

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

[**https://www.vera.org/publications/the-model-police-officer**](https://www.vera.org/publications/the-model-police-officer)

Policy Issue Resources

Publication

This report jointly published by the International City/ County Management Association (ICMA) and the Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) presents research conducted by ICMA on the views of police departments and communities regarding police officer recruitment, training, and community engagement. The survey targeted communities of varying sizes and regions to better understand the characteristics sought in the model police officer. The insights gleaned from these responses seek to provide guidance for police departments in retooling their recruitment and training strategies. With a better understanding of shared priorities and the effectiveness of various community engagement strategies, police departments across the country can begin to think about building more effective practices.

Among both police departments and community members, building community trust was consistently ranked as the highest priority for a police officer. This priority should be acknowledged in the structuring of recruitment and training efforts.

The survey revealed that there are a wide variety of community engagement strategies already in place in most police departments however opinions diverged between departments and community members on which of these strategies are most effective.

Among the respondents to the survey, the average vacancy rate in the police department is 7 percent meaning that authorized positions may be going unfilled and there is room to improve and potentially modernize current recruitment efforts.

Communities reporting the highest levels of police distrust were those with 10-20% African American population (44% indicated minority communities distrusted the police), 20-30% African American population (30% indicated that African Americans distrusted police) and 30% or more Hispanics (15% indicated that Hispanics distrusted police).

PUBLICATION

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