

## Deputy faces child sex charges

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JONESBORO — A Clayton County sheriff's deputy is being held without bond in Henry County Jail following his arrest this weekend on child sex charges.

Deputy Phillip Emanuel Richards, 42, of Arnold Place in Jonesboro was arrested Saturday and charged with sodomy and aggravated child molestation.

Clayton County police Officer Ron Coloma said officers responded about 1 a.m. Saturday to a home in the 10000 block of Wisteria Lane in Jonesboro.

The complainant told officers that the offender performed a sex act on a juvenile victim as she slept on the floor, said Coloma.

The juvenile then left the incident location through a bedroom window, Coloma said.

Coloma declined to release additional information, citing the ongoing investigation.

Richards made his first appearance in Clayton County Magistrate Court Monday afternoon. Bond was considered and denied and Richards was appointed a public defender. His next court date is April 8 for a preliminary hearing followed by an April 11 bond hearing.

However, Richards was identified by *Clayton News Daily* as the suspect through a search of public records.

Sheriff's spokeswoman Shegale Crute-Thurmond didn't respond immediately Monday to a request for reaction from Sheriff Victor Hill.

Richards' employment status is unknown.

Richards is being housed in Henry County Jail for his own safety, said jail officials.