

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ALABAMA
SOUTHERN DIVISION**

TERRY SIAFA BAILEY and
BRANDON PARKER TATUM,

Plaintiffs,

v.

EMANUEL NAMAN DOTCH, II;
TERRANCE J. PALMORE;
RYAN SPENCER
PHILLIPS; OFFICER
R. JONES; OFFICER ROBISON;
WALTER KNIGHT; and AARON
TUCKER, each in his individual
capacity; and THE CITY OF
PRICHARD, ALABAMA,

Defendants.

CIVIL ACTION

FILE NO. _____

Jury Trial Demanded

COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES

On the evening of November 15, 2025, Terry Bailey and Brandon Tatum were sitting in a parked car on South Wilson Avenue in Prichard, Alabama, waiting on a meeting. Mr. Bailey is an Atlanta attorney whose client had arranged a site visit to a business that the client was going to buy. Neither Mr. Bailey nor Mr. Tatum knew, however, that the meeting was never going to happen in the first place. As the men waited, several Prichard Police Department (“PPD”) patrol cars pulled up and activated their lights.

An officer walked to the driver's window and told Mr. Tatum that the car was supposed to be parked straighter in the lines. Roughly half an hour later, over both men's objection and without a warrant, officers searched the car and found a bag of methamphetamine and fentanyl in the back seat. Both men were arrested and charged with trafficking, which on these amounts can carry a mandatory sentence of life in prison.

The problem – the drugs had been planted, and the meeting itself had been a lure. Unbeknownst to Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum, a PPD officer named Emanuel Naman Dotch, II arranged the stop on behalf of private parties who wanted Mr. Bailey out of their way. Dotch ordered the officers on the scene to illegally stop and search the car, and Dotch conspired to have the drugs planted in the car. After reviewing the body-worn camera footage, the Mobile County District Attorney's Office dismissed all charges against Plaintiffs due to clear civil rights violations.

Since then, a federal grand jury has returned an indictment against Dotch for his conduct at issue in this case, which includes civil rights violations, bribery, and evidence tampering. A grand jury has also recommended abolishing the PPD entirely, after several officers and its chief were arrested in a corruption scandal.

Plaintiffs bring this action against four groups of Defendants: (1) Defendant Dotch, the PPD officer who conspired with others, including

private parties, to plant fentanyl and methamphetamine in Plaintiffs' vehicle and then directed the illegal stop and search that was designed to find it; (2) Defendants Terrance J. Palmore, Ryan Spencer Phillips, Officer R. Jones, and Officer Robison (collectively, the "On-Scene Defendants"), who are the PPD officers who carried out the illegal stop and search built on fabricated probable cause; (3) Chief of Police Walter Knight and Major Aaron Tucker, who were responsible for hiring, training, supervision, and retention of PPD officers and failed in those duties; and (4) the City of Prichard, whose policies and customs directly caused the constitutional violations and harms suffered by Plaintiffs.

Parties, Jurisdiction, and Venue

1. Plaintiff Terry Siafa Bailey is a natural person and citizen of the United States of America, residing in Georgia, and is of full age.
2. Plaintiff Brandon Parker Tatum is a natural person and citizen of the United States of America, residing in Georgia, and is of full age.
3. Defendant Emanuel Naman Dotch, II is an individual who was, at all times relevant to the allegations in this Complaint, an employee of the PPD, acting under color of law. Defendant Dotch is sued in his individual capacity.
4. Defendant Terrance J. Palmore is an individual who was, at all times relevant to the allegations in this Complaint, an employee of the PPD,

acting under color of law. Defendant Palmore is sued in his individual capacity.

5. Defendant Ryan Spencer Phillips is an individual who was, at all times relevant to the allegations in this Complaint, an employee of the PPD, acting under color of law. Defendant Phillips is sued in his individual capacity.
6. Defendant R. Jones is an individual who was, at all times relevant to the allegations in this Complaint, an employee of the PPD, acting under color of law. Defendant Jones is identified in the PPD's November 15, 2025 incident report and associated records solely as "Officer R. Jones." Defendant R. Jones is sued in his individual capacity.
7. Defendant Robison is an individual who was, at all times relevant to the allegations in this Complaint, an employee of the PPD, acting under color of law. Defendant Robison is identified in the PPD's November 15, 2025 incident report and associated records solely by surname as "Officer Robison." Defendant Robison is sued in his individual capacity.
8. Defendant Walter Knight is an individual who was, at all times relevant to the allegations in this Complaint, the Chief of Police of the

PPD, acting under color of law. Defendant Knight is sued in his individual capacity.

9. Defendant Aaron Tucker is an individual who was, at all times relevant to the allegations in this Complaint, a Major in the PPD, acting under color of law. Defendant Tucker is sued in his individual capacity.
10. Defendant City of Prichard, Alabama is a municipal corporation organized under the laws of the State of Alabama. The PPD is an agency of the City of Prichard, and Prichard police officers are agents and employees of the City. The City is responsible for the policies, customs, practices, training, supervision, and discipline of the PPD and its officers.
11. This action is brought pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983 and 1988 and the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution, as well as the laws of the State of Alabama. This Court has jurisdiction over the federal claims under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1343 and supplemental jurisdiction over the state law claims under 28 U.S.C. § 1367(a).
12. All the parties herein are subject to the personal jurisdiction of this Court. Venue is proper under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b) because the Defendants reside within the Southern District of Alabama and because the events giving rise to these claims occurred in Mobile

County, Alabama, within the Southern Division of the Southern District of Alabama.

