



# Law Enforcement Officers Shot in the Line of Duty

2023 Year-End Summary



**COPS**  
*Community Oriented Policing Services*  
U.S. Department of Justice



**NATIONAL FRATERNAL  
ORDER OF POLICE**

---

May 2024



---

This report is compiled from publicly available information using media monitoring software and general research. It contains data on law enforcement officers shot in the line of duty, both fatally and nonfatally, for the express purpose of better understanding the nature and frequency of incidents that could give rise to the issuance of a Blue Alert. Care should be considered when comparing these results to those of other entities that collect similar data. The opinions contained herein are those of the author(s) or contributor(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The COPS Office acknowledges the contributions of the National FOP's staff to this report, including National President Patrick Yoes; Executive Director Jim Pasco; Senior Legislative Liaison Tim Richardson; and Legislative Liaisons David Taboh, Asa Render, and Benjamin Stokes.

*Recommended citation:*  
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. 2024. *Law Enforcement Officers Shot in the Line of Duty: 2023 Year-End Summary*. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

Published 2024

## NATIONAL BLUE ALERT NETWORK

In 2015, Congress passed the Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act, named in honor of two New York City police officers killed in an ambush attack on December 20, 2014. The Act directs the U.S. Department of Justice to establish a voluntary nationwide system to promote the use of early warnings of threats against law enforcement officers and to aid in the apprehension of suspects who have killed or seriously injured an officer. In 2016, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) was tasked with implementing the Act and establishing the National Blue Alert Network.

The National Blue Alert Network seeks to encourage, enhance, and integrate Blue Alert plans throughout the United States. Blue Alerts provide for rapid dissemination of information to law enforcement agencies, media, and the public to aid in the apprehension of offenders who have killed, seriously injured, or pose an imminent and credible threat to law enforcement. Blue Alerts can be transmitted via wireless devices and through the Emergency Alert System (EAS) in the same manner as AMBER Alerts.

## TRACKING OFFICER SHOOTINGS

This report was compiled by the **COPS Office** in partnership with the **National Fraternal Order of Police** using media monitoring software and general research to analyze publicly available information. It contains data on law enforcement officers shot in the line of duty, both fatally and nonfatally, for the express purpose of better understanding the nature and frequency of incidents that could give rise to the issuance of a Blue Alert. Care should be taken into account when comparing these results to those of other entities that collect similar data. The opinions contained herein are those of the author(s) or contributor(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of the U.S. Department of Justice.

## 2023 SUMMARY DATA

- **Three hundred seventy-eight** law enforcement officers were shot in the line of duty during calendar year 2023 in **308** separate shooting incidents, including **52** incidents where multiple officers were shot.
- A total of **46** law enforcement officers died in 2023 as a result of being shot in the line of duty. **Forty-four** law enforcement officers died after being shot in 2023; **332** officers survived. In addition, in 2023, **two** officers succumbed to complications from gunshot wounds that occurred during incidents that took place prior to 2023.<sup>1</sup>
- **City** or **municipal** law enforcement officers accounted for nearly two-thirds (**62 percent**) of all shooting incidents in 2023.
- **Disturbance calls (47 incidents)** and **felony investigations (41 incidents)** accounted for **28.7 percent** of all shooting incidents and resulted in **114** officers shot.
- **One hundred thirty-eight** law enforcement officers were shot in **115** separate ambushes. **Twenty** of those officers died.
- At least **45** officers were known to have been protected from gunshots by protective ballistic vests.
- Shootings occurred in **43** different states, the **District of Columbia**, and **Puerto Rico**. **Texas** had the highest number of officers shot with **39**, followed by **Pennsylvania** with **25** and **California** with **22**.
- **August** saw the highest number of officers shot in 2023, with **43**, followed by **38** officers shot in **March**.
- The day of the week that experienced the highest number of officers shot was **Wednesday**, which saw a total of **68** officers shot in 2023.

---

<sup>1</sup> When these **two** incidents are included in a specific datapoint, they will be noted with the use of (\*).

