

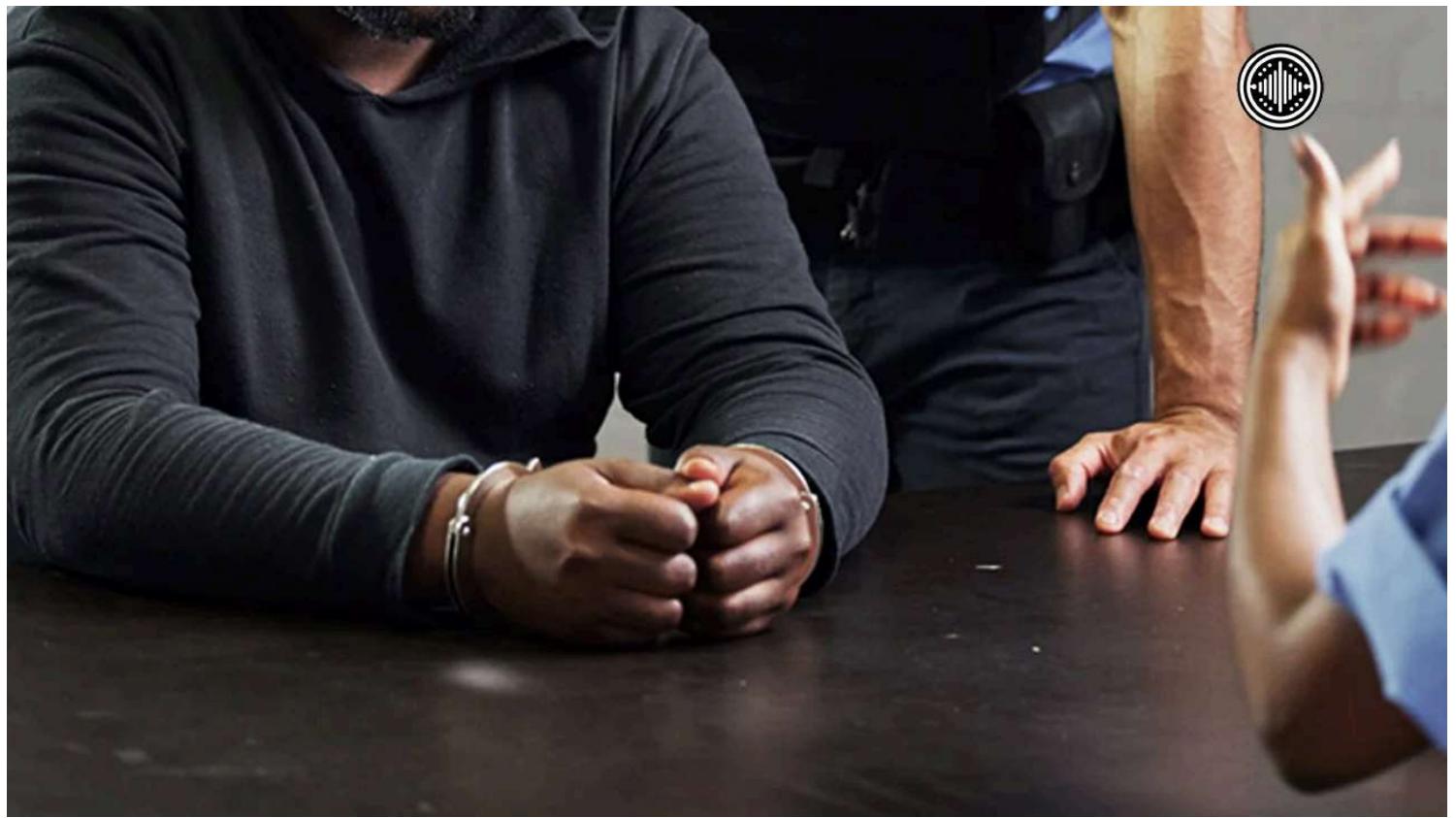
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Three Arrested as Shocking Downtown Cincinnati Mob Assault Sparks Federal Investigation

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— Categories: *Crime*



Three individuals have been taken into custody in connection with a brutal mob-style assault involving roughly 100 people in downtown Cincinnati. This incident has now drawn federal attention and sparked widespread outrage. The arrests follow the circulation of disturbing videos that captured the chaotic and violent scene as it unfolded on Elm and Fourth streets.

Montianez Merriweather, 34, of South Cummins, and DeKyra Vernon, 24, of Evanston, were booked into the Hamilton County Justice Center on Tuesday afternoon. Both face serious charges, including felonious assault and aggravated riot. Early Wednesday morning, Jermaine Matthews, 39, of East Price Hill, became the third suspect to be arrested. He was booked at 1:06 am on similar charges of aggravated riot and assault.

All three suspects are scheduled to appear in Hamilton County Municipal Court for arraignment. According to court records and criminal complaints, Merriweather was caught on video punching the victim while others stomped on the victim's head. Vernon was also seen striking the victim in the face with a closed fist moments before the victim lost consciousness.

While full court documentation for Matthews has yet to be made public, records confirm his prior criminal history. He is a convicted felon who pleaded guilty in 2009 to cocaine possession and trafficking charges. In both of his earlier arrests, Matthews reportedly attempted to swallow crack cocaine before being subdued with a Taser by law enforcement.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) confirmed Monday that it has launched a federal investigation into the attack. This comes after Republican Senator Bernie Moreno of Ohio announced he had secured federal involvement in the case. U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi acknowledged Moreno's efforts publicly, posting, "Thank you Senator Bernie Moreno for connecting the U.S. Department of Justice with the victim and for caring so much."

Violent Attack Captured

Cincinnati Police Chief Teresa Theetge described the incident as a "violent attack" involving approximately 100 individuals. The event began with a verbal dispute, although it remains unclear what triggered the confrontation. What followed was a violent eruption caught on video, widely shared on social media, and now under scrutiny by local and federal authorities.

In one video posted online, a man is seen being confronted by a crowd outside a downtown business. A punch is thrown, igniting a brawl. The victim is taken to the ground as others surround and repeatedly punch and kick him. Separate clips show more individuals being assaulted, including a woman who appears to intervene but is then punched in the face and knocked unconscious. Blood can be seen streaming from her mouth as she lies motionless on the ground.

One particularly shocking moment shows a woman in a cheetah-print outfit striking another woman from behind, followed by a man delivering a punch that sent the victim to the pavement. The violent content of the footage has only heightened public demand for justice and accountability.

Criticism has mounted over Merriweather's release prior to this incident. At the time of the assault, he was already out on bond for unrelated charges, including receiving stolen property, carrying a concealed weapon, and weapons under disability. According to the Cincinnati Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Queen City Lodge No. 69, Merriweather had been indicted on July 10, yet was granted a \$4,000 bond, only required to post 10 percent to be released.

Matthews' criminal past also adds another layer of concern, especially given his previous drug convictions and resistance to police efforts during past arrests. These details have reignited debates around bond policies and the release of repeat offenders back onto the streets.

Ohio Lieutenant Governor Jon Husted told *FOX19 NOW* that he personally reached out to some of the victims. "I called all three of them. There may have been more," he said. Husted also noted that the victims themselves are unsure of why they were targeted, saying, "I know maybe more facts will come out in this situation."