

Police Officer: Excerpts from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008 – 2009 Edition

Employment Outlook: Employment of police and detectives is expected to grow 11 percent over the 2006-16 decade, about as fast as the average for all occupations. Overall opportunities in local police departments will be excellent. Applicants with college training or military experience will have the best opportunities in local and State departments. Layoffs are rare because retirements enable most staffing cuts to be handled through attrition.

Earnings: Police and sheriff's patrol officers had median annual earnings of \$47,460 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between \$35,600 and \$59,880. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$27,310, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$72,450. Total earnings for local, State, and special police and detectives frequently exceed the stated salary because of payments for overtime, which can be significant.

Nature of the Work: People depend on police officers and detectives to protect their lives and property. Law enforcement officers perform these duties in a variety of ways depending on the size and type of their organization.

Uniformed police officers have general law enforcement duties, including maintaining regular patrols and responding to calls for service. Much of their time is spent responding to calls and doing paperwork. They may direct traffic at the scene of an accident, investigate a burglary, or give first aid to an accident victim. Some police officers specialize in a particular field, such as chemical and microscopic analysis, training and firearms instruction, or handwriting and fingerprint identification. Others work with special units, such as horseback, bicycle, motorcycle, or harbor patrol; canine corps; special weapons and tactics (SWAT); or emergency response teams.

Education and training. In Michigan, police officers must successfully complete an MCOLES approved basic police training school (police academy). Pre-service candidates must also have a minimum of an Associate's Degree by the time they finish the police academy.