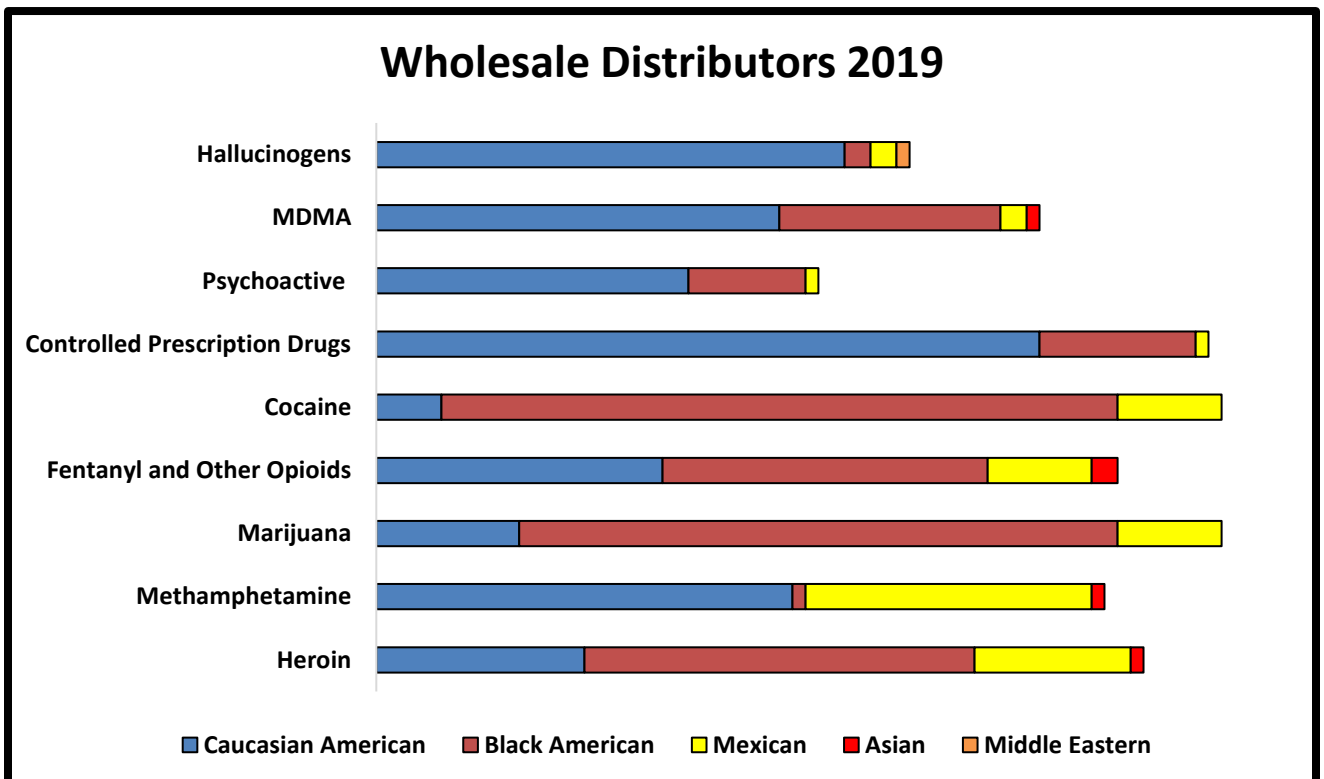
When defining Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTO) the main goal is to identify who controls the main drug distribution details in a defined area whether it be locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. Within Alabama DTOs can vary widely depending on the source of the drug, the drug traffickers involved, and distribution of the drug. For the purpose of this Assessment we will state the main source of the majority of the drugs here in Alabama and the main DTOs responsible for their distribution.

### a. Sources of Drugs

Methamphetamine in Alabama is mainly sourced directly from Mexico. According to law enforcements respondents from the survey over 69% stated methamphetamine has increased in their area. The majority of this methamphetamine is from originations outside Alabama which is continuing to drive down the total number of local methamphetamine labs seen in the state. Heroin is mainly sourced from Mexico, with some also being seen from California. Fentanyl which has been coming from Mexico has also been seen via postal packages from China via purchase from the Dark web. Cocaine, which has seen ups and downs as far as availability, is mainly sourced south of the border. Marijuana has mainly been sourced, according to law enforcement, from the states of Colorado and California where the laws on producing and selling marijuana are much more relaxed than Alabama. Diverted pharmaceuticals, as well as new psychoactive drugs, are mainly sourced from the internet or dark web which makes the drugs being seized by law enforcement less likely.

### b. Groups in Alabama distributing the drugs

The following chart documents the main criminal groups, according to law enforcement respondents, responsible for the wholesale distribution of drugs in Alabama. As the chart below documents, Black Americans are primarily responsible for the cocaine and marijuana distributed as well as a large percentage of heroin. Caucasian Americans are primarily responsible for controlled prescription drugs, hallucinogens, MDMA, new psychoactive drugs, and methamphetamine. Mexicans are involved in a large percentage of methamphetamine and heroin that is distributed in Alabama.