13. Mr. Bailey presented a sworn ante litem notice of his claims to the City Clerk of the City of Prichard by certified mail sent May 12, 2026, and by hand delivery on May 15, 2026. Mr. Tatum presented a sworn ante litem notice by certified mail sent May 13, 2026, and by hand delivery on May 15, 2026. Each notice was received by the City Clerk within six months of the accrual of the claims described in it.¹

Background Facts

Terry Bailey and Brandon Tatum

14. Mr. Bailey is a lawyer. He has practiced law in Atlanta, Georgia for 15 years, and he has no criminal history of any kind.
15. Mr. Tatum works as a driver. He had driven Mr. Bailey to court appearances and other work obligations seven to ten times before this trip, which allowed Mr. Bailey to work during the drive.
16. On information and belief, private parties with a personal grievance against Mr. Bailey arranged to have him lured to Prichard on business, to have illegal drugs planted in his vehicle, and to have the vehicle unlawfully stopped and searched so that the drugs would be found and

¹Ala. Code §§ 11-47-23, 11-47-192. The notices and delivery receipts are attached as Exhibit A.

Mr. Bailey would be arrested on fabricated charges. Those private parties acted through Defendant Dotch and other PPD officers.

The Setup

17. In October of 2025, a man contacted Mr. Bailey about buying a club in Alabama and said he needed a lawyer to advise on the transaction (federal investigators identify him as the “client”).
18. Mr. Bailey met the client in Tucker, Georgia, on or about October 17, 2025, was paid a consultation fee, sent the client a receipt and an invoice, and agreed to travel to Alabama to look at possible locations. Nothing about the meeting suggested that anything was wrong.
19. On the morning of November 15, 2025, Mr. Bailey rented a new 2025 Jeep Grand Wagoneer from Avis. Mr. Tatum drove so that Mr. Bailey could work.
20. The night before, the client had asked Mr. Bailey to give a ride to an acquaintance, a man federal investigators identify as “L.L.” They picked L.L. up in the parking lot of a Target near Atlantic Station in Atlanta.
21. About an hour outside Mobile, L.L. said he could not find his wallet and asked to stop at a gas station in Fort Deposit, Alabama. While Mr. Bailey was inside and Mr. Tatum sat in the front seat on the phone, L.L. was alone in the back seat with his bags. On information and

belief, it was then that L.L. placed a bag containing illegal drugs behind Mr. Bailey's seat.

22. In Prichard, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum dropped L.L. off at a residence, then proceeded to the club the client was planning to purchase.
23. Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum parked on South Wilson Avenue in front of the club and waited for more than an hour, while the client texted that he was on his way and "pulling up in three minutes."
24. The vehicle was parked fully within the white lines, and Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum were fully within their rights to be parked there.

Defendant Dotch Arranges the Stop

25. As Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum waited, Defendant Dotch called Defendant Phillips, an on-duty PPD investigator, and told him to stop the vehicle. Defendant Dotch said there were narcotics and firearms inside the vehicle but would not say how he knew.
26. Defendant Phillips suspected that Defendant Dotch was attempting to coordinate an illegal stop and search; he later told federal investigators that he knew the stop "would be bad" and that he did everything he could to "stall."
27. When Defendant Phillips hesitated, Defendant Dotch called Defendant Palmore, who agreed to perform the illegal stop and search. Defendant Phillips heard Defendant Palmore on the radio and, despite his doubts,

responded to back him up. Defendants Jones and Robison also responded.

28. Phone records show that Defendant Dotch was in contact with Defendants Phillips and Palmore during the stop. A seven-minute, thirty-second call between Defendant Dotch and Defendant Palmore began at 6:01 p.m. Two minutes into the Palmore call, Defendant Dotch also called a Mobile-area drug dealer whom federal investigators have identified as his co-conspirator (“Conspirator-1”) and who, investigators believe, was feeding him information to relay to Defendant Palmore. Body-worn camera footage from the scene depicts Defendant Dotch directing the officers over the phone to fabricate probable cause to enter the vehicle.
29. Defendant Palmore’s unit and two other PPD units pulled up to the parked Jeep with their emergency lights activated and surrounded it. Defendant Palmore approached the driver’s window and told Mr. Tatum that the car was supposed to be “straighter in the lines.” That was false; body-worn camera footage shows a car parked well within the lines and parallel to the curb.
30. In Defendant Palmore’s incident report, he gives a different (and equally false) justification for the stop, writing that he stopped the car

“in reference to multiple suspicious vehicles that had been called in at that location.”

31. Defendant Palmore asked Mr. Tatum for identification and ran the vehicle with dispatch, which reported no alerts and no stolen status.
32. Mr. Bailey told Defendant Palmore that the car was a rental he had picked up that morning, that he was a lawyer, and that Mr. Tatum was his driver.
33. Rather than terminating the stop or issuing a citation, Defendant Palmore asked each man for consent to search the car. Each refused. Mr. Bailey asked whether they were being detained, and Defendant Palmore told them that they were.
34. Defendant Palmore then made the men wait for an extended amount of time while he tried, as Defendant Dotch had advised, to get a narcotics K-9 to run on the car, but none were available. Throughout, Defendant Palmore was on the phone with Defendant Dotch, taking instructions.
35. The On-Scene Defendants kept Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum on the side of South Wilson Avenue trying to manufacture a reason to search the car.

