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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General James Uthmeier Announces Recovery of \$23,000 for Active Duty Service Member

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier announced the Office of Statewide Prosecution recovered \$23,000 for an active duty service member after he fell victim to a cryptocurrency scam.

"This recovery should be a warning to criminals: even a China-based scammer wasn't out of reach for our team," **said Attorney General James Uthmeier**. "Thanks to the diligent work of the Cyber Fraud Enforcement Unit and our law enforcement partners, we have recovered the hard-earned money of one of our nation's heroes."

The victim, a resident of Osceola County, was deployed overseas. He received an email from a scammer posing as Microsoft, alleging that his accounts had been compromised. The email stated the only way to protect his money was to transfer Bitcoin to the scammer immediately.

The incident was reported to the Osceola County Sheriff's Office Economic Crimes Unit, which worked collaboratively with a U.S. Secret Service analyst and the Office of the Attorney General Cyber Fraud Enforcement Unit (CFEU) to freeze access to the funds. The CFEU then secured a court order and recovered the funds for the victim.

No legitimate business, financial institution, or government will email, text, or message you on social media to ask for money—and they will never demand that you buy or pay with cryptocurrency. Don't pay anyone who contacts you unexpectedly and demands payment. Fraudsters are skilled at using emotional manipulation to trick people into acting against their best judgment. Scammers love to create urgency because it's a quick way to make victims panic and skip the logical steps they would usually take, like verification or consulting a professional or friend.

Any phone interaction with a bank or government entity should always be verified before providing any personal information.

If you believe you have been the victim of fraudulent activity, you may file a complaint at MyFloridaLegal.com or by calling 1-866-9-NO-SCAM.

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