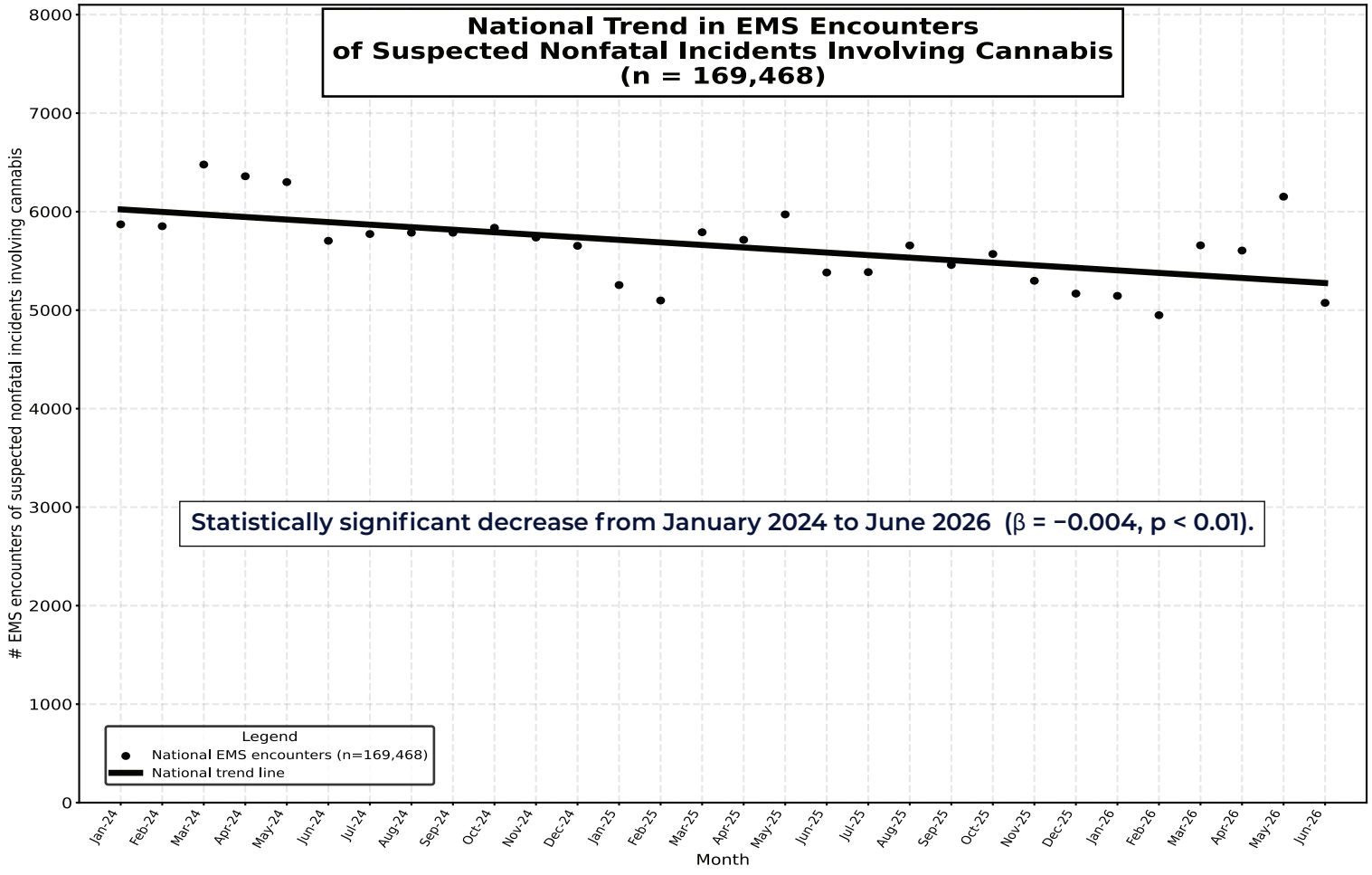
NDEWS Special Report

National trend in EMS encounters of suspected nonfatal incidents involving cannabis January 1, 2024 - June 30, 2026

