



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

Rodney M. Collins
Chief Deputy Sheriff

Telisa E. White
Chief of Detention

Jason R. Beebe
Chief Deputy Sheriff

MEDIA ADVISORY FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Dejah Gilliam, Public Information Manager

dejah.gilliam@mecklenburgcountync.gov

O: (980) 314-5170

M: (704) 564-3234

Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office Changes Use of Force Policy Removes the Usage of "Tear Gas"

(CHARLOTTE, NC) - The Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) is changing its Use of Force Policy and is removing the use of tear gas from its policy. The use of chemical irritants such as tear gas especially during times of civil unrest have been a standard for law enforcement as a less-than-lethal use of force option.

With tensions mounting between law enforcement and the communities they serve, MCSO thought that it was prudent to take another approach in response to the pain, frustration and national outcry against police brutality.

After careful consideration Sheriff McFadden has decided to take tear gas out of the arsenal of the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff McFadden says; *"I would rather have meaningful conversations and engagement that build relationships and bonds with the community so that tear gas never has to be used. Throughout the past two weeks I've heard the cries of the community and during the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, protecting our citizens is vital."*

MCSO will continue to focus on purposeful engagement which is one of the key law enforcement strategies of the 21st Century Policing Model. *"Trust and legitimacy grow from positive interactions based on more than just enforcement interactions."* As Pillar Two: Policy and Oversight states in *The President's Task Force On 21st Century Policing* – *"Citizens have a constitutional right to freedom of expression, including the right to peacefully demonstrate."*

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