



# Police Officer

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## Job Description:

Police patrol officers keep order in their communities and make sure that people follow laws.

**Wages:** Average median yearly pay is about \$44,000 a year in Utah.

**Schedule:** Generally have a set schedule each week. May work weekends, holidays, and nights. Services are needed 24 hours a day.

## Education & Experience:

- ◆ Completed High School
- ◆ Complete moderate-term on-the-job training

## High

## School Courses:

- ◆ Community Protection
- ◆ Criminal Justice Assisting
- ◆ Criminology
- ◆ Physical Education
- ◆ Psychology

## Work Conditions:

- ◆ Have a high level of social contact. They constantly work with the public
- ◆ Are placed in conflict and sometimes dangerous situations on a daily basis
- ◆ Always deal with angry, discourteous, or violent individuals.
- ◆ Almost always work outdoors patrolling, but often work indoors while writing reports.
- ◆ Work in a vehicle on a daily basis, such as a patrol car
- ◆ Often exposed to violent people, diseases and infections.

**Travel:** May travel within city limits throughout the day

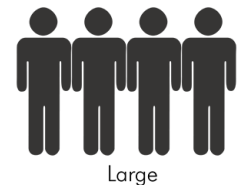
## Gross Monthly Income:

\$3,600

**Advancement:** Police officers usually are eligible for promotion after a probation period. This period ranges from six months to three years. Promotions to a higher rank are usually made according to a candidate's position on a promotion list. Scores on written exams and job performance determine a candidate's position.

Continuing training helps officers improve their job performance and their chances for promotion. Officers can obtain training through police academies and other training centers. In addition, many departments pay all or part of the tuition for officers to take courses toward a college degree in criminal justice, police science, administration of justice, or public administration.

## Job Outlook:



Large

## Hours a Week:

45

## Leisure Time:

Medium

## Knowledge:

- ◆ Public Safety & Service
- ◆ Law, Government, & Jurisprudence
- ◆ English Language
- ◆ Psychology
- ◆ Customer & Personal Service
- ◆ Telecommunications
- ◆ Sociology & Anthropology

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## Overview

The history of American police dates back nearly four centuries, to the year 1631, when a night watch began in Boston. Two centuries later, the first modern organized police force was set up in New York City. It is modeled after the system used by the London Metropolitan Police.

Police patrol officers protect people and property. They patrol areas by walking or driving through them. Some officers ride horses or bikes. While on patrol, officers watch for signs of criminal activity and talk to residents and business people. They try to build relationships with people in their community. Officers are also called to respond to accidents, crimes in progress, fights, and other events. Officers evaluate the information they receive and determine the best way to respond.

Police officers have many traffic-related duties. They respond to traffic accidents and make sure everyone involved is okay. They call ambulances when people are seriously injured and may give emergency first aid. Officers interview the drivers and any witnesses at the scene to learn more about what happened. They may take pictures or draw diagrams to document where cars and other items are located. Depending on where the accident occurred, officers may put cones around the vehicles and direct traffic around them. Later, officers analyze the information they gathered and determine which drivers were at fault. They write reports about these decisions. Some officers use computers to write their reports and document other information.

Police officers attempt to prevent traffic accidents by making sure drivers follow traffic laws. They may drive through towns or along highways and observe motorists' behavior. They pull over motorists who are speeding or driving dangerously and give them citations or warnings. Officers document why they gave tickets and may write reports about their decisions. Occasionally officers testify in court. They present facts about crimes or accidents and explain their decisions.

When officers respond to fights, they attempt to calm people down. When robberies occur, officers take statements from the people who were robbed. They make lists of the missing items and try to determine who committed the crime. Officers respond to a variety of other problems. They first determine whether people are safe. Then they gather information and figure out if crimes were committed. They follow up on these cases or transfer them to other police officers.

In large police departments, officers are usually assigned to a specific duty. For example, some respond to traffic accidents, while others handle robberies.

Pathway:  
***Skilled &  
Technical Sciences***