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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

CA: Beware of Scams as Florida Reopens



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today issued a Consumer Alert urging continued vigilance as Florida slowly starts to reopen. Many retail stores, restaurants and other businesses in select industries are already partially open. Scammers may try to exploit the now expanding marketplace to take advantage of consumers and small businesses.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “As Florida businesses begin to slowly and thoughtfully re-emerge, scammers will look for ways to exploit the reopening to make a dishonest dollar. I want Floridians and business owners to be on the lookout for new scams associated with reopening and report fraud to our office.

“Scammers will likely use the same nefarious tactics that they have been using to target Floridians throughout the COVID-19 crisis—robocalls, phishing emails and imposter scams, to name some of the most common. They will just use them in different ways, utilizing new messages about the crisis to get a consumer’s attention. So, don’t be fooled. Stay alert and stay informed about government orders and actions regarding reopening as well as the latest scams.”

To guard against scams, Floridians should:

- Hang up on robocalls offering products or services. Do not press any buttons and do not offer any personal or financial information;

- Avoid clicking links on email solicitations or ads offering free COVID-19 tests, business loans or too good to be true prices on pandemic-related products;
- Never trust the number on a caller ID display, as spoofing technology allows scammers to change the display on an incoming call so that it appears to be coming from a government entity; and
- Research a website or organization thoroughly before purchasing a product, scheduling a service or providing any personal information. Reports of scammers creating fake COVID-19 websites to rip off consumers abound.

For more tips on avoiding robocall-related scams, click here.

For tips on scams related to stimulus payments, click here.

For tips on general COVID-19 related scams, click here.

Since the COVID-19 emergency declaration, Attorney General Moody has issued 13 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 of the Attorney General's COVID-19 related releases and additional COVID-19 tips and resources, click here.

Anyone who encounters a COVID-19 related scam should contact the Florida Attorney General's Office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or visiting MyFloridaLegal.com.

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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.