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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

CA: Websites Selling PPE Take Money, Don't Deliver



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today issued a Consumer Alert urging Floridians to be on the lookout for fraudulent websites purporting to sell Personal Protective Equipment. According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, more than 19,000 new websites selling PPE emerged as COVID-19 began to spread in the U.S. There are reports of some of these sites taking orders, accepting payments and not delivering products.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “This is outright fraud. It’s criminal and we will not tolerate it in Florida. Imposters are exploiting this crisis and scamming Floridians trying to purchase vital PPE to protect their health and stop the spread of COVID-19. Sadly, we have received reports of several of these fraudulent websites that purport to be associated with locations in Florida and are working with website domain hosts to have these sites removed and evidence preserved. As our investigations continue, I want to make sure Floridians proceed with caution when shopping for face masks, gloves and other gear needed to prevent contracting COVID-19.”

Attorney General Moody is offering the following tips to Floridians to help avoid falling victim to online PPE fraud:

- Do business with trusted vendors with a long history of customer satisfaction;
- Research a vendor before making a purchase. Check the Better Business Bureau’s website for complaints about the vendor and Google search the website name in combination with the words scam or fraud;

- Always pay with a credit card and not with cash or debit card as most credit card companies offer extra security measures, user protections and the ability to cancel purchases; and
- Be wary of any website that purports to be endorsed or connected to a government entity. If a vendor claims a connection to a state or federal government agency, check with the agency first before making a purchase.

If anyone encounters PPE fraud, they should 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 11 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.