

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