## V. ILLICIT FINANCE

Ways to launder money from drug proceeds will always be something that DTOs are looking for in order to elude law enforcement. According to EPIC statistics the extensive use of bulk currency movement is via the highways. The top SAR Activity for Alabama in 2019 is the Depository Institutions. Money Service businesses via SAR reports have dropped to number two in the state. Other methods which are showing more in investigations throughout the state is the use of the Dark Web and virtual currencies (VC). Intelligence continues to show that individuals in Alabama are now using the Dark Web as a means of drug transactions. During 2019, the GC HIDTA Watch Center reported a total of \$4,933,932.00 in U.S. currency seized in Alabama. According to EPIC the currency seizures from traffic stops and investigations for Alabama in 2019 totaled \$6,637,789.00.

### Suspicious Activity Reports

FinCEN reported 218 SARs filed by casinos and card clubs in Alabama in 2019. The SAR totals as reported to FinCen in each category below have shown slight increases from 2018 in every category with the exception of the Money Service Businesses. The chart below shows the SAR reports for Alabama as reported to FinCEN during calendar years 2018 and 2019.

<b>FinCEN Suspicious Activity Reports 2018-2019</b>		
	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
SAR-C (Casino and Card Clubs)	217	218
SAR-DI (Depository Institution)	15,742	16,695
SAR MSB (Money Service Businesses)	17,011	11,599
SAR (Other business)	44	94

In the SAR filings for Alabama, the Depository Institutions and the Money Service Businesses continue to top the list, however Money Service Businesses has dropped significantly in the number of SARs reported for Alabama in 2019. The below chart explains the top reasons for the SARs filed by Money Service Businesses, and Depository Institutions in Alabama.

<b>Top Characteristics listed on SARs filed for Money Service Business</b>	
<b>Transaction(s) Below BSA Recordkeeping Threshold</b>	<b>4,815</b>
<b>Suspicious use of multiple transaction locations</b>	<b>3,885</b>
<b>Other Suspicious Activities</b>	<b>2,699</b>
<b>Two or more individuals working together</b>	<b>2,234</b>

<b>Top Characteristics listed on SARs filed for Depository Institutions</b>	
<b>Transaction with No Apparent Economic, Business, or Lawful Purpose</b>	<b>6,649</b>
<b>Check</b>	<b>5,652</b>
<b>Suspicion Concerning the Source of Funds</b>	<b>4,004</b>

**Example of an Alabama currency seizure for 2019:**

- On July 2, 2019, the MBMIT and the Baldwin Co So seized approximately \$1,248,915.00 in currency. The currency was wrapped in duct tape and concealed in the cab of a tractor trailer truck. The driver was arrested and his travel itinerary showed McAllen, TX, Ohio, and North Carolina.



## VI. OUTLOOK

Based on the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, methamphetamine continues to be the most significant drug threat in Alabama. Fentanyl has moved into the number two slot according to law enforcement and heroin is staying close as the number three greatest threat. Another main drug category of concern which is now ranked fourth according to law enforcement is controlled prescription drugs. Controlled prescription drugs are coming in as the number two greatest drug threat according to the treatment survey and these drugs are now ranked the highest in mental health admissions for 2019. According to the survey, Caucasian Americans are the primary methamphetamine transporters and distributors in Alabama; while Caucasian and Black American DTO's distribute significant quantities of heroin, fentanyl and other opioids. Controlled prescription drugs are distributed and transported by Caucasian American DTOs. Cocaine, which has dropped in ranking as the greatest drug threat, is still a threat when it comes to property crime in Alabama. Black American DTOs are the primary distributors of crack and powder cocaine.

Atlanta, Georgia, remains the primary distribution point for drugs coming into Alabama. The state of Texas is also a prominent source for drugs because of its location next to the Mexican border.

Hydrocodone and Oxycodone continue to remain the primary pharmaceutical drugs of abuse. Additionally, heroin and fentanyl will continue to be a major concern for law enforcement. With the recent seizure of carfentanil in Alabama the dangerous aspects of fentanyl analogs will continue to remain high. Other dangerous drugs such as synthetic cannabinoids and synthetic cathinones, primarily Spice and Spice analogs, as well as hallucinogens and other designer drugs, will continue to be a threat to the population of Alabama. The rate at which these drugs are being seen and analyzed by the Alabama Forensic Sciences indicates that these drugs will not be decreasing anytime soon.

