

OCJS Special Report

Ohio Statistical Analysis Center

12/14/2018



Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted 2017

U.S. and Ohio Statistical Summary

In October 2018, the FBI released its annual *Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted* report for 2017. The report is based on data submitted to the FBI from agencies participating in the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) Program, FBI field offices, and the following federal agencies; the U.S. Capitol Police, U.S. Department of Defense, 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, whether on or off duty
- They were duly sworn with 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 death must have been directly related to injuries received during the incident.

U.S. statistics

- In 2017, 46 law enforcement officers were feloniously killed in the line of duty. The deaths occurred in 25 states and Puerto Rico. In 2016, 66 officers were feloniously killed.
- **Profile of feloniously killed officers in 2017:**
 - Average age was 38 years old
 - Average length of law enforcement service was 11 years
 - Of the 46 officers killed, 43 were male and 3 were female
 - Thirty-five officers were White, 9 were Black/African American, 2 were American Indian/Alaska Native

- **Characteristics of the incidents surrounding officer felonious killings:**
 - 46 percent (21) of officers died as a result of investigative or enforcement activities.
 - 13 percent (6) of officers were involved in pursuits.
 - 11 percent (5) of officers were ambushed.
 - 9 percent (4) of officers were involved in arrest situations.
 - 7 percent (3) of officers were involved in unprovoked attacks.
 - 4 percent (2) of officers were assisting other law enforcement officers.
 - 4 percent (2) of officers were responding to crimes in progress
 - One officer was on administrative assignment and was performing a prisoner transport
 - One officer responded to a disorder/disturbance and encountered a domestic disturbance upon arrival.
 - One officer encountered or was assisting an emotionally disturbed person.
- Ninety-one percent (42) of the 46 officers were killed by a firearm. Of those killed by a firearm, 76 percent (32) were killed with handguns, 21 percent (9) were killed with rifles, and 2 percent (1) were killed with a shotgun. Ten officers attempted to fire (but did not) their own weapon and 10 fired their own weapon during the incidents. Thirty-three percent (14) of firearm deaths of officers occurred when the distance between the victim and offender was between 0-5 feet.
- Seventy-four percent (34) of all officers feloniously killed were wearing body armor at the time of their murder.
- Forty-four offenders were identified in connection with the 46 homicides. The average age of the alleged offenders was 36 years. All offenders were identified as male. Of those whose race was reported, 59 percent (26) were white, 36 percent (16) were black, 2 percent (1) was American Indian/Alaska Native and 2 percent (1) was Asian. Ninety-one percent (40) had prior criminal arrests, and 78 percent (31) were under judicial supervision at the time of the felonious incident.
- Over a 10-year period, 53 percent of felonious killings of officers occurred in the P.M. hours between noon and midnight, while 47 percent of felonious killing occurred in the A.M. hours. In 2017, 63 percent of felonious killings occurred during the P.M. hours, while 37 percent of felonious killings occurred during the A.M. hours.
- Over a 10-year period, 44 percent of felonious killing of officers occurred between Tuesday and Thursday, while the remaining 56 percent occurred between Friday and Monday. In 2017, the most felonious killings occurred on a Friday (9).

U.S. statistics

- In 2017, 47 law enforcement officers died as a result of accidents that occurred in the line of duty. These deaths occurred in 26 states.

- **Profile of officers accidentally killed in 2017:**
 - Average age was 40 years old
 - Average length of law enforcement service was 12 years
 - Of the 47 officers accidentally killed, 45 were male and 2 were female
 - Forty-one were White, 3 were Black/African American, 2 were American Indian/Alaska Native, and 1 was Asian

- **Characteristics of the incidents surrounding officer accidental deaths:**
 - 74 percent (35) died as a result of automobile accidents.
 - 13 percent (6) were pedestrian officers struck by vehicles
 - 6 percent (3) officers drowned.
 - 4 percent (2) officers died in an aircraft accident
 - One officer died in another type of accident

- **Characteristics of the incidents surrounding officer assaults:**
 - 60,211 officers were assaulted in the line of duty in 2017, a rate of 10.1 per 100 sworn officers. Of these, 29 percent sustained injuries. Seventy-seven percent of officers were assaulted with personal weapons, such as hands, fists, or feet. Two percent were assaulted with knives or other cutting instruments. Four percent were attacked with firearms and 17 percent were attacked with other dangerous weapons.
 - Thirty percent of officers were assaulted while handling a disturbance call. In other circumstances, 16 percent were assaulted while attempting arrest and 12 percent were assaulted while handling, transporting, or in custody of a prisoner.

