

Examining employment and diversity in the protective service occupations

Asians, Hispanics or Latinos, and women have been underrepresented in protective service occupations relative to their shares of total employment, despite increases in minorities' shares of total U.S. employment. African Americans have been overrepresented relative to their shares of total employment, however, the African American employment share in protective service occupations is not representative of each protective service occupation. For example, their share of employment in first-line supervisors of police and detectives and their share in police and sheriff's patrol officers have been much lower than their share in protective service occupations as a whole since at least 2003. The share of women in protective service occupations has consistently been less than half of their share in total employment.

The protective service occupations are a vital occupational group, providing security and emergency services throughout the United States. As the United States has grown more diverse, so have the protective service

occupations, but demographic changes within this occupational group have not kept pace with this growing diversity. This article examines employment in protective service occupations from 2003 to 2019 by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. (The Hispanic or Latino ethnicity category includes Mexican, Cuban, South American, Puerto Rican, Salvadoran, Dominican, and other groups. People of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity can be of any race, and therefore are also included in race groups such as White, African American, Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and Two or More Races.)^[1] The state of these occupations in 2019 is furthered examined with educational requirement and wage data. Protective service occupations include four broad groups: law enforcement workers, supervisors of protective service workers, firefighting and fire prevention workers, and other protective service workers.



Maria Hussain

hussain.maria@bls.gov

Maria Hussain is an economist in the Office of Employment and Unemployment Statistics, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Law enforcement workers include police and sheriff's patrol officers, detectives and criminal investigators, and bailiffs, correctional officers, and jailers. First-line supervisors, such as first-line supervisors of police and detectives, directly coordinate and supervise activities of protective service workers. Firefighting and fire prevention workers include forest firefighters and fire hazard inspectors, among others. Other protective service workers include, but are not limited to, security guards, gaming surveillance officers, and private detectives and investigators.[\[2\]](#)

The article uses data from two U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) surveys: the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics survey.[\[3\]](#) The CPS is a monthly survey conducted by the Census Bureau on behalf of BLS, and it provides a wide range of data on the labor force, including data for occupations broken down by sex, race, and ethnicity. The Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics survey is conducted twice per year and collects wage and employment data for almost 800 occupations.

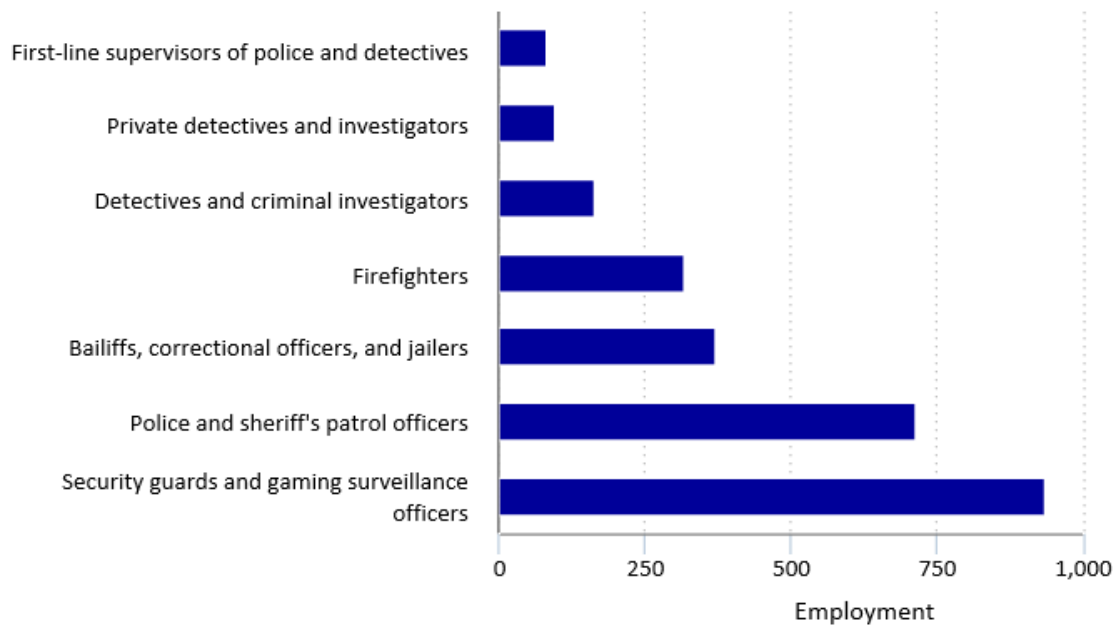
Employment and diversity in 2019

To examine diversity in the protective service occupations, I compare the employment shares for each racial, ethnic, and sex group within the various protective service occupations with each group's employment share in total protective service occupations as well as with each group's employment share in all occupations. Some insights emerge as to which groups are over- or underrepresented.

In 2019, eight detailed occupations accounted for about 90 percent of all those employed in the broad protective service occupational group.[\[4\]](#) These eight detailed occupations were first-line supervisors; bailiffs, correctional officers, and jailers; detectives and criminal investigators; police and sheriff's patrol officers; private detectives and investigators; security guards and gaming surveillance officers; firefighters; lifeguards and other recreational, and all other protective service workers. The occupational subgroup lifeguards and other recreational, and all other protective service workers in the Current Population Survey does not have a direct match with Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics program's occupation groups with wage data, and so is excluded from this section for the purpose of occupational level analysis.[\[5\]](#)

Total protective service employment in 2019 was 3,128,000. Among the occupations that are the focus of this article, the largest protective service employment was among security guards and gaming surveillance officers, at 937,000 jobs. (See chart 1.) They made up 30 percent of the total protective service employment. Police and sheriff's patrol officers made up 23 percent. Bailiffs, correctional officers, and jailers made up 12 percent. The smallest protective service employment was among first-line supervisors (83,000). They made up about 3 percent of total protective service employment. Employment diversity in these occupations are the focus of this article.