The Fabricated Odor and the Search

36. Defendant Palmore eventually approached the other Prichard officers standing near the vehicle and asked the group, “Did y’all smell the odor

of marijuana?” Defendant Phillips and a third officer answered honestly that they had not.

37. Defendant Palmore then turned and looked at the third officer. Defendant Phillips watched that exchange and understood what it meant, and he said, “Okay, I see.”
38. The officers went back to Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum and told them about the odor. Both men said they did not smoke marijuana and pointed out that the car was a rental picked up that morning.
39. Defendant Palmore then abandoned his own stated basis for the search, telling the men on camera that the smell “may be passing vehicles.” He ordered them out of the car anyway.
40. As Mr. Tatum stepped out, he told the officers he was carrying two handguns on his hip; Mr. Bailey told them he had a handgun in his bag. All three were lawfully possessed, Alabama being a permitless-carry state, though an officer told the men that Alabama required them to declare their firearms. This was not true.
41. Defendants Palmore, Phillips, Jones, and Robison then unlawfully searched the car and the bags inside it, including a bag containing Mr. Bailey’s work files, in which, according to the report, Defendant Robison found a sandwich-style Ziploc bag containing methamphetamine and fentanyl on a “further sweep.” Defendant

Phillips took custody of it. The On-Scene Defendants also seized all three handguns.

42. There was no marijuana in the vehicle; the report lists none, and none was found. The report nonetheless states that Defendant Palmore “detected the odor of marijuana coming from inside the vehicle” and that “based on the odor, both individuals were asked to step out so a probable-cause search could be conducted.” That statement was false, Defendant Palmore knew it, and a PPD supervisor approved the report.

The Arrest and Prosecution

43. Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum were taken to the Homeland Security Investigations building in Mobile, interrogated, and then arrested and taken to the Mobile County Metro Jail.
44. On November 19, 2025, on sworn complaints filed in the District Court of Mobile County, warrants issued and each man was charged with five offenses, including trafficking in illegal drugs (19 grams of a mixture containing fentanyl) and trafficking in methamphetamine (124 grams). The trafficking charges carried mandatory minimum sentences of ten and three years, plus five more years each because firearms were present; had the 19 grams been charged as fentanyl rather than a mixture, as the officers on the scene told the men it would be, the charge would have carried mandatory life imprisonment.

45. Mr. Bailey was held at Metro Jail for three days and Mr. Tatum for fourteen. By November 19, 2025, Mr. Bailey's mugshot had been published on a commercial mugshot website under the heading "TRAFFICKING FENTANYL." Neither man had committed the offenses for which they were arrested and charged, and they had not broken the law at all.
46. Under an investigative agreement with the City of Prichard, the Mobile County Sheriff's Office ("MCSO") obtained and reviewed the body-worn camera footage from the PPD officers at the scene and closed the investigation. The Mobile County District Attorney's Office declined to prosecute either man, citing an apparent civil rights violation in the search and seizure and the officers' apparent consultation with Defendant Dotch to manufacture probable cause that did not exist.
47. On December 3, 2025, the State moved to dismiss all charges against both men, and District Judge Deborah D. Tillman granted the motion the day it was filed.

Defendant Dotch

48. On June 16, 2026, Defendant Dotch was arrested on a federal criminal complaint and on June 24, 2026, a federal grand jury in this District indicted him for extortion, bribery, tampering with evidence, deprivation of rights under color of law, conspiracy against rights, and

related conspiracies. Count Two charges Dotch with conspiring, on November 15, 2025, to injure and oppress two victims in the exercise of their Fourth, Second, Fifth, and Fourteenth Amendment rights by carrying out an unlawful traffic stop of the vehicle they occupied, an unlawful seizure of their firearms, and their unlawful arrests. The two victims are Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum. The indictment and the sworn affidavit of the FBI agent supporting the criminal complaint are attached as Exhibit B. See United States v. Dotch, No. 1:26-cr-00112-KD (S.D. Ala.), ECF No. 18 (indictment); No. 1:26-mj-00200-MU (S.D. Ala.), ECF No. 1-1 (affidavit).

49. Defendant Dotch had a history of criminality. He left the Mobile Police Department in 2013 while under investigation for allegations of a similar nature, and the PPD hired him anyway.
50. Also, in May of 2021, at the request of a subject of a federal murder-for-hire investigation, Defendant Dotch retrieved surveillance video of a shooting and made it disappear; the PPD produced a bare incident report to the federal agents who asked for the file, and agents later found the missing recordings in Defendant Dotch's personal iCloud account.
51. In January of 2024, in a conversation secretly recorded by federal investigators, Defendant Dotch agreed to transport marijuana for

\$2,500 per trip and explained that, in his experience, “seven times out of ten, a police officer will lie about smelling weed in a vehicle in order to search the vehicle.”

52. In May of 2026, he and another PPD officer took \$1,000 in cash to release two men they had detained outside a Prichard bar. His extortion conspiracy, according to the indictment, ran from at least 2020 until his arrest, and through all of it the City of Prichard kept him on the street, in uniform, with a badge, a gun, and the power to stop and arrest people.

