



# Crime in Oklahoma, 2017

## Selected Findings

June 2018

## 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 in the commission of a crime is included. Manslaughters, suicides, accidental deaths, and justifiable homicides are excluded from this category.

**Oklahoma law enforcement reported 246 murders in 2017.**

Murders accounted for 1.4% of all violent crimes. In 2017, 167 murders were cleared by arrest or exceptional means, representing a statewide clearance rate of 67.9%. 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 2017, white victims accounted for 48.4% of all murders, while 40.7% were black, 6.1% were Native American, and 1.2% were Asian. In 2017, 46.9% of persons arrested for murder were black, 46.3% were white, 6.3% were Native American, and 0.6% were Asian.

**The majority of murders were committed using a firearm.**

Sixty-eight percent of all murders in Oklahoma were committed with a firearm. The most common firearm type was a handgun (133), followed by firearms of not stated type (23). A knife or cutting instrument was used in 9.8% of murders. Other methods used by offenders to commit murder included personal weapons (20), shotgun (6), rifle (5), blunt object (11), and chemical (7).

**Law enforcement identified the offender in 72% of reported murders.**

The offender knew the victim in 61.8% of murders reported in 2017. Murders committed by a family member accounted for 13.4% of all reported murders in 2017.

**The number of reported murders has slightly increased during the last 10 years.**

In 2017, Oklahoma law enforcement reported 246 murders. From 2008 to 2014, Oklahoma law enforcement reported, on average, 208 murders per year. Over the last three years (2015-2017), Oklahoma law enforcement has reported, on average, 242 murders per year.

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

Oklahoma and Tulsa counties comprise 40.6% of Oklahoma’s population. Even though they do not have the highest murder rates, they are the only counties with over 70 murders in 2017.

**Murder in Oklahoma, 2008-2017**