Chart 1. Employment among selected protective service occupations (in thousands)



Hover over chart to view data.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Table 1 shows employment by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity in 2019.^[6]

Table 1. Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 2019

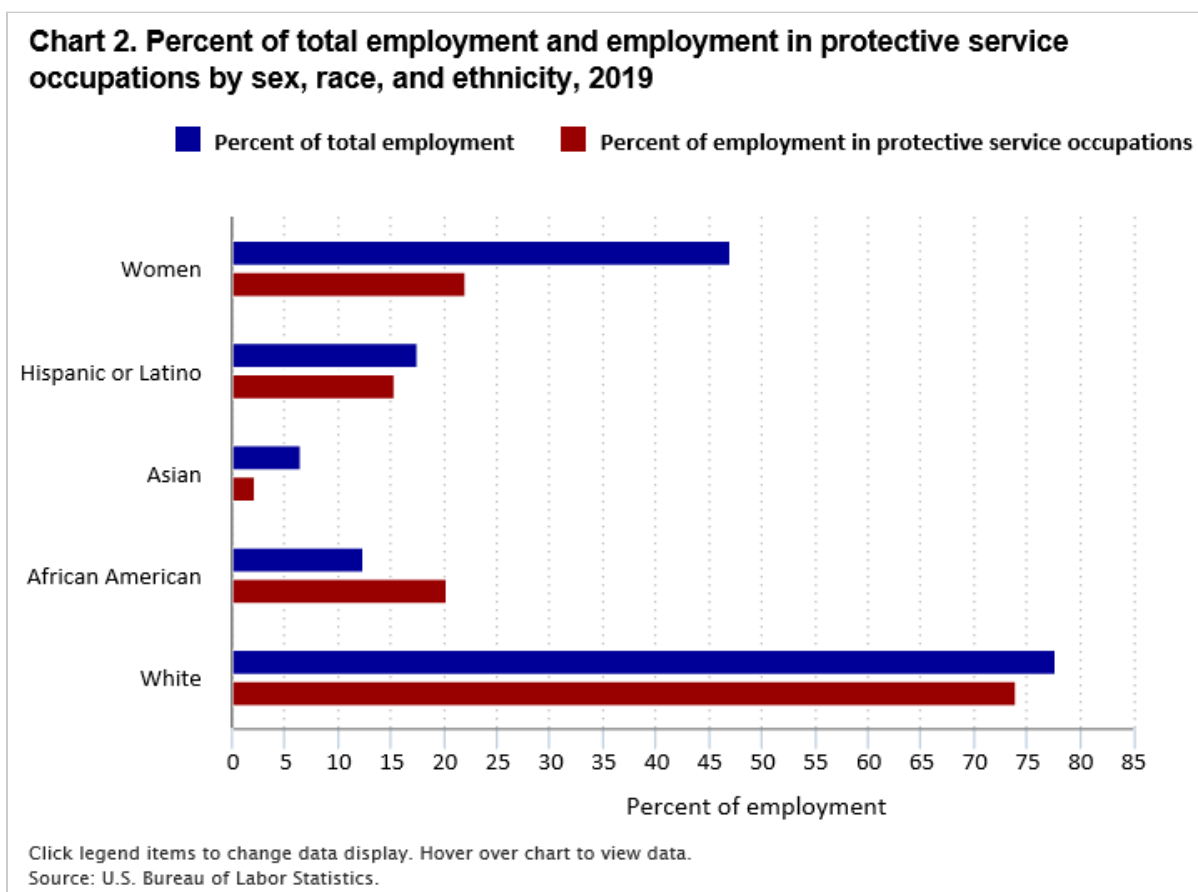
Occupational groups	Total employed (in thousands)	Percent of total employed				
		Women	White	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino
Total, 16 years and over	157,538	47	77.7	12.3	6.5	17.6
Total protective service	3,128	22.1	73.9	20.3	2.2	15.3
First-line supervisors of police and detectives	83	9.9	89.2	7.6	0.4	5.6
Firefighters	318	3.3	86.7	8.5	1.3	11.6
Bailiffs, correctional officers, and jailers	372	30.1	60.5	34.2	1.7	12.3
Detectives and criminal investigators	164	23	82.7	12.7	1.9	8.4
Police and sheriff's patrol officers	716	17.6	82.9	12.6	1.5	17
Private detectives and investigators	97	47.6	72.6	23.5	3	17.7
Security guards and gaming surveillance officers	937	21.5	62.9	29.6	3.5	18.8

See footnotes at end of table.

Note: Estimates for the above groups do not sum to totals because of overlap between groups. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.