Marijuana in the past has always been the most widely available and most widely abused illicit drug. Marijuana has now dropped slightly below methamphetamine as far as availability goes according to law enforcement and it now ranks as the number seventh drug in threat. The Department of Mental Health now has marijuana falling behind controlled prescription drugs as it relates to patient admissions. The abuse of marijuana will continue to cross all racial and economic boundaries. In the past, most of the marijuana was imported from Mexico, but today California, Colorado, and Washington have become sources for high-grade marijuana in Alabama. The state of Illinois which has become the most recent state to allow recreational use of marijuana could become the next state which is seen as an origination point for Alabama considering the closeness of the State.

Activity on the Dark Web, will continue to be an avenue of untraceable transactions of currency and drugs for Alabama. More investigations of use of the Dark Web and virtual currency will continue being used in criminal drug activity.

## **VII. METHODOLOGY**

In December 1996, the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) designated 12 counties/parishes across Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama as the Gulf Coast High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (GC HIDTA); additional counties/parishes were designated at later dates. In 2008, the GC HIDTA added four additional designated counties located in Arkansas and in 2010 the county of Shelby Tennessee was added. Northwest Florida became a member of the Gulf Coast HIDTA in 2016. Combined, the six states serve as a gateway/throughway for drugs crossing into the United States and as a transit and staging zone for drug distribution.

The 2021 Alabama Drug Threat Assessment details the drug categories of methamphetamine, fentanyl and other opioids, heroin, controlled prescription drugs, cocaine, marijuana, and synthetic / other dangerous drugs. Also included within the threat assessment are details on drug admissions/treatment given at various mental health facilities located across the state as well as statistics from Poison Control on emergency room admittance.

Sources used to create this assessment include statistics from the 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey, El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Alabama Fusion Center, Alabama Poison Control, Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences, Alabama Department of Mental Health, Alabama Department of Public Health, GC HIDTA Watch Center, Alabama Department of Human Resources and various law enforcement agencies who contributed individual statistics from their area.



## VIII. APPENDICES, TABLES AND ADDENDUMS

\*\*The following chart documents the top counties in Alabama that provided traffic stops and the top traffic stop county of each drug as reported to EPIC for 2019.

TOP 3 COUNTIES FOR TRAFFIC STOPS AS REPORTED BY EPIC FOR 2019	
AUTAUGA	152
ELMORE	19
JEFFERSON	15

2019 TOP TRAFFIC STOP COUNTIES FOR EACH DRUG SEIZED AS REPORTED BY EPIC			
DRUG	COUNTY	NUMBER OF STOPS	DRUG AMOUNT
MARIJUANA	GREENE	4	1,048.68 KILO
	JEFFERSON	5	135.26 KILO
	BALDWIN	2	37.64 KILO
COCAINE	BALDWIN	3	88.63 KILO
	JEFFERSON	5	71.95 KILO
	MOBILE	4	68.45 KILO
METHAMPHETAMINE	BALDWIN	5	71.99 KILO
	MADISON	1	11.17 KILO
	DEKALB	1	10.95 KILO
PHARMACEUTICALS	AUTAUGA	26	435.5 PILLS & 2.56 KILO
	JEFFERSON	3	35 PILLS
	ELMORE	1	32 PILLS
HEROIN	MOBILE	1	2.27 KILO
	JEFFERSON	3	.97 KILO
	BALDWIN	1	.22 KILO

The following chart references all Alabama traffic stops (drug, currency, firearm) as reported to EPIC according to the interstate location, day of the week and time of day stopped.

2019 TRAFFIC STOPS BY DAY IN ALABAMA WITH DRUG NEXUS AS REPORTED TO EPIC	
WEDNESDAY	54
FRIDAY	51
THURSDAY	37
TUESDAY	37
SATURDAY	32
MONDAY	31
SUNDAY	25

2019 TOP TIMES FOR STOPS	
12-1 am	18
1-2 am	9
2-3 am	3
3-4 am	6
4-5 am	1
5-6 am	2
6-7 am	1
7-8 am	1
8-9 am	6
9-10 am	7
10-11 am	9
11-12 pm	14
12-1 pm	27
1-2 pm	13
2-3 pm	13
3-4 pm	11
4-5 pm	19
5-6 pm	15
6-7 pm	14
7-8 pm	19
8-9 pm	21
9-10 pm	15
10-11 pm	17
11-12 am	6

2019 TRAFFIC STOP LOCATIONS VIA INTERSTATE AS REPORTED TO EPIC	
I-20 W	16
I-20 E	1
I-59 N	7
I-59 S	4
I-65 N	8
I-65 S	13
I-85 S	5
I-10 W	6
I-10 E	16
I-459 N	5
HWY 35	4
HWY 72	11
HWY 35	4
HWY 78	2
HWY 9	4
HWY 231 N	2
HWY 411 N	1
HWY 278 W	1
HWY 181 S	1

The following charts document the traffic stops per location and day of week as reported to EPIC for the surrounding States of GA and MS in 2019.

