



ASHE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff B. Phil Howell

For Immediate Release – October 26th, 2026

Suspect Shot After Allegedly Forcing Entry into Residence

West Jefferson, NC – On Monday, October 12th, at approximately 7:45 pm, the Ashe County Dispatch Center received a call from an out-of-town female stating that she and her husband were in a domestic dispute. During this time, our Ashe County Sheriff's Office deputies were assisting the West Jefferson Police Department with a shooting investigation that had occurred earlier that afternoon. Once on scene, Sheriff's deputies safely located the female in the woods behind the home and provided transportation out of the county with family.

This was an especially high-volume day for the Ashe County 911 Center due to the nature of the calls being received in succession. On October 12th, 2026, dispatch received 35 calls for service from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm while training two new dispatchers. Our current call count for 2026 is 23,307 as of 10/14/2026, up 1,629 from last year's 21,618. Jefferson Police Department, West Jefferson Police Department, NC SBI, and NC Hwy Patrol came together and helped one another during this period.

Later on, during the same night, Tuesday, October 13th, 2026, at 3:00 a.m., Ashe County 911 Center received a call from a female stating a male subject kicked down the door to their Airbnb, and she had shot the suspect when he entered the home. Ashe County Sheriff's Office, Ashe Medics, West Jefferson PD, and Jefferson PD all responded to the call on Sunset Ridge Rd in West Jefferson. The male subject was identified as Icon Christen, the same suspect in the prior evening's domestic dispute involving his wife. Icon was transported to Ashe Memorial Hospital and then flown to Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem, where he was later released.

"I am a strong supporter of the Second Amendment and the right to protect yourself and your family. No one should have to fear for their safety inside their own home. When someone forcibly enters an occupied residence, they create a dangerous situation with potentially serious consequences. I will always stand behind the right to lawful self-defense. Our goal will always be to keep Ashe County a safe place to live, work, and raise a family." ~ Sheriff Howell

Ashe County Sheriff's Office obtained warrants, and Icon was arrested and transported to the Ashe County Detention Center on October 21st, 2026.

Icon Christen, age 33, from Long Branch, NJ, was arrested and placed under a NO BOND. His charges include:

- Felony First Degree Burglary
- Assault on a Female

**INTAKE
PHOTO**



Icon
CHRISTEN

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