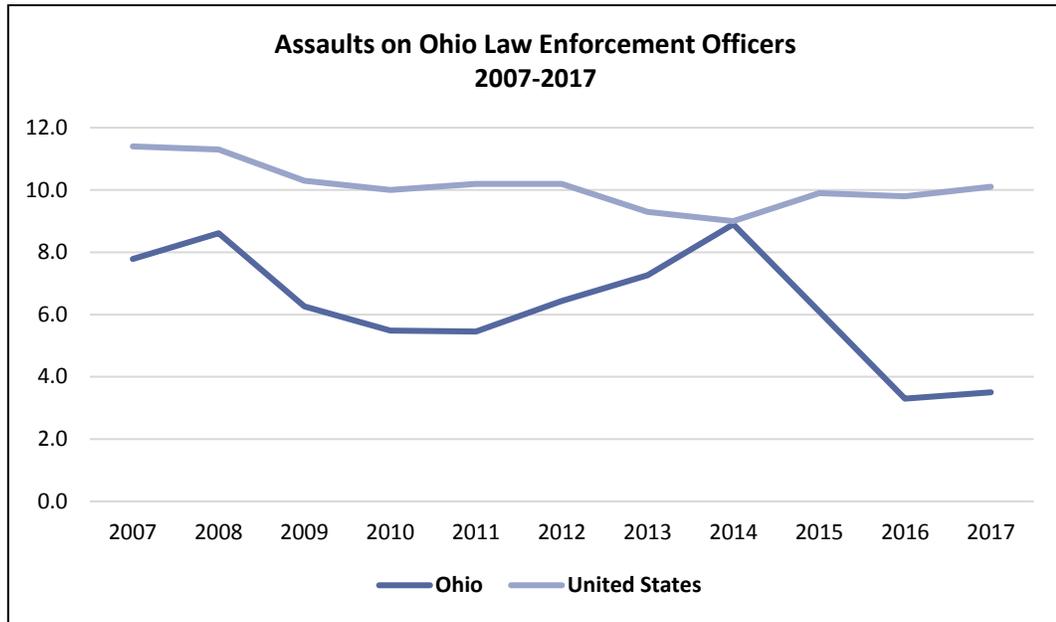
Ohio statistics

- There were two officers feloniously killed in Ohio in 2017. Both officers died from wounds sustained by a firearm. Since 2008 there have been 14 felonious killings in Ohio.

- ❖ On October 21, shortly after 10 p.m., a 31-year-old police officer with the Girard Police Department (GPD) was shot and killed while answering a call for service. Two officers with the GPD responded to a report of an intoxicated man who had been involved in a domestic dispute earlier in the day and was now firing a weapon inside a dwelling. The subject's live-in girlfriend fled the house and called police. The officer and his partner arrived at the residence and confronted the suspect. One of the officers took out his notebook to write down

the suspect's information. At that point, the suspect produced a .40-caliber semiautomatic handgun and shot the officer once in the front upper torso/chest. The officer's partner shot and killed the 37-year-old suspect. The injured officer was transported to a local hospital where he died in surgery. The suspect, who was on probation at the time of the incident, was known to the department for prior arrests for assault and domestic violence.

- ❖ On May 12 at 7:44 a.m., the 46-year-old chief of the Kirkersville Police Department was shot and killed in an unprovoked attack. Earlier that morning, an individual, who was on conditional release pending criminal prosecution, took two hostages into the woods near a nursing and rehabilitation center. He informed the hostages that he intended to kill a woman in the facility and then kill himself because of their domestic issues. One of the hostages surreptitiously called 911 and left the line open. The dispatcher notified the chief and the Licking County Sheriff's Office (LCSO). When the chief arrived at the scene, he parked in front of the individual's location in the woods and reported to dispatch that he "had a visual on the suspect." A hostage later reported that when the chief exited his vehicle, the man stood up and shot one round from a 12-gauge pump-action shotgun at the chief, striking him in the neck/throat above his body armor. Deputies from the LCSO found the chief on the ground behind his patrol vehicle. The chief was taken by emergency services personnel to a hospital where he succumbed to his injury. The offender, armed with the shotgun and a handgun, entered the facility, shot and killed two female employees, then committed suicide. The 43-year-old offender had been in a turbulent relationship with one of the center's employees, and protection orders had been issued prior to these events.
- Since 2008, there have been 12 officers accidentally killed in Ohio. One Ohio officer was accidentally killed in 2017.
- During 2017, 266 Ohio agencies reported 458 assaults on officers. Fifty-nine percent of the assaults were committed with a personal weapon. Four percent of officers were reported to have been injured with a firearm. Thirty-five percent of assaults were committed with other dangerous weapons.
- The rate of assault per 100 officers in Ohio in 2016 was 3.5, which is substantially below the U.S. rate of 10.1 per 100 officers.



For the full report, please visit the FBI's website at <https://ucr.fbi.gov/leoka/2017/home>