GA DAY OF WEEK STOPS	
MONDAY	26
TUESDAY	50
WEDNESDAY	56
THURSDAY	41
FRIDAY	18
SATURDAY	10
SUNDAY	16

GA INTERSTATE LOCATIONS CONNECTED TO AL WITH STOPS	
I-85 S	18
I-85 N	18
I-20 W	0
I-20 E	8

MS DAY OF WEEK STOPS	
MONDAY	60
TUESDAY	79
WEDNESDAY	92
THURSDAY	72
FRIDAY	68
SATURDAY	62
SUNDAY	22

MS INTERSTATE LOCATIONS CONNECTED TO AL WITH STOPS	
I-10 E	61
I-10 W	41
I-20 E	12
I-20 W	10

The following two charts includes totals accounting for all traffic stops in Alabama as reported to EPIC in 2019

<b>EPIC Total Traffic Stops in Alabama for 2019 with currency, illegal drugs, controlled prescription drugs, and/or drug paraphernalia seized</b>
266

EPIC 2019 Total of each drug and currency seized in stops	
Methamphetamine	106.07 kilos
Marijuana	1,360.53 kilos
Cocaine	270 kilos
Heroin	3.48 kilos
Fentanyl	0
Controlled Prescription Drugs	555 dosages, 2.56 kilos
Other Dangerous Drugs	248 dosages, .979 kilos
Psychotic Drugs	.139 kilos
Currency	3,792,154.00 dollars

## **SAFETY CONCERNS / TRENDS/ OF VARIOUS DRUGS SEEN IN ALABAMA or SURROUNDING STATES or NATIONWIDE**

### **“Carfentanil” seized in Huntsville, AL**

In 2019 two kilos of what was thought to be heroin was seized in Huntsville, but lab reports proved that it was indeed Carfentanil. **\*\*Carfentanil is 100 times more potent than fentanyl**



### **“White Ghost” in Georgia**

In June of 2019 a new form of blue heroin aka “White Ghost” was encountered in Georgia. This substance consists of pain pill medication being crushed up and mixed with heroin. The drug appears like a chalky substance similar to “Gray Death” heroin. The users are told to use this intravenously at a slow rate in order to avoid overdose death

