



CITY OF FORT WAYNE

SHARON TUCKER, MAYOR

Police Department • Paul Smith, Police Chief

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 10, 2026

Location: Fort Wayne

Time: 8:00 AM

Details/Summary:

The Fort Wayne Police Department is aware of a video circulating on social media involving an FWPD officer and an individual who was asked to leave Arab Fest.

We understand that videos posted online can raise questions and concerns. We also recognize the importance of providing accurate context when only a portion of an interaction is shown publicly.

Arab Fest had rented that section of the park for its event. As the event organizer for that rented space, Arab Fest had the authority to determine who could remain within the event area. The officer involved in the video was off duty and working for Arab Fest. She directed the individual to leave at the request of Arab Fest organizers.

When a business, property representative, or event organizer with lawful control over a space directs someone to leave, and that person refuses, the matter may become a trespassing situation. Under those circumstances, a person who refuses to leave can be subject to arrest.

The video also includes an allegation that the officer violated department policy by not calling for a supervisor when one was requested. FWPD does not have a policy requiring an officer to call a supervisor solely because a person requests one. Whether to request a supervisor is based on the circumstances and remains within the officer's discretion.

The video also includes a claim that the individual's freedom of speech was violated. The Fort Wayne Police Department respects and protects the constitutional rights of all individuals, including the right to free speech. However, the right to free speech does not give a person the right to remain in a rented event space after the event organizer has directed that person to leave.

The role of the officer in this situation was not to regulate speech. The officer was acting on behalf of the event organizer's request that the individual leave the rented event area.

FWPD encourages anyone who has concerns about an officer's conduct to contact the department so the matter can be reviewed through the appropriate process. We remain committed to transparency, accountability, and protecting the rights of all members of our community.

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