



124 Law Enforcement Fatalities Nationwide in 2015

42 officers shot and killed—52 died in traffic-related incidents

According to preliminary data compiled by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, 124 law enforcement officers died in the line of duty in 2015, a 4 percent increase from 2014, when 119 officers were killed.

Traffic-related incidents were the leading cause of officer deaths in 2015, killing 52. Thirty-five officers died in automobile crashes, 11 were struck and killed outside their vehicle and six were killed in motorcycle crashes. Traffic-related fatalities increased 6 percent from 2014 when 49 officers were killed.

Firearms-related incidents decreased in 2015. These fatalities accounted for 42 deaths, dropping 14 percent from 2014 when 49 officers were shot and killed.

Thirty officers died from other causes in 2015 compared to 21 in 2014, a 43 percent increase. Job-related illnesses, such as heart attacks, rose to 24 officer deaths compared to 18 in 2014.

Traffic-related incidents were the leading cause of officer deaths

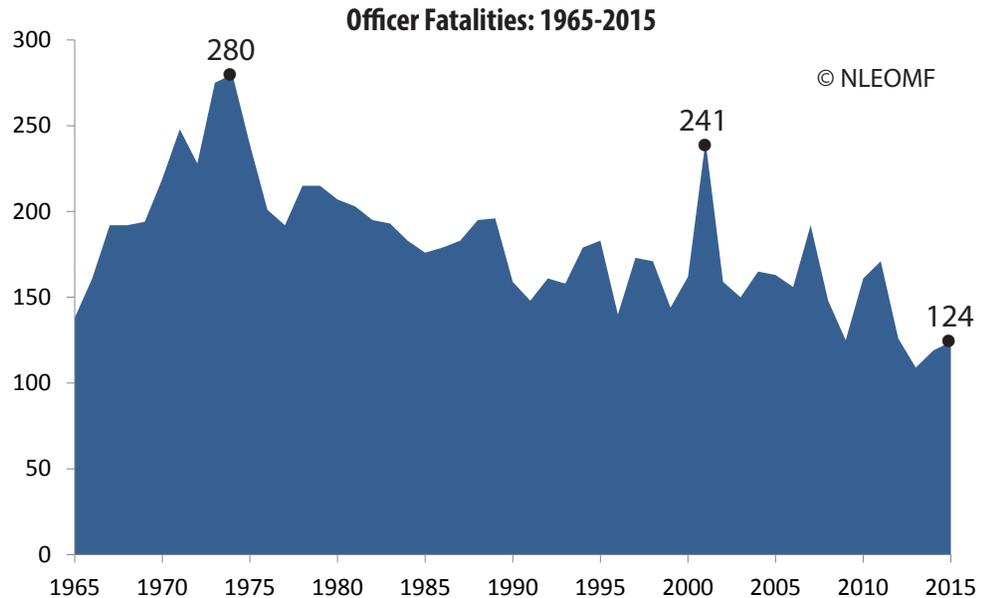
58 in 2014.

Texas had the highest number of fatalities, losing 12 officers in 2015.

Fifty-two officers were killed in felonious incidents, a 16 percent decrease from 61 in 2014, and 73 officers died as a result of non-felonious incidents, increasing 20 percent over

Eleven officers died in Georgia, nine in Louisiana, and six in both New York and California. Seventeen states and the District of Columbia did not lose an officer in 2015.

Nine of the fallen officers were female, more than double the four killed in 2014. The average officer was 41-years-old, with 12 years of service. The average number of children left behind by an officer was two.



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A Closer Look



Police Officer Benjamin Deen
Hattiesburg (MS) Police Department
EOW: 5/9/2015
Cause: Shot while making a traffic stop of a vehicle.



Police Officer Liquori Tate
Hattiesburg (MS) Police Department
EOW: 5/9/2015
Cause: Shot while making a traffic stop of a vehicle.



Police Officer Kerrie Orozco
Omaha (NE) Police Department
EOW: 5/20/2015
Cause: Shot while attempting to serve an arrest warrant.