The Prichard Police Department

53. Defendant Dotch did not act alone or in a vacuum. The PPD that hired him, and that kept him on the street through November 15, 2025, was a department without functioning supervision, and everyone responsible for it knew it before this incident.
54. In April of 2021, a PPD officer was arrested for computer tampering and ethics violations for misusing a law enforcement database.
55. In September of 2024, a PPD detective was arrested for perjury for lying to the Mobile County District Attorney’s Office in a murder investigation that was dismissed.
56. In August of 2025, a PPD officer kept an arrestee’s phone and sent compromising photographs from it to the arrestee’s wife.

57. The MCSO had already assumed responsibility for major narcotics investigations in Prichard under an agreement with the City because the PPD lacked the capacity to conduct them.
58. Mobile County Sheriff Paul Burch (“Sheriff Burch”) told Mayor Carletta Davis, before and after she took office in November of 2025, that there was a problem inside the PPD; she has since admitted that she chose not to act on it and instead gave the department “a clean slate.”
59. PPD incidents after Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum’s arrests confirm the rampant issues inside the PPD.
60. In January of 2026, Defendant Phillips took a handgun from a crash scene he was working; he pleaded guilty in May of 2026 to possession of a stolen firearm.
61. On June 16, 2026, the MCSO took over law enforcement in Prichard and found a department in complete disarray: 2,956 pieces of evidence stored outside the evidence room, more than a thousand items with no case number, 247 sexual assault kits, 148 of them never tested, “evidence piled on top of evidence, some labeled, some not labeled,” buckets of unlabeled handguns, and a long gun on the floor next to a toilet in an old jail cell.² Sheriff Burch said that “words can’t describe

²NBC 15, “Mobile Co. Sheriff says Prichard PD evidence room ‘most disorganized’ he’s ever seen” (June 17, 2026) (available at

how bad that evidence room is”;³ Mobile County District Attorney Keith Blackwood (“D.A. Blackwood”) called the conditions “appalling.”⁴

62. In July of 2026, PPD officer Jihad Hasan Irby was charged with extortion and bribery arising from the same bribe Defendant Dotch took in May of 2026. Officer Irby knew L.L., the man who planted the drugs in Mr. Bailey’s vehicle; in June of 2025 he publicly tagged L.L. in a social media post.
63. On July 22, 2026, a special Mobile County grand jury, convened solely to investigate the PPD, indicted Defendant Knight, the Chief of Police, and Defendant Tucker, a Major, for using their official positions for personal gain and second-degree theft by deception; both were arrested

<https://myNBC15.com/news/local/mobile-co-sheriff-says-prichard-pd-evidence-room-most-disorganized-hes-seen>); NBC 15, “Mobile Co. Sheriff’s Office begins comprehensive inventory of Prichard PD evidence room” (June 29, 2026) (available at <https://myNBC15.com/news/local/mobile-co-sheriffs-office-begins-comprehensive-inventory-of-prichard-pd-evidence-room>); NBC 15, “New charges, rape kits, and hundreds of cases,” (July 10, 2026) (available at <https://myNBC15.com/news/local/new-charges-rape-kits-and-hundreds-of-cases-inside-the-prichard-investigation>).

³News 5 WKRG, “Mobile County Sheriff says Prichard PD takeover is running up expensive tab,” (June 23, 2026) (available at <https://www.wkrg.com/mobile-county/mobile-county-sheriff-says-prichard-pd-takeover-is-running-up-expensive-tab/>).

⁴NBC 15, “Sheriff’s office launches evidence audit at Prichard PD after ‘appalling’ findings” (June 30, 2026) (available at <https://myNBC15.com/news/local/sheriffs-office-launches-evidence-audit-at-prichard-pd-after-appalling-findings>).

that day, Defendant Knight resigned two days later, and a PPD Captain has since been arrested on similar charges.

64. The same grand jury recommended that the City remove Defendant Knight, abolish the PPD, and rebuild it from scratch under nationally recognized accreditation standards. D.A. Blackwood put it this way: “Really, it’s a cultural rot that was going on at the Prichard Police Department. Its failure to supervise, its failure to follow guidelines, policies, regulations.”⁵

Plaintiffs’ Injuries

65. Defendants’ conduct individually and collectively violated Plaintiffs’ rights under the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments. As a direct, proximate result, Plaintiffs were wrongfully detained, searched, arrested, held, and prosecuted, and they suffered invasion of privacy, loss of liberty, emotional distress and reputational harm, and faced the possibility of decades, and potentially life, in prison before the true facts came to light.
66. Mr. Bailey spent three days in the Mobile County Metro Jail and Mr. Tatum spent fourteen. Mr. Bailey is a practicing lawyer whose

⁵ Fox 10 News, “Cultural rot’ – grand jury recommends abolishing, rebuilding Prichard Police Department” (July 22, 2026) (available at <https://www.fox10tv.com/2026/07/22/cultural-rot-grand-jury-recommends-abolishing-rebuilding-prichard-police-department/>).

mugshot, captioned “TRAFFICKING FENTANYL,” was published on the internet within days of his arrest; he lost work and clients, and the arrest has been used against his wife in custody litigation in Georgia. Mr. Tatum, who drives for a living, lost two weeks of income and more.

