



CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Chatham County Police Department Chief Jeffrey M. Hadley Statement Regarding Recent Advertising Sales to Local Businesses

Chatham County, GA (June 24, 2021)— The Chatham County Police Department (CCPD) has identified the organization whose employees have approached numerous businesses in the area asking for advertising sales on behalf of the department.

The company, who we are not naming at this time, made contact with one of our employees in mid-June. The company stated in an email that it was working on an anti-drug use publication that we could distribute to community members, but would not require the use of any CCPD funds. The email also stated, “In order to properly represent your agency, we ask that you meet with your (company name) representative before any potential sponsors are contacted. At this meeting, you can discuss with your (company name) representative any special needs your community may have. We also ask that you provide your (company name) representative with an introduction letter from your agency to use when contacting potential sponsors.”

Our employee was advised that once the introduction letter was signed by me, a meeting between the company and CCPD could take place. This is where I made an error.

I signed the letter, and returned it to the employee to be sent to the company. It was our understanding, based on written communications with the company, that a meeting would take place **before** any community contact or engagement occurred. No such meeting ever took place, or was confirmed.

I’m confident that if we had gained a better understanding that area businesses would be asked to pay for an advertisement in this publication that we would have decided not to move forward with the project. However, the company had a letter with my signature and used that letter to solicit sales from many of our area businesses eager to support our law enforcement community.

When a concerned community member contacted our department late Tuesday afternoon, we went to great lengths to try to determine whether anyone had been authorized to solicit sales on

behalf of CCPD. Knowing we had not authorized any sales on our behalf, we alerted the public. It was only this morning, after we began receiving copies from citizens of the documents provided to them by representatives of the company, that we realized what had happened.

Within minutes, we called the publishing company representative and asked them to stop any sales representatives purporting to be acting on behalf of the Chatham County Police Department. The representative agreed.

As I stated to several media outlets yesterday, CCPD does not contract out third-party vendors to solicit on behalf of our department. While some law enforcement agencies may find this useful, it does not align with the community-oriented mission of the Chatham County Police Department. We have not, and will not, authorize this type of activity.

I want to make it clear that this publication is not going to print with the endorsement of the Chatham County Police Department. If you made payment to this company, please contact our Criminal Investigation Division office at 912-651-4701. We have asked the company to return all monies collected as a part of this project, and have made it clear that they are not authorized to use the Chatham County Police Department's name or logo in any publications.

The trust of our citizens is the most valuable asset we have at the Chatham County Police Department. I hope the mistake I made will serve as a reminder to each one of our citizens. Be vigilant, and never sign anything without a complete understanding of every detail.

I apologize for the concern and inconvenience that this caused anyone in our community. I work hard each day to earn your trust, and will work even harder as we move forward.

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