

# NEWS RELEASE

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## DA Merriweather announces restructure of felony teams

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Mecklenburg County District Attorney Spencer B. Merriweather III announced today that the DA's Office is implementing a change to its felony team structure.

Under the new design, the form of the DA's Homicide and Felony Special Victims Teams will remain largely the same, but Assistant District Attorneys (ADAs) from the Felony Crimes (FCT), Violent Crimes (VCT), and Habitual Felon Teams (HFT) will be reassigned to four (4) General Felony Teams. Each ADA on these General Felony Teams will continue to be assigned one of three specialized subject area inventory types (VCT, FCT, HFT), but instead of concentrating specialists on one subject area-based team, these prosecutors and their cases have been dispersed across each of the new General Felony Teams. This structure will enable the DA's Office to ensure the community's top priority cases are eligible for prosecution each week. Under this model, prosecution teams will proceed with a six-week administrative/trial court rotation.

"While this plan does not begin to remedy the chronic under-resourcing of our justice system that serves a community of our size and complexity, it does represent the most efficient deployment of the resources we do have, the best way we know how," DA Merriweather said.

This new design represents a substantial shift from the prosecution team model the DA's Office has featured since 1994. This new design moves the DA's Office closer to the structure offered in other large prosecutorial jurisdictions. This modified team structure includes many benefits, including the following:

- **Eventual Expansion of the Homicide Team** - The District Attorney's Office is resolving to adjudication over 50% more homicides a year than it did a decade ago, though the average homicide filings per year have increased by 36%. Despite this progress, the burden of homicide cases carried by our prosecutors is far beyond what is acceptable by national standards, and this model should enable us to add prosecutors to the Homicide Team within 12 months.
- **Increased Utilization of Trial and Administrative Court Time** - This new model will afford the DA's Office the ability to schedule a wider variety of cases for trial and administrative disposition. Currently, the docketing of complex and multi-phase dispositions leaves prosecutors with time in court sessions that is difficult to utilize in the present structure. It is expected that the new design will increase flexibility in scheduling without binding prosecutors to the strictures of disposing only of certain case types within a single week.

- **Swifter Long-Term Development of Prosecutors** - As is true across sectors of legal practice, prosecutors across the country have seen the average tenure of experience within their ranks decline significantly over the past decade. This new model enables us to expose ADAs to a broader array of case types through collaborative case assessments and trial participation at an earlier stage in their career. This advances the long-term development of prosecutorial experience in the DA's Office.

In the last several months, DA's Office staff have engaged in a significant undertaking—internally and externally—in collaboration with other court system partners—to prepare for full implementation of this reorganization. We extend our appreciation to those partners for their collaboration in making this transition possible, and we ask for patience from the Bar, the Bench, and the public at-large, as we navigate unforeseen challenges related to these changes. Ultimately, we expect this reorganization to advance public safety and justice considerably within our courts, to the benefit of the entire community.

*Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit [www.charmeckda.com](http://www.charmeckda.com). For updates and other information, follow @CharMeckDA on [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [Instagram](#).*

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