



National Law Enforcement Officers
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News and Media

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Law Enforcement Fatalities Dip to Lowest Level in Six Decades

33 officers killed in firearms-related incidents the fewest since 1887

Washington, DC—Law enforcement officer fatalities dropped for the second year in a row to the lowest level in six decades and the number of officers killed in firearms-related incidents this year was the fewest since the 1800s, according to preliminary data compiled and released today in an annual [research bulletin](#) published by the [National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund](#) (NLEOMF).

According to the report, 111 federal, state, local, tribal and territorial officers were killed in the line of duty nationwide in 2013. This was the fewest number of fatalities for the law enforcement profession since 1959 when 110 officers died. This year's total was eight percent fewer than 2012 when 121 officers made the ultimate sacrifice.

The number one cause of officer fatalities in 2013 was traffic-related incidents, which claimed 46 lives. Thirty-three officers were killed in firearms-related incidents this past year, which was a 33 percent drop from 2012 and is the lowest number since 1887 when 27 officers were shot to death. Thirty-two officers died due to other causes in 2013, including 14 who suffered heart attacks while performing their duties.

Just two years ago, officer fatalities spiked to 169, which led to a number of new initiatives aimed at promoting law enforcement safety. Among them were: an increasing number of agencies requiring officers to wear bullet-resistant vests; the formation of the National Officer Safety and Wellness Group by the U.S. Department of Justice; and the [VALOR program](#) launched by U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder to provide training to help prevent violence against officers and to help officers survive violent encounters when they do occur. Since 2011, all categories of officer fatalities have dropped by 34 percent and firearms-related deaths have declined by 54 percent.

The statistics released by the NLEOMF are based on preliminary data compiled and do not represent a final or complete list of individual officers who will be added to the [National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial](#) in 2014.

For a complete copy of the preliminary report on 2013 law enforcement fatalities, go to: www.LawMemorial.org/ResearchBulletin.

Key Data as of December 29, 2013:

- Traffic-related incidents declined 4 percent in 2013 (46) compared to 2012 (48). Of these 46 officers, 31 were killed in auto crashes, 11 were struck outside their vehicle, and four were killed in motorcycle crashes.
- Firearms-related fatalities declined by 33 percent in 2013 (33) compared to 2012 (49). Of the 33 officers, seven officers were shot and killed in ambush attacks, six officers were shot and killed while responding to a disturbance call, five officers were killed while

conducting an investigative activity, three officers were killed while responding to a domestic disturbance call, three officers were feloniously killed during a traffic stop, three officers were shot and killed while responding to a robbery in progress and three officers were killed while attempting to arrest a suspect. Two officers were inadvertently shot and killed and one officer was killed during a burglary in progress.

- Of the 32 officers who died due to other causes, 18 were caused by job-related illnesses; six officers fell to their death or died as a result of an injury sustained in a fall, two officers drowned while attempting to assist victims during a flash flood, two officers were stabbed to death, one officer was killed in a helicopter crash, one officer was killed in a boat related accident, one officer was killed by an explosive device and an officer was electrocuted.
- During the past year, more officers were killed in Texas (13) than any other state; followed by California (10); Mississippi and New York (7); and Arkansas (6).
- Nine officers killed in 2013 served with federal law enforcement agencies. Nine of the officers who died during the past year served with correctional agencies. Four of the 111 fatalities were female. On average, the officers who died in 2013 were 42 years old and had served for 13 years.

Supporting Quote:

“The only good news is zero deaths, but this very significant drop in law enforcement fatalities the past two years is extremely encouraging,” declared NLEOMF Chairman and CEO [Craig W. Floyd](#). “Our organization, in partnership with others, is working hard to create a new culture of safety in law enforcement that no longer accepts deaths and injuries as an unavoidable part of the job. This year’s officer fatality report is strong evidence that this intensified effort to promote law enforcement safety is making a difference.”

To schedule an interview, contact Steve Groeninger, Senior Director of Communications & Marketing, at (202) 737-7135, or via email at steve@nleomf.org.

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About the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund

Established in 1984, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund is a private non-profit organization dedicated to honoring the service and sacrifice of America's law enforcement officers and to promoting officer safety. The Memorial Fund maintains the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, DC, which contains the names of 19,981 officers who have died in the line of duty throughout U.S. history. The Memorial Fund is now working to create the National Law Enforcement Museum, which will tell the story of law enforcement in America through high-tech, interactive exhibitions, historical artifacts and extensive educational programming. For more information, visit www.LawMemorial.org.

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