



Joint Release From
Akron Police Department
Summit County Sheriff's Office
Springfield Township Police Department

March 7, 2026

EAST MARKET STREET / INNOVATION WAY Officer-Involved Shooting Update

Akron, Ohio – On Saturday February 28, 2026, at approximately 5:55 p.m., Springfield Township Police Department responded to IHOP (2877 South Arlington Road), for a report of a male screaming at employees. When the STPD officer arrived on scene, he was informed that the male had left and got into a white semi-truck. The officers located the semi-truck near Walmart and encountered a male inside, later identified as Jeffrey Latson. The officers instructed Mr. Latson to turn off the truck and step outside; however, he refused. The officers became involved in a brief struggle before Mr. Latson accelerated in attempt to flee the scene, with a Springfield Police officer standing on the exterior sidestep of the semi-truck. After Mr. Latson made an abrupt turn, the officer was thrown from the vehicle, causing serious leg injury.

Mr. Latson Flees and Enters I-77

After fleeing the Walmart parking lot at a high rate of speed, Mr. Latson drove southbound on South Arlington Road into oncoming traffic and entered I-77 North. Officers from Springfield Township Police initiated a pursuit as Mr. Latson continued northbound on the highway, committing multiple traffic violations, and creating significant risks to other motorists. The pursuit continued into the City of Akron where Springfield Township Police terminated the pursuit near I-77 North and U.S. 224 East.

Officers Locate Mr. Latson in Akron

The Akron Police Department received a call from the Summit Emergency Communications Center (SECC) which indicated that Springfield Township Police and the Summit County Sheriff's Office had been involved in a pursuit with Mr. Latson. At approximately 6:14 p.m., Akron Police received information that Mr. Latson was near Azteca (1779 East Market Street). Akron Police officers and Summit County Sheriff's Office deputies responded to assist and began searching the parking lot for Mr. Latson. Several minutes later, officers located Mr. Latson in an adjacent parking lot. Mr. Latson pulled out onto the roadway with a trailer attached, and drove westbound on East Market Street, leading officers on a short pursuit.

Mr. Latson made a southbound turn onto Innovation Way, where he struck multiple vehicles including a marked Akron Police cruiser, and a Summit County Sheriff's Office cruiser, which was disabled as it was pushed several feet. Moments later, a Summit County Sheriff's Office

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deputy and two Akron Police officers discharged their duty weapons. After the shots were fired, Mr. Latson turned eastbound into a parking lot, striking multiple vehicles before coming to a stop.

In the moments following the shooting, officers called EMS while trying to evaluate the best tactical approach to safely remove Mr. Latson. After trying to establish contact and gain compliance, officers were able to secure Mr. Latson and began to administer first aid.

Updates on Mr. Latson's Condition

Mr. Latson was transported to an area hospital. He is still hospitalized and listed in serious but stable condition.

Next Steps

The Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) responded to the scene and will conduct the investigation. After the investigation, the case will be submitted to the Ohio Attorney General's Office for review before being submitted to the Summit County Grand Jury for evaluation.

The Akron Police Department's Office of Professional Standards and Accountability will conduct a separate internal investigation. The results will be provided to the Chief of Police and the City of Akron Police Auditor.

The Summit County Sheriff's Office will conduct a separate internal investigation.

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Statement from Akron Police Chief Brian Harding:

“Incidents like this highlight the very real dangers that our Akron Police officers face while working to keep our community safe. Our officers are often required to make split-second decisions in rapidly evolving and dangerous situations. Our thoughts continue to be with anyone impacted by this event, including the injured officers. We are confident in the BCI’s ability to conduct a thorough, independent review of this incident.”

Statement from Summit County Sheriff Kandy Fatheree:

“I’m proud that our deputies and Akron’s officers were able to resolve this incident before it resulted in further injury, damage to property, or potentially much worse. This is a great example of law enforcement agencies working together in a crisis to keep our communities safe. I pray for the speedy recovery of the Springfield Township officer injured in this incident.”

Statement from Springfield Township Police Chief Jack Simone:

“The situation rapidly evolved into a dangerous and unpredictable event that required an immediate response from our officers. They acted without hesitation, and their actions helped prevent a very serious situation from becoming an even greater tragedy. The officers’ priority was protecting the public and preventing a multi-ton semi-truck from entering a busy roadway where it could have endangered countless members of our community. Law enforcement officers routinely face volatile and uncertain situations where decisions must be made within seconds. Incidents like this highlight the risks officers take every day, often in moments the public never sees but that truly defines this profession. Our concern remains with everyone affected by this incident. At this time, our department’s primary focus is on the recovery of the injured officer and providing continued support to the officer and their family.”

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