Count I

42 U.S.C. § 1983 Unlawful Stop and Prolonged Detention (Defendant Dotch and the On-Scene Defendants)

67. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.
68. On November 15, 2025, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum were sitting in a lawfully parked car on a public street, committing no offense. The On-Scene Defendants surrounded the car with several marked police vehicles with their emergency lights activated, and Defendant Palmore told the men they were being detained. No reasonable person in that position would have felt free to leave, and Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum submitted to the officers’ show of authority.
69. No Defendant had reasonable suspicion that Mr. Bailey or Mr. Tatum had committed, was committing, or was about to commit any offense; both justifications Defendant Palmore offered were false. Whatever purpose he claimed was fully resolved when dispatch cleared the rental car, yet the On-Scene Defendants prolonged the detention well beyond

that point, without consent and without any lawful basis, while they worked to manufacture a reason to search.

70. Each of the On-Scene Defendants personally participated in the seizure. Defendant Palmore initiated and announced it. Defendants Phillips, Jones, and Robison each responded to the scene, positioned themselves and their vehicles around Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum, and held the men on the roadside while Defendant Palmore looked for a reason to search, knowing that dispatch had cleared the vehicle, that both men had refused consent, and that no K-9 was coming.
71. Defendant Dotch caused the seizure: he directed Defendant Phillips to stop the car, and when Defendant Phillips stalled, he directed Defendant Palmore to do it and directed the stop and search by phone while it was underway.
72. It is clearly established that an officer may not seize a person without reasonable suspicion of criminal activity, that an officer may not extend a detention beyond the time reasonably required to address the reason for it, and that an officer who participates in a seizure he knows to be unlawful is liable for it even if he did not initiate it.⁶ As a direct and

⁶Terry v. Ohio, 392 U.S. 1 (1968); Rodriguez v. United States, 575 U.S. 348 (2015); Wilkerson v. Seymour, 736 F.3d 974, 980 (11th Cir. 2013); Jones v. Cannon, 174 F.3d 1271, 1283-84 (11th Cir. 1999).

proximate result, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum suffered the invasion of their persons, their vehicle, and their private effects, along with humiliation, indignity, emotional distress, reputational harm, loss of liberty, and economic damages.

Count II

42 U.S.C. § 1983 Warrantless Search and Seizure of Property (Defendant Dotch and the On-Scene Defendants)

73. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.
74. Defendants had no warrant and no consent to search the vehicle. The only basis they claimed was the odor of marijuana, and there was none. Defendants manufactured it. Well into the stop, Defendant Palmore polled the other officers, Defendant Phillips and a third officer said they had smelled nothing, Defendant Palmore looked at the third officer, and Defendant Phillips responded, “Okay, I see.” Each Defendant knew, when the search began, that there was no odor of marijuana and no basis for the search, and Defendant Dotch had instructed the On-Scene Defendants to fabricate one.
75. Defendants Palmore, Phillips, Jones, and Robison each personally searched the car and the bags inside it, including the bag containing Mr. Bailey’s work files. The On-Scene Defendants also seized Mr. Tatum’s two lawfully possessed handguns and Mr. Bailey’s lawfully

possessed handgun without a warrant and without probable cause to believe that any of them was contraband or evidence of a crime.

76. It is clearly established that officers may not search a vehicle without a warrant, consent, or actual probable cause, and that officers may not manufacture the probable cause on which they rely.⁷ As a direct and proximate result, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum suffered the invasion of their persons, their vehicle, and their private effects, along with humiliation, indignity, emotional distress, reputational harm, loss of liberty, and economic damages.

Count III

42 U.S.C. § 1983 Failure to Intervene

(The On-Scene Defendants, in the alternative)

77. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.
78. In the alternative, to the extent any On-Scene Defendant contends that he did not personally participate in the unlawful detention or search, he is liable for failing to intervene. Each was present for the entire encounter, knew the vehicle was lawfully parked, knew both men had refused consent, and knew no one had smelled marijuana. Each had a realistic opportunity to stop the unlawful stop, detention, and search

⁷See, e.g., Franks v. Delaware, 438 U.S. 154 (1978); Kelly v. Curtis, 21 F.3d 1544, 1554 (11th Cir. 1994).

and did nothing. It is clearly established that an officer who observes a constitutional violation by another officer, and who has the ability and opportunity to prevent it, has a duty to intervene.⁸ As a direct and proximate result, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum suffered the injuries described above.

Count IV
42 U.S.C. § 1983 False Arrest
 (Defendant Dotch)

79. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.
80. On November 15, 2025, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum were arrested without a warrant and held in custody before any legal process issued against them. Defendant Dotch caused those arrests: he arranged the stop and directed the search knowing that the planted drugs would be found. Manufactured probable cause is not probable cause, and an officer who causes an arrest he knows to rest on evidence he knows to be fabricated is liable for the arrest whether or not he placed the handcuffs.⁹ Defendant Dotch acted with malice and without probable

⁸See, e.g., Priester v. City of Riviera Beach, 208 F.3d 919, 924 (11th Cir. 2000); Skrtich v. Thornton, 280 F.3d 1295, 1301 (11th Cir. 2002); Jones v. Cannon, 174 F.3d at 1283-84.

⁹Jordan v. Mosley, 487 F.3d 1350, 1354 (11th Cir. 2007); Kelly v. Curtis, 21 F.3d at 1554; Black v. Wigington, 811 F.3d 1259, 1267 (11th Cir. 2016).

cause. As a direct and proximate result, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum suffered a loss of liberty, humiliation, emotional distress, reputational harm, and economic damages.