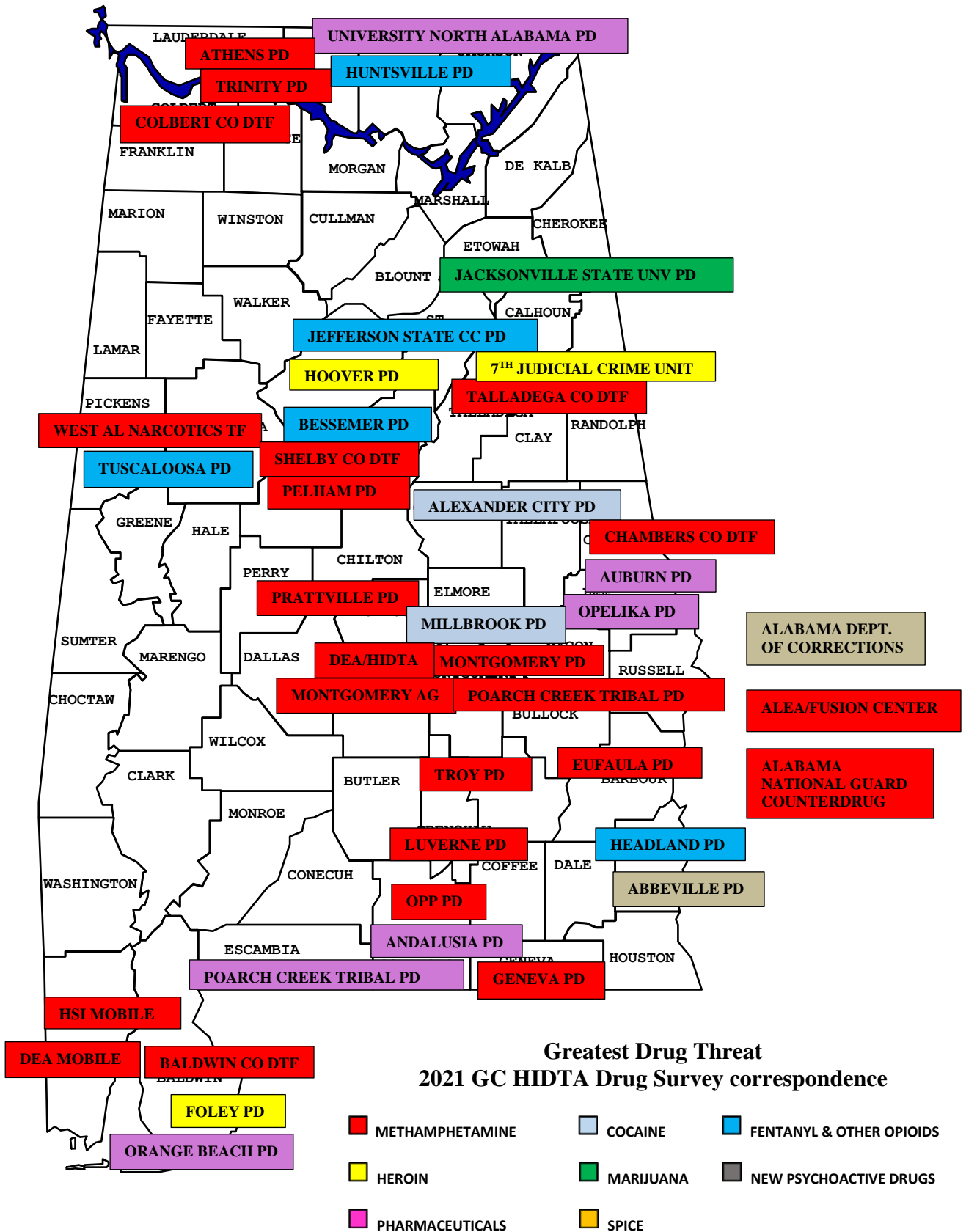


### **“Black Fentanyl”**

In October of 2019, detectives with the Mid Michigan Investigative Narcotics Team (MINT) conducted a purchase of a drug in powder form, black in color, and packaged in a typical paper fold in Michigan. The drug tested positive for both fentanyl and methamphetamine. This drug has possible adverse reactions of hallucinations, extreme muscle rigidity, and high risk of overdose.



# 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey correspondence Alabama PD/DTF/Board Agencies



**2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey correspondence with participates from (Local Police, State/Board Agencies, DEA and Drug Task Forces).**

