



## **CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT**

295 Police Memorial Drive, Savannah, GA, 31405

(912) 652-6920      FAX: (912) 652-6974

Chief Jeffrey M. Hadley

Assistant Chief Terry Shoop

Assistant Chief Julie Tolbert

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

**For Immediate Release**

**June 30, 2020**

### **Chatham County Police Department Alerting Residents About Rental Property Scam**

**Chatham County, GA (June 30, 2020)** – The Chatham County Police Department is alerting the public about rental property scams.

In these scams, victims think they are paying a deposit to rent a house and they make payments to the person posing as the property owner, landlord, or rental agent. In some cases the victim even signs a lease, only to find out later that the property doesn't belong to the person claiming to be the owner. The victims often pay with cash, wire transfers, or gift cards and are unable to get their money back once they realize they have been scammed. Scams like this are happening around the U.S., and have also happened in Chatham County.

There are things you can do to try to protect yourself from this type of fraud:

1. Work with a reputable real estate rental company to find your new home.
2. Insist on touring the property before you pay a security deposit and/or first month's rent, and ask to see the ID of the person giving you the tour.
3. Use a credit card to make payments, and pay through the rental company's website or portal. If you found the property on a listing site, use that site to make your payment.
4. Remember that being asked to pay with cash, a gift card, or wire transfer is a red flag and likely a strong signal that you're being scammed.

If you become the victim of a rental scam, contact law enforcement immediately to file a report.

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Betsy Nolen  
Public Information Officer  
Chatham County Police Department  
Cell: (912) 675-2949