



## MECKLENBURG COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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### MEDIA ALERT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office Educates Board of Elections Staff on Safety Tips Ahead of Upcoming Election Season

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.** – In preparation for the highly anticipated election season, the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) is taking proactive measures to ensure the safety and security of the Mecklenburg County Board of Elections staff. On Aug. 29, Deputies L. Blackwelder and C. Durham, along with Sergeant S. Horne, conducted a comprehensive safety session at the Board of Elections office on Kenilworth Avenue.

The session provided valuable safety tips and guidelines to the board members and employees, focusing on how to maintain vigilance and ensure a secure working environment during this politically charged time. The deputies addressed a range of topics, including recognizing unusual behavior, responding to potential emergencies, and protocols for handling volatile individuals.

Key recommendations included:

- Being mindful and making eye contact with individuals entering the building.
- Implementing a buddy system for staff leaving the premises late at night or early in the morning.
- Contacting 911 immediately in case of emergency situations, including active shooter scenarios.
- Establishing an emergency exit plan and being prepared for various security threats.
- Reporting suspicious packages.

The deputies plan to conduct frequent safety checks and be visible both inside and outside the building during the election season to provide employees reassurance and assistance.

The deputies also acknowledged the current societal climate and the heightened sentiments surrounding this particular election season. They stressed that their goal is to ensure a welcoming environment for not just staff members, but the voting population, as well. MCSO encourages voters to exercise caution when heading to the polls and participating in campaigns.

Members with the Board of Elections expressed their appreciation for the ongoing support from the MCSO and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, noting that such collaborations significantly enhance their sense of security and readiness.

*“The Mecklenburg County Sheriff’s Office remains committed to protecting the integrity of the election process,” said Sheriff Garry McFadden. “Emotions are running high. America is very divided. A lot is at stake. We must ensure that both board staff and voters feel safe and supported over the next few months.”*

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