## 2023 INCIDENT DATA

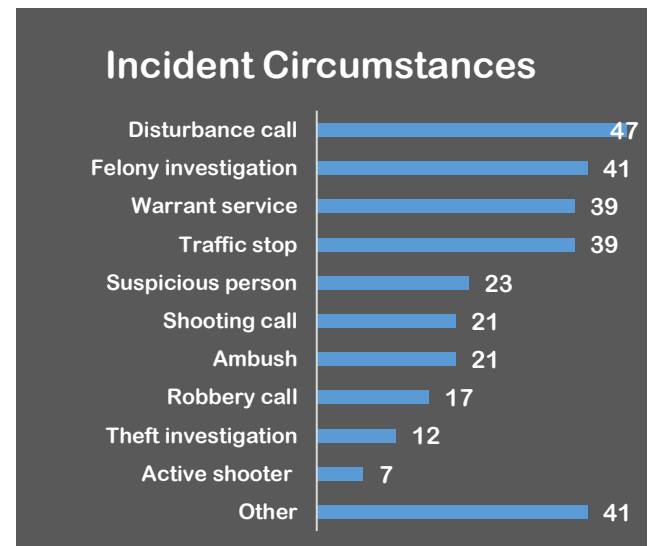
There were **308 incidents** in 2023 in which law enforcement officers were shot in the line of duty, a **15.3 percent** increase from the total number of incidents in 2022. The number of officers shot in the line of duty in 2023 increased by **14.2 percent** compared to 2022, after that year had seen a **4.3 percent** decrease from 2021. The number of officers who died in 2023 as a result of being shot decreased by **25.8 percent** compared to 2022, which was a decrease of **3.1 percent** compared to 2021. *NOTE: One (\*) represents an officer who succumbed to a gunshot inflicted in a previous year.*

	2023 totals	Change from 2022 to 2023	2022 totals	2021 totals	Change from 2021 to 2022
Total number of shooting incidents	308	+ 15.3 %	267	271	- 1.5 %
Total number of officers shot	378	+ 14.2 %	331	346	- 4.3 %
Number of officers shot and survived	332	+ 22.1 %	272	287	- 1.5 %
Number of officers shot and killed	46**	- 25.8 %	62***	64*****	- 3.1 %

## INCIDENT DATA BY CIRCUMSTANCE

**Disturbance calls (47 incidents)** and **felony investigations (41 incidents)** accounted for **28.7 percent** of all shooting incidents.

Circumstance at Time of Incident				
<i>Each asterisk (*) equals one officer who was shot prior to 2023 but died from that gunshot wound in 2023.</i>				
Circumstance	Shooting incidents	Officers shot	Number survived	Number killed
Active shooter	7	9	9	0
Ambush	21	26	21	5*
Disturbance call	47	60	50	10
Felony investigation	41	54	48	6
Robbery call	17	20	19	1
Shooting call	21	23	20	3
Suspicious person	23	26	24	2
Theft investigation	12	13	12	1
Traffic stop	39	44	37	7
Warrant service	39	54	52	2
Other	41	49	40	9*
	308	378	332	46**



## NATURE OF ATTACKS

Every felonious attack on law enforcement officers, especially by gunfire, is disturbing regardless of the circumstances. Officers are always vulnerable to life-threatening attacks and therefore must always be vigilant and maintain the highest level of situational awareness. In most cases, officers are able to quickly assess situations, recognize threats, and take adequate defensive actions. Tragically, not every threat can be seen or mitigated. Perhaps most troubling and worrisome are ambush-style and other calculated attacks on law enforcement.

Premeditated ambush-style attacks are particularly disturbing and pernicious. These types of attacks are carried out with an element of surprise and intended to deprive officers of the ability to defend against the attack, which contributes to a worrisome desensitization to evil acts that were once largely considered taboo except by the most depraved.

## **AMBUSH-STYLE ATTACKS**

There were **115** ambush-style incidents in which officers were shot without any warning or opportunity to defend themselves, including several planned assassinations. In many cases, officers were shot before they could exit their vehicles after an initial traffic stop or upon arrival at the scene of an incident. In all, **138** law enforcement officers were shot in ambush-style attacks, of whom **20** died. In 2023, **37 percent** of shooting incidents were considered ambush-style.

Of the total number of officers who were ambushed, **14.5** percent died of their injuries, compared to **10.4** percent of officers shot under other circumstances, making ambush-style attacks more lethal to their targets.

