



Crime in Oklahoma, 2015

Selected Findings

June 2016

Murder in Oklahoma

According to Uniform Crime Reporting requirements, murder is defined as “the unlawful killing of a human being in which the element of malice aforethought was present.”

Any death due to a fight, argument, quarrel, assault, or commission of a crime is included. Manslaughters, suicides, accidental deaths, and justifiable homicides are excluded from this category.

Oklahoma law enforcement reported 241 murders in 2015.

Murders accounted for 1.5% of all violent crimes. In 2015, 138 murders were cleared by arrest or exceptional means, representing a statewide clearance rate of 57.3%. For reporting purposes, clearance rates are calculated by dividing the number of murders cleared by the total number of murders reported.

The majority of victims of murder were white males.

In 2015, white victims accounted for 56.8% of all murders, while 35.3% were black, 5.4% were Native American, and 0.8% were Asian. In 2015, 51.1% of persons arrested for murder were black, 44.4% white, 3.3% Native American, and 1.1% were Asian.

The majority of murders were committed using a firearm.

Sixty-four percent of all murders in Oklahoma were committed with a firearm. The most common firearm type was a handgun (119), followed by shotgun (9). A knife or cutting instrument was used in 14.1% of murders. Other methods used by offenders to commit murder included personal weapons (1), strangulation/hanging (17), chemical (4), and other blunt objects (8).

Law enforcement identified the offender in 76% of reported murders.

The offender knew the victim in 60%; of those, 19% of murders were committed by a family member.

The number of murders has remained steady over the last ten years.

In 2015, Oklahoma law enforcement reported 241 murders. Over the last ten years, law enforcement in Oklahoma has reported, on average, 212 murders per year.

High murder rates are found in both urban and rural counties.

Oklahoma and Tulsa counties comprise one-third of Oklahoma’s population. Even though they do not have the highest murder rates, they are the only counties with more than 40 murders in 2015.

Murder in Oklahoma, 2006-2015

