



SNAPSHOT

July 10, 2023

Public Employee Pay Series: *Law Enforcement Pay*

Average Salary of Louisiana Patrol Officers Tops \$45,000

Lagging most of the South and the rest of the country, Louisiana pays its patrol officers and sheriff's deputies below the regional average of \$51,482 and the national average of \$71,380. Louisiana paid its more than 13,000 patrol officers and sheriff's deputies an average annual wage of \$45,310 in May 2022, according to [Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics data](#) from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

While most officers included in the data are local, the federal data also includes state troopers' wages. The entrance salary for a Louisiana State Police cadet is \$46,610 with a salary increase after every year of service. A state trooper with 20 years of service can make more than \$85,000 a year. Those salaries are expected to grow larger after lawmakers agreed to raise the state tax on vape products and electronic cigarettes starting July 1 and use the money for a trooper raise.

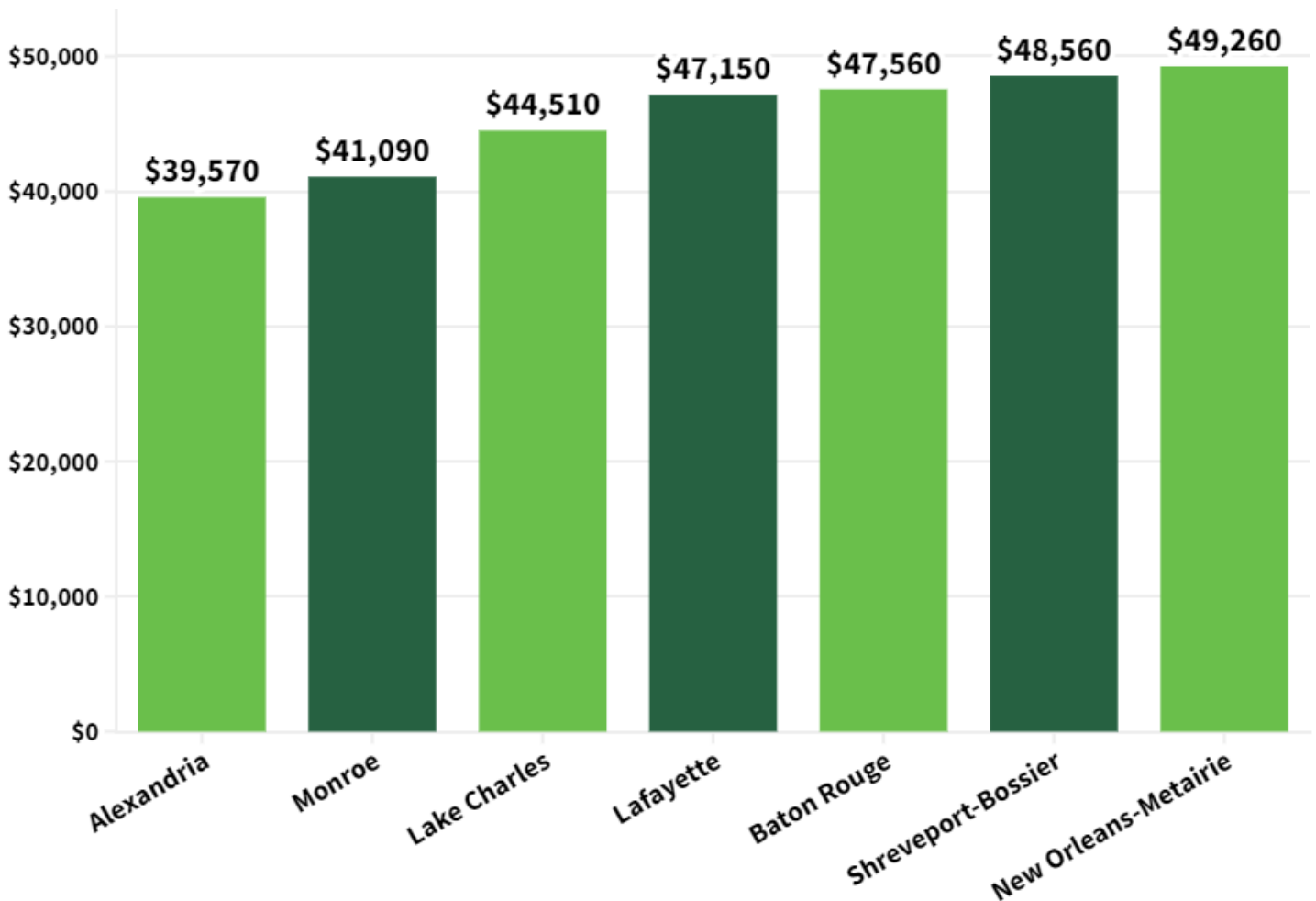
The federal Division of Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics calculated annual wages by multiplying the hourly mean wage, which is \$21.78 in Louisiana, by a "year-round, full-time" hours figure of 2,080 hours. It's unclear whether the data includes the salary supplement that Louisiana gives law enforcement officers in its estimates of mean hourly and annual wages.

