

Officer Rates in North Carolina, 2019 - 2022

Local law enforcement agencies and sheriff's offices employ about 80% of North Carolina's full-time sworn personnel. These agencies are primarily responsible for providing law enforcement services to the population residing within their jurisdiction. Officer rates represent the number of full-time sworn law enforcement officers per 1,000 residents and does not include other types of law enforcement agencies such as State Highway Patrol.



2.5%

The total number of full-time local law enforcement officers in North Carolina dropped by 2.5% between 2019 and 2022 (20,558 to 20,043).

Police Departments



Change in officers **-4.5%**

Agency Size

Median number of officers **12**

Largest department **1,668**

Sheriff's Offices



Change in officers **+0.6%**

Agency Size

Median number of officers **63**

Largest department **391**

Police departments saw a rate decrease from 2.2 officers per 1,000 residents served to 2.0.



Sheriff's offices saw a rate increase from 1.7 officers per 1,000 residents to 1.8.

Urban counties saw an increase in population (+4.3%) with a decrease in officers (-2.9%) causing a slight decline in officer rates of 2.1 to 1.9.



Rural counties saw a decrease in population (-2.9%) and officers (-1.9%) making officer rates in these areas stable at 2.1 per 1,000 residents.

Notes:

Police Employee Data 2019-2022, provided by the State Bureau of Investigation.

Includes only officers in a full-time sworn position in a local police department or sheriff's office.

Urban (22) and rural (78) county designations provided by the [N.C. Rural Center](#) via Office of State Budget and Management, accessed 05/02/23.

Visit the North Carolina Justice Data Portal at justicedataportal.nc.gov



Governor's Crime Commission
NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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