7<sup>TH</sup> Judicial Crime Unit

Abbeville PD

Alabama AG

Alabama Department of Corrections

ALEA/Fusion Center

Alabama National Guard Counterdrug

Alexander PD

Andalusia PD

Athens PD

Auburn PD

Baldwin County DTF

Bessemer PD

Birmingham PD

Colbert County DTF

DEA/Mobile

DEA/Montgomery

Demopolis PD

Eufaula PD

Foley PD

Geneva PD

Gulf Coast HIDTA - Montgomery

Headland PD

Huntsville PD

ICE/HSI/Mobile

Jefferson State CC PD

Luverne PD

Millbrook PD

Montgomery AG

Montgomery PD

Opelika PD

Opp PD

Orange Beach PD

Poarch Creek Tribal PD

Prattville PD

Shelby CO DTF

Talladega CO DTF

Trinity PD

Troy PD

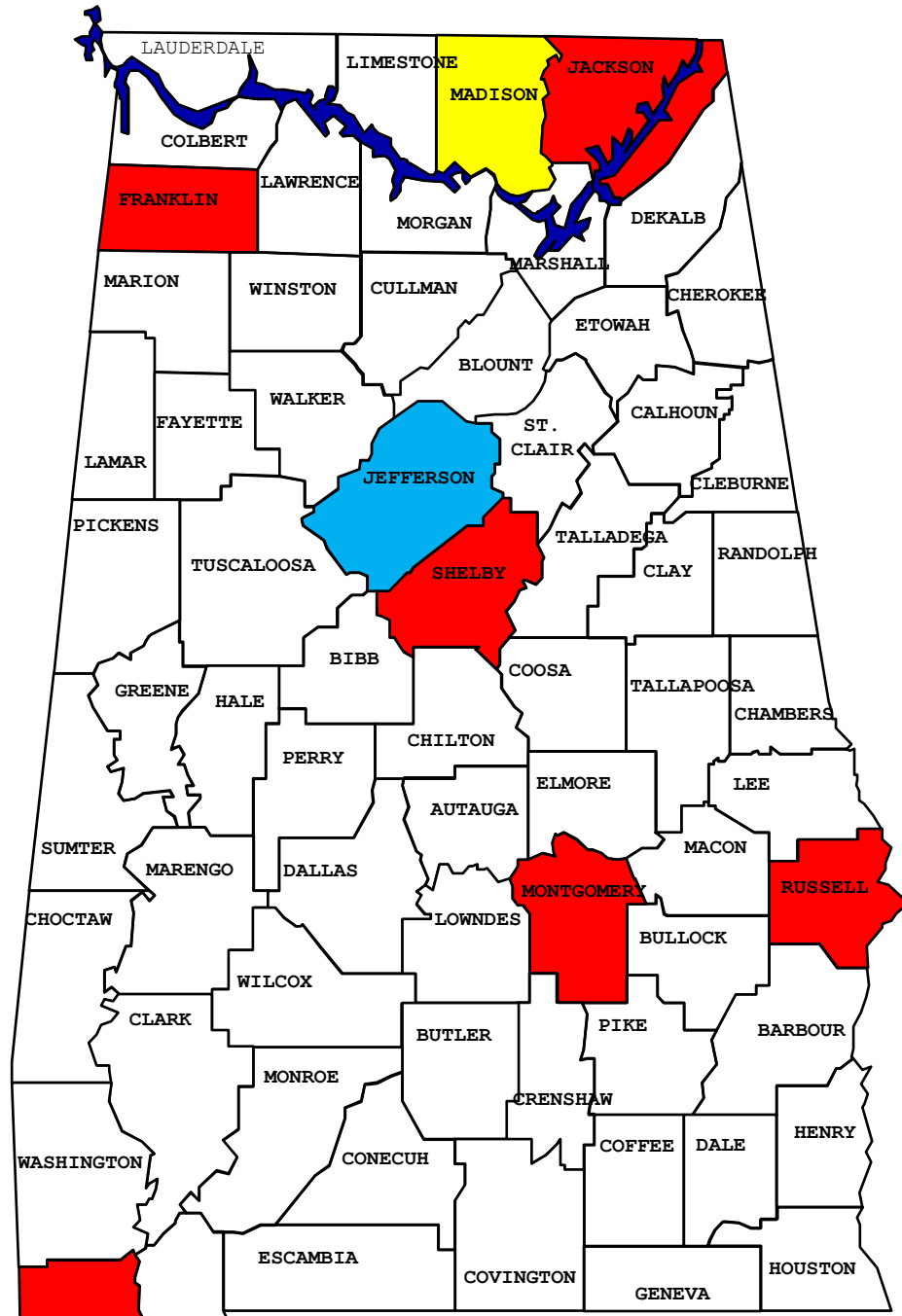
Tuscaloosa PD

UNV N Alabama PD

West Alabama Narcotics DTF



# 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey correspondence County Sheriff Offices



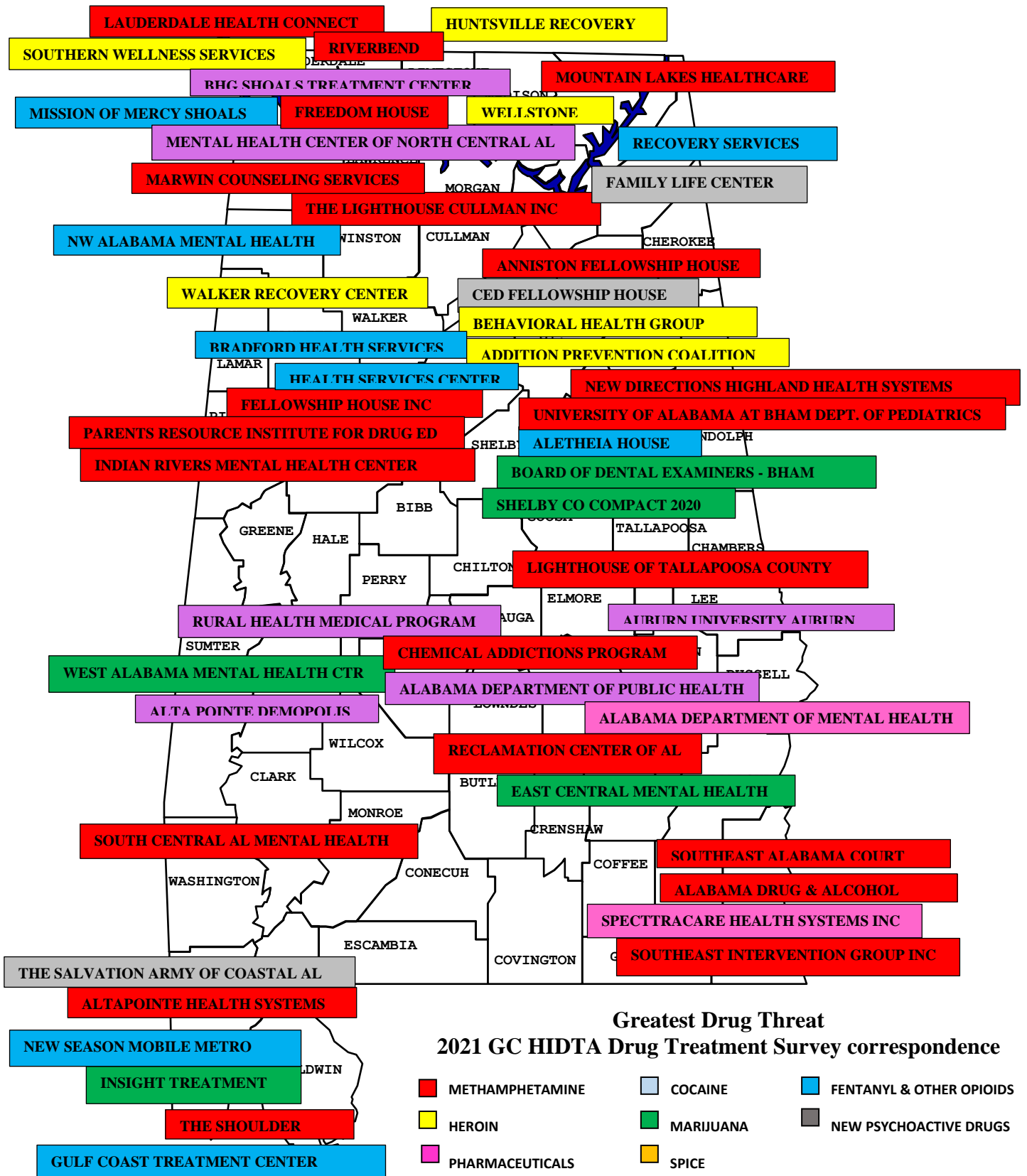
**Greatest Drug Threat**  
2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey correspondence

