



# Crime in Oklahoma, 2011

## Selected Findings

December 2012

## 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 219 murders in 2011.**

Murders accounted for 1.2% of all violent crimes. In 2011, 177 murders were cleared by arrest or exceptional means, which represents a clearance rate of 80.8%. For reporting purposes, clearance rates are calculated by dividing the number of clearances by the number of offenses.

**The majority of offenders and victims of murder were white males.**

In 2011, 52.9% of persons arrested for murder were white, 35.9% were black, and 11.2% were American Indian. White victims accounted for 59.4% of all murders, while 34.2% were black and 5.5% were American Indian.

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

Sixty-three percent of all murders in Oklahoma were committed with a firearm. The most common firearm type was a handgun (103 murders), followed by a shotgun (10 murders). A knife was used in 13.7% of murders. Other methods used by offenders to commit murder included personal weapons (28 murders), explosives or fire (4 murders), and other blunt objects (7 murders).

**In 2011, most victims of murder were known by the offenders.**

In 91.8% of murders, the offender knew the victim. Approximately 22% of murders were committed by a family member.

**The number of murders has steadily increased over the last ten years.**

In 2002, Oklahoma law enforcement reported 163 murders. When compared to the 219 murders in 2011, this represents an increase of 34.4% over the ten-year period. On average, Oklahoma law enforcement has reported 202 murders per year over the last ten years.

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

Even though Oklahoma and Tulsa counties comprise more than one-third of the state’s population, they do not have the highest murder rates. Even so, they are the only counties with 50 or more murders in 2011.

### Murder in Oklahoma, 2002-2011

