



Town Of Old Orchard Beach
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Old Orchard Beach Reserve Officer Detained by ICE had Been Approved by Homeland Security Verification Program Prior to Being Hired

A Statement from Old Orchard Beach Police Chief Elise Chard

OLD ORCHARD BEACH - The following is a statement from Police Chief Elise Chard:


"On Friday, July 25, the Old Orchard Beach Police Department was notified that one of its reserve police officers was detained by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement for allegedly being in the country with an expired visa.

"Jon Luke Evans was hired by the Old Orchard Beach Police Department in May as a summer reserve officer. As part of the standard hiring process by the Town and the Police Department, Evans was required to complete an I-9 federal immigration and work authorization form to verify that he was legally authorized to work in the United States.

"As part of the hiring process, the Town reviewed multiple forms of identification, including photo identification, and submitted Evans' I-9 form to the Department of Homeland Security's E-Verify Program. The Department of Homeland Security then verified that Evans was authorized to work in the U.S. The form was submitted and approved by DHS on May 12, 2025. Evans would not have been permitted to begin work as a reserve officer until and unless Homeland Security verified his status.

"The Police Department was notified that Evans was legally permitted to work in the U.S., and his I-766 Employment Authorization Document was not set to expire until March 2030.

"The State of Maine is one of approximately a dozen states that allows non-citizen residents to work in law enforcement. The State of Maine, by law, allows those with legal work authorization to work in law enforcement. In Old Orchard Beach, reserve police officers are part-time, seasonal employees who must meet the same background checks, pass the same physical agility tests, and receive the same medical evaluations as full-time police officers.



“Reserve officers are generally assigned a variety of tasks, including foot/bicycle beach patrol and community policing. Reserve officers receive firearms training and are issued a firearm, however, reserve officers are not allowed to bring a Department-issued firearm home with them and must turn their firearms into the department at the end of each shift. Reserve officers are not requested to, nor are they allowed to purchase or carry any other firearms for the performance of their duties.

“Evans passed all physical and medical checks, passed a background check, was approved by Homeland Security to work in the United States, and underwent the standard course of training for a reserve officer before he was deployed on duty.

“Reserve officers face a lengthy probation period, and Evans’ probationary employment status is now under review. The Old Orchard Beach Police Department will conduct a thorough internal review of the facts and circumstances.

“The Old Orchard Beach Police Department was never officially informed about Evans’ detention, and the department officially learned the details of the matter in a news release issued by Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

“The Old Orchard Beach Police Department takes its legal responsibilities very seriously, and takes great care to follow the laws that we are tasked with enforcing. In hiring Evans, our department and our community relied on the Department of Homeland Security’s E-Verify program to ensure we were meeting our obligations, and we are distressed and deeply concerned about this apparent error on the part of the federal government. We intend to investigate this matter to determine what other steps we should take moving forward to ensure our continued compliance with all applicable laws.”

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