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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General James Uthmeier Files Lawsuit Against Discord for Deceiving Florida Families and Exposing Children to Predators



Courtesy of the Office of the Attorney General

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier filed a lawsuit against Discord, alleging the popular online chat platform marketed itself to Florida families as safe for children while failing to verify users' ages, shield minors from strangers, or keep predators off the app.

"We've arrested more than 2,100 child predators in this state since I took office," **said Attorney General James Uthmeier**. "Again and again, their trail to our kids leads back to Discord. Discord told parents that safety is at the core of everything they do. That was false. It's time for this app to get serious about protecting our children or face serious consequences."

"Invisible predators are locating Florida's children online," **said Patti Rendon, District Four, Hillsborough County School Board**. "The Attorney General's office is ensuring that online platforms know they have a responsibility to keep our children safe. Attorney General Uthmeier and Hillsborough County Sheriff Chronister are critical partners in this mission."

“Online chat platforms are powerful tools that can connect, inform, and support people,” **said Joe Pepe, EdD, Florida Department of Health**. “Thanks to Attorney General Uthmeier’s leadership, we are ensuring these benefits are maximized while protecting users, especially young people, from preventable harms.”

Discord markets itself to children as “all fun & games” and tells parents that “safety is at the core of everything we do.” The platform has more than 200 million monthly users worldwide, sells paid Nitro subscriptions to Florida users, including children, and reported approximately 2.7 million monthly active U.S. users under the age of 18 as of February 2024.

Despite millions of vulnerable users, Discord has not required age verification. Adults can pose as children with nothing more than an email address and a birthday. For years, its default settings let strangers send children friend requests and messages, and Discord still does not scan all private chats for rule breaking.

In one Florida case, a 60-year-old St. Cloud man posed as a 14-year-old boy and contacted nearly 300 minors on Discord. He is now serving life in prison. A 19-year-old Highlands County man lured an 11-year-old Miami-Dade County girl from Roblox to Discord, then sexually assaulted and kidnapped her.

The lawsuit alleges Discord has violated the Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act and Florida’s law protecting children in online spaces (§ 501.1735). It also brings claims for negligence, negligent misrepresentation, and public nuisance.

Specifically, it alleges that Discord:

- Engaged in unfair, unconscionable, and deceptive acts or practices by promising safety and failing to deliver in violation of the Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act;
- Processed the personal information of Florida children with actual knowledge or willful disregard that it would lead to substantial harm or privacy risk for children in violation of § 501.1735, Fla. Stat;
- Breached its duty to exercise appropriate care when designing, marketing, selling, promoting, and/or distributing its platform;
- Negligently misrepresented that its application was safe, while knowing that it was not safe for Florida children; and
- Created a public nuisance through its unreasonable and unlawful conduct, which has caused public harm in Florida and continues to jeopardize the health and safety of Florida children.

Attorney General Uthmeier is asking the court to:

- Permanently bar Discord from the unfair, unconscionable, and deceptive practices alleged in the complaint, including operating without real age verification and collecting children’s data without parental consent;
- Impose civil penalties of up to $10,000 per willful violation of the Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act;

- Impose civil penalties of up to $50,000 per violation of Florida's law protecting children in online spaces (§ 501.1735), or up to $150,000 per violation where Discord had actual knowledge that a Florida child was under 18;
- Order Discord to give up money and property acquired from Florida consumers through its continued misrepresentations, deceptions, false promises, and unfair practices, and provide restitution to consumers;
- Award damages and the cost of abating the public nuisance Discord created; and
- Award attorney's fees and costs.

This lawsuit is part of Attorney General Uthmeier's effort to hold social media and gaming platforms accountable for creating harmful environments for children. It follows Uthmeier's March investigation and subpoena of Discord. Six months later, on September 22, 2026, Discord announced new teen safety settings. The lawsuit alleges those changes are too little, too late.

To read the full complaint, click here.

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