

My name is Justin Campbell, and I am 38 years old. On April 29, 2024, an event unfolded that none of us could have anticipated. What began as a routine workday quickly changed the moment the call came over the radio: an officer was down. In that moment, there was no time to think—only to act.

I waited for the address and immediately responded to help my brother in blue. When I arrived, I knew the situation was far worse than I had imagined. Shots were still being fired, but I ran toward the sound without hesitation, determined to reach my CMPD family in need. I entered through the back yard of the neighboring house. After receiving information about the location of the wounded officers, I ran to their location. I took cover behind the tree, and directed nearby officers to return fire so that we could evacuate the injured. I was able to pull one wounded officer by his vest to safety. The uneven terrain caused me to fall, and as I did, the injured officer landed on my foot, twisting it badly. Despite the pain, I continued to pull him until I reached other officers who could help. Tragically, he did not survive his injuries.

What began as a normal shift quickly turned into devastation. Adrenaline carried me through that day, but by nightfall, I realized the extent of my own injury. My foot had been broken, and though the bones eventually healed, the nerve damage did not. I was later diagnosed with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS). Despite therapy, injections, and multiple treatments, the pain worsened and spread up my right leg, leaving no clear path to recovery. On July 24, 2025, I underwent a below-the-knee amputation.

- Hughes had a lengthy criminal history spanning roughly 20 years. ([The Independent](#))
- His arrests and charges included (but were not limited to): drug charges (marijuana possession, manufacturing, drug paraphernalia) ([WFMY News 2](#)), fleeing to elude arrest ([WCNC](#)), breaking and entering ([Charlotte Observer](#)), firearm possession (as a felon) ([The Independent](#)), aggravated assault ([The Independent](#)), and other weapon/offense violations. ([The Independent](#))
- Some more recent charges had been **dismissed** or languished in court pending years. For example:
 - A 2021 Mecklenburg County fleeing/eluding arrest charge was “dismissed with leave,” though it remained pending under certain conditions. (<https://www.wbtv.com>)
 - A 2021 marijuana-related case was dropped by the Mecklenburg DA amid administrative changes and backlog pressures. (<https://www.wbtv.com>)
 - A 2020 driving with revoked license charge was dismissed due to COVID-19 court closures. (<https://www.wbtv.com>)
- He had served time in prison, including sentences around 2011 and 2013. ([Charlotte Observer](#))
- Earlier in his criminal history, in 2001, he was charged with communicating threats (against his father) among the first recorded incidents. ([The Independent](#))
- At the time of the fatal 2024 shootout, he was wanted on active felony warrants for (1) possession of a firearm by a felon, and (2) felony flee-to-elude (from Lincoln County) ([WFAE](#))

Thus, his record was broad and involved multiple jurisdictions (Mecklenburg, Person, Alamance, Rowan, etc.). ([The Independent](#))