Count V

**42 U.S.C. § 1983 Fabrication of Evidence and Malicious Prosecution
(Defendant Dotch)**

81. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.
82. Defendant Dotch arranged the stop, stayed on the phone with the officers throughout it, and directed them to fabricate a basis to search the car, all in coordination with the client, L.L., and Conspirator-1, who conspired to have narcotics planted for the purpose of having Mr. Bailey arrested. Manufactured probable cause will not support an arrest or a prosecution.
83. Legal process issued against Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum when sworn complaints were filed and arrest warrants issued in the District Court of Mobile County charging each man with five offenses, and each was seized pursuant to that process: held in the Mobile County Metro Jail following initial appearance, released only on bond, and subject to bond conditions until December 3, 2025. Each charge was constitutionally infirm as to each man, because the only evidence supporting any of

them was the planted bag, which Defendant Dotch knew had been planted.

84. Defendant Dotch acted with malice and without probable cause. The proceedings terminated in Plaintiffs' favor on December 3, 2025, when the State dismissed every charge and the court granted the dismissal the same day. By fabricating the basis for the search and causing constitutionally infirm legal process to issue, Defendant Dotch violated Plaintiffs' rights under the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments.¹⁰ As a direct and proximate result, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum suffered a loss of liberty, humiliation, emotional distress, reputational harm, and economic damages.

Count VI

42 U.S.C. § 1983 Conspiracy

(Defendant Dotch and the On-Scene Defendants)

85. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.
86. Defendant Dotch and the On-Scene Defendants reached an understanding, among themselves and with private persons who were not employees of the City of Prichard, to deprive Mr. Bailey and Mr.

¹⁰See Williams v. Aguirre, 965 F.3d 1147, 1157, 1165 (11th Cir. 2020); Luke v. Gulley, 50 F.4th 90, 94-96 (11th Cir. 2022); Thompson v. Clark, 596 U.S. 36 (2022); Chiaverini v. City of Napoleon, 602 U.S. 556 (2024).

Tatum of their rights under the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments.

The private members of the conspiracy included the client, L.L., and Conspirator-1, none of whom was employed by the City of Prichard.¹¹

87. The agreement began before Plaintiffs left Atlanta; federal investigators have concluded from Defendant Dotch's phone records that the stop and the seizure of the planted bag were planned before Plaintiffs left with L.L. It reached the PPD when Defendant Dotch told Defendant Phillips to stop a vehicle he said contained drugs that he knew had been planted there, and when Defendant Phillips stalled, Defendant Dotch called Defendant Palmore, who initiated the stop, and the other On-Scene Defendants joined in. The rest of the agreement was formed on the street, on camera, when Defendant Phillips answered "Okay, I see" and every officer proceeded as if an odor had been detected. They all knew it was a lie.
88. The overt acts in furtherance of the conspiracy include the planting of the drugs, the phone calls among Defendant Dotch, Conspirator-1, and Defendants Phillips and Palmore, the stop, the prolonged detention, the fabricated odor, the search, the seizure of the firearms, the arrests, and Defendant Palmore's false incident report. The conspiracy caused

¹¹Dennis v. Sparks, 449 U.S. 24, 27-28 (1980).

actual constitutional injury to Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum. As a direct and proximate result, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum suffered the invasion of their persons, their vehicle, and their private effects, along with humiliation, indignity, emotional distress, reputational harm, loss of liberty, and economic damages.

Count VII
42 U.S.C. § 1983 Supervisory Liability
(Defendant Knight and Defendant Tucker)

89. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.
90. Defendant Knight served for nine years as Chief of Police of the PPD, and Defendant Tucker was a Major, an executive command-staff member positioned directly beneath the Chief of Police. Together they were responsible for the training, supervision, and discipline of Prichard police officers, including Defendant Dotch and each of the On-Scene Defendants.
91. By November 15, 2025, the PPD had a cultural rot: no supervision of officers, and leadership that violated department policies and the law and led others, by example and by instruction, to do the same. Before that date, Defendants Knight and Tucker knew, or the abuses were so obvious, flagrant, rampant, and of such continued duration that they

must have known, that Defendant Dotch had come to the PPD under investigation for misconduct of the same kind; that PPD officers were extorting people, selling releases from arrest, and fabricating pretexts to justify searches; that PPD officers had been arrested in 2021, 2024, and 2025 for tampering, perjury, and misuse of an arrestee's phone; that the evidence room was unsecured and open to theft and tampering; and that the MCSO had taken over major investigations because the PPD could not be trusted with them.

92. That history of widespread abuse put Defendants Knight and Tucker on notice of the need to train, supervise, and discipline their officers. They took no corrective action: they did not discipline Defendant Dotch, did not review body-worn camera footage of stops and searches, did not audit the evidence room, and approved, through the supervisors who reported to them, reports like Defendant Palmore's that recited pretexts no one on the scene believed.
93. Defendants Knight and Tucker were themselves abusing their offices for private gain, and they led by that example. Their failures were causally connected to the violations of Plaintiffs' constitutional rights on November 15, 2025. As a direct and proximate result, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum suffered the invasion of their persons, their vehicle, and

their private effects, along with humiliation, indignity, emotional distress, reputational harm, loss of liberty, and economic damages.

