

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Date: April 23, 2025

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In the wake of recent events in the Albemarle County courthouse, I would like to let you know that the Albemarle County Sheriff's Office is committed to protecting the citizens of Albemarle County and building communities of trust with all individuals we serve.

As Sheriff of Albemarle County, it is my responsibility to provide courthouse and courtroom security. There have been a lot of questions being asked about the incident that occurred in the courthouse April 22, 2025, which was reported with a video by The Daily Progress. The three plain clothes federal agents identified themselves with their badges and federal credentials with the bailiff before proceeding through the screening area. When the agents were presenting their identification and credential none of the agents were wearing any face coverings. The agents informed the bailiffs at that time that they were there to detain two individuals who had court cases in the Albemarle County General District Court. The federal agents showed the bailiff their paperwork and photographs of the individuals they were looking for and waited outside the courtroom until the conclusion of each case. The first individual was detained and escorted out of the building without incident and the agents proceeded to wait for the second individual. During the time between the two individual cases a small group had gathered and began videoing the federal agents. When the federal agents became the subject of individual recording them, one of the agents put on a hood to cover his face. After the conclusion of the second individuals court hearing, he was detained by federal authorities and escorted out of the building.

I want to be clear to the citizens of Albemarle County that the safety and security of the citizens and its courts are the top priority of our office. At no time was this a raid of the courthouse. These individuals were identified by the federal agents and taken into custody with paperwork in hand for them. Which would be the same practice whether it be Albemarle or Charlottesville police, state agencies or federal agencies.

The Albemarle County court complex is a public building and as such, the only individuals who can prohibit entry would be the Judges therein.

The Albemarle County Sheriff's Office does not have legal authority to enforce federal immigration. Immigration enforcement falls within the jurisdiction of federal agencies like U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The Albemarle County Sheriff's Office does not have any contact with federal agencies regarding any individuals who have court cases. Any questions or concerns about civil immigration enforcement activities in or around courthouses should be forwarded to the Department of Homeland security and the U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agencies.

Respectfully,

Chan R. Bryant

Sheriff, Albemarle County