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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

CA: Beware of Fake COVID-19 Contact Tracing Calls



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today issued a Consumer Alert asking Floridians to exercise caution when answering COVID-19 contact tracing calls. To slow the spread of the novel coronavirus, state public health professionals are calling Floridians who may have come into contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. These calls are an extremely vital tool in the state's effort to contain the spread of the virus, but Floridians need to take steps to verify that the call is from the local county health department before providing information.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Unfortunately, we can't trust the voice on the other end of the phone to always be truthful—even in the face of a deadly pandemic. I want to encourage all Floridians to engage with legitimate health professionals working to contain the spread of COVID-19, but to be cautious before providing information.

"If you are diagnosed with COVID-19, you will be asked by an epidemiologist from your county health department about everyone you've come in contact with over the last two weeks. The epidemiologist will talk to each person and ask them about their health. But they will never ask for your Social Security number or financial information."

Attorney General Moody is asking Floridians to stay alert for signs that a call from someone claiming to be a contact tracer is a scam. Such signs include:

- Requesting a Social Security number, bank account information or some type of payment at any point during the call;
- Asking for a birth date. Legitimate contact tracers should already know this information for the individual they are calling and should only ask the individual to verify the information; and
- Disclosing the identity of the COVID-19 positive individual who reportedly may have spread the virus. An authorized contact tracer will NEVER disclose the identity of the person who tested positive.

The Florida Department of Health has prepared a fact sheet about contact tracing. To view the fact sheet, click here.

To report contact tracing scams or any other COVID-19 related fraud, contact the Florida Attorney General's Office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or visiting MyFloridaLegal.com.

Since the COVID-19 emergency declaration, Attorney General Moody has issued more than a dozen Consumer Alerts with information about emerging scams and tips to avoid fraud. 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 the Attorney General's COVID-19 related releases and additional COVID-19 tips and resources, click here.

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The Florida Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division issues Consumer Alerts to inform Floridians of emerging scams, new methods used to commit fraud, increased reports of common scams, or any other deceptive practice. Consumer Alerts are designed to notify Floridians about scams and available refunds in an effort to prevent financial losses or other harm caused by deceptive practices. Anyone encountering a scam should report the incident to the Florida Attorney General's Office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or visiting MyFloridaLegal.com. To view recent Consumer Alerts and for other information about avoiding scams, visit MyFloridaLegal.com/ConsumerAlert.