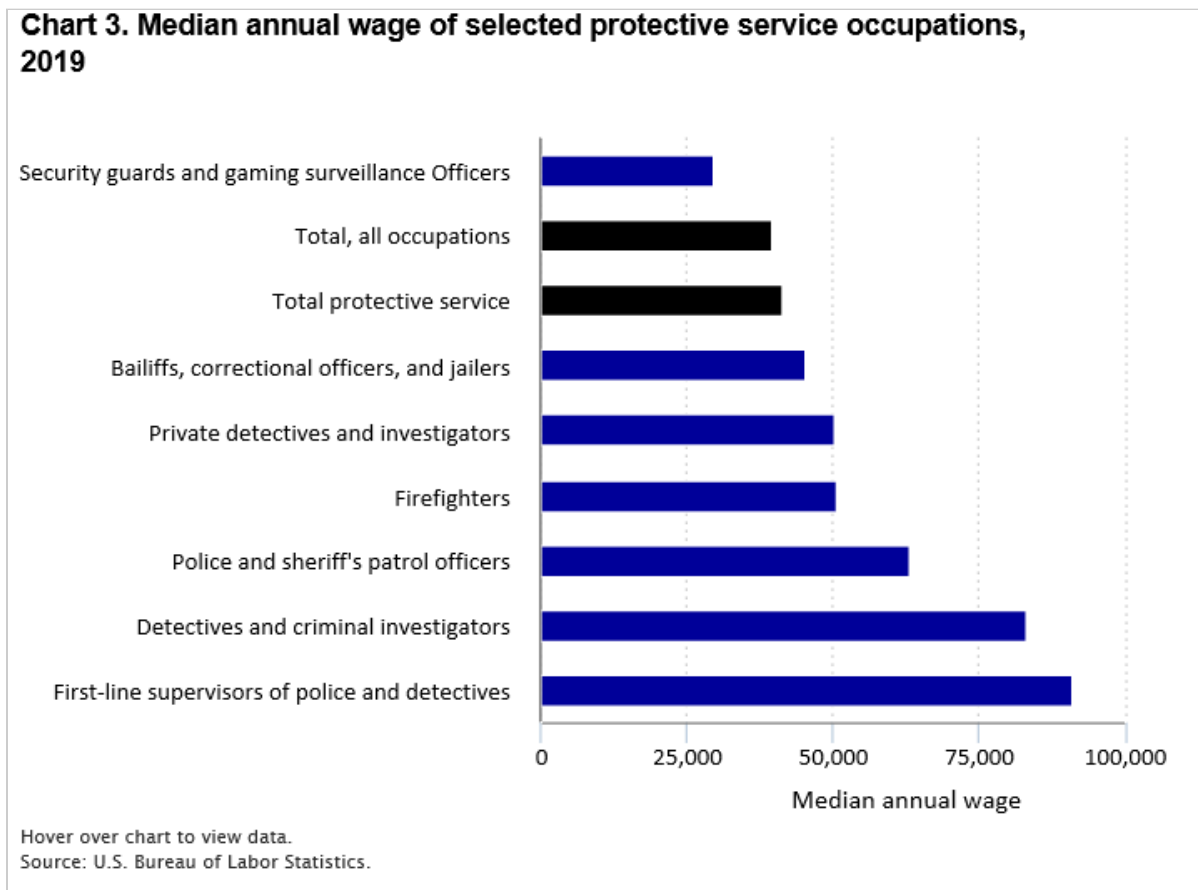
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In 2019, African Americans had a greater share of employment in protective service occupations (20.3 percent) than they did in total employment (12.3 percent). The employment shares of women (22.1 percent) and Asians (2.2 percent) in protective service occupations were less than half their shares of total employment, (47.0 and 6.5 percent, respectively). Hispanics or Latinos made up a smaller share of employment in protective service occupations (15.3 percent) than in total employment (17.6 percent). (See chart 2.)



Looking at detailed occupations within protective service reveals nuanced patterns of over- and underrepresentation. In 2019, first-line supervisors of police and detectives were among the highest paid protective service occupations. They were also among the least diverse: Whites made up nearly 90 percent of first-line supervisors of police and detectives. Whites also made up over 80 percent of the two protective service occupations with the next highest median annual wages, police and sheriff's patrol officers and detectives and criminal investigators. African Americans had their highest representation (34.2 percent) in bailiffs, correctional

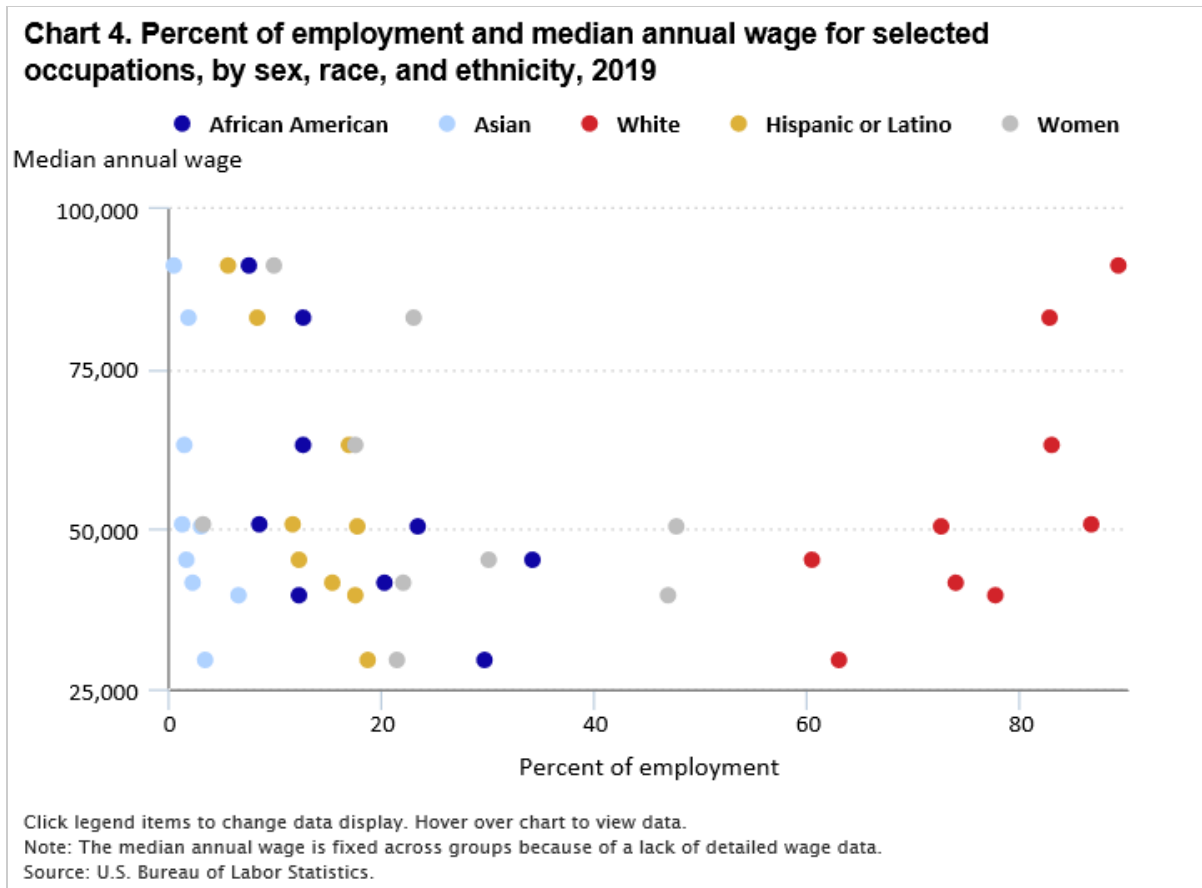
officers and jailers, which had a median annual wage less than half that of first-line supervisors of police and detectives. (See table 1 and chart 3.)



