

General purpose state and local law enforcement agencies conducted an average of 186 vehicle pursuits per day in 2012. Local police departments (about 40,000) conducted most of the estimated 68,000 pursuits during the year, followed by sheriffs' offices (about 18,000) and state police and highway patrol agencies (about 10,000). Nearly one person a day was killed in a pursuit-related crash in 2012 for a total of 351 deaths.

### Jurisdiction size

All local police departments serving 250,000 or more residents and nearly all (95%) of those serving 50,000 to 249,999 residents conducted vehicle pursuits. In comparison, fewer than half (47%) of departments serving fewer than 10,000 residents conducted pursuits.

A similar pattern was observed among sheriffs' offices. About 9 in 10 agencies serving 100,000 or more residents, 8 in 10 agencies serving 25,000 to 99,999 residents, and 7 in 10 agencies serving 10,000 to 24,999 residents conducted vehicle pursuits in 2012. In comparison, fewer than half (43%) of sheriffs' offices serving fewer than 10,000 residents conducted vehicle pursuits that year.

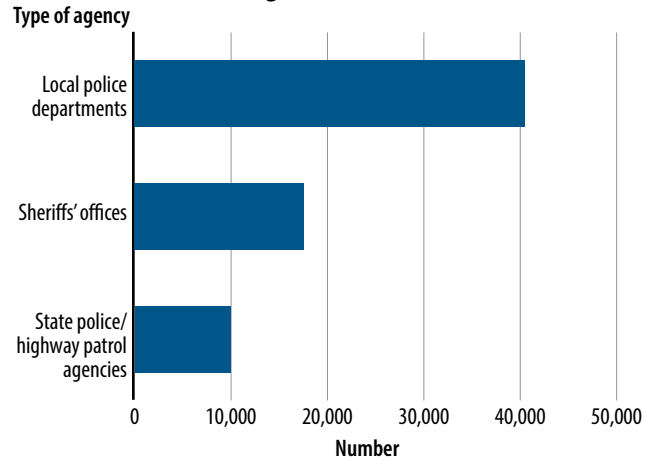
### Pursuit rates

In 2012, state police and highway patrol agencies conducted 17 vehicle pursuits per 100 officers employed, compared to 9 per 100 for sheriffs' offices and 8 per 100 for local police departments. Local police departments in the smallest jurisdictions had 15 pursuits per 100 officers, which was nearly four times the rate of departments in the largest jurisdictions (4 per 100). The rate of pursuits in sheriffs' offices serving fewer than 25,000 residents (15 per 100) was about double the rate of agencies serving 100,000 or more (7 per 100).

### Agency policies

All state police and highway patrol agencies and all local police departments serving 25,000 or more residents had a written vehicle pursuit policy as of January 2013. The majority of local police departments (71%), sheriffs' offices (63%), and state law enforcement agencies (53%) had a policy that restricted pursuits based on specific criteria, such as speed, type of offense, and surrounding conditions.

**Vehicle pursuits conducted by general purpose state and local law enforcement agencies, 2012**



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics survey, 2013.

About a third (30%) of state police and highway patrol agencies permitted officers to use their own discretion when deciding to initiate a vehicle pursuit. Smaller percentages of sheriffs' offices (17%) and local police departments (13%) had discretionary pursuit policies. Agencies with a discretionary policy had the highest vehicle pursuit rate (17 pursuits per 100 officers), and agencies that discouraged or prohibited pursuits had the lowest pursuit rate (2 per 100). Agencies with a restrictive policy conducted 8 per 100.

### Fatal crashes

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System, there were more than 6,000 fatal pursuit-related crashes from 1996 to 2015. More than 7,000 persons died during this period for an average of 355 per year (about 1 per day). The number of pursuit-related deaths peaked in 2006 and 2007, with more than 400 each year. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of pursuit-related fatalities involved occupants of the pursued vehicle. A third of those killed were occupants of a vehicle not involved in the pursuit (29%) or bystanders not in a vehicle (4%). Slightly more than 1% of the fatalities were occupants of the pursuing police vehicle.

The full report (*Police Vehicle Pursuits, 2012-2013*, NCJ 250545), related documents, and additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics can be found at [www.bjs.gov](http://www.bjs.gov).