Examples of ambush-style attacks include the following:

- An officer was sitting in their patrol car when the suspect drove alongside and opened fire, striking and killing the officer. The suspect fled the scene but was captured a few days later.
- Officers had stopped to assist a disabled motorist. The driver then opened fire, striking an officer. Officers returned fire, striking the suspect. The suspect fled the scene in the officer's vehicle but eventually crashed and died because of their injuries.
- Officers were executing a search warrant at a residence when the suspect opened fire, striking an officer. Officers were able to take the suspect into custody after a brief standoff.

## **CALCULATED ATTACKS**

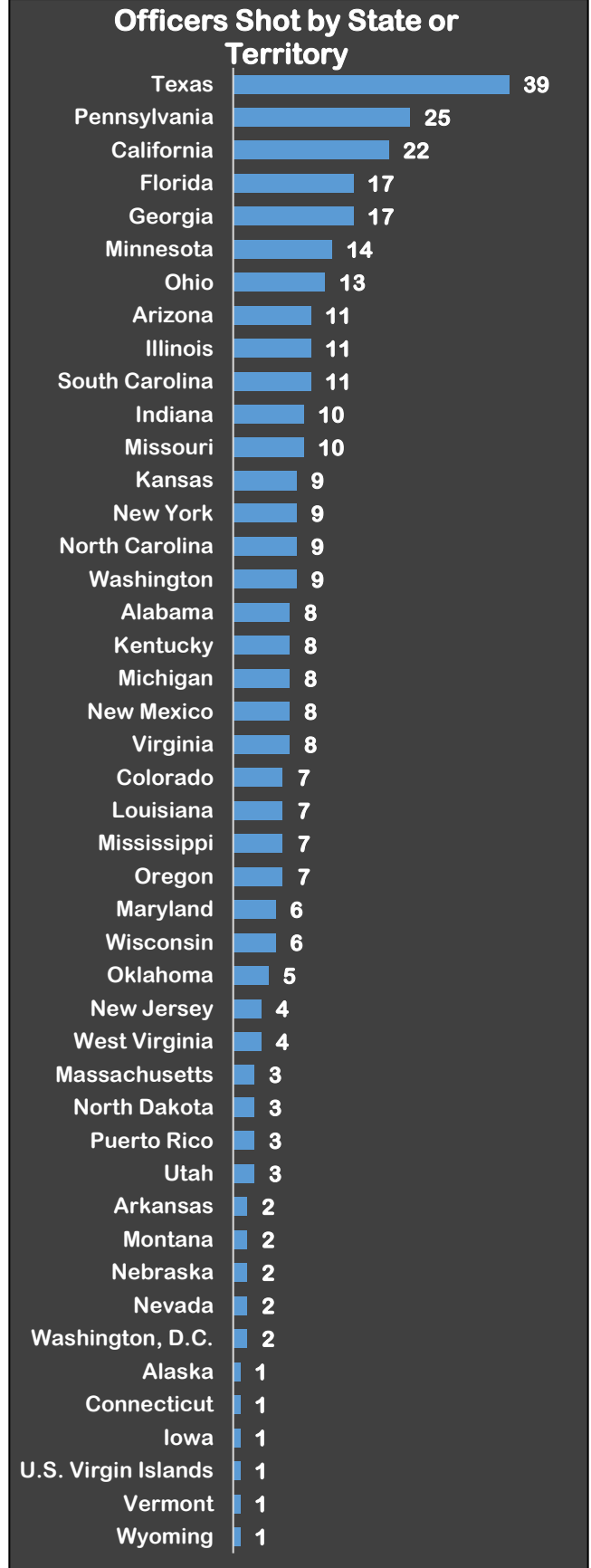
Similar to ambush-style attacks, there were **166** incidents where offenders acted in a calculated and premeditated manner to shoot officers who were performing their duties. These attacks differ only slightly from the more brazen ambush-style attacks in that officers *may* have had some reason to anticipate a threat. In all, **209** officers were shot in calculated attacks, and **21** of those officers were killed.

