

A police car is shown from a front-three-quarter view, overlaid with a semi-transparent American flag. The stars of the flag are on the left side, and the stripes are on the right. The car's lights and front grille are visible.

2021 Salary Survey Report

OFFICER

THE LEADER IN PRODUCTS, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

SALARY SURVEY REPORT

**FROM 2021 SALARY SURVEY PERFORMED BY
OFFICER MEDIA GROUP**

<http://www.officer.com/21218121>

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INTRODUCTION

It is the intention of the Officer Media Group, through the publication of this report, to offer information to the law enforcement executive community including Chiefs of Police, Sheriffs and any other administrative executive within the profession.

As law enforcement executive officers prepare their budget requests each year, it's our intention that this document be viable to support the stated needs. Many LE executives have had to depend on information as much as three to five years old when attempting to justify increases in salaries and benefits. By publishing the results of our first annual survey, which reveals the needs and expectations of contemporary LE executives, other LE executives can leverage the information, properly cited to support their stated salary recommendations / requests.

Any questions or clarifications can be directed to our editorial staff via email to editor@officer.com or by calling 800-547-7377 and asking for a member of the Officer Media Group editorial staff.

INTENDED PURPOSE

Knowing that law enforcement executives all across the nation have to justify budget requests year after year, and that they do so largely based on information from previous years, Officer Media Group recognized the need for a survey that showed comparative salary data across the industry. This report provides you the results from our comprehensive survey conducted April-May, 2021.



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SECTION ONE: SURVEY SAMPLING INFORMATION

Percentages reported are typically rounded off to the nearest whole number.

The Officer Media Group Salary survey was sent out to approximately 55,000 email subscribers from our opt-in only qualified email list. Of the email invitations for participation that were sent out, 618 recipients actively participated. With a reported approximate 18,000 law enforcement agencies existent in the United States, the 618 survey completions represent approximately 3.4% of the overall agencies.

Respondent Rank

Of the 618 responses, 51 or 8.3% were Chiefs, Sheriffs or other Agency heads.

Of the 618 responses, 359 or 58% were of command rank.

Of the 618 responses, 170 or 28% were of line officer rank.

Of the 618 responses, 74 or 11.9% were assigned to investigations.

It is imperative that the 28% of respondents that are line officer rank aren't dismissed as inaccurate or lacking in value. If an agency has limited staffing, executive and administrative duties often are delegated to line rank officers. See statistics on the sizes of agencies represented to correlate the responses to agency staffing and keep this number in perspective.

Level of Education

Education Level	% Reported
High School	3.6%
Vocational/Technical School	6.66%
Some College	27.11%
College Degree	44.16%
Postgraduate Study	4.71%
Postgraduate degree(s)	13.8%

Respondent Duty Assignment

Of the 618 responses, 110 or 18% identified themselves as Executive/Command officers.

Of the 618 responses, 170 or 28% identified themselves as assigned to Patrol.

The largest respondent group of 226 or 37% identified themselves as command rank –Major, Captain or Lieutenant, or as a Department Head or Department Manager.

Type of Agency

The largest single segment of Agency Type responding was Municipal at 62% of the participants.

County agencies were the next largest represented at 23%.

State agencies were third largest at 7.4%.

The remaining 7.6% of the responses were a combination of Private, Training/Academy, Correctional/Prison and other agency types.

Agency Total Employment Size

As you review these numbers and percentages, be aware that this is NOT an indicator of average agency size in the United States. The numbers reported were for the total number of employees at a given agency, not the number of sworn officers. Many forget that a Chief or Sheriff is responsible for every agency employee, not just the sworn personnel. When considering salary standards, the total employee count is important and often overlooked.

