

Q. What is NIBRS?

- A. In 2015 the FBI announced that it would move from its Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) system to the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS), effective January 1, 2021. The FBI began administering the UCR system in 1930, so understandably it was time for an overhaul. This change was implemented by the federal government to improve the overall quality of crime data collected by law enforcement. Unlike the UCR system, NIBRS captures details on each single crime incident—as well as on separate offenses within the same incident—including information on victims, known offenders, relationships between victims and offenders, arrestees, and property involved in crimes. NIBRS also goes much deeper because of its ability to provide circumstances and context for crimes like location, time of day, and whether the incident was cleared.

Q. When did the Columbia Police Department transition to NIBRS?

- A. In 2019 the Columbia Police Department transitioned from UCR to NIBRS to meet the national standard and deadline.

Q. What does “cleared by arrest” mean?

- A. The offender has been arrested, charged and referred to the court for prosecution.

Q. What does “exceptionally cleared” mean?

- A. In certain situations, elements beyond law enforcement’s control prevent the agency from arresting and formally charging the offender. Examples of exceptional clearances include, but are not limited to, the death of the offender, victim’s refusal to cooperate after the offender has been identified, or the denial of extradition because the offender committed a crime in another jurisdiction and is being prosecuted for that offense.

Q. What was the clearance rate for murder in 2024?

- A. 100%

Q. Why were all the murders from 2024 not cleared by arrest?

- A. One of the incidents involved two victims being murdered by one offender.

Q. Why does the CPD believe that the Crimes Against Persons decrease from 2023 to 2024 is unreliable?

A. During the internal audit it was discovered that some of the sexual offense categories were miscategorized and did not meet the NIBRS definitions. This resulted in overreporting of some sexual offense categories. Once we subtract the incidents in the sexual offense categories from both years and compare them we find an increase of 0.64% in Crimes Against Persons.

Notes:

- Crimes Against Property was down approximately -7.27% from 2023-2024
- Crimes Against Society was down approximately -2.25% from 2023-2024
- Crimes Against Persons was up approximately +0.64% from 2023-2024
- Adjusting the totals for Group A Crimes (subtracting sexual offenses) there were 7,959 offenses reported in 2023 and 7,594 offenses reported in 2024, for a total decrease across all crime categories of approximately -4.59%.