

A nationwide trend reported this week is police departments relaxing age and fitness standards and forgiving minor criminal convictions when recruiting.

Life experience, according to many police departments, is more valued than education in law enforcement today. Some departments in Florida dropped the need for a two-year college degree if the candidate has military or law enforcement experience. According to a study by the Police Executive Research Forum, 10 percent of the nation's police departments have severe shortages of officers. To combat the shortage, departments around the country have to reevaluate their recruitment standards.