IN THE COURT OF APPEALS
FIRST APPELLATE DISTRICT OF OHIO
HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO

STATE OF OHIO,	:	APPEAL NO. C-250694 TRIAL NOS. 25/CRB/11052/A/B/C
Plaintiff-Appellant,	:	
vs.	:	
AMANDA DOHERTY,	:	*JUDGMENT ENTRY*
Defendant-Appellee.	:	

This cause was heard upon the appeal, the record, the briefs, and arguments.

For the reasons set forth in the Opinion filed this date, the judgments of the trial court are reversed and the cause is remanded.

Further, the court holds that there were reasonable grounds for this appeal, allows no penalty, and orders that costs be taxed under App.R. 24.

The court further orders that (1) a copy of this Judgment with a copy of the Opinion attached constitutes the mandate, and (2) the mandate be sent to the trial court for execution under App.R. 27.

To the clerk:

Enter upon the journal of the court on 9/16/2026.

Pursuant to App.R. 30, the clerk is directed to send all parties, or their counsel if represented, a copy of the court's judgment and note such action on the docket.

By: Jennifer Hunsley
Administrative Judge

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Plaintiff-Appellant,	:	
vs.	:	
AMANDA DOHERTY,	:	*O P I N I O N*
Defendant-Appellee.	:	

Criminal Appeal From: Hamilton County Municipal Court

Judgments Appealed From Are: Reversed and Cause Remanded

Date of Judgment Entry on Appeal: September 16, 2026

Emily Smart Woerner, City Solicitor, *Susan M. Zurface*, Chief Prosecuting Attorney, and *Chase O. McGary*, Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, for Plaintiff-Appellant,

Angela Chang, Hamilton County Public Defender, and *Lora Peters*, Assistant Public Defender, for Defendant-Appellee.

MOORE, Judge.

{¶1} Plaintiff-appellant the State of Ohio appeals the trial court's judgments granting defendant-appellee Amanda Doherty's motions to suppress. We sustain the State's sole assignment of error because the police's extended detention of Doherty was supported by reasonable suspicion. Accordingly, we reverse the judgments of the trial court and remand the cause for further proceedings.

I. Factual and Procedural History

{¶2} On July 1, 2025, Cincinnati Police Officer James Mathews and trainee Officer Austin Conley responded to the 3500 block of Warsaw Avenue in East Price Hill. An individual had called 9-1-1 to report a woman approaching vehicles in the area. According to Mathews, the location was known for prostitution. The 9-1-1 caller described the woman as a white female, aged 25 to 30, of average build, with red or orange hair, wearing a black, two-piece outfit.

{¶3} Upon arrival, Mathews observed a white woman with curly, strawberry-colored hair, wearing a black, two-piece outfit. Because this woman resembled the person described by the 9-1-1 caller, he and Conley approached her and asked what she was doing. This woman was Amanda Doherty. When asked to identify herself, Doherty hesitated before telling the officers that she was Carrie Doherty. After Doherty gave the officers a date of birth and social security number, Conley went to the police cruiser to run the information in his computer.

{¶4} While waiting for Conley to return, Mathews talked with Doherty. He suspected that she was not being honest about her identity. Mathews believed that Doherty resembled a woman named Adrienne Toliver. Mathews had encountered Toliver before and had recently signed charges against her. Toliver frequented the area and had not yet been arrested despite having open warrants. Mathews noted that

Toliver often changed her appearance, including her hair color. Doherty denied being Toliver, maintained that she was Carrie Doherty, and told Mathews that her friend was around the corner and could verify her identity.

{¶5} Meanwhile, in the police cruiser, Conley ran the identifying information that Doherty gave to him. The computer returned a photograph of Carrie Doherty and both Conley and Mathews did not believe that the woman in the photograph matched Doherty's appearance. They detained Doherty and transported her to the Hamilton County Justice Center so she could be identified by her fingerprints. While in the car, Doherty admitted that she was Amanda Doherty, not Carrie Doherty. Doherty's fanny pack was eventually searched, and the officers seized a hypodermic needle and a pipe from inside.

{¶6} Doherty was charged with falsification, in violation of R.C. 2921.13, possession of drug-abuse instruments, in violation of R.C. 2925.12, and illegal use or possession of drug paraphernalia, in violation of R.C. 2925.14. Doherty moved to suppress the evidence seized in connection with her detention. Following a hearing, the trial court granted the motions. The State has appealed.

