

Hartselle Police Department

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Justin S. Barley, Chief of Police

August 16, 2024

Press Release

Incident Date: Sunday, June 30, 2024

Time: Approximately 2:30 AM

Location: Hwy 31 near the intersection of Hwy 36, Hartselle, AL

On Sunday, June 30, 2024, at approximately 2:30 AM, an officer with the Hartselle Police Department initiated a traffic stop on Hwy 31 near the intersection of Hwy 36 after observing a vehicle exceeding the speed limit. Upon making contact, the driver, who was the sole occupant of the vehicle, identified themselves as an off-duty officer with the Decatur Police Department. During the interaction, the Hartselle PD officer suspected that the driver had been drinking. When asked, the driver admitted to consuming alcohol earlier that night.

Ultimately, the Hartselle PD officer decided not to arrest the driver for DUI and arranged to give them a ride to a nearby residence where a friend of the driver lived.

As soon as the incident was reported to our command staff, the Hartselle Police Department launched an internal review. It was determined that our officer did not act in accordance with the policies and standards of the Hartselle Police Department and was disciplined accordingly.

Police officers are entrusted with significant authority and, in many situations, have discretion in making decisions during the performance of their duties. However, officers also have a duty to enforce the law impartially, regardless of who may have violated it. In this specific incident, we believe the law should have been enforced.

Let me be clear: the Hartselle PD officer involved in this incident is an outstanding officer who has my full support. I often remind our officers that we are all human and that humans are not perfect. Mistakes will happen, but if we are committed to learning from them, we will continue to grow and improve as an organization. In this case, I am confident that our officer has done exactly that.

Respectfully,

Justin S. Barley, Chief of Police
Hartselle Police Department