



Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office

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MEDIA ALERT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office Announces Detention Center Lockdown Following an Increase in Positive COVID 19 Cases at Detention Center Central

(CHARLOTTE, NC) – Further to address the outbreak of COVID-19 among residents of Detention Center-Central (currently 107 residents in custody are positive with the virus), MCSO's contract healthcare provider Wellpath, Inc., in cooperation with the Mecklenburg County Health Department, began testing all staff and contractors working at the detention center earlier this week. In the first 72 hours of testing, MCSO identified more than 20 staff members who were unwittingly positive with the virus. In order to facilitate contact tracing as efficiently as possible while minimizing additional exposures and potential spread of the virus, the Detention Center has eliminated all visitation and movement of residents for at least the next 48 hours, keeping all residents in Respiratory Isolation while contact tracing takes place. State and Federal Court authorities have been made aware. No in-custody defendants will be transported for previously scheduled court appearances tomorrow.

Testing of all Detention Center staff will continue all day tomorrow and Saturday. Should additional staff be identified as positive the lockdown may need to continue into next week. Testing of residents continues as well, and though many of the residents who tested positive in the past few weeks are being released to general population as they are no longer contagious, the number of residents testing positive is still rising. Only two of the 107 active-positive residents at present require housing in the infirmary; the vast majority remain asymptomatic and those with any symptoms are mild.

"I remain grateful for and amazed by the commitment and dedication of the staff at the Detention Center, and of our incredible team of healthcare providers with Wellpath," Sheriff McFadden said. "These are challenging times for us all. Our residents and their families should know that we continue

to do all that we can to care for and protect those individuals entrusted to us. Perhaps the most difficult aspect of this horrible virus is that it can be spread so easily by individuals who have no idea that they themselves are sick.”

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