African Americans made up 20.3 percent of all employed workers in protective service occupations. In four of the selected protective service occupations, African Americans' employment shares were less than their total protective service employment share (20.3 percent), such as detectives and criminal investigators (12.7 percent) and police and sheriff's patrol officers (12.6 percent). In two of those four, the employment shares of first-line supervisors of police and detectives (7.6 percent) and firefighters (8.5 percent) were even less than their total employment share (12.3 percent).

As a group, African Americans had higher employment shares in occupations with lower median annual wages. Bailiffs, correctional officers, and jailers had the highest share of African American workers (34.2 percent) and a median annual wage of \$45,300. Security guards and gaming surveillance officers and private detectives and investigators, which had median annual wages of \$29,710 and \$50,510 respectively, accounted for the next largest shares of African American employment among protective service occupations.^[7]

Meanwhile, the protective service occupation with the lowest share of African Americans was first-line supervisors of police and detectives (7.6 percent), which is the protective service occupation with the highest median annual wage (\$91,090). (See chart 4.)



In 2019, Whites made up 73.9 percent of employed workers in protective service occupations and were overrepresented relative to their total employment share (77.7 percent) in four of the selected occupations. They made up over 80 percent of employment in occupations such as first-line supervisors of police and detectives (89.2 percent); firefighters (86.7 percent); police and sheriff's patrol officers (82.9 percent); and detectives and criminal investigators (82.7 percent). Whites had their lowest employment share in the occupation that African Americans had their highest employment share: bailiffs, correctional officers, and jailers (60.5 percent and 34.2 percent, respectively). (See chart 4.)

Asians made up 2.2 percent of employed workers in protective service occupations. (The Asian race group includes Asian Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Pakistani and other subgroups.)^[8] Asians were underrepresented in all the selected protective service occupations compared with their share of total employment (6.5 percent). Two occupations—private detectives and investigators (3.0 percent), and security guards and gaming surveillance officers (3.5 percent)—had greater than their share of total protective

service employment (2.2 percent). Their largest share was among security guards and gaming surveillance officers, which is among the lowest median wage occupations. The employment share for Asians among police and sheriff's patrol officers was 1.5 percent. (See chart 4.) Their smallest employment share, similar to African Americans, was in first-line supervisors of police and detectives (0.4 percent).

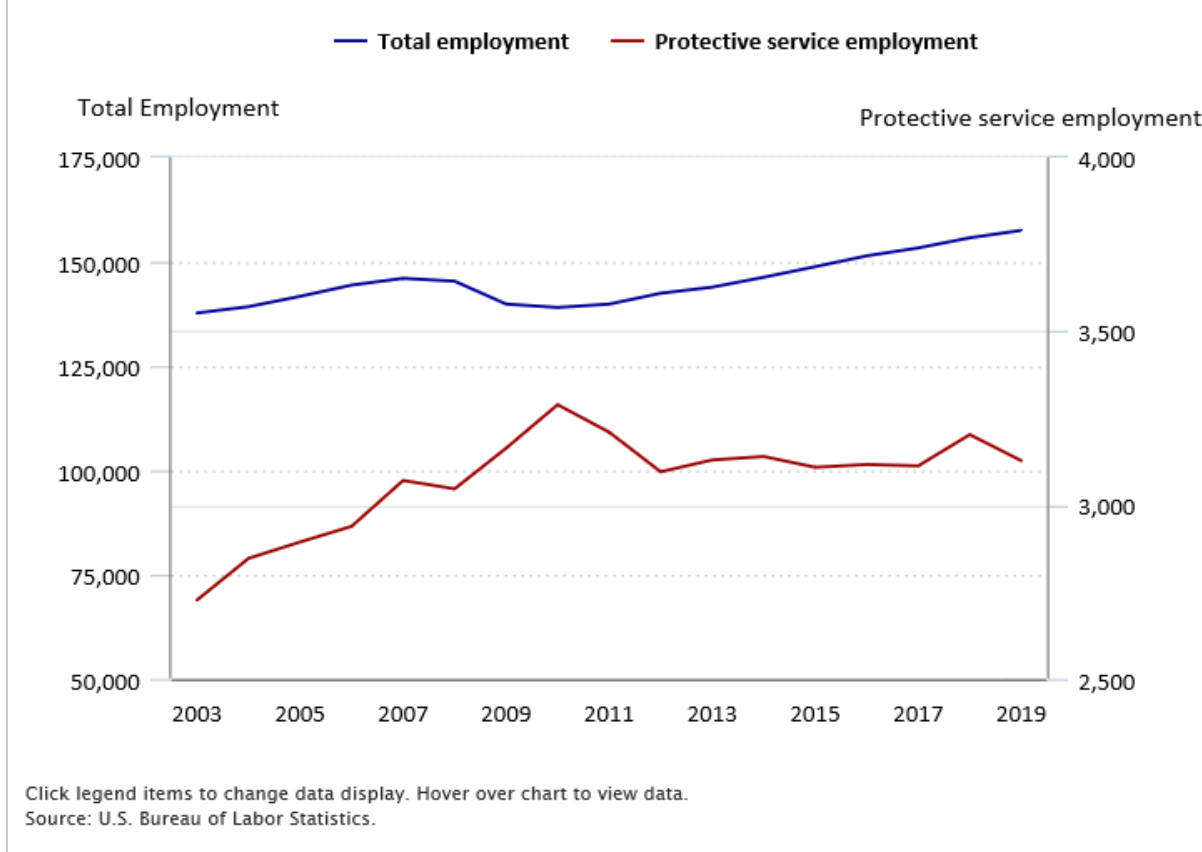
Hispanics or Latinos made up 15.3 percent of employed workers in protective service occupations. They were underrepresented in five of the selected service occupations compared with their share of total employment (17.6 percent). The lowest share of Hispanic and Latino employment was in first-line supervisors of police and detectives (5.6 percent), and their highest share was in security guards and gaming surveillance officers (18.8 percent). (See chart 4.)