Not all police officers in the state receive supplemental pay, but those eligible receive a yearly total of \$7,200 in addition to their salaries -- after lawmakers and the governor just boosted the monthly state payments for municipal police officers, deputy sheriffs, firefighters and other local law enforcement from \$500 to \$600 on July 1. With the increase, Louisiana will pay about \$148 million annually for the salary supplements. State House budget analysts could only find two other states, Tennessee and Kentucky, that offer supplemental pay in a way similar to Louisiana.



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Average Patrol Officer Salary in Metropolitan Areas



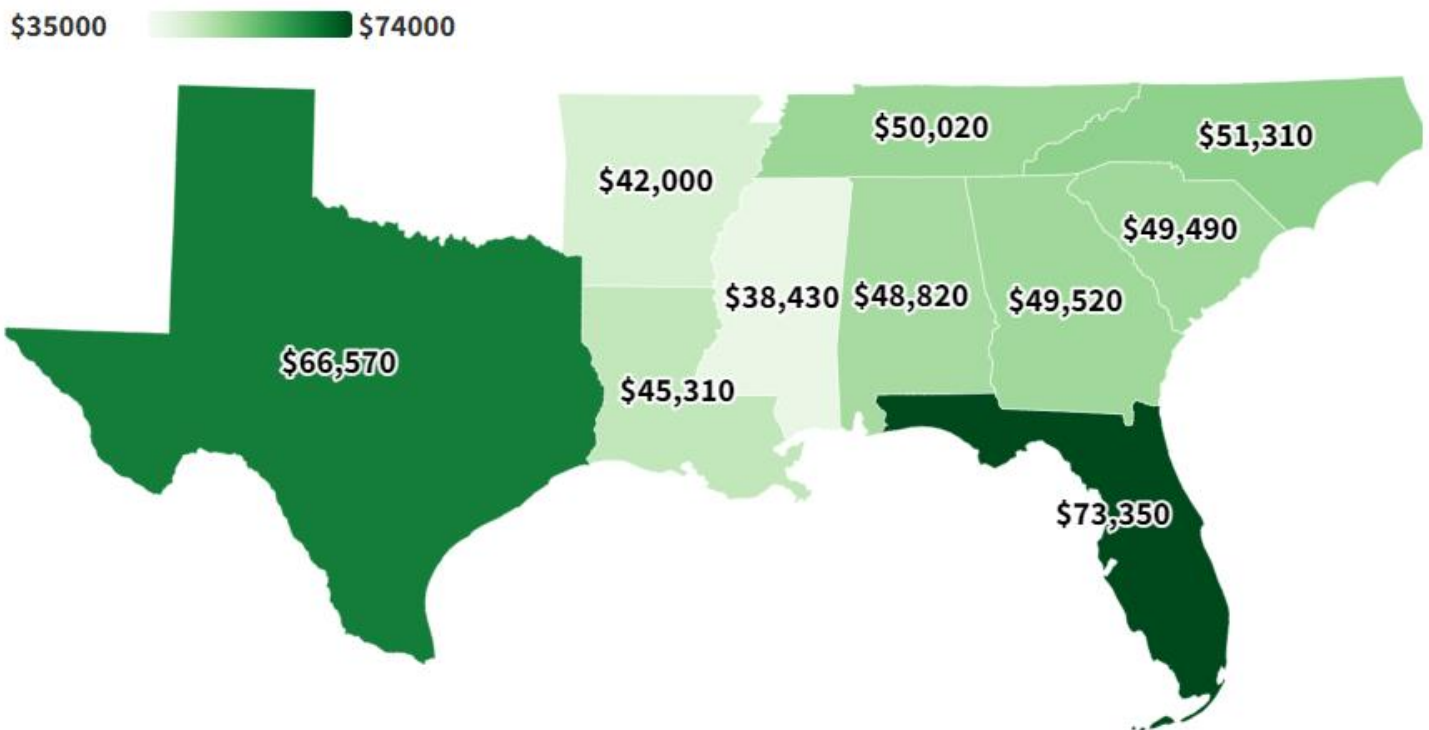
Source: Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Average annual wages for law enforcement patrol officers are highest in Louisiana's most populated areas, according to the data. Police officers in the New Orleans-Metairie area receive the highest pay in the state, making \$49,260. The Shreveport-Bossier City and Baton Rouge regions are next highest, paying their officers \$48,560 and \$47,560, respectively.



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Average Patrol Officer Salary Across Southern States



Source: Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Comparing Louisiana to neighboring states, law enforcement patrol officers are paid \$6,000 below the regional average of \$51,482, according to the federal data. Louisiana has the third lowest police pay compared to the nine Southern states shown above. Florida ranks first, paying its police officers an average of \$73,350 annually. Mississippi ranks last, paying an average salary of \$38,430 to its police officers.

While the South has the lowest wages for police in the country, it also has the highest concentration of jobs in law enforcement. In Louisiana, seven out of every 1,000 jobs are in law enforcement, making the state number one in police occupation density. Mississippi and Alabama hold second and third place. Tennessee has the lowest concentration of jobs in law enforcement in the South; only four out of every 1,000 jobs in that state are in the police force.

Part 4 of a four-part series addressing public employee compensation in Louisiana.