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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

# Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

## Action Taken Against Google for Anticompetitive Practices




TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is taking action against Google for multiple violations of federal and state antitrust and consumer protection laws—including anticompetitive conduct, exclusionary practices, and false and deceptive misrepresentations in connection with its role in the multitrillion-dollar online-display advertising industry. Google also made false and deceptive misrepresentations to consumers regarding Google's privacy practices. Google's monopolization of online-display advertising involves an anticompetitive agreement with Facebook, making misrepresentations to users and customers, and suppressing competition. Attorney General Moody is joined by a bipartisan multistate coalition of 14 other state attorneys general in the lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "For far too long, Google has used its size and position as one of the largest tech giants in the world to manipulate and unfairly monopolize the marketplace. The core of American economic success lies on our foundation of capitalism and a free, fair and competitive marketplace.

"Google knowingly and willingly monopolized the products and services used by advertisers in online-display advertising. The company also engaged in false and deceptive acts while buying and selling the online-display ads. Through their monopolization and deceptive acts, Google greatly decreased other publishers' ability to monetize their content while simultaneously increasing costs to advertisers. Most of all, Google harmed consumers, including the millions of Floridians who use the search engine daily."

The internet revolutionized the way people consume content and the type of ads that companies can purchase to reach consumers, including online-display ads. In addition to representing both the buyers and sellers of online-display advertising, Google competes directly against the buyers and sellers they separately represent—all while operating the largest exchange on which these ad products are bought and sold. Google exchanges trades in billions of ad impressions a day.

This action alleges that Google monopolized or attempted to monopolize products and services used by advertisers and publishers in online-display advertising. The complaint also alleges that Google engaged in false, misleading and deceptive acts while selling, buying and auctioning online-display ads. These anticompetitive and deceptive practices demonstrably diminished publishers' ability to monetize content, increased advertisers' costs to advertise and harmed consumers.

To read a copy of the complaint, click here.

Florida is joined in this action by attorneys general from: Alaska, Arkansas, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, Texas and Utah.

In October 2020, Attorney General Moody joined the U.S. Department of Justice, along with 10 other state attorneys general, in filing a civil antitrust lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to prevent Google from unlawfully maintaining monopolies through anticompetitive and exclusionary practices in the search-advertising markets.