Count VIII
42 U.S.C. § 1983 Municipal Liability
(City of Prichard, Alabama)

94. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.
95. The City of Prichard is liable under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 where a municipal policy or custom is the moving force behind a constitutional violation.¹² At least four policies and customs of the City of Prichard were the moving force behind the violations of Plaintiffs' rights:
- a. The retention, without discipline, of officers who were known to be lying to justify unlawful stops and searches, abusing their offices for private gain, and losing, removing, destroying, planting, and otherwise tampering with evidence;
 - b. Lying to justify unlawful stops and searches;
 - c. The use of police authority for private gain, including extortion, bribery, and the sale of releases from arrest; and
 - d. The reckless handling of evidence that allowed for the rampant loss, removal, destruction, planting, and other tampering with

¹²Monell v. Department of Social Services, 436 U.S. 658 (1978).

evidence, and that reflected the absence of any supervision within the PPD.

96. Defendant Knight, as Chief of Police, was the final policymaker for the City of Prichard with respect to the law enforcement operations of the PPD, including its officers' stop, search, and arrest practices and their supervision and discipline. In the alternative, the Mayor and City Council were the final policymakers; they had actual notice of each of these customs before November 15, 2025, through Sheriff Burch's warnings, the public arrests of PPD officers in 2021, 2024, and 2025, and the MCSO's assumption of major investigations in Prichard, and they chose to do nothing.
97. Every individual Defendant in this case was still employed by the PPD on November 15, 2025, despite years of rampant misconduct, and the City kept Defendant Dotch in uniform for seven more months after that. If there had been any accountability within the PPD before this incident, Defendant Dotch would not have had a badge to sell, and the On-Scene Defendants would not have assumed that a fabricated odor of marijuana would go unquestioned.
98. Defendant Dotch's recorded statement that seven in ten times an officer will lie about smelling marijuana to search a vehicle was his experience as a PPD officer, and it demonstrates a custom of Prichard

through repeated acts, so rampant that Defendant Knight knew of it and permitted it by never disciplining it. It was the moving force here: as soon as Defendant Palmore made clear that he intended to lie, every officer on scene went along, and a supervisor approved the report that memorialized it.

99. Five PPD officers, including the Chief of Police himself, Defendant Tucker, and Defendant Dotch, have so far been charged for the use of police authority for private gain. It was the moving force here: Defendant Dotch was selling his police authority when he followed a non-officer co-conspirator's instructions and directed the On-Scene Defendants to stop and search the vehicle.
100. The Mobile County Sheriff found the evidence room the most disorganized he had ever seen, and Defendants Dotch and Phillips have both been charged criminally in connection with the concealment or theft of evidence. The reckless handling of evidence was the moving force here: a department in which no one could say what evidence it had or who had touched it was a department in which Defendant Dotch could arrange for evidence to appear in a car with no fear that anyone would ask where it came from.
101. The City of Prichard is also liable under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 where the inadequacy of its training amounts to deliberate indifference to the

rights of persons with whom the police come into contact.¹³ Here, officers were trained by instruction and example to abuse police power and to disregard the rights of the people they encountered; the need for training on the constitutional limits of detentions and warrantless searches was obvious before November 15, 2025; and not one of the On-Scene Defendants challenged Defendant Palmore's obvious lie, because they were trained to go along with it.

102. The City has since ratified the conduct at issue: after the MCSO reviewed the footage in November 2025 and declined to pursue the case because of the officers' apparent civil rights violation, the City did not discipline, retrain, or even question any of the On-Scene Defendants or Defendant Dotch, and Defendant Dotch remained on the street for seven more months. These policies and customs and the inadequacy of the PPD's training, individually and together, were the moving force behind the unlawful stop, detention, search, and arrests of Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum. As a direct and proximate result, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum suffered the invasion of their persons, their vehicle, and their private effects, along with humiliation, indignity, emotional distress, reputational harm, loss of liberty, and economic damages.

¹³City of Canton v. Harris, 489 U.S. 378 (1989).

Count IX
Invasion of Privacy
(The On-Scene Defendants)

103. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.

104. Alabama recognizes a claim for the wrongful intrusion into a person's private activities in a manner that would outrage or cause mental suffering, shame, or humiliation to a person of ordinary sensibilities.¹⁴

The On-Scene Defendants intruded on Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum by detaining them on a public street, ordering them out of their vehicle, searching it, and going through their bags and Mr. Bailey's work documents, without consent and without lawful authority, in public, in front of onlookers, on a justification they had invented minutes earlier. That intrusion would outrage and cause humiliation to a person of ordinary sensibilities.

105. The On-Scene Defendants acted willfully, maliciously, in bad faith, and beyond their authority; they knew there was no odor of marijuana because they had said so to one another moments before the search. They are not entitled to State-agent or discretionary-function

¹⁴Johnston v. Fuller, 706 So. 2d 700, 701-02 (Ala. 1997); Phillips v. Smalley Maintenance Services, Inc., 435 So. 2d 705, 708-11 (Ala. 1983).

immunity.¹⁵ The arrest, the days in custody, the criminal charges, and the costs of defending against them flowed directly and foreseeably from this intrusion, and Plaintiffs seek those consequential damages here.