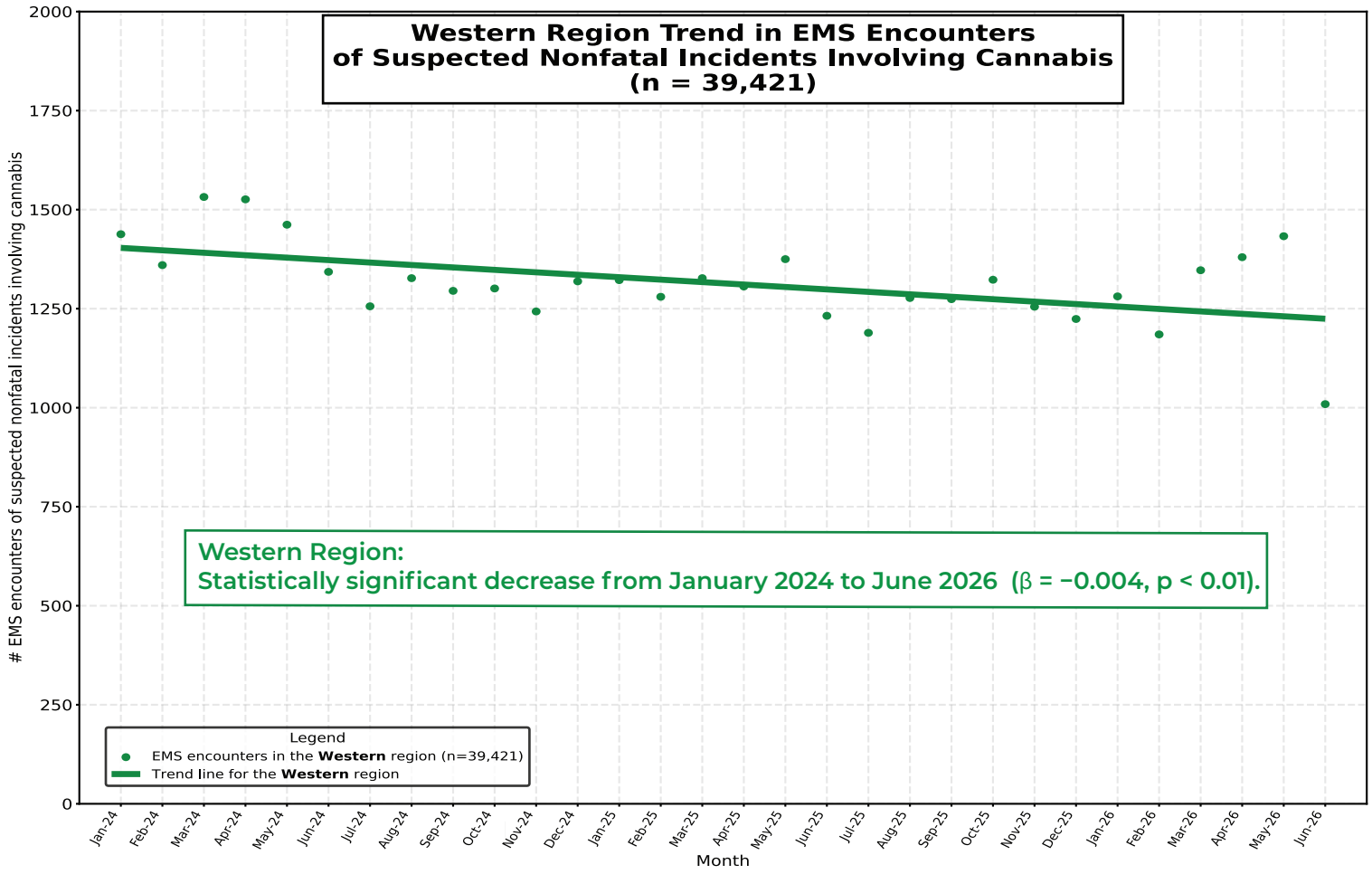
Published in NDEWS Weekly Briefing Issue 308: October 23, 2026

Nationally, there were 169,468 EMS encounters of suspected nonfatal incidents involving cannabis from January 1, 2024 to June 30, 2026. Of these, 39,421 occurred in Western states, 28,840 in Midwestern states, 74,270 in Southern states, and 26,937 in Northeastern states. The national and regional trends as well as counties with the 10 highest EMS encounter rates per 10,000 population are presented in this special report.



