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Contact Kylie Mason

Phone 850-245-0150

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

AG Moody Warns Floridians About Lethal Counterfeit Pills



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is warning Floridians about the recent explosion in deadly counterfeit pills confiscated nationwide. The United States Drug Enforcement Administration recently seized 1.8 million fentanyl-laced pills in a two-month nationwide sting that launched on Aug. 3. Since the start of 2021, officials have seized more than 9.5 million counterfeit pills—an increase of nearly 430% since 2019. Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid 50 times more potent than heroin and is an accelerating force behind the increase in drug overdose deaths.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “We are seeing a nationwide increase in the amount of fentanyl coming across our border. We are also seeing a dramatic spike in the number of overdose deaths attributed to fentanyl. As Florida’s Attorney General and as a mother, I don’t want anyone to abuse drugs, but please be especially warned that if you take a pill from anyone other than your doctor, you may be risking your life. Just one dose of fentanyl can kill, and with an increasing number of these counterfeit pills circulating throughout the country, the message is more important today than ever before.”

According to the DEA, opioids are responsible for nearly 75% of the more than 93,000 fatal drug overdoses in the U.S. in 2020. The flooding of new fentanyl-laced drugs could accelerate opioid deaths. According to the latest FDLE Medical Examiners Report, 21 people in Florida die from opioid-related overdoses every day. Last year, deaths attributed to fentanyl in Florida increased

by more than 80%. Recent reports highlight the toll these deadly fentanyl pills are having on teens nationwide.

Just two milligrams of fentanyl can be lethal depending on a person's body size, tolerance and past usage. Following last month's sizeable seizure, DEA's lab results revealed that four out of every 10 fake pills contained a potentially lethal dose of fentanyl. According to the DEA, just a few years ago, about 10% of drugs tested contained fentanyl—that is now up to 40%. According to reports, the fake pills are being manufactured to look identical to prescription opioid medications like Xanax, Vicodin, Percocet and Oxycontin.

To provide Floridians with more information about opioid addiction and to provide resources for support, the Florida Attorney General's Office created Dose of Reality Florida. For year-round take-back locations and other tips to fight opioid abuse, visit this statewide resource at DoseOfRealityFL.com.