II. Analysis

{¶7} On appeal, the State raises one assignment of error. The State challenges the trial court's grant of Doherty's motions to suppress based upon its determination that the officers lacked reasonable suspicion to detain Doherty after she identified herself.

A. Motions to Suppress

{¶8} A trial court's ruling on a motion to suppress presents a mixed question of law and fact for appellate review. *State v. Curry*, 2022-Ohio-627, ¶ 12 (1st Dist.), citing *State v. Burnside*, 2003-Ohio-5372, ¶ 8. We must accept the trial court's factual

findings if they are supported by competent, credible evidence. *Id.* at ¶ 13. We then independently assess whether the facts satisfy the applicable legal standard. *Id.*

{¶9} The Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article I, Section 14 of the Ohio Constitution protect individuals from unreasonable searches and seizures by the government. All evidence obtained from unlawful searches and seizures is inadmissible in court and subject to suppression. *Mapp v. Ohio*, 367 U.S. 643, 655 (1961).

{¶10} During a *Terry* stop, a police officer may briefly detain an individual for investigatory purposes if that officer has a reasonable suspicion that criminal activity has occurred recently or is imminent. *State v. Hairston*, 2019-Ohio-1622, ¶ 9, citing *Terry v. Ohio*, 392 U.S. 1, 30 (1968). Reasonable suspicion requires more than a mere hunch, though it is a less demanding standard than probable cause. *In re J.T.*, 2023-Ohio-2695, ¶ 18 (1st Dist.), citing *State v. Henson*, 2022-Ohio-1571, ¶ 17 (1st Dist.). The "facts available to the officer at the moment of the seizure or the search [must] warrant a man of reasonable caution in the belief to take the same actions." (Cleaned up.) *Id.*, quoting *Terry* at 22. The constitutionality of a *Terry* stop is based on the totality of the circumstances as viewed through the eyes of a reasonable and prudent police officer reacting to events as they occur. *State v. Wright*, 2022-Ohio-2161, ¶ 15 (1st Dist.), quoting *State v. Hawkins*, 2019-Ohio-4210, ¶ 21.

{¶11} Though we are bound to accept the trial court's factual findings if they are supported by competent and credible evidence, our review of the record indicates that the trial court rendered its judgment under a factual mistake. In announcing its decision to grant Doherty's motions to suppress, the trial court found that "the difference in this case is that the officers were, in the Court's opinion, much broader in terms of the detention, because they thought she was Toliver, and she wasn't. She

said she was Doherty, and she was." While Amanda Doherty was not Adrienne Toliver, she also was not Carrie Doherty. The constitutionality of Doherty's extended detention hinges on this crucial fact.

1. Initial Terry *Stop*

{¶12} The parties dispute whether the trial court found that there was reasonable suspicion to initially detain Doherty. On one hand, the trial court implicitly indicated that there was reasonable suspicion to support the initial detention through its finding that "there was no reasonable suspicion to detain Ms. Doherty *after* she identified herself and asked the officer to take her around the corner to be identified by a friend." (Emphasis added.) On the other hand, the trial court indicated that there may not have been reasonable suspicion for the initial *Terry* stop when it found that Doherty "was much older than the original description from 911." Because the constitutionality of the extended *Terry* stop depends on whether there was reasonable suspicion for the initial stop, we address that issue first.

{¶13} Information provided by an informant may generate a reasonable suspicion of criminal activity in the mind of a police officer. *State v. Smith*, 2005-Ohio-5204, ¶ 13 (1st Dist.). While an anonymous tip alone is generally insufficient for reasonable suspicion, it may justify an investigatory stop if independent police corroboration establishes sufficient indicia of reliability. *Id.*; *accord City of Maumee v. Weisner*, 87 Ohio St.3d 295, 299-300 (1999).

