



Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office

700 East Fourth Street
Charlotte, NC 28202

T (704) 336-2543 • F (704) 336-6118

www.mecksheriff.com

GARRY L. MCFADDEN
SHERIFF

TELISA E. WHITE
CHIEF OF DETENTION

KEVIN D. CANTY
CHIEF DEPUTY SHERIFF

MEDIA ALERT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Sarah Mastouri
MCSO Communication Specialist | Public Information
Sarah.Mastouri@mecklenburgcountync.gov
O: (980)-314-5170

Sheriff's Office Responds to Rising Suicide Rates within Detention Center

(CHARLOTTE, N.C.) – The Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office is addressing the concerning increase in suicide attempts within the detention center, with 15 incidents reported in 2024 thus far, marking a notable rise compared to previous years.

In 2023, there were 19 attempts. In 2022, the sheriff's office successfully intervened to stop 24 attempts. However, one in-custody death by suicide did occur. Despite the current challenges, Sheriff Garry McFadden remains confident in the dedication and capability of his officers and healthcare provider, VitalCore Health Strategies, to continue saving lives.

Just recently, a detention center officer demonstrated the proactive and compassionate approach our staff embodies, successfully saving a resident's life with the assistance of fellow residents. This underscores our commitment to vigilance and teamwork in preventing tragedies.

VitalCore Health Strategies, our trusted healthcare partner, offers comprehensive medical, behavioral, and mental health services tailored to the individual needs of residents. With a focus on holistic care, including rehabilitative programs, residents receive treatment on par with community standards.

Our staff undergoes rigorous training to handle diverse scenarios, including emergency medical response and crisis intervention, equipping them with the skills and tools necessary to safeguard resident well-being. Care is never delayed, and residents are seen immediately by a registered nurse, or, if necessary, escalated to a provider.

The collaboration between our security administration, medical teams and mental/behavioral health units ensures seamless coordination and prompt response to high-risk cases. VitalCore's commitment to transparency and communication further strengthens our ability to address challenges effectively.

Since he was sworn in as sheriff in 2018, Sheriff McFadden has always encouraged family members to visit loved ones face-to-face inside the detention center, a concept he says strengthens family ties and improves mental health outcomes. If a loved one is struggling with harmful thoughts or suicidal feelings, the sheriff is requesting family and friends report it to him directly at garry.mcfadden@mecklenburgcountync.gov or by calling the office at 704-336-2543.

"We are here to support. We are here to serve. And we are here to save and change lives," said Sheriff Garry McFadden. "We will continue prioritizing resident safety and well-being and remain steadfast in our mission to continue providing the highest standard of care within the detention center."

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