

Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

Columbia, South Carolina

Profile of Drug Indicators

November 2003



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Columbia, South Carolina

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, funding, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

Demographics¹

- Population (2000 Census): 116,278
- Race/Ethnicity (2000 Census): 48.2% white; 45.6% black/African American; 0.2% American Indian/Alaska Native; 1.7% Asian; 0.1% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander; 0.1% some other race; 0.1% two or more races; 3.0% Hispanic/Latino (of any race)
- The city of Columbia is located in Lexington County and Richland County.

Politics

- Mayor: Bob Coble²
- Council Members: E.W. Cromartie, II; Jim Papadea; Hamilton Osborne Jr.; Anne M. Sinclair; Sam Davis; Tameika Isaac³

Programs/Initiatives

- Crime Stoppers⁴

Since May 1982, the Columbia Crime Stoppers have received more than 10,000 calls with tips that have helped solve over 4,011 cases, 1,733 of which were drug cases. Crime Stoppers is a non-profit organization working to obtain pertinent information that could lead to an arrest.
- Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.)⁵

In February 1989, the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy began to certify DARE instructors. The Columbia Police Department was represented in the class and became one of the first law enforcement agencies in the Midlands of South Carolina to adopt the program. DARE was introduced on a pilot basis in Hyatt Park Elementary School in Columbia in early March 1989. Since then the program has expanded to include DARE Middle School and Senior High School programs. DARE Middle school programs began in 1993 and DARE Senior High school programs were implemented in September 1996.

Funding

- Drug-Free Communities Support Program⁶

Since FY 1998, there has only been one community coalition in Columbia to receive funding from the Drug-Free Communities Support Program. During FY 1999, the Lexington/Richland Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council was awarded \$99,145.
- FY 2002 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Discretionary Funds received in Columbia:⁷
 - Center for Mental Health Services: \$1,220,642
 - Center for Substance Abuse Prevention: \$2,918,649
 - Center for Substance Abuse Treatment; \$0
- Executive Office for Weed and Seed⁸

Columbia has not been officially recognized as a Weed and Seed site.

- Columbia did not receive Federal funding through the FY 2002 Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Grant Program.⁹
- Columbia did not receive any methamphetamine funding in 2002 from the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).¹⁰
- No funds were received in Columbia during FY 2001 from the Housing and Urban Development Low Income Housing Drug Elimination Grant.¹¹
- FY 2002 Office of Justice Programs and Community Oriented Policing Services grant amounts received by Columbia recipients:¹²
 - \$25,773,738 in formula funds
 - \$25,947,527 in discretionary funds
- There were no Columbia recipients of the FY 2003 Prescription Drug Monitoring Awards.¹³
- There were no Columbia recipients of the FY 2003 Indian Alcohol and Substance Abuse Awards.¹⁴

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- During 2000, there were 493 robbery offenses known to law enforcement in Columbia.¹⁵ This number decreased to 442 during 2001.¹⁶ During 2002, there were 497 robbery offenses in Columbia.¹⁷

Number of Offenses Known to Law Enforcement, Columbia, 2000-2002

Offense	2000	2001	2002
Murder and non-negligent manslaughter	12	15	10
Forcible rape	40	62	83
Robbery	493	442	497
Aggravated assault	955	781	949
Burglary	1,209	1,426	1,639
Larceny-theft	6,508	6,863	6,213
Motor vehicle theft	750	985	916
Arson	47	29	-
Crime index total	9,967	10,574	10,307

- According to the Columbia Police Department, during the time period of January 1 to July 31, 2002, there were 352 total drug-related incidents with arrests.¹⁸

Number of Drug Offenses, Columbia, January 1 to July 31, 2002

Drug Offenses	Number of Incidents	Number of Incidents with Arrests
Loitering to sell drugs	5	5
Manufacturing narcotics	2	1
Possession of drug with intent to distribute	144	130
Sale of narcotics	7	1
Simple possession of narcotics	228	215
Total drug offenses	386	352

- During 2000 in the city of Columbia, there were 3,632 drug abuse violation arrests and 70 drug paraphernalia violation arrests.¹⁹

Number of Drug-Related Arrests, Columbia, 2000

	Drug Abuse Violations	Drug Paraphernalia Violations
Lexington county	1,060	45
Richland county	2,572	25
Columbia total	3,632	70

- During 2000, there were 832 arrests for crack in Columbia.²⁰

Number of Drug Abuse Violation Arrests, Columbia, 2000

Drug Type	2000
Crack	832
Cocaine	157
Hashish	0
Heroin	44
Marijuana	2,542
Opium	0
Other narcotics	9
LSD	3
Other hallucinogens	0
Amphetamines	14
Other stimulants	0
Other depressants	1
Other drugs	16
Unknown types	14
Total	3,632

