



# CITY OF FORT WAYNE

SHARON TUCKER, MAYOR

Police Department • Paul Smith, Police Chief

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Date: May 18, 2026**

**Location: 1800 Howell St**

**Time: 2:14 PM**

### **Details/Summary: Statement From Chief Smith**

Good afternoon. I'm Chief **Smith** with the Fort Wayne Police Department.

First, I want to acknowledge that this is a tragic outcome. Any loss of life is serious, and we recognize the impact this has on the individual's family, the surrounding neighborhood, our officers, and the broader community.

At approximately **2:14 p.m.**, Fort Wayne Police officers were called to a residence in the **1800 block of Howell Avenue** regarding an adult male who was reportedly experiencing a mental health crisis and was possibly armed with a firearm.

Officers were familiar with the individual, as they had responded to at least **three prior incidents of a similar nature involving him within the last several days**. When officers arrived today, they made multiple attempts, using various methods, to contact him, communicate with him, and de-escalate the situation.

When those efforts were unsuccessful, and because of concerns for the safety of nearby residents and surrounding homes, the decision was made to request additional specialized resources. The Fort Wayne Police Department's **Emergency Services Team, Crisis Response Team, and Air Support Unit** responded to the scene to continue efforts to bring the situation to a peaceful resolution.

During the incident, members of the Emergency Services Team observed the individual lying on the ground just inside the front door of the residence. Our Crisis Response Team made extensive efforts to establish communication with him. They were able to make contact several times; however, they were only able to hear an open line with incoherent mumbling. CRT was actively working closely with a local hospital and the mental health court to obtain a court order for a mental health evaluation.

On multiple occasions, the individual opened the front door but did not take further action. Ultimately, he opened the front door and pushed what appeared to be a long gun out toward officers. At that point, several Fort Wayne Police officers, believing the individual was about to fire upon them, discharged

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their weapons, striking him.

Medical personnel were immediately called to the scene to render aid. Despite those efforts, the individual was pronounced deceased at the scene.

The **Allen County Coroner's Office** will release the individual's identity after next-of-kin notification has been made.

As is standard procedure in an officer-involved shooting, this incident will be thoroughly investigated. Indiana State Police are here conducting a parallel investigation. The officers involved will be placed on administrative leave, which is also standard procedure. We are committed to ensuring this investigation is handled carefully, professionally, and transparently.

I want to emphasize that this was a prolonged incident in which officers and crisis personnel made repeated attempts to communicate with this individual and de-escalate the situation. Our goal from the beginning was a peaceful resolution. Unfortunately, the situation escalated when the individual presented a rifle toward officers.

We will release additional information when we are able to do so without compromising the investigation. At this time, our thoughts are with everyone affected by this incident.

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