



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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NEWS RELEASE

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Palm Coast Man Charged With Kidnapping Child

Brandon Leohner Arrested After Using 1-Year-Old As Shield To Evade Arrest

PALM COAST, FL – A 27-year-old Palm Coast resident faces charges of kidnapping and using a minor as a human shield after he abducted a small child while armed with a gun and led deputies on a chase which ended in a standoff at a fast food restaurant's parking lot.

At approximately 6:08 p.m. Tuesday (September 27, 2022), the Flagler County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) responded to a home on Bunker Lane in Palm Coast after receiving a report of a possible child abduction involving a 1-year-old.

FCSO discovered that the boyfriend of that child's mother – since identified as 27-year-old Brandon Matthew Douglas Leohner – had abducted the child while armed with a handgun and was driving with the child in his lap as he left the residence.

Deputies located the male a short time later driving recklessly through medians while speeding south on Belle Terre Parkway. When deputies attempted to conduct a traffic stop on the vehicle, Leohner fled traveling east onto State Road 100, driving over the median and through oncoming traffic before turning into the Target shopping center in Town Center.

Leohner then drove into the nearby McDonald's parking lot and exited the vehicle near the drive-thru with the child in his arms, using the child as a human shield and refusing to obey law enforcement commands to put the child down. After a brief standoff, deputies deployed a taser, rescued the child and began immediately comforting the child while other deputies worked to control Leohner.

Leohner attempted to flee and continued to resist deputies until a K-9 and a taser were able to control him. He was then placed in handcuffs and paramedics were called in to treat his wounds from being apprehended by the K-9.

"Here is a case of a domestic situation turning violent, putting a 1-year-old child and innocent drivers in danger," said Flagler County Sheriff Rick Staly. "Deputies were confronted with a very chaotic situation and a very

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combative individual that was putting his child at risk by using the child as a shield. Our deputies did everything they could to quickly rescue this child safely from a madman and apprehend the suspect. Fortunately, the child was not hurt and was quickly reunited with his mother.”

Leohner was arrested and charged with kidnapping, using a minor as a shield, resisting with violence, child neglect, fleeing and eluding and reckless driving.

Leohner was transported to AdventHealth for treatment of his injuries and will be booked at the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility upon his release. He has no prior arrests in Flagler County.

[Click here to view body camera of the arrest.](#)



Brandon Leohner during confrontation with deputies (FCSO)

Leohner's Date Of Birth: 05/18/1995

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