Examples of calculated attacks include the following:

- Officers were responding to reports of shots fired. When officers arrived at the scene, the suspect opened fire, striking an officer. The suspect surrendered to officers after the incident.
- Officers were searching for a suspect who had an arrest warrant and tracked him to an apartment. When officers tried to enter, the suspect opened fire, striking an officer. Officers returned fire, killing the suspect.
- Officers were responding to reports of a domestic violence incident. When officers arrived at the scene and tried making contact with the suspect, the suspect opened fire, striking an officer. The suspect was arrested after a standoff.

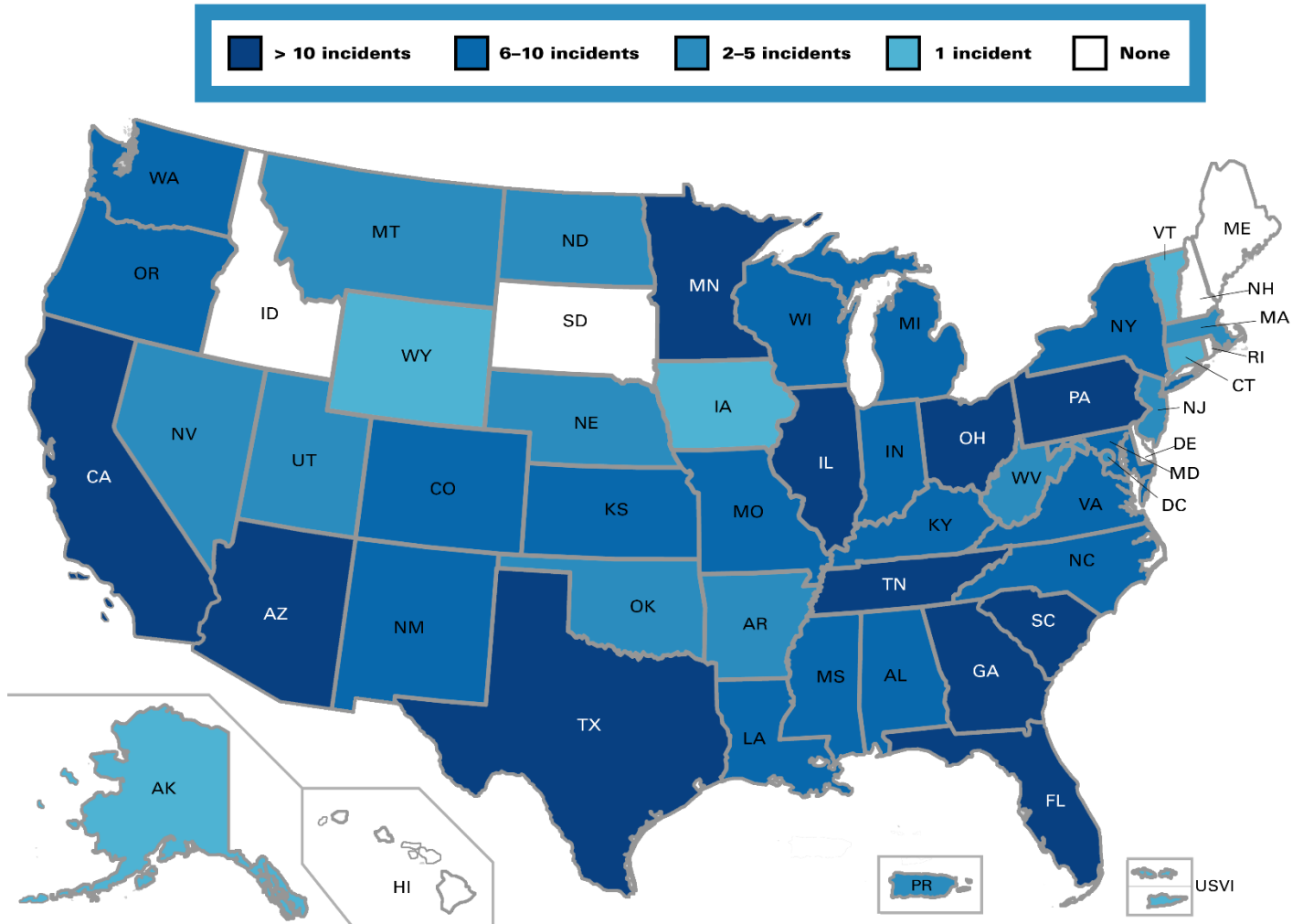
**INCIDENT DATA BY STATE**

State or territory	Shooting incidents	Officers shot	Number survived	Number killed
<i>Each asterisk (*) equals one officer who was shot prior to 2023 but died from that gunshot wound in 2023.</i>				
Alabama	6	8	7	1
Alaska	1	1	1	0
Arizona	8	11	11	0
Arkansas	2	2	2	0
California	20	22	18	4
Colorado	7	7	6	1
Connecticut	1	1	1	0
Florida	16	17	17	0
Georgia	15	17	15	2
Illinois	11	11	9	2
Indiana	8	10	9	1
Iowa	1	1	0	1
Kansas	5	9	8	1
Kentucky	7	8	7	1
Louisiana	6	7	4	3*
Maryland	4	6	6	0
Massachusetts	3	3	3	0
Michigan	7	8	8	0
Minnesota	7	14	13	1
Mississippi	6	7	5	2
Missouri	6	10	9	1
Montana	2	2	2	0
Nebraska	1	2	2	0
