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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

CA: Aug. Deadline for Tech Support Scam Restitution



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today issued a Consumer Alert to urge victims of several tech support scams to claim millions of dollars made available for restitution. The multimillion dollar claims process currently underway is the result of action taken by the Florida Attorney General's Office to shut down several companies operating tech support scams. The deadline to file a claim is August 30. Thousands are eligible, but so far, only hundreds have successfully filed claims.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Our Consumer Protection Division has worked hard to secure restitution for victims of tech support scams and they continue to diligently reach out to eligible consumers. We need your help to make sure victims know restitution is still available. If you or someone you know was the victim of a tech support scam, please file a claim before the August 30 deadline."

For more information on the claims process, visit FloridaAGReimbursement.com.

The claims process follows a massive tech support scam investigation by the Florida Attorney General's Office into the following companies; Complete Fix, Compusafe, JSA Sales, GoReadyCalls Marketing, My Direct Customer Care, My Direct Tech, PC Tech Pros, Project Net 123, Protectnet Solutions, Safenet Solutions, Secure IT Digital Solutions, Telcom Experts, US Software Experts, US Software Pros, Webguard 123 and Wizard Tech Solutions. Another company, Banc of America Merchant Services, provided payment processing for the accused

companies. Through an agreement with Banc of America Merchant Services, a claims process is now in place with $7,200,000 available for victims.

The investigation revealed that more than 100,000 people nationwide fell victim to the tech support scams perpetrated by these companies. Last year, and again last month, claim notices went out to thousands of potential eligible consumers with information about how to obtain restitution. So far, approximately $197,000 of the fund has been distributed.

Eligible victims are encouraged to submit claim forms as soon as possible. The deadline to file a claim and any supporting documentation is August 30.

Since 2014, the Florida Attorney General's Office has successfully shut down 13 tech support scams—representing the most tech support scam cases filed by any single state agency in the country. Attorney General Moody filed the most recent case against American PC Corporation.

Tech support scams typically involve fake pop-up messages or imposter phone calls claiming that a consumer's computer is infected with malware that poses an imminent risk to the device. Fraudsters will request virtual access to a victim's computer to supposedly fix the nonexistent problem. These scammers often target seniors.

To avoid tech support scams, consumers should never:

- Click on any links or call phone numbers provided on pop-up ads or emails;
- Send money, credit card numbers or any financial information to someone they do not know;
- Give anyone control of personal computers or electronic devices;
- Forget that Microsoft and most major computer companies do not display pop-up warnings and ask consumers to call toll-free numbers about viruses or security problems; or
- Go online without up-to-date security software.

For more information on avoiding tech support scams, click here.

To report a suspected scam, submit a complaint by calling the Attorney General's Office at 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or visiting MyFloridaLegal.com.