1 – 4 employees: 7 / 1.13%

5 – 9 employees: 24 / 3.89%

10 – 19 employees: 56 / 9.08%

20 – 49 employees: 119 / 19.29%

50 – 99 employees: 93 / 15.07%

100+ employees: 318 / 51.54%

Time in profession, with employer, in position

These three “time in...” characteristics are often considered when being selected for a given position. How long have you served in your given profession? How long have you been with your current agency? How long have you been in the position you currently hold? The percentages are broken down and shown below. Because of how the recipients were targeted by the email distribution process, the most common time indicate what you’d expect when looking at Chiefs/Sheriffs and other command staff positions.

	Time in Profession	Time with Current Agency	Time in Current Position
Less than 6 months	0.16%	0.65%	3.4%
7 – 11 months	0.65%	1.13%	2.27%
1 – 3 years	1.29%	5.5%	18.61%
4 – 7 years	2.75%	8.9%	19.09%
8 – 11 years	6.96%	6.96%	10.03%
12 – 15 years	10.84%	12.78%	9.87%
16 or more years	64.4%	44.01%	13.59%

SECTION TWO: SALARY & BENEFITS RESPONSE INFORMATION

Reported Usual Work Week

These responses reveal that there are still some “part time” Commanders and/or Chiefs/Sheriffs. That said, the numbers also reveal that most executive level officers are working far more than a 40 hour week to earn their pay. While it’s good news that roughly half of all executive level officers work between 40-44 hours per week, it’s slightly bothersome that a combined 39% work over 45 hours per week and 18% work over 50 hours per week. This is similar to the “standard” expected in the commercial business world of executives.

Average Hours worked per week	
Less than 30	1.13%
30 – 39	1.78%
40 – 44	63.21%
45 – 49	19.45%
50 – 54	8.27%
55 – 59	3.4%
60 or more	2.76%

Number of Employees Directly Supervised

Dependent on the size of the agency, a Chief or Sheriff may directly supervise anything from the entire 5-person agency to a 20-person command staff. What is surprising is that any executive officer would answer that they directly supervise zero personnel. Yet that is exactly how one-third of our respondents answered in this survey.

Number of Employees Directly Supervised	
None	40.68%
1	2.43%
2	2.76%
3 – 4	10.05%
5 – 6	12.48%
7 – 9	9.08%
10 – 14	8.10%
15 – 19	5.67%
20 or more	8.75%

Current Salary Ranges

All of the foregoing information needs to be considered when looking at the salary ranges listed below. Some of the numbers may seem very low or very high, but they have to be put into perspective. A part-time Chief who oversees just one or two officers may well get paid very little (comparatively). A Chief working 60+ hours per week and overseeing an agency of thousands may get paid like the CEO of a major corporation. Perspective matters so as you read through this table, don't fail to keep the previous answers in mind.

Reported Current Salary Range	
Up to \$25,000	0.32%
\$25,001 - \$50,000	9.56%
\$50,001 - \$75,000	28.2%
\$75,001 - \$100,000	31.28%
\$100,001 - \$150,000	25.93%
\$150,001 - \$200,000	3.73%
\$200,001 - \$250,000	0.81%
\$250,001 - \$300,000	0.16%
\$300,001 - \$500,000	0
Greater than \$500,000	0

Reported Salary Increase/Decrease

The following reflects reported year-over-year salary increases and/or decreases. It is often wrongfully assumed that pay never gets cut. The unfortunate reality is that budgets often require cuts and if the salary line item is the only place that can be cut, that's where it happens. Thankfully it's not as common as pay increases are. Additionally, for those who weren't in the same position as last year, that was identified as well. It's interesting to note that a zero percent change could be reported as either a 0% increase OR a 0% decrease, but if you add the numbers, you get 102% so obviously some respondents reported both.

With the "average" or "standard" pay increase being a cost of living adjustment, sometimes accompanied by a merit or step increase, that averages 3% or less per year, it's no surprise to see the largest number for any increase in the 1%-5% range. That almost another 10% of respondents got increase between 6%-15% is significant and notable.