Nevada	2	2	2	0
New Jersey	4	4	3	1
New Mexico	8	8	6	2*
New York	8	9	9	0
North Carolina	8	9	8	1
North Dakota	1	3	2	1
Ohio	10	13	13	0
Oklahoma	5	5	5	0
Oregon	5	7	6	1
Pennsylvania	17	25	20	5
Puerto Rico	1	3	2	1
South Carolina	10	11	11	0
Tennessee	16	21	19	2
Texas	33	39	35	4
U.S. Virgin Islands	1	1	0	1
Utah	3	3	3	0
Vermont	1	1	1	0
Virginia	8	8	7	1
Washington	7	9	9	0
Washington, D.C.	2	2	2	0
West Virginia	3	4	3	1
Wisconsin	4	6	2	4
Wyoming	1	1	1	0
	<b>308</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>46**</b>



## INCIDENT LOCATION DENSITY MAP

Shootings occurred in **43** different states, the **District of Columbia, Puerto Rico,** and the **U.S. Virgin Islands**. **Texas** had the highest number of officers shot with **39**, followed by **Pennsylvania** with **25** and **California** with **22**. There were no reports of officers shot in a total of **7** states (**Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and South Dakota**) nor in the territories of American Samoa, Guam, or the Northern Mariana Islands. The map below depicts shooting incident density across the nation.



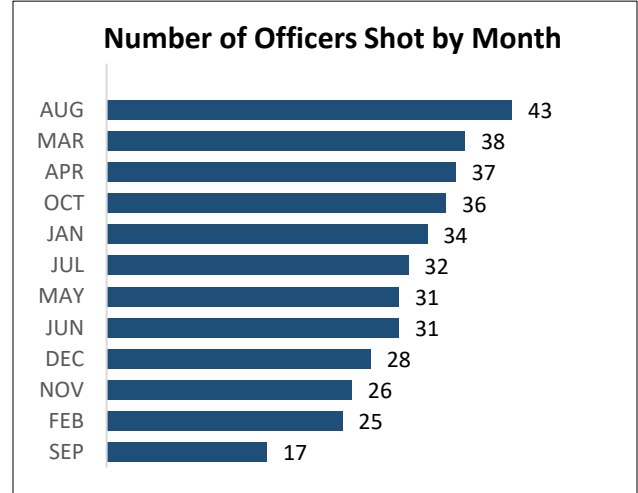
## BULLET-RESISTANT VESTS

At least **45** officers were protected from gunshots that struck a protective ballistic vest. The actual number may be higher, but this element is not consistently apparent from news reporting.

