



Ohio Attorney General's Office
Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Investigative Report



2025-2243
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 3013 Mohawk Street,
Middletown, Ohio 45044 (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer
Involves: Officer John Harris (W)
Date of Activity: 07/25/2025
Activity Location: Middletown Police Department – Business – One Donham Plaza,
Middletown, OH 45042
Author: SA Lauren Frazier, #129

Narrative:

On June 25, 2025, at approximately 1346 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation Special Agents Kenneth Smith and Lauren Frazier interviewed Middletown Police Officer John Harris (Officer Harris). The interview took place at the Middletown Police Department. Also present for the interview was Attorney Rob Stokar. The interview was audio recorded.

The following summary of the recorded interview highlights the key points that the author deemed most relevant, although it does not provide a verbatim account. Additionally, this report was placed in a chronology to enhance the reader's understanding of the information obtained during the interview. However, it is important to note that this may not reflect the actual order of the questions posed. Therefore, it is suggested that the full audio recording be reviewed.

Officer Harris was identified as being an officer who witnessed and/or had some level of involvement in the officer-involved critical incident that occurred on June 13, 2025, in the City of Middletown, Butler County, Ohio. Officer Harris did not discharge his firearm during this incident. The primary objective of the interview was to gather all pertinent information known or observed. He confirmed that he was providing his statement voluntarily.

Officer Harris has been employed as a police officer at Middletown Police Department since [REDACTED]. He stated that he works second shift from [REDACTED] hours. He was wearing the standard Middletown police uniform. He said that his supervisor that day was Sgt. Jason Wargo. Officer Harris was wearing a body-worn camera (BWC), which was activated and recording at the time of this incident.

On July 13, 2025, Officer Harris said that he was in the jail with a subject he had arrested from a traffic stop. He heard someone mention a signal 28, stating that someone just got shot.

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Officer Harris began towards the incident location and heard someone air via radio that the subject had a firearm. Officer Harris arrived on scene 5–10 minutes later and parked on the southwest side of the residence. He was armed with his department–approved rifle and took a position at the back of his cruiser. Officer Harris said that Officer Patterson and Officer Kessler were northwest of his location and were trying to make contact with the subject via PA.

At the front of the residence, Officer Harris saw the subject's arm shut the front door. Officers said that there could be a hostage inside and Sgt. Wargo stated that they needed to go in. Officers developed a plan to approach and Officer Harris placed his rifle in the front of a cruiser. Sgt. Wargo had a shield which Officer Harris obtained.

Officers began approaching the residence and noticed a wheelchair ramp in the front. Officers decided to go to the back of the house because they were told that the back door was unlocked. Officer Harris stated that he was able to open the door and had the shield posted up against the house. Officer Harris said he made an initial announcement, stating "Middletown Police". Shortly after, Officer Harris said that the subject stated that he would shoot and that he didn't want to hurt them. At one point, Officer Harris heard what sounded like the charging of a handgun or racking of a slide, then what sounded like a gunshot fired, presumably by the subject.

Officer Harris said that he did not know where the subject was. Other officers called for Officer Kessler to come to the back. Officer Kessler tried to speak with the subject. Officer Harris recalled the subject saying that he was a pervert. Officer Harris said that the way the shield was positioned, he had a slight angle near the window, giving him a view inside the residence. Officer Harris said that he observed a fridge or freezer door open and then heard what sounded like a carbonated beverage or pop can open.

██████████ asked Officer Harris if there was a gun pointed at him and Officer Harris said, "No." Officer Harris and ██████████ moved over and Officer Harris placed the shield near the center of the door. ██████████ went to the left side of the door, where he was able to see and engage the subject. He said that ██████████ gave some type of verbal commands, just prior to ██████████ firing shots. Officer Harris said that he partially retreated and took cover but could recall ██████████ shooting.

Officer Harris asked ██████████ if the subject was down. He said that his body–worn camera fell off, he dropped the shield and drew his department–issued firearm. Officer Harris said he was the first one to make entry into the residence. He said that he saw a male subject on the ground with blood on his lower forehead. Officer Harris observed the subject's firearm near the subject. He described the gun as possibly a Glock with a turquoise lower frame and silver slide. Officer Harris said that he was going to move the firearm, but other officers told him not to. Another officer then kicked the firearm away from the subject.

Officer Harris assisted with clearing the residence, and officers located a female victim lying on the ground in the living room area. Officer Harris said that he tried to get a response from the female, but she did not respond. He did not provide any medical intervention. Officers exited the residence and Officer Harris said that he briefly spoke to the son and another family member on scene. Officer Harris arrived back at the Middletown Police Department, where he was processed by the BCI Crime Scene Unit.

