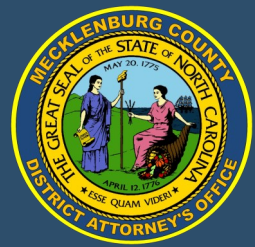




# FROM THE DESK OF DA MERRIWEATHER



Mecklenburg  
County  
District  
Attorney's  
Office

The District Attorney's Office is responsible for the prosecution of criminal offenses in Mecklenburg County. Each month, this newsletter provides information about court happenings, initiatives being used to combat crime, the DA's work in the community, and more.

## INCLUSION

### DA's Office has curriculum for all staff

District Attorney Spencer Merriweather believes that justice and equity demand that members of your District Attorney's Office challenge themselves and strive to become fluent in a real understanding of Mecklenburg County's diverse population.



That's why, in 2018, he established a [Diversity and Inclusion Team](#). Since then, the team has sought out a myriad of training opportunities for the entire office. This spring, the team created and implemented a curriculum that is required of all employees, making our office one of the first prosecutorial offices in North Carolina to set such standards. The curriculum provides opportunities in four categories: trainings, small group discussions, self-guided activities, and volunteer work. Employees must complete activities in multiple categories in addition to any mandatory, office-wide trainings.

Since the curriculum went into effect, our employees have attended trainings on a variety of subjects, including harassment faced by the LGBTQ community. They have participated in a [21-day equity challenge](#), joined small group discussions about Emmanuel Acho's "[Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man](#)" book and video series, and more.

We believe this work is critical to our efforts to treat everyone with dignity and build a justice system that truly serves all people throughout our community.

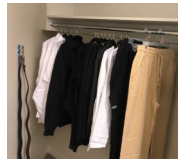
DA Merriweather and Assistant District Attorney Perlman recently sat down with [WBTV News' Dedrick Russell](#) to discuss the office's Diversity and Inclusion curriculum.

## DWI COURT

A state report estimated that, by the end of 2020, nearly 30 percent of Mecklenburg County's pending DWI cases were unresolved due to COVID-19 delays. Now, after 14 weeks of a court session dedicated to DWIs, [the DA's Office has resolved 627 cases](#), marking a significant step forward in addressing the backlog of DWI cases caused by COVID-19 court closures. This helps ensure accountability and safety on our roads, as well as more swift resolution for defendants. DA Merriweather [continues to advocate](#) for the safe reopening of additional court proceedings.

## COURT CLOSET

With the help of a N.C. Governor's Crime Commission grant, we created a "court closet." Often, we meet victims who feel intimidated by the prospect of testifying at trial. Our court closet contains professional clothing that allows victims experiencing hardship to feel more comfortable in court and command the respect they deserve. We also stocked up on coloring books and games to place throughout the DA's Office to help children, many of whom have experienced trauma, feel more at ease when they visit our office to meet with our staff.



## FAQ: Can I handle my traffic citation without coming to court?

Absolutely! With COVID-19 court closures, Mecklenburg County's traditional traffic court is not yet operational, so you may wish to utilize another way to resolve a citation. The courts offer [virtual means](#) of requesting the dismissal of violations relating to your driver's license, registration, and inspection if you have obtained compliance. You can also pay some citation fines online. To request a speeding ticket reduction or dismissal of a compliance-related matter (expired registration or license, etc.), you can visit our station at the courthouse 9 a.m.-noon Monday-Friday. Visit [our website](#) for details.

Visit [www.charmeckda.com](http://www.charmeckda.com) for the latest news, information about the courts and more. Follow [@charmeckda](#) on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

