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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General Moody Calls Meta CEO Zuckerberg to Florida to Testify About the Use of Meta Platforms in Florida Human Trafficking Cases



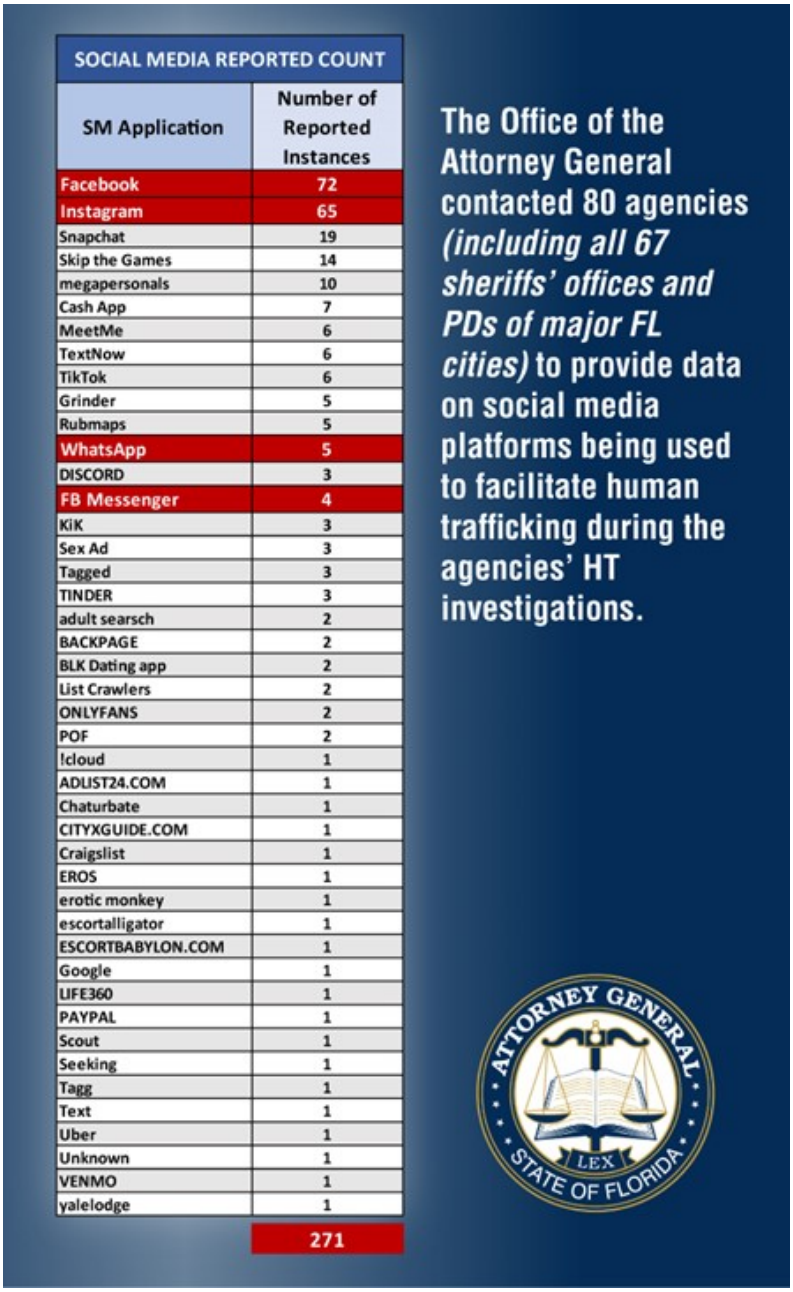
TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is inviting Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg to testify before the Statewide Council on Human Trafficking about the results of a concerning Florida human trafficking survey and other recent reports. To meet the statutory objective set by the state legislature, the council worked with law enforcement agencies to review instances in which social media may have been used to facilitate human trafficking. The findings show more than half of all reported instances of social media platform use in Florida trafficking cases, since 2019, involved Meta platforms—Facebook, Instagram, Messenger and WhatsApp.

Attorney General Moody shared the results of the statewide survey today during a virtual meeting of the council. Attorney General Moody also sent a letter inviting Zuckerberg to testify about what Meta plans to do to stop human traffickers from using its platforms to advance this horrific crime.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Before launching new products or wasting time preparing for a cage match that will likely never happen, Zuckerberg should be working to make Meta’s existing platforms safer for users and to prevent vulnerable people from being forced into

illicit sex work. The findings of our statewide survey and other reports make it clear that Meta platforms are the preferred social media applications for human traffickers looking to prey on vulnerable people. Zuckerberg needs to immediately turn his attention to this public safety threat and testify to our council about what Meta is doing to prevent its platforms from being used to assist, facilitate or support human trafficking."

Attorney General Moody and the council conducted a statewide study with Florida law enforcement agencies on documented instances since 2019 in which social media is used to facilitate human trafficking, trafficking operations or control victims. The survey went out to 80 law enforcement agencies, going to all 67 sheriffs' offices and police departments in major Florida cities. Results show that 146 of the 271 reported instances of social media platform use in human trafficking are attributable to Meta platforms—more than half of the reported instances involved.



According to the 2022 Federal Human Trafficking Report, Facebook was the top platform used in recruitment of human trafficking victims from 2019-2022. Facebook and Instagram combined to make up 60% of the top ten platforms included in the study.

To view the report, click here.

Additionally, major social media sites self-reported increases in suspected child sexual abuse materials, including child sex trafficking incidences. According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's 2022 CyberTipline Reports by Electronic Service Providers, more than 27 million, or 85%, of the incidents reported were from Meta platforms.

To view the report, click here.

The next council meeting is scheduled for Oct. 2. Attorney General Moody is requesting a response from Zuckerberg by Sept. 5.

To read the letter Attorney General Moody sent to Zuckerberg, click here.

Last year, Attorney General Moody released an Online Safety Toolkit designed to empower parents and guardians to teach their children about the online dangers connected to human trafficking. The toolkit helps parents create an effective safety plan for children's internet use. To view the Online Safety Toolkit, click here.

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