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Officer Harris stated that he was not sure if the subject had shot, when [REDACTED] fired. Officer Harris later learned that [REDACTED] had also fired.

The interview concluded at 1401 hours. Officer Harris prepared a typed statement, which was provided to investigators. The statement was signed and dated at the conclusion of the interview. Officer Harris' typed statement, and a copy of the audio recorded interview are attached to this report.

References:

No references.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: 2025-07-25 Officer John Harris Interview

Attachment # 02: Middletown Police Officer John Harris Signed Statement

STATEMENT OF OFFICER JOHN HARRIS, BADGE NO. 683

This statement is in regard to an incident that occurred on Sunday, July 13, 2025, at approximately 4:42 p.m. I am making this statement voluntarily as part of the investigation concerning this matter.

My date of hire as a police officer with the Middletown Division of Police was around [REDACTED]. My regular assignment with Middletown PD is as a Patrol Officer, with [REDACTED] as my current off days. My regular duty hours are from approximately [REDACTED] to approximately [REDACTED]. On the day of the incident, I was working as a single-officer unit and my call number was 2L9. At the time this incident occurred, I was wearing my regular duty police uniform. The uniform included an outer ballistic vest, badge and nameplate. I was wearing a body worn camera (BWC) which recorded the event. I was carrying a department approved Glock 17, semi-automatic 9mm pistol, loaded with department approved ammunition. I was also equipped with a Sons of Liberty LRF, patrol rifle, but did not have the LRF on my person at the time of the incident. I most recently qualified with both weapons around June of 2025. My uncorrected vision is good and I was not wearing glasses or contacts. I am in good health, and I do not take any medications that would impair my ability to perform my duties. I had consumed approximately 3-4 drinks of alcohol in the 24 hours prior to my shift, but no alcohol in the 12 hours prior to my shift. I am unsure if I worked a small amount of overtime on the shift the prior day because this can be a routine occurrence. I had 4-9 hours of sleep the night before my assigned shift.

Immediately prior to the incident that resulted in the officer involved shooting, I was at the jail. At around 4:43 p.m. Officer Patterson's radio traffic aired a "28." I exited the jail to respond. Response was initially no lights and sirens, but those were later activated prior to arriving at the location.

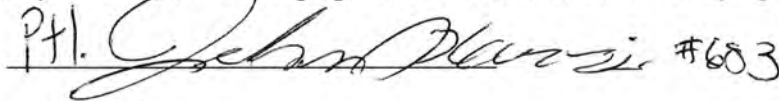
As I arrived on scene, I parked my marked patrol vehicle on the street southwest of the residence. I do not recall responding to calls for service to this location in my capacity as a Middletown Police Officer prior to this incident. I also do not recall any previous contact with the suspect or the female victim involved in this incident. On scene, it was determined entry was necessary after the suspect inside closed the front door. I retrieved a shield from Sgt. Wargo and assumed the front position of the formation. Officers approached the front of the residence, but determined entry at the back provided a better opportunity for success. As I approached the rear door, I opened the door, which was unlocked, and announced "Middletown Police."

From my position I could hear the suspect speaking. Prior to what sounded like the suspect firing off a round, I heard him state something about how he would shoot. I also heard what sounded like a firearm charging or being "racked." Sgt. Wargo also verbally engaged the suspect prior to the gunshot-like sound. After what sounded like a shot fired, Officer Kessler verbally engaged the suspect. At one point, the suspect stated that he was a "pervert." The suspect also mentioned something about him not wanting to hurt us, but I believe that statement was made prior to him firing off a round.

While at the rear of the residence, I was able to see what appeared to be a refrigerator or freezer door open. At one point, a noise that sounded like that of a carbonated drink opening was present. After, [REDACTED] positioned himself to the left and stated something, and he fired shots.

I did not fire my weapon. After [REDACTED] fired his rifle and confirmed the suspect was down, I dropped the shield, drew my handgun, and made entry. Upon entry, I observed the suspect lying on the floor and what appeared to be a handgun near him. I went through the residence and was either the first or one of the first to enter the room where the victim was lying on the ground. I exited the residence with other officers around the time medics arrived. Prior to exiting, I did touch the victim lying on the floor but did not render aid. After exiting the residence, I remained on scene and on perimeter until I was relieved.

This concludes my statement, and I am prepared to answer additional clarifying questions.

Pt.  #683

Officer John Harris, Badge No. 683