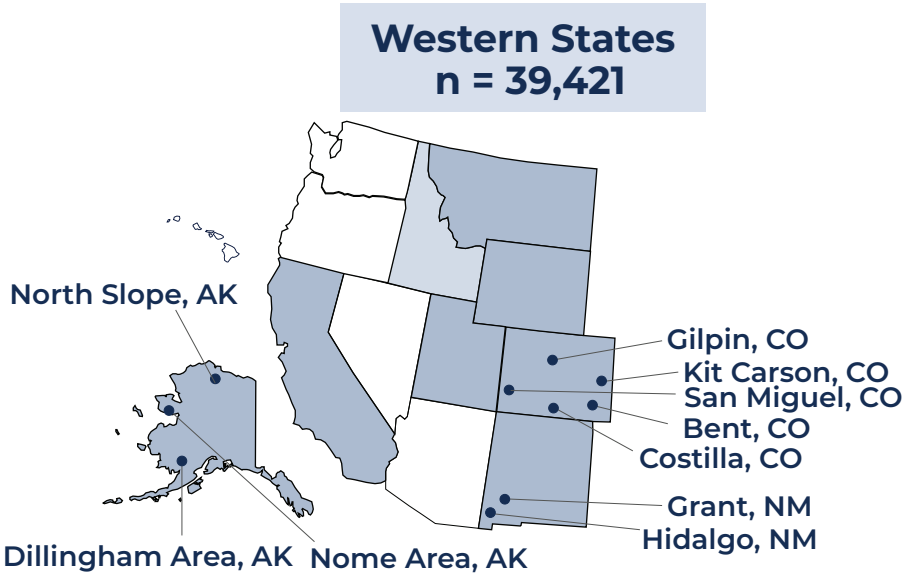
See pages 2, 3, 4, & 5 for regional trends detailing the EMS encounters

Western region trend in EMS encounters of suspected nonfatal incidents involving cannabis and the counties with the 10 highest EMS encounter rates per 10,000 population January 1, 2024 - June 30, 2026 (n = 39,421)



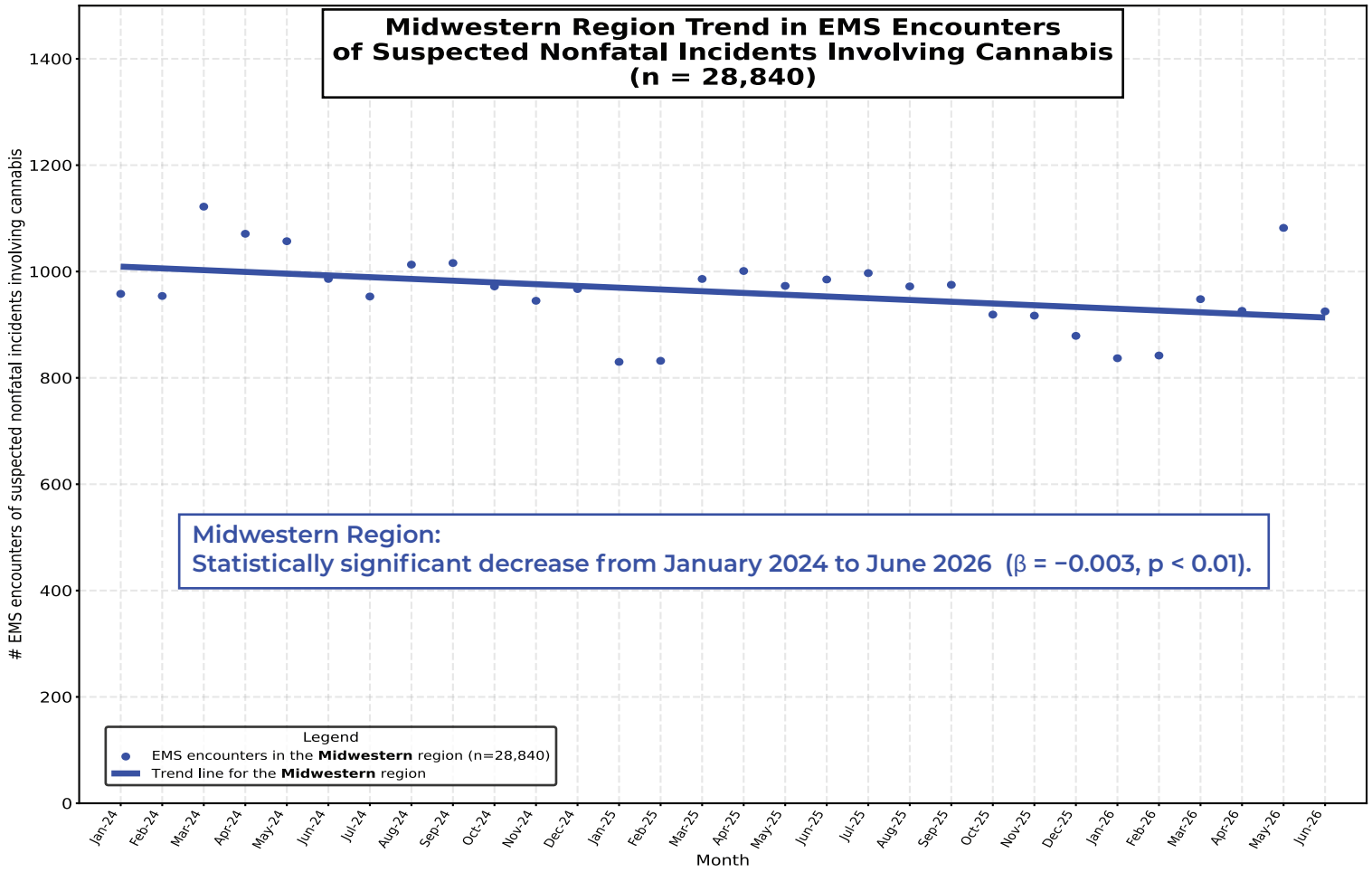
County*	EMS encounters per 10,000 population
Bent, CO	39.2
Hidalgo, NM	38.9
Gilpin, CO	38.4
Costilla, CO	30.6
Nome Area, AK	29.3
San Miguel, CO	27.1
Grant, NM	25.9
Dillingham Area, AK	22.8
North Slope Borough, AK	22.6
Kit Carson, CO	22.5

