

OCJS Special Report

Ohio Statistical Analysis Center

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Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted 2012

U.S. and Ohio Statistical Summary

In October 2013, the FBI released its annual *Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted* for 2012. The report is based on data submitted to the FBI from agencies participating in the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) Program, FBI field offices, and federal agencies including the U.S. Capitol Police, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of the Treasury, and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. Data is provided for duly sworn city, university and college, county, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement officers feloniously killed, officers accidentally killed, and officers assaulted, with narrative descriptions provided for incidents where officers were feloniously killed.

The data pertain to those officers who at the time of the incident met the following criteria:

- They were working in an official capacity
- They had full arrest powers
- They ordinarily wore a badge and carried a firearm
- They were paid from governmental funds set aside specifically for payment of sworn law enforcement representatives

In addition, their deaths must have been directly related to injuries received during the incidents.

U.S. statistics

- Forty-eight law enforcement officers were feloniously killed in the line of duty in 2012. The deaths occurred in 26 states, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. In 2011, 72 officers were feloniously killed.
- **Characteristics of the feloniously killed officer in 2012:**
 - Average age was 38.
 - Average length of service was 12 years.
 - 43 officers were male, 5 officers were female.
 - 42 officers were white and 6 were black.

- **Characteristics of the incidents surrounding officer felonious murders:**
 - 25 percent occurred during arrest situations.
 - 13 percent occurred in ambush situations.
 - 17 percent occurred during traffic pursuits or stops.
 - 10 percent were killed during tactical situations.
 - 8 percent of officers were killed answering disturbance calls.
 - 17 percent of officers were killed while investigating suspicious persons or circumstances.
 - 1 officer (2%) was killed handling a person with a mental illness.
 - 6 percent was killed while transporting or maintaining custody of a prisoner.
 - 1 officer (2%) was killed while conducting investigative activity.

- Forty-four of 48 (92%) officers were killed by a firearm. Of these, 73 percent were killed with handguns, 16 percent were killed with rifles, and seven percent were killed with shotguns. Two officers attempted to fire their own weapon and seven fired their own weapon during the incidents. Fifty-five percent of firearm deaths of officers occurred when the distance between the victim and offender was between 0-5 feet.
- Twenty-four officers feloniously killed were wearing body armor at the time of their murder. Of these officers, 23 were killed by firearm. Sixteen were shot in the head, four in the neck/throat, and three in the torso/back.
- Fifty-one identified offenders were associated with the 48 homicides. The average age of the alleged offenders was 31 years. All but two were male. Of those whose race was reported, thirty were white, 16 were black, 1 was American Indian/Alaskan Native, 1 was Asian/Pacific. Sixty-five percent had prior criminal arrests, and 16 percent were under judicial supervision at the time of the felonious incident.
- Over a 10-year period, 55 percent of felonious killings of officers occurred in the P.M. hours between noon and midnight, while 44 percent of felonious killings occurred in the A.M. hours (one percent was not reported). In 2012, 50 percent of felonious killings occurred during the A.M. hours while 44 percent of felonious killings occurred during the P.M. hours (six percent was not reported). Thirteen percent (6 incidents) occurred both during the daytime hours of 10 A.M – noon and during the afternoon hours of 6pm – 8pm. The six-hour stretch between 6 P.M. – Midnight and 6 A.M – Noon was the most active time for felonious assaults on officers, as 27 percent of assaults occurred during each of these time periods.
- Over a 10-year period, 49 percent of felonious killing of officers occurred between Thursday and Saturday. More officers were feloniously killed on either Thursday (96) or Saturday (86).

- **Characteristics of the incidents surrounding officer accidental deaths:**

- There were 47 accidental deaths of law enforcement officers in 2012. Twenty-two died as the result of an automobile accident, six died in motorcycle accidents, and three died in aircraft accidents. Ten officers were struck by vehicles, eight of whom were directing or stopping traffic, assisting motorists, etc., and two who were struck by vehicles while executing traffic stops, roadblocks, etc. Three officers were killed in falls. Two officers were accidentally shot as a result of crossfire or other firearm mishaps. One officer died as the result of other accidental causes.

- **Characteristics of the incidents surrounding officer assaults:**

- 52,901 officers were assaulted in the line of duty, a rate of 10.2 per 100 sworn officers. Twenty-eight percent sustained injuries as a result of the assault.
- About one-third of officers were assaulted while handling a disturbance call. In other circumstances, 15 percent were assaulted while attempting arrest and 14 percent were assaulted while handling, transporting, or maintaining custody of a prisoner.

Ohio statistics

- There was one feloniously killed officer in Ohio in 2012. Since 2003 there have been 15 felonious killings in Ohio. This officer died from wounds sustained by a handgun.
 - On January 23, a former police officer with the Akron Police Department died as the result of a gunshot wound received while conducting an armed robbery investigation. At 3:20 a.m. on April 10, 1965, the officer, who was 25 years old and had almost 2 years of law enforcement experience at the time of the incident, was with another officer and a police reserve officer when they stopped a vehicle during their investigation. Shortly thereafter, both officers and the reserve officer were found shot and lying on the pavement. The three victim officers were transported to the hospital, where one officer was pronounced dead and the other officers were treated. Although these two officers survived, their injuries were permanently disabling. The 25-year-old suspect, who had an extensive criminal history including violent crime and weapons violations, was arrested. Since one officer died on the day of the incident, the suspect was charged with First-Degree Murder of a Law Enforcement Officer and was sentenced to life in prison. The former police officer who survived the initial attack continuously struggled with serious health complications of long-term quadriplegia due to the gunshot wound to the neck/throat that he sustained. According to the chief medical examiner, the injuries received during the incident were considered a contributing factor to his death, which occurred nearly 47 years later.

- Since 2003 there have been 14 officers accidentally killed in Ohio. One Ohio officer was accidentally killed in 2012.
 - On September 21, an officer from Willoughby Police Department with 6 years of law enforcement experience was struck by a pickup truck while responding to an emergency call.
- During 2012, 115 Ohio agencies reported 288 assaults on officers. Ninety percent of the assaults were committed with a personal weapon, such as hands, feet, or fists. Four percent of assaults were committed with a firearm.
- The rate of assault per 100 officers in Ohio in 2012 was 6.4, which is below the U.S. rate of 10.2 per 100 officers.

