Colorado Alcohol Abuse Statistics

How Colorado compares with the United States, West, and the states it borders on alcohol consumption, drinking and binge drinking by age, alcohol use disorder, liver-disease deaths, and drunk driving.

KEY STATISTICS

2.96
Per-capita consumption (US 2.42)

22.0%
Binge drinking (US 20.9%)

13.2%
Alcohol use disorder (US 9.9%)

16.4
Liver disease death rate (US 12.7)

30%
Alcohol-impaired share of road deaths (US 30%)

8.8%
Teen drinking (US 6.8%)

QUOTABLE STATISTICS

Colorado has the second-lowest rate of alcohol-impaired-driving deaths in the Mountain West, at 3.4 per 100,000 residents in the most recent year.

Source: NHTSA State Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Estimates: 2024 Data (DOT HS 813 813).

Colorado residents purchased the highest level of alcohol among the states it borders, at 2.96 gallons of pure alcohol per person aged 14 and older in the most recent year of federal sales data.

Source: NIAAA Surveillance Report #124, apparent per capita alcohol consumption by state, 2024.

Colorado recorded the largest increase in per-person alcohol purchases in the Mountain West, up 6.5% over the past five years.

Source: NIAAA Surveillance Report #124, apparent per capita alcohol consumption by state, 2024.

Colorado has the third-highest death rate from chronic liver disease and cirrhosis among large states, at 16.4 per 100,000 in the most recent 12 months of provisional data.

Source: NCHS Vital Statistics Rapid Release, quarterly provisional estimates (chronic liver disease and cirrhosis).

Colorado has 35% higher underage drinking than the nation as a whole, at 18.9% vs 14.0%.

Source: SAMHSA NSDUH state prevalence estimates, 2023-2024.

DRINKING BY AGE

Age group	Drank, past month	Binge, past month	Alcohol use disorder
Ages 12-17	8.8% (US 6.8%)	4.5% (US 3.7%)	4.0% (US 3.0%)
Ages 18-25	53.0% (US 48.5%)	29.9% (US 27.7%)	19.1% (US 14.7%)
Ages 26+	59.0% (US 51.5%)	22.7% (US 21.8%)	13.3% (US 10.0%)
Underage 12-20	18.9% (US 14.0%)	11.0% (US 8.1%)	7.4% (US 5.4%)

Age group	Drank, past month	Binge, past month	Alcohol use disorder
All ages 12+	54.0% (US 47.1%)	22.0% (US 20.9%)	13.2% (US 9.9%)

DRUNK DRIVING

	A decade earlier	Most recent year
All traffic deaths	547	689
Deaths with an alcohol-impaired driver (BAC .08+)	151	204
Share of traffic deaths	28%	30%

COMPARED WITH BORDERING STATES

State	Alcohol / person (gal)	Binge (12+)	AUD	Liver disease deaths /100k	Drunk-driving share
Colorado	**2.96**	**22.0%**	**13.2%**	**16.4**	**30%**
Arizona	2.21	19.6%	9.8%	16.5	34%
Kansas	2.14	22.1%	9.7%	13.3	35%
Nebraska	1.92	24.0%	11.0%	14.5	30%
New Mexico	2.2	19.6%	9.6%	31.5	28%
Oklahoma	1.7	18.7%	8.9%	17.1	35%
Utah	1.14	13.2%	7.2%	9.9	26%
Wyoming	2.72	21.9%	10.8%	18.1	32%

DATA YEARS

CDC BRFSS prevalence data: 2024; Census Bureau population estimates by state: 2024; FBI Crime Data Explorer arrests by state (DUI: 12 months to 09-2026; NHTSA State Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Estimates: 2024 Data (DOT HS 813 813): 2024; NIAAA Surveillance Report #124: 2024; SAMHSA NSDUH state prevalence estimates: 2023-2024; NCHS Vital Statistics Rapid Release: 2025 Q3.

SOURCES

- CDC BRFSS prevalence data, binge drinking (_RFBING6), 2024 (https://data.cdc.gov/Behavioral-Risk-Factors/Behavioral-Risk-Factor-Surveillance-System-BRFSS-P/dttw-5yxu)
- Census Bureau population estimates by state, age, and sex (Vintage 2024) (https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2020s-state-detail.html)
- FBI Crime Data Explorer arrests by state (DUI, drunkenness, liquor laws) (https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/docApi)
- NHTSA State Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Estimates: 2024 Data (DOT HS 813 813) (https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813813)
- NIAAA Surveillance Report #124, apparent per capita alcohol consumption by state, 2024 (https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/surveillance-reports/surveillance124)
- SAMHSA NSDUH state prevalence estimates, 2023-2024 (https://www.samhsa.gov/data/data-we-collect/nsduh-national-survey-drug-use-and-health/state-releases/2023-2024)
- NCHS Vital Statistics Rapid Release, quarterly provisional estimates (chronic liver disease and cirrhosis) (https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/mortality-dashboard.htm)

All statistics are drawn from federal government publications and peer-reviewed research and may be quoted with attribution to the National Center for Alcohol Statistics and a link to alcoholabusestatistics.org/colorado/.