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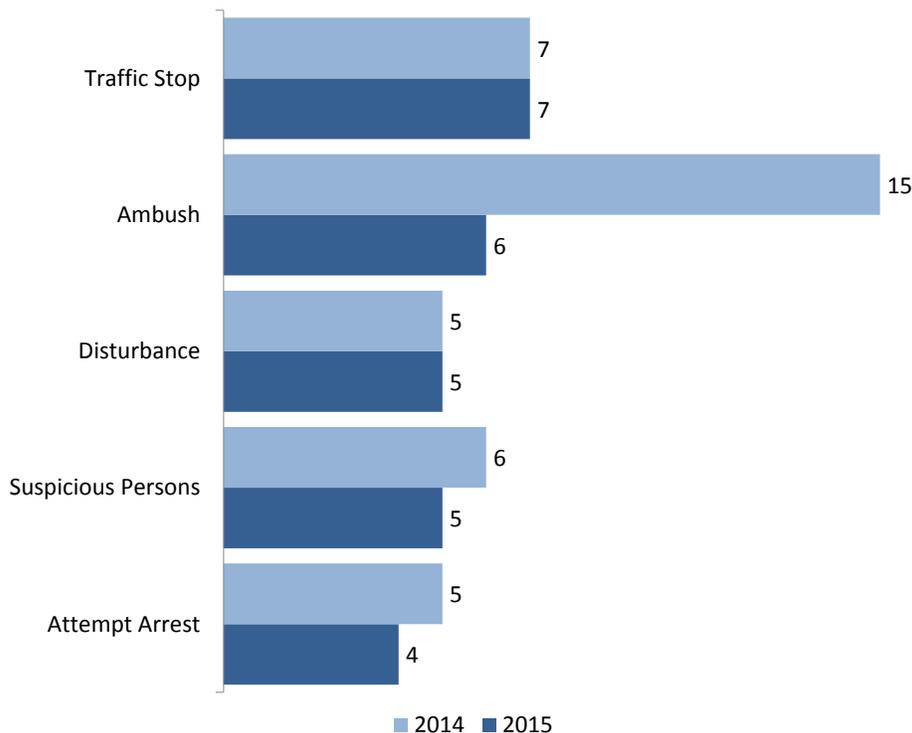
Firearms-related Fatalities

Firearms-related fatalities decreased in 2015, with 42 officers killed by gunfire, down 14 percent from 49 in 2014.

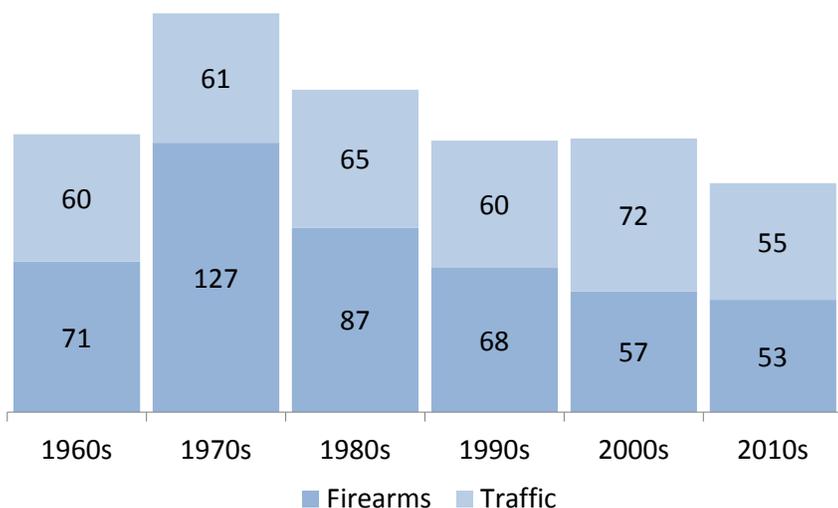
After increasing dramatically in 2010 and 2011, firearms-related fatalities decreased in 2012 (50) and 2013 (33), and they remain below the decade average (53).

Handguns were the leading type of firearm used in fatal shootings of law enforcement officers this year. Of the 42 firearms-related fatalities, 77 percent, or 30 officers, were shot and killed with a handgun. Five officers were killed with a rifle, two officers were killed with a shotgun, two officers were killed with an assault style weapon, and three were killed with an unknown type of firearm. Three officers were killed with their own firearm.

Leading Circumstances of Fatal Shootings © NLEOMF



Average Officer Fatalities by Decade © NLEOMF



Of the 42 firearms-related fatalities in 2015, seven officers were shot and killed during traffic stops, more than any other circumstance of fatal shootings. Six officers were killed in ambush attacks and five officers were slain while investigating suspicious persons. Although classified under various circumstances, the investigation of domestic violence was involved in seven of the 2015 shooting deaths.

