



CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Chatham County Police Department Citing Parents Who Allow Minors to Illegally Operate Motorized Cycles

Chatham County, GA (August 4, 2026) – The Chatham County Police Department is now citing parents who allow their children to operate motorized cycles in violation of state law.

“Like many communities, we have seen a huge increase in the number of young minors illegally operating motorized cycles with no regard for their own safety or traffic laws,” said Chatham County Police Chief Jeff Hadley. “After months of educating and encouraging parents to understand the laws surrounding these vehicles, we’re still inundated with complaints about young riders who endanger themselves and others on major roadways, and in neighborhoods and parks. We now feel we have no choice but ticket parents who are allowing this kind of behavior.”

The Chatham County Police Department recently cited three parents under Georgia Code O.C.G.A. § 40-5-123 after their minor children were found operating motorized cycles in Chatham County’s Eastside Precinct. The state law makes it illegal for anyone to allow an unlicensed person under the age of 18 to operate a motorized vehicle. The charge is a misdemeanor traffic citation, with fines and penalties determined by the courts.

“Any parent who purchases a motorized cycle for their child has the responsibility to make sure that their child can legally operate it under state law,” continued Hadley. “Unlicensed drivers in Georgia can only operate traditional bicycles or E-bicycles. Parents need to make sure that their child is not operating a motorized cycle that would be considered a moped or a dirt bike if they do not have a Georgia driver’s license.”

Under Georgia state law, E-bicycles must have fully operational pedals, a motor that disengages when brakes are applied, cannot go more than 20 mph, and cannot have more than 1000 watts of power. Cyclists must follow all traffic laws and anyone under the age of 16 is legally required to wear a helmet.

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