

Apr 1, 2025

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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General James Uthmeier Secures the Return of Millions from Universal Property & Casualty Insurance Company to the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier secured the return of tens of millions of dollars from Universal Property & Casualty Insurance Company (UPCIC) to the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund (FHCF). The agreement resolves allegations that the company fraudulently submitted numerous ineligible claims for reimbursement in violation of the Florida False Claims Act. This is the first time the Office of the Attorney General has secured repayment related to an insurance fraud case.

“Thanks to the outstanding work of Associate Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Weilhammer, Director Liz Brady, and Assistant Attorney General Andrew Butler, our office secured the return of more than \$30 million to the state’s hurricane fund from fraudulent insurance submission allegations following Hurricane Irma,” said **Attorney General James Uthmeier**. “As Floridians, we know the impact that hurricanes can have on our state and how important recovery efforts are in a storm’s aftermath in helping residents start to rebuild. This office is committed to a healthy and stable insurance market for Florida homeowners, meaning insurance companies must play by the rules.”

The FHCF is a tax-exempt state trust fund administered by the State Board of Administration that serves a vital role in stabilizing the Florida insurance market when hurricanes cause widespread or catastrophic damage. FHCF provides reimbursements to residential property insurance companies for a portion of their payments to homeowners for hurricane-related property damage. In the event of widespread, major hurricanes, such as Hurricane Irma, FHCF provides a backstop to the losses faced by insurance carriers.

Following a whistleblower lawsuit filed in Leon County, the Office of the Attorney General launched its own investigation into UPCIC to ensure that the claims submitted by the company were, in fact, caused by Hurricane Irma. During the course of that investigation, numerous unrelated claims were identified in the submissions from UPCIC to the FHCF. As a result, the company agreed not to seek reimbursement for those claims, lowering the FHCF payout from Hurricane Irma to UPCIC by more than \$30 million. The company also agreed to pay more than \$4 million in fines and implement changes to its policies and procedures.

To view a copy of the agreement, click [here](#).

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