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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Beware of COVID-19 Vaccine-Related Scams



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—The total number of doses of COVID-19 vaccines administered in Florida is now outpacing the total number of Floridians who have been reported to have contracted the novel virus. As the state starts to turn the corner, Attorney General Ashley Moody is issuing a Consumer Alert to warn Floridians about COVID-19 vaccination scams. With the continuing rollout of vaccines and increasing number of Floridians seeking to secure appointments, scammers have devised multiple methods attempting to take advantage of the highly anticipated vaccination distribution.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Florida is turning the corner with vaccinations outpacing infections. This is great news, but it would be a mistake to let your guard down now—we need to remain vigilant, not only in preventing the spread of COVID-19, but also in protecting against scams that exploit the pandemic in an effort to steal your money or identity. By becoming familiar with emerging vaccine scams and how to avoid them, we can stop fraudsters and build a Stronger, Safer Florida.”

Below are a few emerging COVID-19 vaccine scams reported by consumers and the news media in Florida and nationwide:

Paid Appointments: Scammers may post fraudulent appointment booking pages or call, text or email offering to set up a vaccine appointment or expedite access to a vaccine appointment for a

fee. Know that any offer requiring payment in order to place the consumer on a waitlist, secure an appointment or expedite access to the vaccine is a scam. Attorney General Moody previously issued a Consumer Alert warning Floridians of misleading appointment booking pages.

Supposed In-Home Vaccinations through Medicare: Fraudsters claiming to be from Medicare may offer seniors in-home vaccination appointments and request a senior's Medicare card in order to schedule, but this too is a scam. While Medicare cards no longer use Social Security numbers, the card number is still private data that could be used to commit Medicare fraud and should be protected. Additionally, know that Medicare representatives will never visit seniors at home nor call to sell something. To find more information on Medicare coverage of COVID-19 vaccines, click here.

Scam Appointment Calls: Scammers may also call would-be victims posing as county health officials or a vaccination site representative setting up an appointment. Rather than requesting payment, these callers are seeking private information to be used to commit identity theft or fraud. These scam artists may even tell victims to arrive at a known local vaccination site at a specific date and time to bolster the ruse. Be wary of anyone soliciting personal information—such as a Social Security number, Medicare card number or credit or banking information—in order to secure an appointment

Identity Theft Using Vaccination Cards: Attorney General Moody previously issued a Consumer Alert warning those who have received vaccinations not to share vaccination cards online. Vaccination cards issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention include the recipient's full name, birthdate and vaccine location—information scammers can use to hack online accounts or commit identity fraud. Additionally, these cards may be used to create convincing-looking fake vaccine documentation.

Currently in Florida, persons of 65 years of age and older, health care personnel with direct patient contact and residents and staff of long-term care facilities are prioritized to receive a vaccine. To keep up with the Florida Department of Health's vaccine availability, click here.

Anyone who suspects a COVID-19 vaccine-related scam should report it to the Attorney General's Office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or visiting MyFloridaLegal.com.

Since the COVID-19 emergency declaration last March, Attorney General Moody has issued more than 20 Consumer Alerts with information about emerging scams and tips to avoid fraud related to the pandemic. To view the latest alerts and to stay up to date on COVID-19 related scams, visit the Attorney General's Consumer Alert webpage by clicking here.

For all of the Attorney General's COVID-19 related releases and additional COVID-19 tips and resources, click here.