

# FLORIDA SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION



## Access to the Mental Competency (MECOM) Database

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) is authorized under s. 790.065(2)(a)(4)(c), F.S. to maintain a database of citizens who are prohibited from purchasing firearms based on court adjudications of mental defectiveness or commitments to a mental institution. The FDLE is required to check this database before approving the sale of firearms by licensed dealers to determine if a potential purchaser is prohibited by law from possessing a firearm because he or she has been adjudicated mentally defective or committed to a mental institution. If an individual wants to conceal carry, they are no longer required to acquire a permit to do so. Thus, officers cannot rely on the background checks associated with receiving a permit to ensure an individual who is concealed carrying is legally eligible to do so.

Currently, law enforcement officers cannot perform proper investigations to determine eligibility to possess or carry a concealed firearm. Current laws are silent or do not authorize access to the required database where the information is held, specifically the Mental Competency (MECOM) Database. This could have devastating consequences as the MECOM database includes disqualifying information where a citizen is adjudicated incapacitated due to mental health issues or substance use issues resulting in disqualification from the ability to legally possess or carry a concealed firearm.

This legislation will amend s. 790.065(2)(a)(4)(f), F.S. to allow Florida's local law enforcement access to the MECOM database to determine if a citizen is eligible to carry a concealed firearm without a permit.



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