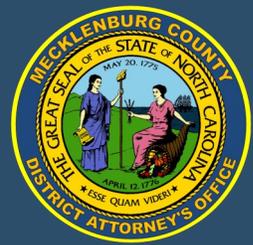




FROM THE DESK OF DA MERRIWEATHER

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.



Mecklenburg
County
District
Attorney's
Office

OFFICE GOALS

Nose to the grindstone in 2023

For the first time since COVID-19 struck, we are beginning a year with court operations in full swing, and we have much work to do in 2023 on behalf of crime victims and the entire community. In addition to the steadfast pursuit of justice in all criminal cases, DA Merriweather has set a number of goals for his office this year.

- DA Merriweather will continue pushing for a [common sense response to issues surrounding pretrial custody](#) for violent offenders. Our community should have the expectation that someone who evidence shows is a threat to our safety will remain in custody for violent offenses. We will make these arguments in court while also working with judicial officials to create policies that support community protection and equity.
- The recent spike in juvenile violent crime is of grave concern to this office. We will pursue efforts to find community-based solutions for our young people.
- We will work alongside advocates and community partners to advance the completion of The Umbrella Center by 2024. This [family justice center](#) will serve survivors of domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse, sexual assault, and human trafficking.
- Prosecutorial offices across the state are facing recruitment and staff retention challenges. This office plans to tackle this by pursuing more resource support from the N.C. General Assembly.
- DA Merriweather is working to lead a redesign of the administrative court plan used to determine how felony cases move through our courts. He aims to create a more efficient and effective court system for our community.
- The DA's Office will also brace for a sweeping change to our court system with the statewide transition to eCourts, a set of new software that intends to move the court system from paper to digital. DA Merriweather and your DA's Office are committed to taking on tough issues to ensure Mecklenburg County is a place where all people can prosper and live in peace.

SWEARING IN

In early January, DA Merriweather was sworn in as Mecklenburg County's elected district attorney for his second four-year term. At the ceremony, all of our Assistant District Attorneys and legal assistants also pledged to work for justice. For DA Merriweather, this is a continuation of a [career dedicated to public service](#). He spent more than a decade as a prosecutor before becoming DA, and he draws on that experience to develop fair policies that support victims and promote safety.



TDVAM 2023

Everyone, especially our young people, deserve healthy relationships rooted in respect. As we celebrate love this Valentine's Day, let's take the opportunity to have a conversation with the teens in our lives about healthy relationships and teen dating violence. February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. The frequency of dating abuse is staggering. One in three U.S. teens will experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse in a relationship before they become adults, according to love is respect, a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline. Visit [loveisrespect.org](#) for resources for teens, parents, and teachers, or check out Mecklenburg County's [LoveSpeaksOut](#) program, which provides presentations to teen groups.



FAQ: Why are some court documents sealed?

Every adult criminal case has a file that is public record, meaning anyone can view the file. There are some scenarios, however, when specific documents might be sealed by the court, preventing the record — usually temporarily — from becoming publicly available. The reasons for sealing a record vary. The record may pertain to a defendant's mental health evaluation. Or in some cases, public release of the information may jeopardize an ongoing investigation or may influence a witness' statements before law enforcement can conduct an interview. The DA's Office cannot seal documents. A judge must make that determination. Juvenile court files are always sealed.

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