{¶14} Here, Doherty was initially stopped by police based on information provided by an anonymous 9-1-1 caller. The caller alleged that a woman was approaching cars near the 3500 block of Warsaw Avenue. Officer Mathews considered this area to be "notorious for prostitution-related offenses." The caller described the woman as a white female, approximately 25 to 30 years old, of average build, with red

or orange hair, and wearing a black two-piece outfit. Upon arriving at the scene, the officers spotted Doherty. Despite being significantly older than the description given by the caller, Doherty otherwise matched the caller's description. *See, e.g.*, *State v. Greer*, 2014-Ohio-2370, ¶ 9-10 (9th Dist.) (holding that there was reasonable suspicion justifying an investigatory stop because the defendant's race, gender, and clothing matched the suspect even though there was significant discrepancy between their height and weight); *State v. Watson*, 2009-Ohio-6713, ¶ 22 (3d Dist.) (holding that there was reasonable suspicion justifying an investigatory stop because the defendant's appearance was sufficiently similar to the suspect's appearance, even though there were some minor discrepancies). Noting the similarities between the woman described in the call and Doherty, Mathews and Conley approached Doherty, asked her what she was doing, and asked her to identify herself.

{¶15} While it is not a crime to merely approach cars, it is a crime to approach cars with the purpose of soliciting another to engage in sexual activity in exchange for payment. R.C. 2907.241. Given the area's reputation for prostitution-related offenses, and the match between Doherty's appearance and the individual described in the 9-1-1 call, we hold that the officers were justified in initially approaching Doherty to investigate whether she was the woman identified by the caller.

2. Extended Terry *Stop*

{¶16} If, during an initial detention, a police officer "ascertain[s] reasonable articulable facts giving rise to a suspicion of criminal activity, the officer may then further detain and implement a more in-depth investigation of the individual." *State v. Robinette*, 80 Ohio St.3d 234, 241 (1997).

{¶17} While Mathews and Conley initially detained Doherty to investigate her potential connection to the 9-1-1 call, the purpose of the *Terry* stop quickly shifted into

investigating a potential falsification offense, a violation of R.C. 2921.13. There were several facts that indicated to the officers that Doherty may have provided them with a false name. To start, Doherty hesitated before telling the officers that her name was Carrie Doherty. Doherty also took a long pause before answering Conley's question regarding her age. When asked if Doherty had been in trouble for anything in the past, Doherty responded that she had gotten in trouble for falsification after she gave the police her sister's name instead of her own.

{¶18} Additionally, Mathews thought Doherty resembled a woman named Adrienne Toliver. According to Mathews, Toliver was a white woman with reddish hair who frequently wore black shorts with a black top. Mathews had recently signed charges against Toliver and knew that she frequented the area but had not been arrested yet.

{¶19} The officers had further reason to believe that Doherty was lying about her identity after they entered the information provided by Doherty into their computer. The search revealed a photograph of Carrie Doherty, and both Conley and Mathews believed that Amanda Doherty did not resemble the person in the picture. Additionally, Doherty told Mathews that she had been "locked up" for some felonies in Hamilton County. This did not match the records of Carrie Doherty, who had no felony convictions.

{¶20} Throughout the interaction, Doherty repeatedly insisted that she was Carrie Doherty. The officers communicated their suspicion that she was not being honest about her identity and Doherty continued to say that she was Carrie. It was only when she was being transported to the Hamilton County Justice Center for fingerprint identification that Doherty finally told the officers that she was Amanda Doherty, not Carrie Doherty.

{¶21} Considering the totality of these circumstances, Mathews and Conley were justified in extending their detention of Doherty so that they could transport her to the Justice Center to confirm her identity through her fingerprints. *See, e.g.*, *State v. Davis*, 2017-Ohio-5613, ¶ 41-42 (2d Dist.) (holding that further detention and investigation to ascertain the defendant's identity was justified after the defendant provided a false name to hospital staff); *State v. Lewis*, 2021-Ohio-3179, ¶ 17 (11th Dist.) (holding that further detention and investigation was justified after the defendant failed to provide photo identification and provided a false name during a traffic stop). The officers had reasonable suspicion that Doherty was lying to them about who she was. Even if the officers lacked reasonable suspicion that Doherty was Adrienne Toliver, they certainly had reasonable suspicion that Amanda Doherty was not Carrie Doherty. As a result, the officers were justified in continuing to detain Doherty to investigate her identity.

{¶22} Accordingly, we sustain the State's sole assignment of error.

III. Conclusion

{¶23} Based on the totality of the circumstances, the officers reasonably suspected that Doherty committed the offense of falsification. This reasonable, articulable suspicion justified their continued detention of her so that they could ascertain her identity through fingerprinting. As a result, the trial court erred in granting Doherty's motions to suppress. Accordingly, we reverse the trial court's judgments and remand the cause for further proceedings.

Judgments reversed and cause remanded.

BOCK, P.J., and **NESTOR, J.,** concur.