Women made up 22.1 percent of employed workers in protective service occupations. Their employment share in police and sheriff's patrol officers was their third lowest (17.6 percent), with first-line supervisors of police and detectives as their second lowest (9.9 percent) and firefighters (3.3 percent) as their lowest. They were underrepresented compared to their share of total employment of 47.0 percent in all selected protective service occupations except for one (private detectives and investigators [47.6 percent]). (See chart 4.)

Historical employment in protective service occupations, 2003–19

Employment in protective service occupations grew 14.7 percent through 2003–19, finishing the period with 3,128,000 jobs. However, this occupational group had more growth prior to the steep declines in 2011 and 2012 and has stayed relatively flat since then. (See chart 5.) By comparison, total employment grew 14.4 percent over the period, increasing every year from 2003 to 2019, except for 2008 to 2010.

Chart 5. Total employment and protective service employment



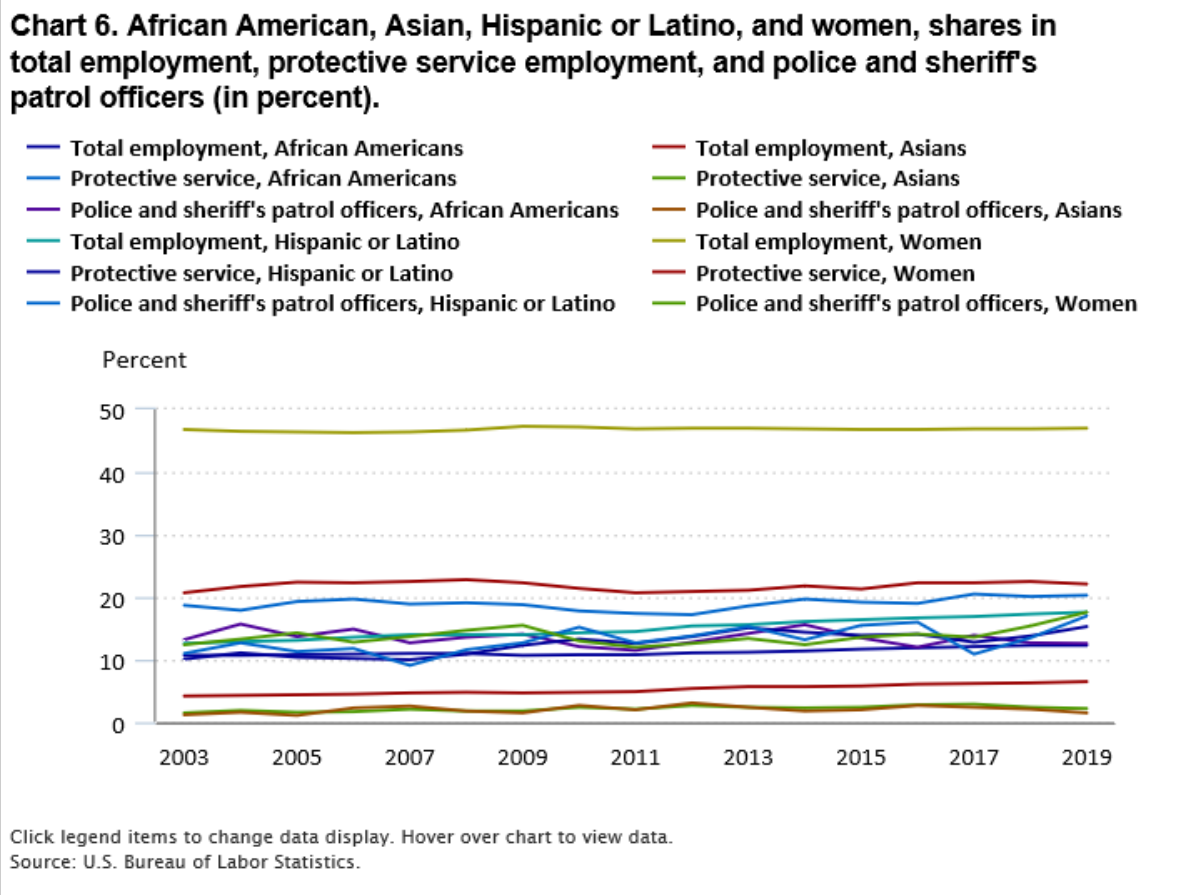
Historically, African Americans have made up a larger share of employment in protective service occupations compared with their share of total employment, and this trend did not change in the 2003–19 period (See chart 6.). In 2003, African Americans' employment share in protective service occupations (18.7 percent) was 8 percentage points higher than their total employment share (10.7 percent). In 2019, their employment share in protective service occupations (20.3 percent) was also 8 percentage points higher than their total employment share (12.3 percent). However, this trend is not representative of each protective service occupation; for example, their share of employment in police and sheriff's patrol officers has been much lower than their share in protective service occupations as a whole since at least 2003.

Asians, Hispanics or Latinos, and women were consistently underrepresented in protective service occupations over the 2003–19 period, with their share of employment in that occupational group being smaller than their share of total employment.