## INCIDENT DATA BY MONTH

**August** saw the highest number of officers shot in 2023, with **43**, followed by **38** officers shot in **March**.

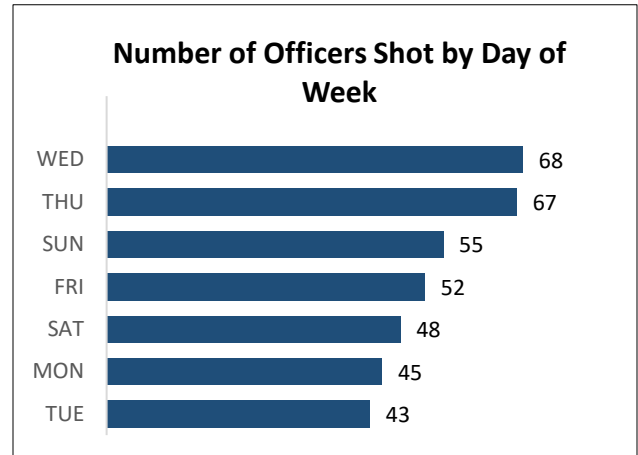
Incident Data by Month				
<i>Each asterisk (*) equals one officer who was shot prior to 2023 but died from that gunshot wound in 2023.</i>				
Month	Shooting incidents	Officers shot	Number survived	Number killed
JAN	27	34	31	3
FEB	19	25	21	4
MAR	30	38	34	4
APR	29	37	32	5*
MAY	26	31	26	5
JUN	27	31	27	4
JUL	26	32	24	8
AUG	32	43	41	2*
SEP	16	17	15	2
OCT	27	36	33	3
NOV	24	26	24	2
DEC	25	28	24	4
	<b>308</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>46**</b>



## INCIDENT DATA BY DAY OF WEEK

**Wednesday** was the day of the week that saw the highest number of officers shot, with **68** officers shot, followed by **Thursday** (**67**) and **Sunday** (**55**).

Incident Data by Day of Week				
<i>Each asterisk (*) equals one officer who was shot prior to 2023 but died from that gunshot wound in 2023.</i>				
Day	Shooting incidents	Officers shot	Number survived	Number killed
SUN	46	55	50	5*
MON	35	45	38	7*
TUE	36	43	37	6
WED	55	68	63	5
THU	51	67	63	4
FRI	44	52	44	8
SAT	41	48	37	11
	<b>308</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>46**</b>

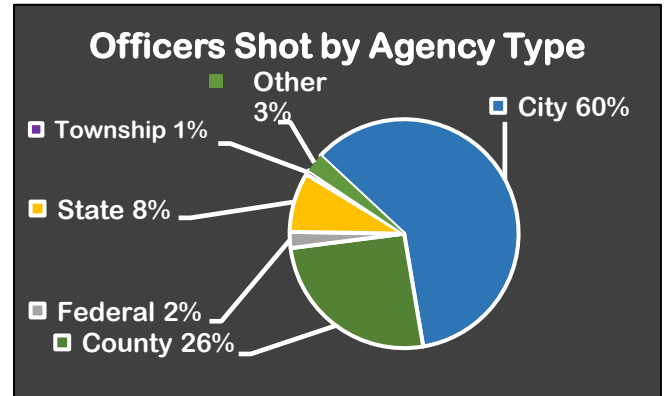




## INCIDENT DATA BY AGENCY TYPE

**One hundred ninety-one** of the officers shot in 2023 were members of city or municipal law enforcement agencies. The data and chart below depict incidents broken down by agency type. *NOTE: Some incidents involved multiple types of agency.*

<b>Incidents by Agency Type</b>				
<i>Each asterisk (*) equals one officer who was shot prior to 2023 but died from that gunshot wound in 2023.</i>				
Agency type	Shooting incidents	Officers shot	Number survived	Number killed
City	186	226	195	31**
County	79	98	89	9
Federal	7	10	10	0
State	2	2	2	0
Township	2	2	2	0
Other	8	11	9	2
	<b>308</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>46**</b>





## 2023 - LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS SHOT IN THE LINE OF DUTY



	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	2023	2022	% Change
<b>Total number of shooting incidents</b>	27	19	30	29	26	27	26	32	16	27	24	25	<b>308</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>+ 15.3%</b>
<b>Total number of officers shot</b>	34	25	38	37	31	31	32	43	17	36	26	28	<b>378</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>+ 14.2%</b>
<i>Number of officers survived</i>	31	21	34	32	26	27	24	41	15	33	24	24	<b>332</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>+ 15.7%</b>
<i>Number of officers killed</i>	3	4	4	5*	5	4	8	2*	2	3	2	4	<b>46**</b>	<b>62***</b>	<b>- 25.8%</b>

*Each asterisk (\*) represents one officer who was shot prior in one year but died from that gunshot wound in a subsequent year.*