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LOCAL NEWS

Bail bondswomen face false imprisonment charges over questionable arrest in Garland county



by: [Tyler Thomason](#)

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GARLAND COUNTY, Ark. — Two bail bondswomen have found themselves on the wrong side of the law following allegations of a bogus arrest.

Camelia Chism and Catherina Maher were both arrested on Oct. 29 following allegations of falsely arresting a woman in Hot Springs back in June. The duo faces false imprisonment charges.

According to an arrest report, Chism and Maher kicked their way into a Hot Springs home, forced a woman into handcuffs and went through her phone.

Chism and Maher were employees at a bail bond company, according to sheriff's investigators.

Chism hasn't had an active bail bond license in years, according to the Bail Bond Licensing Board.
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Maher's license has been activated since February of this year.

The Bail Bond Licensing Board says an investigation is still ongoing.

"You just cannot step over the line," John Chism says.

John Chism — unrelated to Camelia Chism — has owned and operated his own bail bond company for 16 years.

"The cornerstone of what I believe in we're here helping good people out of bad situations," John Chism says.

The Bail Bond Licensing Board says a bail bondsman or bondswoman can only take a person into custody if he or she is out on bond.

It didn't appear the woman cuffed in this case was out on bond, according to the sheriff's investigation.

The arrest report indicates the suspects were looking for the victim's ex-husband who wasn't home.

Camellia Chism and Catherine Maher have since bonded out of the Garland county jail.

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