



# Media Release

For Immediate Release: March 25, 2026  
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## Two Vehicle Serious Injury Crash on Interstate 71

Jefferson Township – The Mansfield State Highway Patrol is investigating a two-vehicle serious injury crash that occurred on Wednesday March 25, 2026 at approximately 12:32 PM. The crash happened on Interstate 71 near mile post 163 when a 2023 Freightliner box truck driven by Zachary Kryslar, age 39, of North Royalton, Ohio was traveling northbound in the right lane of Interstate 71, traveled onto the right shoulder of Interstate 71, and struck a parked 2021 Toyota RAV 4 that was occupied by Harold Merz, age 73, and Brenda Merz, age 75, both of Westerville, Ohio. Harold Merz was extricated and transported by MedFlight to the Ohio State University Hospital in Columbus. Brenda Merz was transported from the scene by ambulance to Ohio Health Mansfield with non-life-threatening injuries. A passenger in the Freightliner, Gregory Medlen, was also transported to Ohio Health Mansfield with non-life-threatening injuries. Kryslar sustained minor injuries but was not transported from the scene. All lanes of Interstate 71 were closed for a brief time but are currently open. The crash remains under investigation at this time. Assisting agencies on scene were Jefferson Township EMS, Mansfield Fire, Troy Township EMS, Ronk's Towing, and Auer's Towing.