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**PLYMOUTH COUNTY DA CRUZ ANNOUNCES 2020 HOMICIDE, OVERDOSE
STATISTICS FOR COUNTY**

BROCKTON – Massachusetts State Police Detectives assigned to the Plymouth County District Attorney’s Office investigated seven homicides and one officer-involved shooting, and responded to 165 suspected fatal drug overdoses in 2020, according to Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz.

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Law, Massachusetts State Police assigned to the District Attorney’s Office have the responsibility of investigating all sudden or unattended deaths if under violent, suspicious, or unusual circumstances. These deaths are investigated by the District Attorney’s law enforcement representative, which in our county is the Massachusetts State Police Detective Unit-Homicide Section. The State Police Detective Unit works in conjunction with the local police on death investigations.

In 2020, numbers compiled through the Massachusetts State Police Detectives assigned to our office responded to a total of 7 homicides in Plymouth County, and one fatal officer-involved shooting in Brockton. In 2019, State Police responded to 10 homicides. These numbers do not include motor vehicle homicides.

In 2020, 31 individuals were hit by gunfire in Brockton, compared to 2019 where 23 individuals were struck.

“As District Attorney I see firsthand the impact of violence and homicide on the community, particularly on surviving family and friends,” DA Cruz said. “The tentacles of trauma associated with gun violence and homicide run deep, and the ripple effect is wide. We strive every day to hold accountable those perpetrating violent crime, but also use our resources to support the prevention and re-entry work of our Safe Streets coalition here in Brockton. We look forward to continuing these efforts in 2021.”

In 2020, there were a total of 165 suspected fatal overdoses in the county for the year. In 2019, there were 143 suspected fatal overdoses. These numbers were compiled

from suspected overdoses State Police detectives responded to and data compiled by Plymouth County Outreach.

“The number of suspected fatal overdoses is up for 2020,” DA Cruz said. “One overdose is one too many. This coming year, we will continue our work with the Plymouth County Drug Abuse Task Force to get help and resources to those addicted and their families. Another goal in 2021 is to expand our Handle with Care program so that all 27 communities here in Plymouth County have the tools and training to address trauma sensitivity and help children coping with Adverse Childhood Experiences, build resiliency and succeed.”

In 2015, DA Cruz along with Plymouth County Sheriff Joseph McDonald formed the Plymouth County Drug Abuse Task Force, an effort to engage all community sectors to work on the opioid issue. The Drug Abuse Task Force brings law enforcement, the medical community, educators and substance abuse experts together to share information and track the current trends of the opiate epidemic. Out of the task force emerged Plymouth County Outreach (PCO), the county-wide effort to reach overdose victims and their families and get them the support and services they need in the critical hours after an incident. PCO is comprised of 27 municipal police departments in Plymouth County, along with the Bridgewater State University Police.

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