

Press Release

LAKE CITY
POLICE
DEPARTMENT



www.lcflapd.com

@LCFlaPD

Chief of Police Gerald Butler

For Immediate Release

May 7, 2025

Greg Burnsed, Public Information Officer

Ph. (386) 247-1148

Arrest Made After Gunfire Damages Hotel Room

On Wednesday, May 28, 2025, at approximately 2:23 P.M., officers from the Lake City Police Department responded to the Baymont Inn and Suites, located at 3598 W US Highway 90, in reference to a report of property damage caused by gunfire.

Upon arrival, officers met with hotel staff who reported that a guest had checked out earlier that afternoon and was observed walking to his vehicle with a firearm. Housekeeping staff later discovered spent shell casings on the floor, visible bullet holes in the wall, and multiple damaged items in the guest's room.

Officers reviewed surveillance footage showing the individual, later identified as Nicklous Hightower, carrying a rifle and appearing agitated while checking out. Officers entered the room and confirmed multiple bullet holes, spent shell casings, and significant damage estimated at over \$2,000.

Hightower was located while driving to the Columbia County Sheriff's Office Operations Center, where he claimed that snakes had been planted in his vehicle. Officers made contact with Hightower, who waived his Miranda rights and stated that he had discharged his firearm at perceived threats inside his hotel room. A consensual search of his vehicle revealed ammunition and a loaded AR-15-style rifle, both of which were collected and placed into evidence.

Hightower was arrested and transported to the Columbia County Detention Center without incident.

"This case underscores the importance of quickly reporting suspicious behavior," stated Chief of Police Gerald Butler. "Thanks to the swift action of hotel staff and responding officers, no one was harmed, and a potentially dangerous situation was safely resolved."

Anyone with information on any crime is encouraged to contact the Lake City Police Department at (386) 752-4343 or report information anonymously through the LCPD TIPS line at (386) 719-2068 or Crime Stoppers of Columbia County at (386) 754-7099.



Proudly Serving the Citizens of Lake City

225 NW Main Boulevard, Suite 102, Lake City, FL 32055 • Phone: (386) 752-5484 • Fax: (386) 719-5463

An Equal Opportunity Employer



Press Release

LAKE CITY
POLICE
DEPARTMENT



www.lcflapd.com

@LCFlaPD



Chief of Police Gerald Butler

Name: Hightower, Nicklous Emanuel Lamont
DOB: 02/20/1986
Sex/Race: Male/Black
Hair/Eyes: Black/Brown
Charge(s): 648 SW Amberwood Loop #102, Lake City, FL 32025
Discharging a Firearm in Public
Criminal Mischief



Report information anonymously by calling the LCPD TIPS line at 386-719-2068
or Crime Stoppers of Columbia County at 386-754-7099.



Proudly Serving the Citizens of Lake City

225 NW Main Boulevard, Suite 102, Lake City, FL 32055 • Phone: (386) 752-5484 • Fax: (386) 719-5463

An Equal Opportunity Employer

