



Sheriffs' Offices, 2016: Personnel

SUMMARY | NCJ 252834

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As of June 30, 2016, the 15,322 general-purpose law enforcement agencies in the United States employed an estimated 701,000 full-time sworn officers. Sheriffs' offices made up 20% (3,012) of these agencies and employed 25% (173,000) of these full-time sworn officers.

From 1997 to 2016, the total number of full-time sworn officers in general-purpose law enforcement agencies increased by 8%, while the number in sheriffs' offices remained roughly constant. During the same period, the total U.S. population increased by 21%, which resulted in the number of full-time sworn officers in general-purpose law enforcement agencies decreasing from 2.42 per 1,000 residents in 1997 to 2.17 per 1,000 residents in 2016 (down 11%).

General-purpose law enforcement agencies include all municipal, county, and regional police departments, all primary state agencies, and most sheriffs' offices. They are distinct from special-purpose agencies, sheriffs' offices with only jail and court duties, and federal agencies.

Sworn and civilian personnel

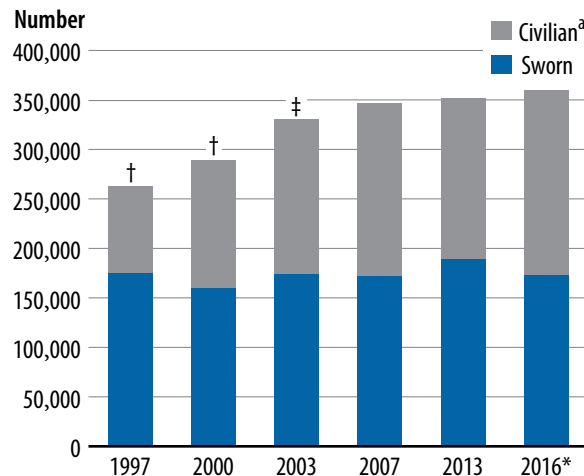
About 52% of all full-time staff in sheriffs' offices were civilian or limited-sworn personnel. The number of full-time civilian or limited-sworn personnel in sheriffs' offices increased 20% from 2003 to 2016, while the number of full-time sworn officers was about the same in both years.

About 4% of sheriffs' offices had the equivalent of 250 or more full-time sworn officers in 2016, and those offices employed about half (47%) of all full-time sworn sheriffs' officers nationwide. Most sheriffs' offices (55%) employed less than 25 full-time-equivalent sworn officers.

Demographics of officers

In sheriffs' offices, about 1 in 7 full-time sworn officers, and about 1 in 8 first-line supervisors, were female. About 1 in 5 officers, and about 1 in 6 first-line

Full-time employees in sheriffs' offices, 1997-2016



*Comparison group.

†Significant difference from comparison group at the 95% confidence level shown for total full-time employees.

‡Significant difference from comparison group at the 90% confidence level shown for total full-time employees.

^aIncludes officers/deputies with limited or no arrest powers and non-sworn employees.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics survey, 1997-2016.

supervisors, were black or Hispanic. From 1997 to 2016, the proportion of officers who were Hispanic nearly doubled, from 6% to 11%.

Specialized units and school resource officers

Most sheriffs' offices with the equivalent of 100 or more full-time sworn officers had specialized units with personnel assigned full-time to address drug enforcement (82% of sheriffs' offices) and school safety (61%). About half (47%) of sheriffs' offices had full-time sworn personnel assigned as school resource officers (SROs), as an estimated 4% of full-time sworn sheriffs' officers (6,900) served as SROs.

The full report (*Sheriffs' Offices, 2016: Personnel*, NCJ 252834), related documents, and additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics are available on the BJS website at www.bjs.gov.