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> METHAMPHETAMINE  | <span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> COCAINE | <span style="color: cyan;">■</span> FENTANYL & OTHER OPIOIDS |
| <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> HEROIN        | <span style="color: green;">■</span> MARIJUANA   | <span style="color: gray;">■</span> NEW PSYCHOACTIVE DRUGS   |
| <span style="color: pink;">■</span> PHARMACEUTICALS | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> SPICE      |  |

**2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey correspondence with participates from (County Sheriffs).**

Franklin County Sheriff  
Jackson County Sheriff  
Jefferson County Sheriff  
Madison County Sheriff  
Marengo County Sheriff  
Mobile County Sheriff  
Montgomery County Sheriff  
Shelby County Sheriff

# 2021 GC HIDTA Drug Survey correspondence Treatments Centers



\*If more than one survey response was received by a Treatment Center, the first one documented was plotted.

## 2021 GC HIDTA Treatment Survey Participants

Addiction Prevention Coalition  
Alabama Department of Mental Health  
Alabama Department of Public Health  
Alabama Drug and Alcohol Center  
Aletheia House  
AltaPointe Health Systems  
Anniston Fellowship House  
Auburn University Auburn  
Behavioral Health Group  
Board of Dental Examiners BHam  
Bradford Health Services  
CED Fellowship House, Inc.  
Chemical Addictions Program  
Cullman Lighthouse  
East Central Mental Health Center  
Family Life Center  
Fellowship House  
Freedom House  
Gulf Coast Treatment Center  
Health Services Center  
Huntsville Recovery  
Indian Rivers Mental Health Center  
Insight Treatment Program  
Lauderdale Health Connect  
Lighthouse Tallapoosa County  
Marwin Counseling Services  
Mental Health Center of North Alabama  
Mission of Mercy Shoals  
Mountain Lakes Behavioral Healthcare  
New Directions Highland Health Systems  
New Season Mobile Metro  
Northwest Alabama Mental Health  
Parents Resource Institute for Drug Education  
Reclamation Center of Alabama  
Recovery Services  
Riverbend Center  
Rural Health Medical Program  
Shelby Co Compact 2020  
South Central Mental Health  
Southeast Intervention Group, Inc  
Southeast Alabama Court Services  
Southern Wellness Services  
SpectraCare Health Systems, Inc.  
The Lighthouse of Cullman, Inc.

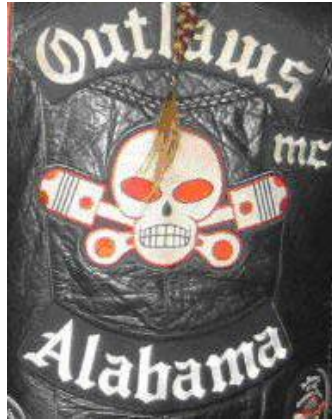
The Salvation Army of Coastal AL  
The Shoulder  
UAB Department of Pediatrics  
Walker Recovery Center  
WellStone  
West Alabama Mental Health Center

# MOTORCYCLE GANGS/CLUBS and STREET GANGS

Although there is no information relating motorcycle drugs directly to any current drug transactions in the State it is important for law enforcement to be aware of their locations and affiliations. Listed below is some of the more prominent motorcycle gang groups that are located in Alabama.

- **Outlaws M C (Motorcycle Club)**

The Outlaw Motorcycle Club has supporting chapters in Birmingham, Dothan and East Orange (FloraBama). The Outlaws M C support club are the Black Pistons M C, Lower Class M C, Chaotic Few M C, and the Southern Tribe M C.



(Support Clubs of Outlaws)

**Black Pistons**

The Black Pistons have locations in Dothan, Montgomery and Foley, Alabama



**Chaotic Few**

The Chaotic Few has a location in Dothan.



**Lower Class**

The Lower Class M C has a location in Birmingham



**Southern Tribe**

The Southern Tribe has a location in Geneva.



- **Devils Diciples M C (Motorcycle Club)**

The Devils Diciples M C have chapters in Albertville (Sand Mountain Chapter), Anniston, Atmore, Birmingham, Dozier, Tuscaloosa, Lillian and Mobile.



