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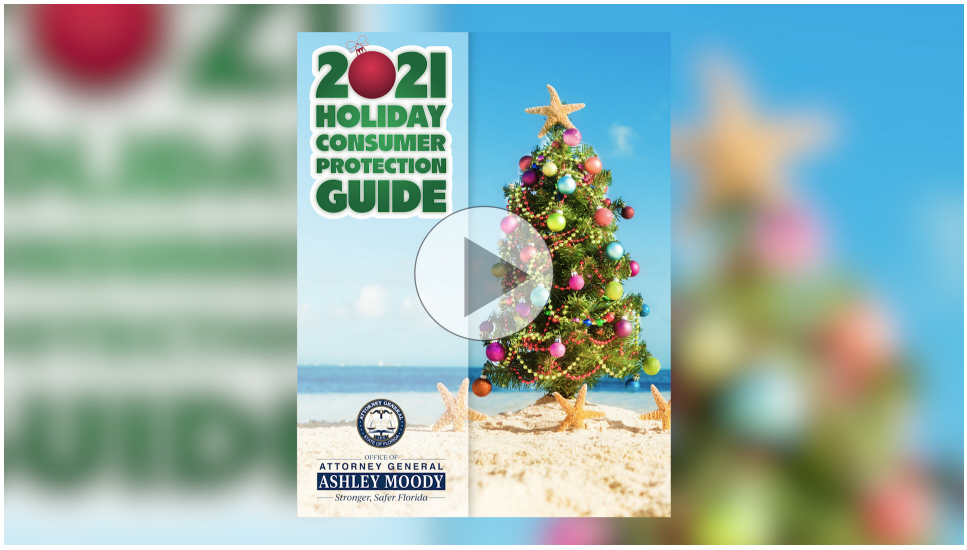
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

AG Moody Unveils 2021 Holiday Consumer Protection Guide



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today released the 2021 Holiday Consumer Protection Guide during a news conference in Osceola County. The guide aims to help protect holiday shoppers from online scams, recalled products, charity fraud and more. With the holiday shopping season in full swing, it is important to be mindful of how and where purchases are made to avoid falling victim to nefarious schemes. Attorney General Moody encourages consumers to take a close look at this year's guide to help ensure a safe shopping experience. This year, supply chain shortages are affecting holiday shopping, with goods such as toys and clothing expected to dwindle from store shelves. Financial analysts are suggesting that consumers may want to shop earlier to purchase wanted items.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "With national supply chain shortages threatening scarcity of some items, many Floridians are rushing to finish their holiday shopping lists early. But don't let the rush blind you to scams or deceptive trade practices. During the hustle and bustle of the season, it is important to watch out for scammers looking to exploit the frenzy to prey on unsuspecting shoppers, especially online. Our new guide provides consumers with simple steps to help spot and avoid potential threats. There is also a list of recalled items to help shoppers spot defective or unsafe gifts and tips to avoid charity scams."

The 2021 Holiday Consumer Protection Guide includes a list of items recalled by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. In addition to information on 2021 product recalls, the guide features tips for online and in-person shopping, as well as tips to avoid charity scams,

such as:

- Use a credit card, instead of a debit card, when shopping online. Credit cards allow consumers to dispute a charge more easily if an item never arrives or a fraudulent charge occurs;
- Keep receipts and be sure to understand retailers' return polices and periods so any unwanted items can be returned for a full refund;
- Before agreeing to a store's layaway plan, be sure to ask whether the retailer charges a fee for its program and whether payments and fees are refundable if the purchase is canceled or returned;
- Research before donating to a charity. Be aware of how much the donation will actually go towards charitable programs as opposed to administrative expenses; and
- Do not provide credit card or bank account information to someone who called or emailed unsolicited.

For more tips and information, access the full 2021 Holiday Consumer Protection Guide here.

To view the guide in Spanish, click here.

For a complete list of all product recalls, please visit CPSC.gov.

To report fraud or file a complaint, visit MyFloridaLegal.com or call 1(866) 9NO-SCAM.