NHTSA 2026
THIRD QUARTER REPORT



The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund in conjunction with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) collects and analyzes fatal law enforcement crash data to track any emerging trends and to provide timely safety recommendations to the field.

During the third quarter of 2026, traffic-related line of duty deaths continued to remain high when compared to the same time in 2025. Through the third quarter of 2026, the overall number of fatalities rose to 34 deaths, which is 62% higher than the 21 deaths over the same period in 2025.

Traffic related fatalities have risen specifically in the category of vehicle crashes. Struck-by crashes and motorcycle crashes were the same when comparing the previous third quarter with this third quarter.

Fatal Law Enforcement Crashes up by 62% in Second Quarter of 2026!

In comparison with the third quarter of 2025, the third quarter of 2026 saw a rise in fatal automobile collisions and in single-vehicle crashes. So far this year, there have been 20 fatal vehicle collision crashes, four of which were single-vehicle crashes compared to 7 fatal vehicle collisions and one single vehicle crashes over the same period in 2025.

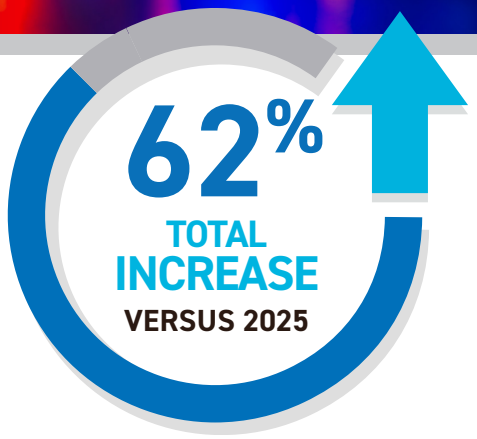
This represents an 186% increase in fatal law enforcement vehicle collisions and a rise in single-vehicle crashes. Through the third quarter of 2026, offices were involved in 7 head-on crashes that were not their fault.

The number of struck-by crashes the first nine months of 2026 was equal to that of 2025. During the same period in 2025, there were 10 fatal struck-by crashes and 10 fatal struck-by crashes in 2026. The most common circumstance in 2026 struck-by crashes was while law enforcement officers were assisting motorists or conducting traffic stops.

There were four fatal motorcycle crashes in the third quarter of 2026, compared to four in 2025. Motorcycle officers escorting VIPs or funerals are at greater risk, as this is one of the most common scenarios for a motorcycle crash.

In the third quarter of 2026, NHTSA Region 4 (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee) led the nation, with 14 law enforcement traffic related fatalities. NHTSA Region 6 (Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas) has experienced 11 line of duty traffic related fatalities. The states of North Carolina and Texas each have sustained four traffic-related fatalities in 2026.

Some preliminary analysis of the 2026 fatalities has revealed that in eight of the vehicle crash cases, the officers were on patrol when their crash occurred, while three crashes involved officers responding with lights and sirens to a priority call for service, and three officers were killed as they diverted or directed traffic.



AUTOMOBILE

▲ 186%

3RD QTR 2025 = 7

3RD QTR 2026 = 20



STRUCK-BY

NO CHANGE

3RDD QTR 2025 = 10

3RD QTR 2026 = 10



MOTORCYCLE

NO CHANGE

3RD QTR 2025 = 4

3RD QTR 2026 = 4

TOTAL ▲ 62%

3RD QTR 2025 = 21

3RD QTR 2026 = 34

Eleven of the fatal cases in 2026 appear to involve violations of that state's "Slow Down and Move Over" law. This represents a very large increase when compared to the four "Slow Down and Move Over" cases from the same period in 2025. This represents a dramatic increase in crashes that are the result of drivers failing to obey the law.

SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS:



Never turn your back to traffic



Wear your seat belt and body armor.



Always make a non-traffic side approach on traffic stops

OFFICIAL LINE-OF-DUTY FALLEN HEROES

RESPECT | HONOR | REMEMBER



DEPUTY SHERIFF BETTY JEAN URIEGAS
E.O.W. 8/8/2026
Hall County Sheriff's Office (GA)

Died from severe injuries from a single-vehicle crash in 1994, while responding to an incident.



DEPUTY BURLIE DUVALL
E.O.W. 8/6/2026
Appomattox County Sheriff's Office (VA)

Struck and killed at a crash scene.



HIGHWAY PATROLMAN BRIAN LILES
E.O.W. 9/28/2026
California Highway Patrol

Killed in a motorcycle crash while on patrol.

NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS MEMORIAL FUND
MEMORIAL MUSEUM OFFICER SAFETY & WELLNESS

NHTSA
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

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