Jan 2, 2025

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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General Moody's Cyber Fraud Enforcement Unit Shuts Down Six Separate Cyber Schemes in Last Three Months

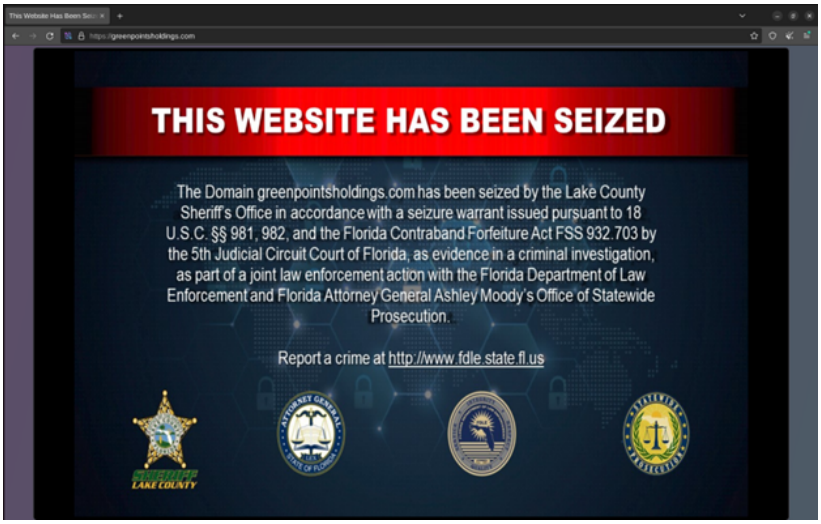


TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody's Cyber Fraud Enforcement Unit is announcing the shutdown of six separate cyber schemes in the last three months. Beginning in October 2024, Attorney General Moody's CFEU stopped seven cybercriminals in six different cases, ranging from grandparent scammers to identity thieves. Three of the schemes targeted Florida seniors. Over the course of 2024, Attorney General Moody's CFEU seized nearly $2.4 million in stolen cryptocurrency funds, returning more than $100,000 to victims — with more than $2.2 million still pending for returns.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Our Cyber Fraud Enforcement Unit works hard to track down cybercriminals seeking to exploit Floridians, especially our seniors. In just the past three months, we have taken down six major cybercrimes. As technology evolves, so do the tactics of scammers, but my office is constantly working to protect Floridians and hold these cybercriminals accountable."

In the last three months, Attorney General Moody's CFEU shut down six different cyber schemes. The following three cases targeted older Floridians:

- Tamer Elia, an employee of Fifth Third Bank, stole the personal identity and bank information of 13 Florida seniors and attempted to drain the victims' financial accounts. Fifth Third Bank caught Elia and worked with Attorney General Moody's CFEU to stop the fraud.
- Jose Batista implemented a grandparent scam by calling seniors pretending to be their grandchild in trouble and needing money. Batista claimed to have been in a car crash with a pregnant woman and needed bail money from the seniors — sending couriers to retrieve the money that Batista instructed the victims to withdraw.
- Attorney General Moody's CFEU shut down a fraudulent crypto-trading website that mimicked legitimate sites. The website falsely showed substantial financial gains for victims, convincing victims to deposit more money that ended up going directly to scammers' bank accounts.



Florida is one of the only states that executes domain seizures, as shown above.

The other three cases involved identity thieves:

- Jamie Bain stole the identity of a university student and, using that identity, took out a $12,000 loan and attempted to purchase a brand-new fishing boat.
- Zachary Jones stole a man's identity and purchased a car under the stolen identity. Jones then sold the car for cash and reported the car as stolen, hoping to double up on the money gained.
- Donald Johnson stole companies' information online and changed mailing addresses of Florida businesses to Johnson's own home address in order to receive all company checks, refunds and receipts. Johnson stole nearly $140,000 from Florida companies.

Attorney General Moody released several online resources for Floridians to learn how to avoid falling victim to cyber scams. Resources can be accessed in both English and Spanish by clicking here.

Report cyber scams to local law enforcement and to the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center at IC3.gov.

The CFEU is a team of criminal and civil attorneys in the Florida Attorney General's Office who work with Florida Department of Law Enforcement analysts and other law enforcement agencies to prosecute cybercrimes statewide.

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