Count X
Trespass to Chattels
(The On-Scene Defendants)

106. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.
107. The 2025 Jeep Grand Wagoneer was in Mr. Bailey's lawful possession under a rental agreement, and the bags, their contents, and the three handguns were the personal property of Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum. The On-Scene Defendants intentionally interfered with Plaintiffs' possession of that property by ordering them out of the vehicle, entering and searching it, opening and searching their bags, seizing their handguns, and causing the vehicle to be towed, with no warrant, no consent, and no lawful authority, and each of them knew it.
108. The On-Scene Defendants acted willfully, maliciously, in bad faith, and beyond their authority, and they are not entitled to State-agent or

¹⁵Ex parte Cranman, 792 So. 2d 392, 405 (Ala. 2000) (State agent not immune when he "acts willfully, maliciously, fraudulently, in bad faith, beyond his or her authority, or under a mistaken interpretation of the law").

discretionary-function immunity. The arrest, the days in custody, the criminal charges, and the costs of defending against them flowed directly and foreseeably from this trespass, and Plaintiffs seek those consequential damages here, together with the loss of use of their property and the value of any property not returned.

Count XI
False Imprisonment
(Defendant Dotch)

109. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.

110. False imprisonment consists of the unlawful detention of a person for any length of time that deprives him of his personal liberty.¹⁶

Defendant Dotch caused Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum to be detained on South Wilson Avenue, arrested, and held in the Mobile County Metro Jail for three and fourteen days respectively, with no lawful authority: the only probable cause for the detention was evidence he knew to be planted. He acted willfully, maliciously, in bad faith, and beyond his authority, and he is not entitled to State-agent immunity. As a direct and proximate result, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum suffered a loss of

¹⁶Ala. Code § 6-5-170.

liberty, humiliation, emotional distress, reputational harm, and economic damages.

Count XII
Malicious Prosecution
(Defendant Dotch)

111. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.
112. Defendant Dotch instituted and caused the prosecution of Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum by arranging their stop, directing the fabrication of probable cause, and causing the seizure of the planted drugs and the false report on which the charging decision rested.¹⁷ He acted with malice and without probable cause, knowing the narcotics had been planted and that there was no lawful basis for the stop or the search. The proceeding terminated in Plaintiffs' favor on December 3, 2025, when the State dismissed all charges and the court granted the dismissal the same day. Defendant Dotch acted willfully, maliciously, in bad faith, and beyond his authority, and he is not entitled to State-agent immunity. As a direct and proximate result, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum suffered a loss of liberty, humiliation, emotional distress,

¹⁷Delchamps, Inc. v. Bryant, 738 So. 2d 824, 831-32 (Ala. 1999).

reputational harm, and economic damages, including the costs of defending themselves against the charges.

Count XIII
Civil Conspiracy

(Defendant Dotch and the On-Scene Defendants)

113. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.
114. Defendant Dotch and the On-Scene Defendants combined and agreed, among themselves and with the client, L.L., and Conspirator-1, to accomplish an unlawful purpose, which was to detain, search, and arrest Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum without a lawful basis by inventing one, and each committed overt acts in furtherance of that agreement, as described above. The underlying wrongs supporting this claim are the invasion of privacy and trespass to chattels committed by the On-Scene Defendants and the false imprisonment and malicious prosecution committed by Defendant Dotch, alleged in the preceding Counts.¹⁸ These Defendants acted willfully, maliciously, in bad faith, and beyond their authority, and none of them is entitled to State-agent immunity. As a direct and proximate result, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum suffered a loss of liberty, humiliation, emotional distress, reputational

¹⁸See Callens v. Jefferson County Nursing Home, 769 So. 2d 273, 280 (Ala. 2000).

harm, and economic damages, including the costs of defending themselves against the charges.

Count XIV
Negligent Hiring, Training, Supervision, and Retention
(City of Prichard, Alabama)

115. Plaintiffs incorporate paragraphs 1 through 66 as though fully set forth herein.
116. A municipality is liable for injuries caused by the neglect, carelessness, or unskillfulness of its agents and officers acting in the line of duty.¹⁹ The City of Prichard was negligent in hiring Emanuel Dotch, who left the Mobile Police Department in 2013 while under investigation for allegations of the same nature as the conduct at issue here; in failing to train its officers on the constitutional requirements governing stops, detentions, and warrantless vehicle searches; in failing to supervise its officers, including by never reviewing the body-worn camera footage of their stops and searches; and in failing to maintain any functioning system for the inventory, storage, and chain of custody of evidence.
117. The City of Prichard was negligent in retaining Defendants Dotch and Phillips and the other officers involved in this incident after it knew or should have known that they were unfit to hold police authority. The

¹⁹Ala. Code § 11-47-190.

City's notice was not limited to its Chief of Police: the arrests of PPD officers in 2021, 2024, and 2025 were public, Sheriff Burch's warnings went to the Mayor, and the MCSO's assumption of major investigations in Prichard was a matter of agreement between the City and the County. Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum presented timely sworn ante litem notices of these claims to the City Clerk of Prichard, as alleged in paragraph 13. As a direct and proximate result of the City's negligence, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Tatum suffered the injuries described above.

Prayer for Relief

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs pray that this Court issue the following relief:

- a. That process and summons issue in accordance with the law;
- b. That the Court award Plaintiffs compensatory and general damages in an amount to be determined by the jury;
- c. That the Court award Plaintiffs punitive damages against the individual Defendants in an amount to be determined by the enlightened conscience of the jury;
- d. That the Court award costs of this action, including attorneys' fees, to Plaintiffs, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1988 and other applicable laws regarding such awards;
- e. That pre-judgment and post-judgment interest be awarded to Plaintiffs under federal statutes and case law;

- f. That the Court award Plaintiffs such other and further relief as it deems just and necessary; and
- g. That Plaintiffs be granted a trial by jury.

This 24th day of September, 2026.

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