**(Support Club of Devils Diciples) – Sinisters**

The Sinisters M C has a chapter in Tuscaloosa.



- **Southern Brotherhood M C (Motorcycle Club)**

The Southern Brotherhood was formed from a white supremacist prison gang. In the past this group has been active in St. Clair County. Most of the logos, cuts, rockers (location listed on back patch of jacket) have “Dixie” or “DOC” listed. This MC has been known to affiliate with members of prison gangs such as Aryan Brotherhood.





- **Wheels of Soul M C (Motorcycle Club)**

The Wheels of Soul has a chapter in Birmingham and Huntsville. The membership is predominately Black Americans.



- **Bandidos M C (Motorcycle Club)**

The Bandidos M C has chapters in Birmingham, Huntsville, Mobile and Montgomery. The support club for the Bandidos M C is the Pistoleros and Alabama Riders. An individual may be a member of a support club for several years before being offered the “opportunity” of becoming a Bandido. There has been recent intelligence that a new “logo” is to be used which has American Bandidos.



**(Support Clubs of Bandidos) – Pistoleros/Alabama Riders**

The Pistoleros M C has the following chapters: Baldwin County, Birmingham (East), Birmingham (West), Dothan, Enterprise, Huntsville, Jasper, Mobile, Phenix City and Montgomery. There is intelligence that possibly Cullman has a chapter. The Alabama Riders M C has chapters in Mobile, Huntsville, Montgomery, Dothan and Phenix City.



- **Outcast M C (Motorcycle Club)**

The Outcast M C has chapters in Dothan, Montgomery, Birmingham, Bessemer, and Huntsville. The Outcast is an All Black “Club”.



## **A. Additional Sources**

**The following agencies contributed additional sources to the Alabama Drug Threat Assessment:**

Alabama Department of Corrections (DOC)  
Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences  
Alabama Department of Human Resources  
Alabama Department of Mental Health  
Alabama Department of Public Health  
Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA)  
Alabama Fusion Center  
Regional Poison Control Center (RPCC) at Children's of Alabama  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Alabama (CDC)  
GC Watch Center, Gulfport, MS (BLOC)  
Jefferson County Coroner's Office  
Drug Enforcement Administration  
High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)  
El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC)  
Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN)  
U.S. Army National Guard  
U.S. Census Bureau

## B. Illicit Drug Prices for Alabama (2019 prices) – DEA/HIDTA Offices Statewide

### Cocaine

State/Territory/District City  
Price in Dollars

	Gram	Ounce	8-Ball	Kilogram
Birmingham	60-120	800-1,250	N/A	30,000-37,000
Mobile	80-100	1,000-1,100	150-200	30,000-33,000
Montgomery	50	1100-1200	150-175	28,000-32,000
Huntsville	60-100	1200-1300	150-200	32,000-40,000

### Methamphetamine

State/Territory/District City  
Price in Dollars

	Gram	Ounce	Pound	Kilogram
Birmingham	80-120	250	5,000-5,500	
Mobile	80-100	350-550	4,000-12,000	4,500-8,100
Montgomery	20-40	250-300	3,000-4,000	7,500-8,000
Huntsville	50-100	300-600	4,800-7,000	10,000-18,000

### High Grade Marijuana

State/Territory/District City  
Price in Dollars

	Gram	Ounce	Pound
Birmingham	N/A	350-500	3,500-4,500
Mobile	N/A	350-500	1,800-2,300
Montgomery	10-24	180-300	2,500-3,000
Huntsville	15-30	175-250	3,000-5,000

### Heroin

State/Territory/District City  
Price in Dollars

	PT	Gram	Ounce	Kilogram
Birmingham	N/A	100-200	2,800-3,500	64,974-159,984
Mobile	10-20	100-160	1,800-2,500	40,000-75,000
Montgomery	20	100-150	1,800-2,500	70,000-80,000
Huntsville	30	100-200	2,800-3,500	

**MDMA**

State/Territory/District City

Price in Dollars

	Dosage/Unit
Birmingham	20-30
Mobile	25
Montgomery	15
Huntsville	20-30

**GBL/GHB**

State/Territory/District City

Price in Dollars

	Tablets/Capsules/Oz
Birmingham	N/A
Mobile	N/A
Montgomery	N/A
Huntsville	N/A

**Spice / K2 (Synthetic Cannabinoids)**

State/Territory/District City

Price in Dollars

	Package
Birmingham	N/A
Mobile	35-45
Montgomery	33-40
Huntsville	30-60

**LSD**

State/Territory/District City

Price in Dollars

	Tablets
Birmingham	N/A
Mobile	N/A
Montgomery	N/A
Huntsville	N/A

**Fentanyl**

State/Territory/District City

Price in Dollars

	Ounce
Birmingham	N/A
Mobile	720
Montgomery	N/A
Huntsville	N/A