Drugs

- Heroin²¹
Heroin contributes to serious medical, legal, and societal consequences in Columbia. Heroin is considered widely to somewhat available and overall heroin availability has increased. A bundle of heroin, which is 2 grams, costs \$225. A gram of heroin costs \$125-\$130.
- Cocaine
Crack cocaine contributes to serious medical, legal, and societal consequences and is considered widely available in Columbia. Crack cocaine is easily obtained with prices ranging from \$100 per gram and \$20 for a rock. Powder cocaine is considered widely to somewhat available. Female powder cocaine users are increasing in the Columbia area. A gram of powder cocaine costs \$100.²² As of May 2002, powder cocaine sold for \$25,000-\$30,000 per kilogram with purity levels ranging from 75-95%.²³
- Marijuana
Hydroponic marijuana availability has increased in Columbia. Adolescents are the predominant marijuana users in Columbia. Mexican or local commercial marijuana

prices range from \$10 per dime bag (3-4 grams) to \$180 per ounce.²⁴ As of May 2002, commercial grade marijuana (typically produced in Mexico) sold for \$750-\$850 per pound.²⁵

➤ **Methamphetamine**²⁶

Methamphetamine is an emerging problem in Columbia, although it is not very available. A gram of methamphetamine costs \$175.

➤ **Diverted Pharmaceuticals**²⁷

The availability of diverted OxyContin has increased in Columbia and is considered somewhat available. Adolescents are the predominant user group to abuse OxyContin.

➤ **Club Drugs**

One pill of ecstasy costs \$25-\$30 in Columbia. A vial of ketamine (1/2 ounce) costs \$125.²⁸ GHB sold for \$20 per tablet during May 2002.²⁹

Enforcement

- As of October 2002, there were 330 law enforcement personnel working in Columbia (288 officers and 42 civilians).³⁰

Trafficking and Seizures

- According to the DEA Columbia District Office, 37 methamphetamine labs were seized between January 1, 2002 through May 28, 2002. These labs were discovered in private residences, motel rooms, cars, trucks, trailers, and secluded wooded areas.³¹
- South Carolina law enforcement conducted two heroin seizures from commercial train passengers transporting 5 grams and 56 grams of heroin from New York City to Columbia.³²
- There are a large number of gangs in the Columbia area that are mostly involved in drug distribution.³³
- Methamphetamine sales were reported in nightclubs and bars for the first time during 2002. Methamphetamine is commonly sold in suburban areas in Columbia.³⁴
- Diverted OxyContin is often sold by “pill ladies,” which are female senior citizens. This drug is also obtained from pharmacies with forged prescriptions.³⁵

Courts

➤ **Drug Courts**³⁶

As of September 2003, there were two drug courts operating for over 2 years in Columbia. There were no other drug courts recently implemented or being planned.

Treatment

- As of July 2002, there were 982 admissions to drug treatment facilities in Richland County and 377 in Lexington County.³⁷

Drug Treatment Admissions, by County, July 2002

	All Drugs	Marijuana	Cocaine-Crack	Other Drugs
Lexington County	377	165	144	68
Richland County	982	388	460	134

Sources

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- ² City of Columbia Web site, Legislative page: <http://www.columbiasc.net/citygov/city1ab.htm>
- ³ City of Columbia Web site, Legislative page: <http://www.columbiasc.net/citygov/city1ab.htm>
- ⁴ Columbia Crime Stoppers Web site: <http://www.columbiasc.net/city/crime.htm>
- ⁵ Columbia Police Department, Community Services Unit: <http://www.columbiasc.net/city/dare.htm>
- ⁶ Drug-Free Communities Support Program Web site: <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/dfcs/index.html>
- ⁷ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, FY 2002 Discretionary Funds, South Carolina: <http://www.samhsa.gov/funding/content/states/sc.htm>
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<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/grant/DrugCourts/02DCgrants.htm>
- ¹⁰ Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, COPS Methamphetamine Grant Announcement, November 14, 2002: http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/GrantAnnounce/meth_grantees.pdf
- ¹¹ Department of Housing and Urban Development, FY 2001 Federally Assisted Low Income Housing Drug Elimination Grants: Detailed Congressional Report:
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- ¹⁷ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2002*, October 2003:
<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/02cius.htm>
- ¹⁸ Columbia Police Department, Reported Incidents of Drug Abuse Violations in the City of Columbia, January 1 – June 31, 2002
- ¹⁹ South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, Drug Related Arrest Data, 1998-2000
- ²⁰ South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, Type of Drug Abuse Violation, 2000
- ²¹ Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Pulse Check: Trends in Drug Abuse*, November 2002:
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- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ National Drug Intelligence Center, *South Carolina Drug Threat Assessment Update*, May 2002:
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- ²⁴ Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Pulse Check: Trends in Drug Abuse*, November 2002:
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- ²⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸ Ibid.
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³⁴ Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Pulse Check: Trends in Drug Abuse*, November 2002:

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³⁵ Ibid.

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³⁷ South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services, *Drug Treatment Admissions*, FY 2002

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