Firearms-related fatalities peaked in 1973, when 156 officers were shot and killed. Since then, the average number of officers killed has decreased from 127 per year in the 1970s to 57 per year in the 2000s. The 42 firearms-related fatalities in 2015 are 26 percent lower than the average of 57 per year for the decade spanning 2000-2009.

Traffic-related Fatalities

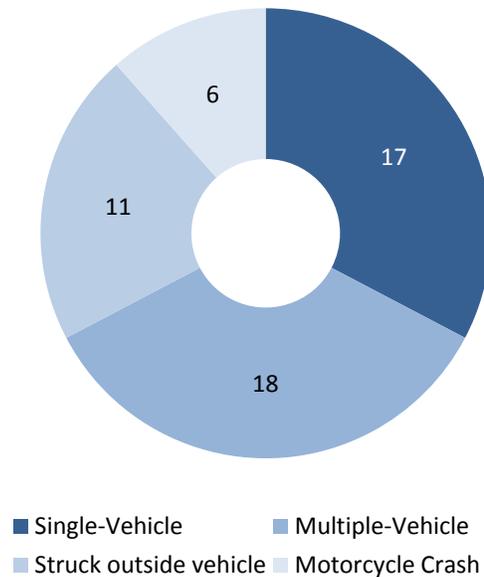
In 2015, fifty-two officers died as a result of traffic-related incidents, a six percent increase from the 49 traffic-related deaths last year.

Thirty-five officers were killed in automobile crashes—a 6 percent increase from the 33 killed in 2014. Eleven officers were struck and killed outside their vehicles this year, a 10 percent increase from 2014, when ten officers were struck and killed. This year, six officers were killed in motorcycle crashes, the same number as in 2014.

Of the 35 automobile crashes in 2015, 18 were multiple-vehicle crashes and 17 were single-vehicle crashes. Traffic-related fatalities decreased during the previous decade (2000-2009), and since 2011 they have fallen to the lowest levels since the 1950s. However, traffic-related fatalities have been the leading cause of death for officers in 15 of the last 20 years.

Circumstances of Traffic-related Fatalities

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Other Causes of Officer Deaths

Of the 124 officer fatalities this year, 30 officers died from job-related illnesses and other causes unrelated to traffic or firearms. In 2014, twenty-one officers died as a result of other causes, representing a 43 percent increase in 2015.

Once again, job-related illnesses were the leading cause of officer fatalities in this category. Twenty-four officers died from job-related illnesses this year, mostly heart attacks—compared to 18 in 2014. Also included among those 24 are four officers who died of illnesses they contracted as a result of their rescue and recovery work following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

In addition, two officers died from falls, one officer drowned, one officer was electrocuted, one officer was beaten to death and one officer died in an aircraft crash.

Felonious and Non-Felonious Fatalities

Fifty-two officers were killed feloniously in 2015, a 15 percent decrease from 2014 when 61 officers died as a result of a criminal act. Of the 52 officers feloniously killed this year, 39 were shot and killed; 11 officers were killed in traffic-related incidents and two officers were killed in incidents unrelated to traffic or firearms. Of the 11 officers feloniously killed in traffic-related incidents, seven were struck, and four were killed in automobile crashes. One officer died as a result of a physical altercation with a suspect, and one officer was beaten to death.

Seventy-two officers died in non-felonious incidents in 2015, a 24 percent increase from 58 in 2014. Automobile crashes were the leading cause of non-felonious deaths in 2015 with 31 fatalities, followed by job-related illnesses, which accounted for 23 officer deaths. Six officers died in motorcycle crashes and four officers were struck and killed by a vehicle. Three officers were inadvertently shot and killed, two fell to their death, one was electrocuted, one was killed in an aircraft crash, and one drowned.

Officer Fatality Data

The deadliest month in 2015 was May with 18 fatalities. February had the fewest fatalities with two deaths.

Fifty-one municipal officers were killed in the line of duty. Thirty-one county officers and 27 state officers also died this year. Six territorial officers, four university officers, three federal officers, and two tribal officers were also killed.

Five Deadliest States

Texas had the highest number of fatalities, losing 12 officers in 2015. Eleven officers died in Georgia, nine in Louisiana, and six in both California and New York. Thirty-three states lost at least one officer this year. Seventeen states and the District of Columbia did not lose an officer in 2015.

Gender



	Low	Average	High
Age of Officer	21	41	69
Length of Service	12 days	12 years	34 years
Number of Children	0	2	6

Jurisdiction

Municipal	51	University	4
County	31	Federal	3
State	27	Tribal	2
Territorial	6		