*Counties sharing a color are in the same state.



Continued on the next page

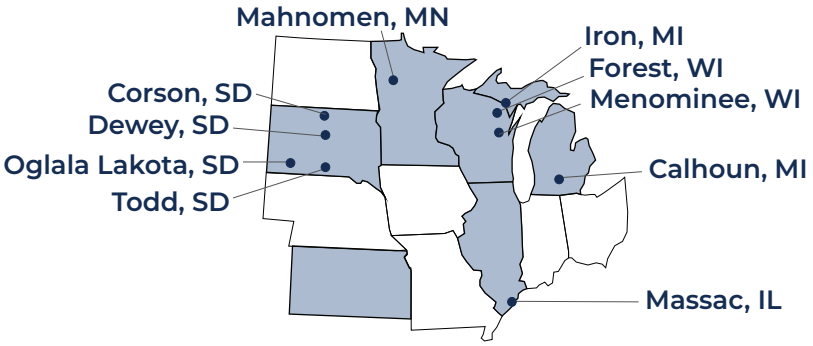
Midwestern region trend in EMS encounters of suspected nonfatal incidents involving cannabis and the counties with the 10 highest EMS encounter rates per 10,000 population January 1, 2024 - June 30, 2026 (n = 28,840)

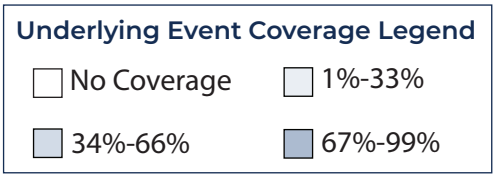


County*	EMS encounters per 10,000 population
Menominee, WI	50.6
Todd, SD	33.9
Corson, SD	24.8
Mahnomen, MN	23.8
Forest, WI	22.3
Iron, MI	20.8
Dewey, SD	19.0
Oglala Lakota, SD	18.5
Massac, IL	18.3
Calhoun, MI	18.0

*Counties sharing a color are in the same state.