In 2003, Asian workers made up 1.5 percent of protective service employment, 2.7 percentage points lower than their total employment share (4.2 percent). In 2019, their employment share in protective service occupations (2.2 percent) was 4.3 percentage points lower than their total employment share (6.5 percent). Their employment trend

in police and sheriff's patrol officers has stayed below their total employment share and the gap has widened as their share in total employment has increased over the years.

In 2003, women comprised 20.7 percent of employment in protective service occupations, 26.1 percentage points lower than their total employment share (46.8 percent). In 2019, their employment share in protective service occupations (22.1 percent) was 24.9 percentage points lower than their total employment share (47.0 percent). Women's employment trend in police and sheriff's patrol officers has stayed below both their total protective service employment share and their total employment share.



Hispanics or Latinos are underrepresented in protective service occupations. In 2003, their employment share in protective service occupations (10.1 percent) was 2.5 percentage points lower than their total employment share (12.6 percent). The employment trend for Hispanics or Latinos in the sheriff's patrol officers group has shadowed their employment trend in protective service occupations, while staying below their share in total employment. In 2019, their employment share in protective service occupations (15.3 percent) was 2.3 percentage points lower than their total employment share (17.6 percent).

Tables 2 and 3 show employment shares by race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex for selected protective service occupations over the 2003–19 period.

Table 2. Employment percentages of selected protective service occupations by race

Year	First-line supervisor of police and detectives		Police and sheriff's patrol officers		Bailliffs, correctional officers, and jailers		Detectives and criminal investigators		Private detectives and investigators		Security guards and gaming surveillance officers		Firefighters	
	African American	Asian	African American	Asian	African American	Asian	African American	Asian	African American	Asian	African American	Asian	African American	Asian
2003	11.7	0.2	13.2	1.2	25.8	0.5	11.7	0.9	19.3	0.7	28.4	2.9	8.2	0.4
2004	10.2	1.4	15.7	1.6	20.2	1.4	17.1	1.6	7.8	2.2	28.4	2.7	8.4	1.3
2005	8.2	0.2	13.7	1.1	23.7	1.3	13.8	1.4	12.8	2.8	31.3	2.5	10.6	1.4
2006	5.5	0.2	14.9	2.3	24.2	0.4	17.6	1.8	11.4	0.6	29.8	3.1	9.9	0.4
2007	11.2	0.8	12.7	2.6	23.9	0.4	14.9	3	7.9	2.8	28.3	3.3	10	0.9
2008	12.5	2.9	13.6	1.8	22	0.6	10.6	2.3	13.8	0.8	31	3	8.2	0.3
2009	15	2.1	14.1	1.5	22	1.3	14.9	3.2	16.5	1.6	28.6	2.2	7.5	0.7
2010	8.7	2.5	12.1	2.7	22	1.2	10.6	3.7	5.7	3.2	28.8	3.4	6.4	0.5
2011	9.3	4	11.5	2	25.1	1.9	8.9	1.2	8.3	1.2	27.2	3.6	2.9	0.6
2012	9.2	4.4	12.8	3.1	22.7	1.1	9.8	3.5	8	2.2	26.6	4.1	7.7	1.1
2013	8.6	1.5	14.2	2.4	23.6	1.1	13.8	1	6.6	4.4	26.5	4	11.4	0.7
2014	14.4	0.7	15.6	1.8	20.6	1.7	14.6	1.6	14.5	3	30.3	3.7	10.2	0.7
2015	14	1.3	13.5	2	26	1.2	8.5	0.8	12.7	5	28.8	4	8.4	1.1
2016	12.3	0.2	12	2.7	25.5	1.9	6.9	4	11.5	4.5	30.4	4	6.8	1.4
2017	14.1	0.9	13.9	2.4	29	1.8	11.6	0.9	13.8	4.6	32.3	4.4	7.5	1
2018	9.2	0.4	12.7	2.1	29	1.2	10.2	1	15.7	3.3	30.7	3.9	8.9	1.1
2019	7.6	0.4	12.6	1.5	34.2	1.7	12.7	1.9	23.5	3	29.6	3.5	8.5	1.3

Note: Data for whites are only available after 2017, and so that racial group is excluded from this table. Because of the introduction of 2010 Census occupational classification, Consumer Population Survey occupational data beginning with January 2011 are not strictly comparable with earlier years. More information can be found at <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsoccind.htm>.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Table 3. Employment percentages of selected protective service occupations by sex and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity

Year	First-line supervisor of police and detectives		Police and sheriff's patrol officers		Bailliffs, correctional officers, and jailers		Detectives and criminal investigators		Private detectives and investigators		Security guards and gaming surveillance officers		Firefighters	
	Hispanic or Latino	Women	Hispanic or Latino	Women	Hispanic or Latino	Women	Hispanic or Latino	Women	Hispanic or Latino	Women	Hispanic or Latino	Women	Hispanic or Latino	Women

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Employment percentages of selected protective service occupations by sex and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity

Year	First-line supervisor of police and detectives		Police and sheriff's patrol officers		Bailiffs, correctional officers, and jailers		Detectives and criminal investigators		Private detectives and investigators		Security guards and gaming surveillance officers		Firefighters	
	Hispanic	Women	Hispanic	Women	Hispanic	Women	Hispanic	Women	Hispanic	Women	Hispanic	Women	Hispanic	Women
	or Latino		or Latino		or Latino		or Latino		or Latino		or Latino		or Latino	
2003	3.8	20.9	11	12.4	9.4	26.2	8.2	23.6	10.6	34.5	12.7	21.1	6.2	3.6
2004	6.5	21.2	12.7	13.3	10.3	28.4	7.3	20.2	8.8	33.1	14.5	22.6	8.6	5.1
2005	6.3	12.5	11.3	14.3	10.8	29.1	8.9	24	6.4	37.7	12.1	24.7	7.9	3.3
2006	6.9	15.5	11.8	12.8	7.4	28.2	13.5	26	5.5	38.2	12.2	23	7.5	3.5
2007	10.6	14.5	9.1	13.7	7.3	29.5	11.2	23.2	9.7	31.1	12.4	23.2	6.2	5.3
2008	6.1	14.7	11.6	14.7	10.4	30	9.5	19.2	6.5	39.4	12.4	23.6	9.4	4.8
2009	5.3	14.7	12.7	15.5	12.9	26.9	10.3	26.4	9.4	40.4	16.2	21.9	8.8	3.4
2010	7.4	15.4	15.2	13	13.3	26.1	13.3	22.8	12.1	37.6	15.9	20.8	9.6	3.6
2011	6.7	17.5	12.7	12	13	27.9	14.9	16.7	11.5	35.3	15.4	19.2	10	4.5
2012	10.6	15.2	13.8	12.6	18.3	28	10.4	24.8	11.1	44	15.8	18.5	9.9	3.4
2013	10.5	15.3	15.3	13.4	20.9	27.2	14.9	20.1	15.9	38.5	17.1	20.4	8.5	3.5
2014	7	15.9	13.2	12.4	16	28.6	13.2	21	13.5	37.7	19	22.6	9.6	5.7
2015	6.6	12.8	15.5	13.6	11.8	23.8	11.9	27.2	14.6	38.4	18.6	22	7.8	5.9
2016	10.6	18.3	16	14.1	12.9	28.2	7.6	23.6	6.7	44	17.6	22	7.7	3.5
2017	7.1	12.5	10.9	13.6	13.5	28.5	14.1	23.2	11.3	48.8	17	24.3	7.7	3.5
2018	9.4	17	13.5	15.4	13.7	29.6	11.2	24.4	20.2	49.5	16.8	22.4	7.4	5.1
2019	5.6	9.9	17	17.6	12.3	30.1	8.4	23	17.7	47.6	18.8	21.5	11.6	3.3

Note: Because of the introduction of 2010 Census occupational classification, Consumer Population Survey occupational data beginning with January 2011 are not strictly comparable with earlier years. More information can be found at <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsoccind.htm>.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

African Americans' employment shares in bailiffs, correctional officers, and jailers, and security guards and gaming surveillance officers have been mostly larger than their shares in other protective service occupations over the years. Their employment share in first-line supervisors of police and detectives reached a low point in 2019.

Asian workers' employment share has stayed much below that of other groups in all these protective service occupations. Their employment share has been mostly larger in security guards and gaming surveillance officers, and private detectives and investigators, and lower in first-line supervisors of police and detectives.

Hispanic or Latino workers' employment shares in first-line supervisors of police and detectives and firefighters have mostly been smaller than their share in other protective service occupations.

Women's employment share in private detectives and investigators has been larger than their shares in other protective service occupations, with the next largest being detectives and criminal investigators. Women's employment in firefighters has consistently been their smallest share. The employment trend of women in first-line supervisors of police and detectives has mostly been declining since 2011, reaching a low point in 2019. Their employment share in police and sheriff's patrol officers has been mostly unchanging but with an uptick in 2019.

Educational requirements

In 2019, the typical entry-level education required for protective service occupations was one of four categories: (1) no formal educational credential, (2) high school diploma or equivalent, (3) postsecondary nondegree award, and (4) bachelor's degree.^[9]

Most of the selected protective service occupations typically require a high school diploma or equivalent for entry. All of these occupations typically require additional preparation through on-the-job-training to attain competency and some require a few years (less than 5) of work experience in a related occupation. (See table 4).

Table 4. Median annual wages, education requirements, and training requirements, by selected occupation, 2019

Occupational group	Median annual wage	Typical education needed for entry	Work experience in a related occupation	Typical on-the-job training needed to attain competency in the occupation
Total, all occupations	39,810	[1]	[1]	[1]
Protective service occupations	41,580	[1]	[1]	[1]
First-line supervisors of police and detectives	91,090	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Firefighters	50,850	Postsecondary nondegree award	None	Long-term on-the-job training
Bailiffs	47,830	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Correctional officers and jailers	45,180	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Detectives and criminal investigators	83,170	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Police and sheriff's patrol officers	63,150	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Private detectives and investigators	50,510	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Gambling surveillance officers and gambling investigators	34,190	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Security guards	29,680	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training

[1] Data not applicable.

See footnotes at end of table.

Note: Wage data represent nonfarm wage and salary workers and do not cover the self-employed, owners and partners in unincorporated firms, or household workers. Occupations from the Current Population Survey that do not have a direct match with the Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics program's occupation groups with wage data are not included in the table. Bailiffs are listed separately from corrections officers and jailers and security guards are listed separately from gambling surveillance officers and gambling investigators because detailed wage and education data are disaggregated for those occupations.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

First-line supervisors of police and detectives and police and sheriff's patrol officers, both with over 80 percent White employment, typically have entry-level education requirements of a high school diploma or equivalent. However, requirements may vary for some of these occupations. For example, some police departments may require college degrees for applicants, and on-the-job-training may include graduation from a training academy. In addition, applicants may have to pass physical exams and take polygraph and drug tests.^[10]

Bailiffs, correctional officers, and jailers, with the highest share of African American employment among protective service occupations in 2019 (see table 1), typically have entry-level education requirements of a high school diploma or equivalent. However, entry-level correctional officers are required to have at least a bachelor's degree or relevant 1–3 years' experience.

Security guards and gaming surveillance officers, in which Asians and Hispanics or Latinos had their highest representation, require a high school diploma or equivalent education for entry-level positions. However, additional experience or becoming licensed to carry a firearm may be required.

More detailed education, training, and work experience information is available from the Occupational Outlook Handbook and Occupational Requirements Survey.^[11]

Table 5 shows the actual educational attainment of workers in these selected protective service occupations in 2019, based on American Community Survey data compiled by the BLS Employment Projections program. The most common educational attainment level for most of these occupations is a bachelor's degree.

