

# Career Profile

A weekly series devoted to providing information on career exploration

## Do You Like

- Performing for people or dealing directly with the public?
- Communicating with people outside the organization and representing the organization to customers, the public, government, and other external sources?
- Analyzing information and evaluating results to choose the best solution and solve problems?
- Handling complaints, settling disputes, and resolving grievances and conflicts, or otherwise negotiating with others?

*Then This Could Be The Career For You!*

## The Type of Work

- Drive vehicles or patrol specific areas to detect law violators, issue citations, and make arrests.
- Investigate illegal or suspicious activities.
- Verify that the proper legal charges have been made against law offenders.
- Execute arrest warrants, locating and taking persons into custody.
- Record daily activities and submit logs and other related reports and paperwork to appropriate authorities.
- Patrol and guard courthouses, grand jury rooms, or assigned areas to provide security, enforce laws, maintain order, and arrest violators.
- Notify patrol units to take violators into custody or to provide needed assistance or medical aid.
- Place people in protective custody.
- Take control of accident scenes to maintain traffic flow, to assist accident victims, and to investigate causes.
- Serve statements of claims, subpoenas, summonses, jury summonses, orders to pay alimony, and other court orders.

## Pathways to Success

**Education requirements range from a high school diploma to a college degree or higher.** Most civil servants learn much of what they need to know on the job, often in their agency's training academy. Civil service regulations govern their appointment in most States, large municipalities, and special police agencies, as well as in many smaller jurisdictions. Candidates must be U.S. citizens, usually at least 21 years old, and meet rigorous physical and personal qualifications. Physical education classes and participation in sports are also helpful in developing the competitiveness, stamina, and agility needed for many law enforcement positions. Knowledge of a foreign language is an asset in many Federal agencies and urban departments.

State and local agencies encourage applicants to take courses or training related to law enforcement subjects after high school. Many entry-level applicants for police jobs have completed some formal postsecondary education, and a significant number are college graduates. Many junior colleges, colleges, and universities offer programs in law enforcement or administration of justice. Many agencies pay all or part of the tuition for officers to work toward degrees in criminal justice, police science, administration of justice, or public administration and pay higher salaries to those who earn one of those degrees.

## What Employers Look For

### Individuals who possess knowledge of:

- Public Safety and Security - relevant equipment, policies, procedures, and strategies to promote effective local, state, or national security operations for the protection of people, data, property, and institutions.
- Law and Government - laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, government regulations, executive orders, agency rules, and the democratic political process.
- Psychology - human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality, and interests; learning and motivation; psychological research methods; and the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.
- Customer and Personal Service - principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
- Telecommunications - transmission, broadcasting, switching, control, and operation of telecommunications systems.
- Education and Training - principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.
- Administration and Management - business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.
- Personnel and Human Resources - principles and procedures for personnel recruitment, selection, training, compensation and benefits, labor relations and negotiation, and personnel information systems.
- Computers and Electronics - circuit boards, processors, chips, electronic equipment, and computer hardware and software, including applications and programming.

## Job Outlook

**Employment of police and sheriff personnel is expected to grow 10 percent over the 2008–18 decade, about as fast as the average for all occupations.** Population growth is the main source of demand for police services. In 2008, there were 661,500 individuals employed as police officers and sheriffs. By 2018, projections indicate there will be 718,800 individuals employed.

Overall opportunities in local police departments will be favorable for individuals who meet the psychological, personal, and physical qualifications. In addition to openings from employment growth, many openings will be created by the need to replace workers who retire and those who leave local agencies for Federal jobs and private-sector security jobs. Bilingual applicants with military experience or college training in police science will have the best opportunities in local and State departments.

# SHERIFFS AND DEPUTY SHERIFFS

## DEFINITION:

Enforce law and order in rural or unincorporated districts or serve legal processes of courts. May patrol courthouse, guard court or grand jury, or escort defendants.



**NAME:** Anthony R. Pluta

**JOB TITLE:** Deputy Sheriff / School Resource Officer

**COMPANY:** Lorain County Sheriff Office

**LOCATION:** Lorain County

**Q. How did you become interested in your particular field?**

**A.** I became interested in my particular field from a family friend when I was in my early teens.

**Q. Who or what influenced your decision the most and why?**

**A.** I was influenced to become a Police Officer by the same friend, who allowed me to do a 'ride along' with him while he was on duty.

**Q. What is your educational background?**

**A.** I graduated from Elyria High School and the Lorain County JVS in 1989. In 1996 I completed the coursework required to become an Auxiliary Officer with the Lorain County Sheriff Office. In 1998 I was hired as a Correctional Officer by the Lorain County Sheriff Office and completed the coursework that is required to become certified. In January 2001, I began working the midnight shift at the jail and went back to school during the day to become a certified Peace Officer at the EHOVE Career Center in Sandusky. After 4 ½ months I graduated from the program and was awarded my certificate.

**Q. How did you get to where you are today? What path did your employment journey take?**

**A.** During my schooling to become a Police Officer I worked full-time as a Correction Officer at the Lorain County Jail. After graduating I remained a Correctional Officer but also worked as a Police Officer for the South Amherst Police Department until I was hired by the Lorain County Sheriff Office in December 2002 as a full-time Deputy. I spent 7 years patrolling the roads of Lorain County. After that, I spent 1 year in the Lorain County Justice Center and now I am a School Resource Officer at Lorain County JVS.

**Q. What skills or certifications do you think are needed to be successful in this field?**

**A.** To be successful in this field you must have good communication skills with people. When dealing with people, negative comments can't be taken personally. Police Officers have to overlook the negative comments or actions made on a daily basis and can't hold grudges toward the people they arrest.

**Q. What is the best part of your job?**

**A.** The best part of my job is communicating with the public and having the chance to meet new people every day. Each day is different and can go from very little happening to something major in the matter of seconds. Now that I spend my time at the JVS, I take the opportunity to educate students and help them to make better decisions. I also give them the opportunity to trust me when they are in need of someone to talk to.

**Q. Do you have any words of advice for someone considering a career in your field?**

**A.** My advice is to be sure you are doing it for the right reasons and remember a Police Officer is held to a higher standard. If you are looking to make millions, this isn't the job. A Police Officer has a lot of responsibilities and daily puts their life on the line for the safety of others. Once you are a Police Officer, it is amazing how your life changes. Being a Police Officer is a rewarding career!

## Earnings Potential

Location	Year	Pay Period	Low	Median	High
United States	2009	Yearly	\$31,400	\$53,200	\$83,600
Ohio	2009	Yearly	\$29,200	\$54,200	\$72,200
Cleveland Elyria-Mentor, OH MSA	2009	Yearly	\$35,200	\$61,700	\$75,500

O\*Net Online, <http://online.onetcenter.org>.

Sources: Occupational Information Network, O\*Net Online, <http://online.onetcenter.org>; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, <http://stats.bls.gov/oco>