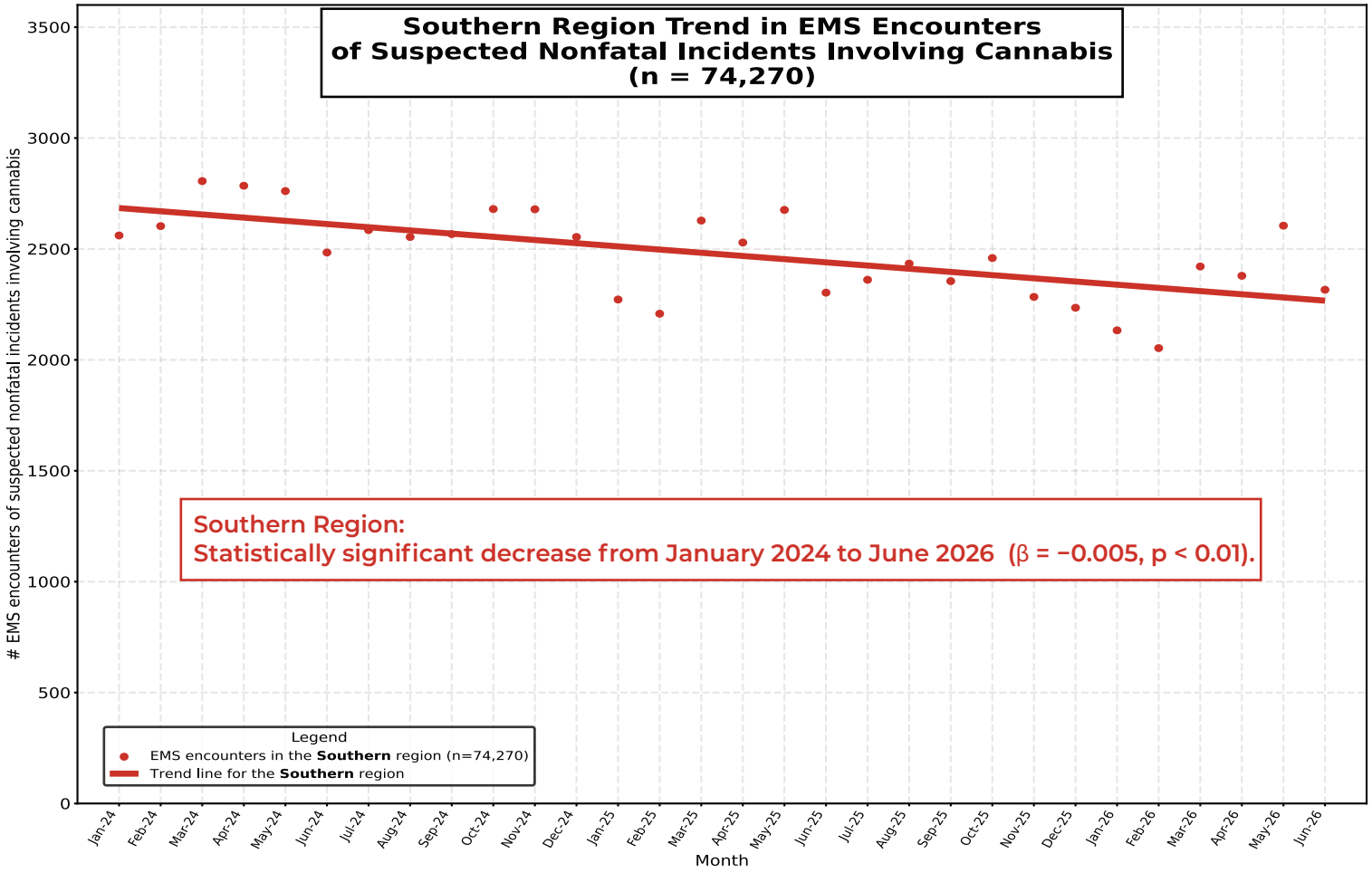
Midwestern States n = 28,840





Continued on the next page

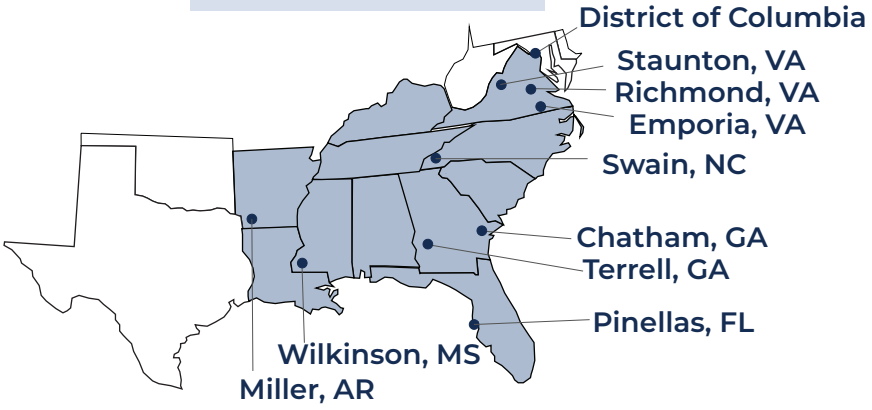
Southern region trend in EMS encounters of suspected nonfatal incidents involving cannabis and the counties with the 10 highest EMS encounter rates per 10,000 population January 1, 2024 - June 30, 2026 (n = 74,270)