Table 5. Educational attainment for workers 25 years and older by selected occupation, 2019 (in percent)

Occupation	Less than high school diploma	High school diploma or equivalent	Some college, no degree	Associate's degree	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Doctoral or professional degree
Total, all occupations	7.9	23.6	20	9.5	23.9	10.6	4.4
First-line supervisors of police and detectives	0.5	13.6	25.7	15.3	31.1	12.1	1.8
Firefighters	0.8	13.4	37.3	22.1	22.7	2.8	0.8
Bailiffs	1	23.4	22	16.7	27.1	7.7	2.1

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 5. Educational attainment for workers 25 years and older by selected occupation, 2019 (in percent)

Occupation	Less than high school diploma	High school diploma or equivalent	Some college, no degree	Associate's degree	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Doctoral or professional degree
Correctional officers and jailers	1	29.7	35.1	14.2	16.9	2.7	0.5
Detectives and criminal investigators	0.5	9.7	20.9	11.1	41.8	13.8	2.3
Police and sheriff's patrol officers ^[1]	0.7	12.3	29.9	16.5	33	6.6	0.9
Private detectives and investigators	0.6	9.4	20.6	12.1	42	11.8	3.4
Gambling surveillance officers and gambling investigators ^[1]	5.5	35.6	31.1	10.8	13.4	3.2	0.5
Security guards ^[1]	5.5	35.6	31.1	10.8	13.4	3.2	0.5

^[1] This occupation is not an exact match with the comparable occupation in the American Community Survey. For details, see National Employment Matrix/ SOC to ACS Crosswalk at <https://www.bls.gov/emp/documentation/crosswalks.htm>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The most common level of education attained by security guards and gaming surveillance officers was high school diploma or equivalent. However, about 6 in 10 workers in these occupations had completed some level of postsecondary education.

The most common level of education attained by correctional officers and jailers was some college, no degree (35.1 percent).

Conclusions

Analysis of historical data at the national level shows a higher share of African American workers in protective service occupations compared with their share of total employment during the 2003–19 period. Women and Asians were underrepresented in protective service occupations compared with their total employment shares. Hispanic or Latino workers made up a slightly lower share of protective service employment relative to their share of total employment during this period. (See chart 6.)

While diversity has been increasing in the U.S. labor force as a whole, employment shares by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity for police officers and first-line supervisors have not kept pace with this growing diversity. (See tables 2 and 3.)

Since 2003, the share of African American employment in protective service occupations has been higher than the African American share of total employment. However, the higher employment share in protective service occupations is not representative of all protective service occupations. Historically, African Americans have had a higher employment share in security guards and gaming surveillance officers, and bailiffs, correctional officers, and jailers.

Asians have experienced a steep growth in total employment since 2003 but have the least representation in all protective service occupations. In 2019, their smallest employment share was in first-line supervisors of police and detectives and their largest employment share was in security guards and gaming surveillance officers.

Hispanics or Latinos have either maintained or slightly increased their employment share in these occupations. Their share of employment in protective service occupations as a whole has remained lower than their share of total employment since 2003.

Women's employment share in protective service occupations has consistently remained at less than half of their share in total employment. Historically, women have had a larger share of detectives and criminal investigators and private detectives and investigators than they have had in other protective service occupations. In 2019, women had their lowest employment shares in occupations such as first-line supervisors of police and detectives, police and sheriff's patrol officers, and firefighters.

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NOTES

¹ For more information on racial and ethnic subgroups in the Current Population Survey, see Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, "Concepts and Definitions" (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021), <https://www.bls.gov/cps/definitions.htm>.

² Police and sheriff's patrol protect life and property and maintain order, and they include border patrol officers, state troopers, motorcycle police, and park police. Detectives and criminal investigators solve or prevent crime by investigating possible violations of local, state, or federal laws, and they include homicide detectives and narcotics investigators. Bailiffs maintain order in courts of law. Correctional officers and jailers include prison guards and juvenile correction officers, and they guard inmates in rehabilitative and penal institutions. Security guards, such as bank guards and bodyguards, patrol and monitor premises. Gaming surveillance officers monitor gambling operations. Private detectives and investigators, such as private eyes and store detectives, provide information to clients about individuals or organizations. For more information, see "Protective Service Occupations" in *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021), <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/protective-service/home.htm>.

³ The Current Population Survey (CPS) is a monthly survey of households conducted by the Bureau of Census for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The survey, best known as the source of the official unemployment rate, measures the extent of employment and unemployment among the U.S. civilian noninstitutional population 16 years and over. For more information on the CPS, see <https://www.bls.gov/cps>. In spring 2021, the Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics program changed its name from Occupational

Employment Statistics to Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics. This article uses the updated program name throughout, but references and URLs mostly use the old name. For more information about this program, see <https://www.bls.gov/oes>.

⁴ For more exact levels of employment, see Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, “Household data annual averages—employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020), <https://www.bls.gov/cps/aa2019/cpsaat11.htm>.

⁵ For the purpose of protective service occupations as a whole, such as for employment share within the protective service occupations for various groups, workers in the occupational subgroup lifeguards and other recreational, and all other protective service workers will still be counted towards the totals.

⁶ See Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, “Household data annual averages.”

⁷ Wage data for these occupations are published by the Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics program. In 2019, the median annual wage for protective service occupations was \$41,580. The median annual wage for all 22 major job groups (excluding military-specific occupations) was \$39,810.

⁸ For a full explanation of these and other racial subgroups, see Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, “Concepts and Definitions” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021), <https://www.bls.gov/cps/definitions.htm#race>.

⁹ For educational requirements, see Employment Projections, “Occupational projections and worker characteristics” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019) archived December 12, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20201212042128/https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/occupational-projections-and-characteristics.htm>.

¹⁰ For these and other potential qualifications, see “Police and Detectives” in *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021), <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/protective-service/police-and-detectives.htm#tab-4>

¹¹ See “Protective Service Occupations,” in *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021), <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/protective-service/home.htm> for all protective service occupations, and see <https://data.bls.gov/PDQWeb/or> for all occupations.

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