



# WESTFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Honor, Integrity, Pride.

- An Accredited Law Enforcement Agency  
& Public Safety Answering and Dispatch Point -

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## WESTFIELD POLICE CHIEF ANNOUNCES ARREST OF RESIDENT FOLLOWING 14-HOUR LONG STAND-OFF

**WESTFIELD – JULY 6, 2023** – Westfield Police Chief Christopher Battiloro has announced the arrest of Michael P. Ward, 41, of the 1500 block of Boulevard, early this morning following a 14-hour long stand-off with officers who responded to his residence on a report of a domestic dispute in progress.

Chief Battiloro stated that officers responded to a 9-1-1 call from the residence on Wednesday, July 5, 2023, at approximately 3:39 PM. This was the Westfield Police Department's second response to this residence on this date for a reported domestic dispute.

Upon the officers' approach, they could hear arguing inside and were met at the front door by Ward, who was brandishing a large kitchen knife about 12" in length. He was holding it above his head with the blade pointed outwards towards the officers.

The officers demanded that Ward drop the knife, but he refused to do so and ordered that the officers leave, stating they would have to shoot in order for him to relinquish it. He then retreated back inside the residence, closing and locking the door.

The door was subsequently opened by Ward's mother, and officers instructed those persons present inside to exit the residence, leaving only Ward inside the home. Officers then learned that, earlier, Ward had grabbed his wife around her throat, applying pressure to it and cutting off her breathing, and agreed only to stop if she called the police. Ward indicated to officers that it was his intent to draw a police response, and to then die by suicide by cop.

Chief Battiloro stated that Westfield Police Department officers secured the area around the residence and the SWAT element of the Union County Emergency Response Team was requested to respond. Negotiators initiated and continued hours-long on and off communications with Ward, but were unable to convince him to voluntarily exit the residence.

Ward was subsequently taken into custody at approximately 5:31 AM this morning when SWAT made entry into the residence. He is currently detained pending further proceedings.



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Ward is charged with the following:

- 1 count of Aggravated Assault, 2C:12-1B(13), a crime of the second degree;
- 1 count of Terroristic Threats, 2C:12-3B, a crime of the third degree;
- 1 count of Possession of a Weapon for an Unlawful Purpose, 2C:39-4D, a crime of the third degree;
- 1 count of Unlawful Possession of a Weapon, 2C:39-5D, a crime of the third degree;
- 3 counts of Endangering Welfare of Children, 2C: 24-4A(2), crimes of the second degree.

Chief Battiloro stated, “I cannot praise enough the professional actions of all responding officers, in particular SWAT and the crisis negotiators, who worked for a such a lengthy period of time in extremely hot and humid conditions, to bring this matter to a successful conclusion without any serious injuries to any persons.”

“No incident of this nature can ever be successfully resolved without the coordination and cooperation of many entities working together,” continued Battiloro, who also recognized the following additional emergency service agencies which operated at the scene or assisted the Westfield Police Department in its investigation of this incident:

- Union County Prosecutor’s Office;
- Union County Sheriff’s Office;
- Westfield Volunteer Emergency Medical Services;
- Westfield Fire Department;
- Westfield Department of Public Works;
- Union County Emergency Medical Services;
- New Jersey State Police, Office of Emergency Management.

These criminal charges are mere accusations. Every Defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

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