

Law Enforcement Officers

NIOSH Motor Vehicle Safety Impact Story

Law enforcement officers spend many hours behind the wheel, including responding to emergency calls, in high-speed pursuits, and conducting normal patrol duties.



564 officers died due to vehicle crashes, 31% of all line-of-duty deaths from 2005-2016.¹
Of the 152 fatal crashes from 2012-2016, almost half were single-vehicle events.¹

Key Actions:



Evaluate the effectiveness of a departmental crash prevention program in reducing motor vehicle crashes and injuries.



Conduct statewide survey of officers and agency leaders to better understand motor vehicle crashes, seat belt use, and motor vehicle safety training.



Investigate crash-related officer fatalities to understand the circumstances and causes of these events.

Key Findings:

- It is possible to reduce crashes and injuries by implementing and enforcing policies, education, and training. One agency's program led to a 14% decline in crash rate and 41% decline in injury rate for all law enforcement officers. Patrol officers, those spending the most amount of time in patrol cars, had the largest decreases in crashes and injuries.
- Nearly all officers believed that driver training is critical to their safety, but only half reported that academy-provided driver training prepared them to safely drive in the field, and only 29% reported having any type of motor vehicle annual in-service training.
- Most officer-involved motor vehicle crashes occurred during daylight (49%), in clear weather (70%), during non-emergency calls (64%), and at speeds lower than 50 mph (79%).

Key Outputs:



- Officer Motor Vehicle Safety [webpage](#)
- Keep officers safe on the road [infographic](#)
- Officer Road Code [toolkit](#)



- [Findings](#) from a statewide survey of officers related to motor vehicle incidents
- Officer motor vehicle crash & struck-by fatality investigation [reports](#)



Police Chief Magazine
[Research in Brief:](#)
Officer-involved collisions:
Magnitude, risk factors,
and prevention

Key Impacts:

- Research fostered a relationship between NIOSH and law enforcement bodies such as the Police Foundation, National Institute of Justice, Destination Zero, National Sheriffs' Association, Below 100, and International Association of Chiefs of Police.
- Crash investigations identified details about circumstances and contributing factors that can be used to support training programs and policy changes to promote safe driving among officers.
- According to a NIOSH Science Blog post about popular NIOSH information in [2018](#), an Instagram message about the Officer Road Code toolkit had the most likes (96) and most engagement (108) of any post since NIOSH opened the account in 2016. Engagement includes likes, comments, and saves.