Jan 4, 2021

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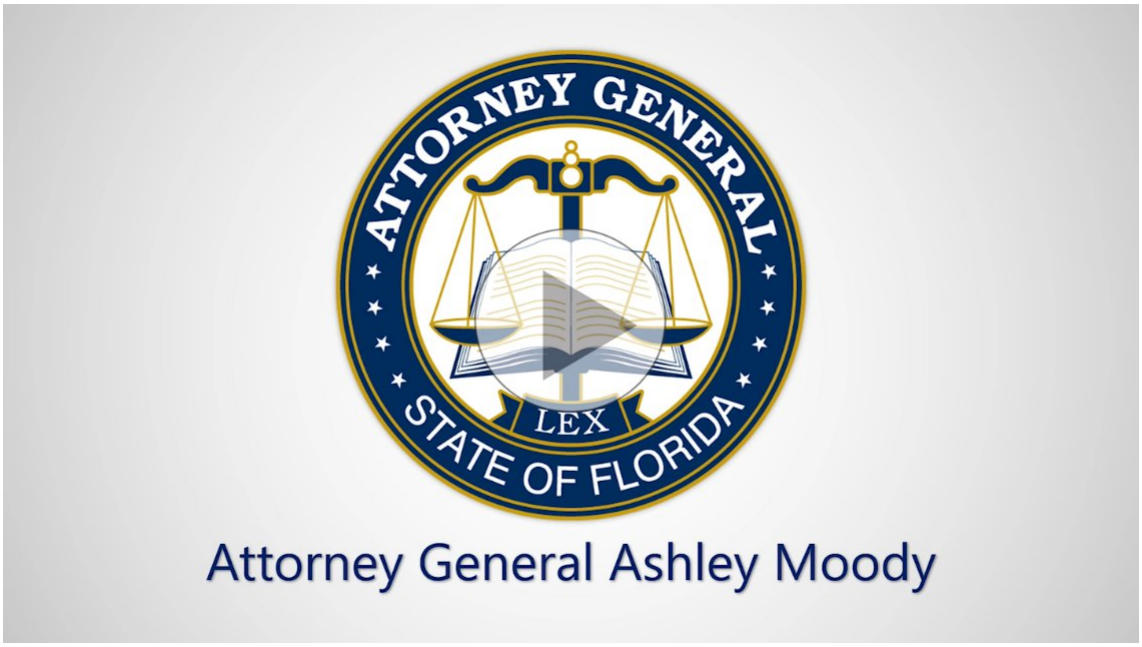
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

AG Moody Recognizes Human Trafficking Prevention Month



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is recognizing National Human Trafficking Prevention Month in Florida as preliminary data points to a potential increase in the illicit practice. The COVID-19 pandemic changed the daily routines of millions of Americans, including how human traffickers operate their criminal enterprises—driving even more illicit activity online. According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, crisis cases handled by the organization increased nationwide by more than 40% during April 2020, one month following the issuance of shelter-in-place orders, with the number of victims seeking emergency shelter nearly doubling during the same time period.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “These heartbreaking and disturbing preliminary reports show us just how much work needs to be done to stop these monsters from forcing more innocent lives into this despicable, illicit enterprise. I encourage all Floridians to learn the signs of human trafficking and take preventative action to protect yourself and your children’s online activity from human traffickers looking to exploit the virtual world to advance this repulsive, heinous crime.”

Attorney General Moody is offering the following tips to help Floridians avoid human traffickers online:

- Use a secure internet connection;
- Delete search and browser history to keep traffickers from accessing private information;
- Check privacy settings on social media accounts and disable automatic GPS tracking;
- Be wary of the content you post online and do not reveal too much personal information or your location;
- Block or filter spam emails that might contain a virus;
- Teach your children how to safely use the internet and monitor their online activity and social media accounts; and
- Use parental controls to limit your child's internet access.

Attorney General Moody and Floridians committed to ending human trafficking are also fighting back online. With the pandemic threatening to cancel the Attorney General's annual Human Trafficking Summit, Attorney General Moody worked to transition to an all-virtual event. Last October, Attorney General Moody launched the first ever virtual Human Trafficking Summit and set a record for attendance with more than 7,400 registrants from 43 states in the nation and other countries.

The Summit, and all of its educational content, is still available online and can be accessed by registering at HumanTraffickingSummit.com.

For even more information about how to spot and report human trafficking, visit YouCanStopHT.com.

If you suspect or witness any instance of human trafficking, contact local law enforcement or call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1(888) 373-7888.