Percentage of Increase/Decrease	Percentage Reported Salary INCREASE	Percentage Reported Salary DECREASE
0%	23.66%%	
1% - 5%	60.78%	1.78%
6% - 10%	7.62%	1.13%
11% - 15%	1.94%	0.16%
16% or more	1.13%	0.16%
Wasn't in the same position last year	1.62%	

Reported Bonus

Any type of Bonus pay is exceedingly rare in the law enforcement industry. The offered options for a bonus amount spanned from less than \$1,000 up to over \$100,000. The largest percentage of respondents indicated no Bonus received at all. All answers with "0" % have been removed for ease of reading and space savings.

Amount of Bonus Received	
Up to \$1,000	5.03%
\$1,001 - \$5,000	7.95%
\$5,001 - \$10,000	0.65%
\$10,001 - \$15,000	0%
\$15,001 - \$20,000	0%
NO BONUS RECIEVED	86.36%

Vacation / Personal Time Off Benefit

Vacation time / Personal Time Off is often part of an overall benefits package offered for executive personnel. When asked how many days of vacation time or personal time off they received, the respondents indicated the largest percentages between 16 and 25 days. The percentages are below. Keep in mind that five (5) days of leave usually equates to one week off, so the standard seems to be between three and five weeks of leave per year.

Unfortunately there are some respondents who get no paid leave at all. This may be responses from that small percentage who work fewer than 40 hours per week and are therefore considered part time.

Number of Days of Leave Annually	
Up to 5 days	1.13%
6 – 10 days	6.47%
11 – 15 days	20.71%
16 – 20 days	21.36%
21 – 25 days	17.96%
26 – 30 days	15.7%
More than 30 days	15.05%
I don't receive any vacation days	1.62%

Other Benefits

Salary and paid leave are not the only measures of compensation. In our survey we also gathered information about full or partial paid benefits that included the following and measured what percentage of each item the employer paid, if any. While some of these don't normally impact law enforcement, some of them might surprise you.

Company Car	Health Insurance
Wellness (usually gym membership)	Non-Uniform Clothing
Uniform Clothing	Day Care
Charitable Giving	401K
Pension	Education
Dining	Fuel / Fuel Vouchers
Parking / commuting costs	Profit Sharing
Employee Discounts	Professional membership fees/dues
Other membership fees/dues	Utility expenses
Housing	Other

Benefit Item	Percentage Employer Invests				
	76-100%	51-75%	26-50%	1-25%	None
Company Car	47.21%	1.15%	1.48%	1.15%	26.07%
Health Insurance	45.41%	26.56%	14.1%	5.9%	3.77%
Wellness	13.77%	1.64%	4.43%	4.59%	47.38%
Non-Uniform Clothing Allowance	8.36%	2.46%	4.92%	9.18%	40.33%
Uniform Clothing Allowance	51.64%	7.7%	5.9%	9.84%	8.69%
Day care	0.16%	0	0.33%	0.82%	68.52%
Charitable giving	0.49%	0.16%	0.49%	2.3%	57.38%
401K	3.93%	1.64%	4.59%	15.08%	41.8%
Pension	27.87%	21.15%	14.75%	21.97%	8.2%
Education	20.49%	6.56%	10.82%	18.69%	22.95%
Dining	2.3%	0.98%	0.98%	2.3%	65.25%
Fuel / Fuel Vouchers	37.54%	0.49%	0.33%	0.98%	34.26%
Parking / Commuting Expenses	15.41%	0.33%	0.82%	1.48%	52.3%
Profit Sharing	0.16%	0	0.33%	0.33%	66.39%
Employee Discounts	0	0.98%	0.16%	4.75%	61.97%
Professional membership fees/dues	18.2%	2.46%	3.28%	4.92%	42.79%
Other membership fees	4.1%	0.16%	0.82%	2.13%	54.92%
Utility Expenses	17.38%	2.3%	1.64%	5.08%	43.93%
Housing	0.16%	0.16%	0.33%	0	69.34%