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MEDIA ALERT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Suspects in Custody, Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office Investigating Erroneous Release

(Charlotte, N.C.) The Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) is investigating the erroneous release of Jose Rivera-Martinez (PID: 513343) and Reyna Ulloa-Martinez (PID: 513342).

Mr. and Ms. Martinez were transported from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody in Georgia to MCSO's Arrest Processing Center (APC) Friday morning, September 6, 2024. Typically, when someone is brought to MCSO from another jurisdiction, upon arrival at APC the transport officers provide MCSO with a copy of a writ which would direct that the individual remain in custody to be returned to the transferring jurisdiction upon conclusion of his/her business in Mecklenburg County court. During the transfer of custody of Mr. and Mrs. Martinez on Friday, MCSO personnel asked the Georgia transport officers if there were writs for both individuals. MCSO was informed by the transport officers that there were no writs, and that Mr. and Mrs. Martinez were brought to MCSO to be served with Mecklenburg County warrants for accessory after the fact to first degree murder. MCSO confirmed the existence of those warrants, served them, and thereafter presented Mr. and Mrs. Martinez to the magistrate on duty at the APC. Still at this time, neither the MCSO personnel in APC nor the magistrate were aware of a writ providing hold-and-return conditions for Mr. or Mrs. Martinez. The magistrate issued release orders with unsecured bonds for both individuals and provided them with a court date of Monday, September 9, for their Initial Appearance on the accessory after the fact charges. MCSO then released the individuals in compliance with the magistrate's orders for release.

When MCSO subsequently learned of the writs late Friday afternoon, MCSO in coordination with local law enforcement partners set out to locate the Martinezes and take them back into custody. Efforts to locate the Martinezes over the weekend were unsuccessful, but when they came to court this afternoon for their Initial Appearances on the accessory after the fact charges, they were taken into custody and the court then secured the bonds on their accessory after the fact charges. When those local charges are resolved, with the writs now in place, the Martinezes will be returned to ICE custody in Georgia.

"When it was discovered that Mr. and Mrs. Martinez were released on Friday without knowledge of the writs that should have held them – MCSO and our local law enforcement partners went immediately into action to try to find them and take them back into custody," said Sheriff McFadden. "It was a stressful weekend, not knowing where the Martinezes were. But thankfully they appeared for court this afternoon and we were able to take them back into custody. We are also still investigating what took place regarding the Martinezes coming into the APC without writs, and we are committed to ensuring better communication with transport officers so that individuals with court-ordered detention holds are not erroneously released in the future."

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