

T H E

J O B

C E N T E R

LAW ENFORCEMENT



A law enforcement officer's first duty is to prevent crime. He or she also assists citizens, investigates crimes, arrests violators, and preserves the peace.

SKILLS REQUIRED

Law enforcement officers must stay in good physical condition and be assertive communicators.

WHERE/HOW TO GET TRAINING

Schooling

Police departments are encouraging applicants to take post-secondary school training in law enforcement. Many entry-level applicants have completed some formal post-secondary education and a significant number are college graduates. Many junior colleges, colleges, and universities offer programs in law enforcement, criminology, or administration of justice. Other courses helpful in preparing for a career in law enforcement include accounting, finance, computer science, and foreign languages. Some large cities hire new high school graduates as police cadets or trainees. They can be appointed to the regular force at the end of their training, usually in one to two years. Before their first assignments, officers usually go through a

training period. In large state and local departments, recruits are trained in their agency's police academy, often for 12 to 14 weeks. In small agencies, recruits often attend a regional or state academy. Training includes classroom instruction in constitutional law and civil rights, state laws and local ordinances, and accident investigation. **Financial Aid** Grants, scholarships, loans, and work/study programs are available for post secondary students. For most of this aid, prospective students must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, which is available from high school guidance offices and post secondary financial aid offices. For more information on federal financial aid programs, or to apply electronically, visit the U.S. Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.ed.gov>.



Federal Student Aid Information Center,
(800) 433-3243

FUTURE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Turnover in police, detective, and special agent positions is among the lowest of all occupations. The need to replace workers who retire

or transfer to other occupations will be the source of most job openings.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Law enforcement officers wear uniforms or clothes that fit the assignment. They may work in an office setting, but most often work

in the field, patrolling in marked law enforcement vehicles.

RESOURCES - HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

BOOKS:

- 100 Best Careers in Crime Fighting by Mary Price Lee, Richard S. Lee, Carol Beam, Carol Dilks
- Careers in Law Enforcement and Security by Paul Cohen, Shari Cohen

ONLINE:

www.iawp.org
(international Association of Women Police)

GENERAL:

Federal Bureau of Investigation
J. Edgar Hoover Bldg.
935 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20535-0001
www.fbi.gov

LOCAL: Terri Parrish 751-7900x2018
parrishm@manateeschools.net

The safety and well-being of this country's citizens greatly depends on the police officers, detectives, and special agents responsible for enforcing statutes, laws, and regulations. Law enforcement officers preserve the peace, enforce the law, protect life and property, prevent criminal acts, arrest violators, and provide assistance to people in need. There are many forms of law enforcement work. Police officers work in both small and large cities, patrolling streets, investigating crimes, and giving aid to the injured. Sheriffs perform similar duties on the county level, often working in rural areas. Sheriffs and their deputy officers often are responsible for operating jails, providing courthouse security, and collecting taxes. State troopers and highway patrol officers enforce statewide highway laws, investigate vehicle accidents and criminal activity, and provide support to local police and county sheriff's departments. Federal law enforcement officers range from those who act as the government's principal investigators in their work for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), to those who specialize in enforcement of drug laws and regulations through the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

Virtually all law enforcement officers must complete some formal training. Many large cities and most states operate their own training facilities, often known as police academies. Some law enforcement agencies require potential employees to complete some post-secondary education in a related field prior to attending the academy to receive specialized training in law enforcement procedures. Federal officers must also complete training programs management by the various agencies they represent. Regardless of where they work or what they do, law enforcement officers must spend a considerable amount of time writing reports and maintaining records that might be needed if they testify in court. Officers often serve as key witnesses, testifying in court about crimes they have seen or learned about through their investigations. Law enforcement work can be dangerous, as officers place themselves in harm's way in order to protect others. Officers usually wear protective equipment, such as bullet-proof vests, and most often carry a firearm. They rely on experience and intense training to help them manage the stress that can arise from working in potentially hazardous conditions.

Q&A

Q: What are some of the specialties in law enforcement work?

A: Law enforcement officers may specialize in such fields as drug prevention and enforcement, chemical and microscopic analysis, handwriting and fingerprint identification, or officer training and firearms instruction. Others may work for special units within a department, including canine units, horseback patrols, bicycle patrols, motorcycle patrols, or harbor patrols via boats.

Q: Everyone knows the law enforcement field is dangerous. Aren't the working conditions also extremely stressful?

A: Yes, law enforcement can be a stressful occupation. Besides the day-to-day dangers of dealing with criminals, people in law enforcement must be prepared to confront threatening and stressful situations. Many law enforcement officers and agents witness death and suffering on a regular basis, which can take an emotional toll. Despite the risks and day-to-day stress, many officers stay in the field until retirement because they enjoy serving their community.

JOBS IN THIS FIELD

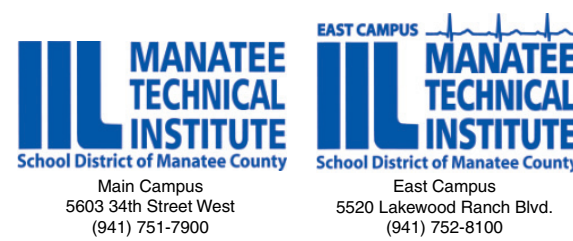
Job titles	Place of work	Kind of work	Average salary*
Patrol officer	State, county, or local agency.	Protects life and property through law enforcement.	\$30,460-\$50,230
Sheriff's officer	County courthouse or sheriff's office.	Enforces laws at the county level, serves court orders and warrants, monitors court proceedings, operates jails.	\$30,460-\$50,230
FBI special agent	Field offices based throughout the nation.	Conducts surveillance, monitors court-authorized wiretaps, examines business records to investigate white-collar crime, participates in sensitive undercover assignments.	\$45,776

*Salaries may vary depending on region, experience, and size of company. Sources: U.S. Department of Labor, Chronicle Guidance Publications.

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