



## BEMIDJI POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Michael Mastin

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

On October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at approximately 6:11pm, a Bemidji Police Officer observed an adult female openly armed with a rifle in the area Norton Ave NW and 22nd ST NW.

The Officer attempted contact with the female who was further observed to be in an emotional state, refusing commands and walking away from the officer. Officers recognized an immediate concern for public safety as result of proximity to residential areas, open businesses, and city parks. Officers immediately established perimeter control and began de-escalation attempts. The female subject continued to disregard commands and walk away.

Officers were able to quickly take control and disarm the female without the use of force. The adult female was secured and taken to the Sanford Bemidji Medical Center for evaluation. This case has been forwarded to the Beltrami County Attorney's Office for review of appropriate charges.

Bemidji Police Officers are trained in Crisis Intervention, which is a high-level communication technique designed to help responders understand persons in crisis and provide better service while reducing further trauma, stigmas and additional injury. BPD Officers' training is based on the nationally recognized Memphis Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) model, which promotes the use of verbal de-escalation skills before using force when confronting a mental health crisis. CIT training has been proven to dramatically decrease the risk of injuries or death to both officers and those suffering from mental illness, while also reducing the number of repeat calls. Minnesota Crisis Intervention Training is the industry "gold-standard" in which over 80% of BPD officers have been trained.

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