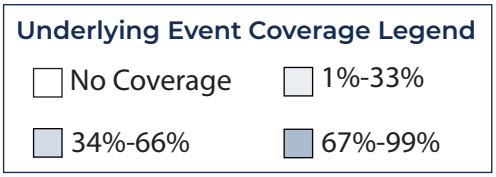


County*	EMS encounters per 10,000 population
Swain, NC	31.7
Terrell, GA	28.2
Wilkinson, MS	25.2
Pinellas, FL	23.7
Emporia city, VA	22.8
Staunton city, VA	22.2
Richmond city, VA	20.8
District of Columbia	20.6
Miller, AR	20.2
Chatham, GA	20.0

*Counties sharing a color are in the same state.

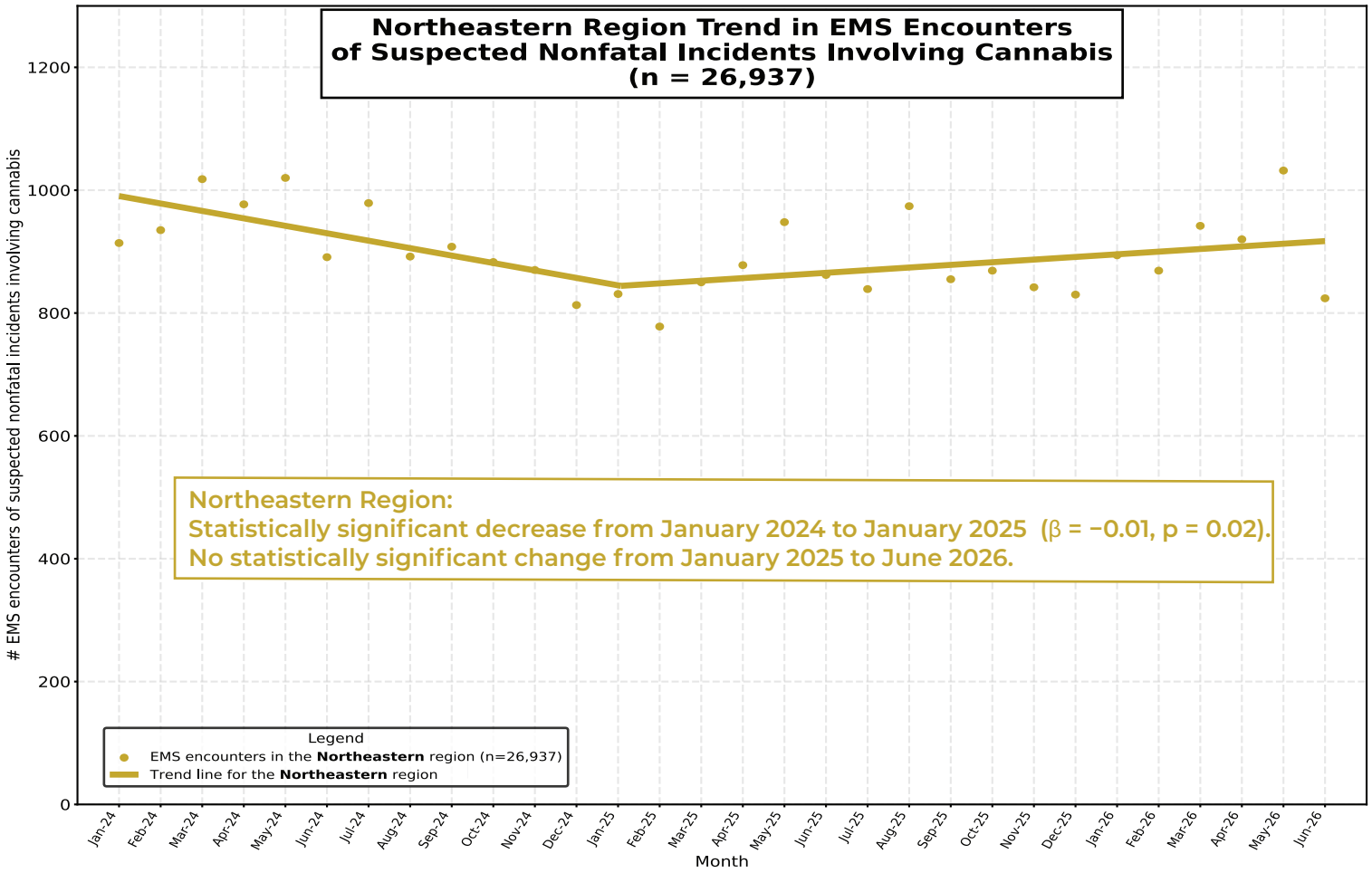
Southern States n = 74,270





Continued on the next page

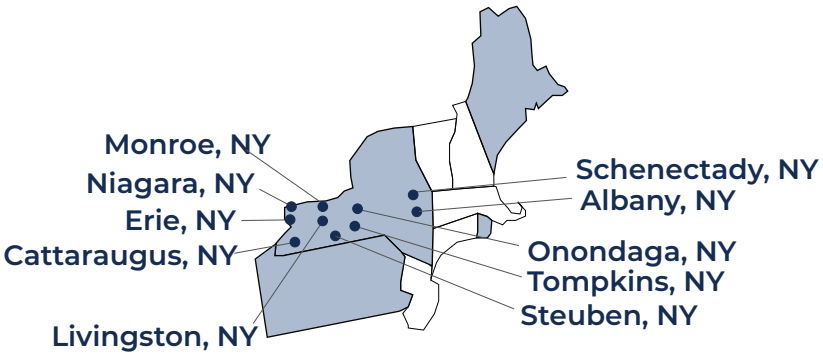
Northeastern region trend in EMS encounters of suspected nonfatal incidents involving cannabis and the counties with the 10 highest EMS encounter rates per 10,000 population January 1, 2024 - June 30, 2026 (n = 26,937)



County*	EMS encounters per 10,000 population
Onondaga, NY	54.6
Monroe, NY	34.0
Livingston, NY	17.8
Steuben, NY	16.3
Tompkins, NY	16.0
Erie, NY	15.3
Schenectady, NY	14.5
Cattaraugus, NY	14.4
Albany, NY	14.3
Niagara, NY	13.7

*Counties sharing a color are in the same state.

Northeastern States n = 26,937



Underlying Event Coverage Legend

No Coverage | 1%-33% | 34%-66% | 67%-99%

Continued on the next page

Methodology: Trends in EMS encounters of suspected nonfatal incidents involving cannabis were examined by month from January 1, 2024, through June 30, 2026, using joinpoint regression. This method fits weighted least-squares regression models to log-transformed encounter counts to identify changes in temporal trends. The optimal number of joinpoints was determined using the Weighted Bayesian Information Criterion (WBIC). Joinpoints represent estimated points in time at which the slope (β) of the temporal trend changes. Poisson variance was specified to account for non-constant variance in EMS encounter counts. County-level encounter rates were calculated by dividing the total number of encounters during the period by the county population and multiplying by 10,000.

EMS encounters for suspected nonfatal incidents involving cannabis were included if the encounter contained a documented mention of cannabis in the patient complaint or narrative (including common misspellings). Eligible EMS encounters were identified using the Overdose criteria established by the state of Florida's Enhanced State Opioid Overdose Surveillance (ESOOS) program and the marijuana symptom criteria from biospatial.io. Only nonfatal encounters involving emergency response services in which patient contact was made were included.

All dispatch types above follow the guidelines set by the National Emergency Medical Services Information System (NEMSIS).

Limitations: biospatial.io data reflect pre-hospital EMS encounters and do not include hospital outcomes or toxicological confirmation. Much of the classification relies on clinical impressions, self-report, or bystander accounts. Additionally, EMS encounters involving suspected incidents may be underreported, overreported, or misclassified. County-level rates per 10,000 population may be sensitive to small population sizes, as a small number of encounters can produce high rates. Underlying event coverage varies by state, with incomplete reporting in some states. States with less than 67% coverage are AZ, CA, CT, DE, IA, ID, IN, LA, MA, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NV, OH, OK, OR, TX, VT, WA, and WV.