



## **CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT**

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### *MEDIA ADVISORY*

**For Immediate Release**

**October 8, 2019**

### **Chatham County Police Department Instituting New Protocol to Assist Domestic Violence Victims**

**Chatham County, GA (October 8, 2019)** – The Chatham County Police Department is instituting new measures to help better serve domestic violence victims.

After several months of study and preparation, the department is implementing a protocol designed to help identify the most at-risk victims of domestic violence, and take immediate action to help ensure their safety.

When patrol officers are dispatched to a call involving domestic violence, they will ask the victim a series of questions known as a lethality assessment. The purpose of the lethality assessment is to help determine how at-risk the victim is for escalating, and potentially fatal, violence at the hands of the other party involved in the dispute. In cases where the risk is deemed great, victims will have the opportunity to be transported by a Chatham County Police officer to Safe Shelter where they will immediately receive assistance and a place to stay. The questions are based on a national model, and will be asked in a private setting so the victim feels free to speak truthfully without fear of further angering the other party involved in the dispute.

Training will be conducted for all patrol officers on when and how the questionnaire should be used, and what results require immediate action.

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