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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Refunds Secured and Outrageous Posts Removed



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—This week marks two months since Attorney General Ashley Moody activated Florida's Price Gouging Hotline in response to the COVID-19 emergency declaration. During that time, Attorney General Moody's Office has secured hundreds of thousands of dollars in refunds, worked with online platforms to deactivate nearly 200 posts offering items for outrageous prices and ensured information important to price gouging investigations is preserved.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "My office is dedicated to protecting consumers and that is exactly what we are doing during this COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout this crisis, we have been working diligently to secure refunds, deactivate outrageous online posts and collect information crucial to our price gouging investigations.

"A key part of our success is the thousands of tips flooding into our Price Gouging Hotline from Florida and beyond. And as we slowly start to reopen, I want to remind Floridians to remain vigilant. Don't let your guard down. We are more successful when we work together, so please keep sending us price gouging tips and we will continue to do our part to protect consumers."

Since activating Florida's Price Gouging Hotline, the Florida Attorney General's Office has:

- Received approximately 4,400 consumer contacts about the price of essential commodities;

- Made more than 6,300 referrals and contacts to merchants about allegations of price gouging, refunds and scams;
- Secured more than $497,000 in refunds related to travel, leisure and product purchases;
- Issued 70 subpoenas to further price gouging investigations; and
- Worked with online platforms to deactivate 189 posts offering items for outrageous prices.

Violators of the price gouging statute are subject to civil penalties of $1,000 per violation and up to a total of $25,000 for multiple violations committed in a single 24-hour period.

For more information on price gouging, please click here.

For a list of the commodities covered under the state's price gouging laws during the COVID-19 state of emergency, click here.

Price gouging can be reported by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM, visiting MyFloridaLegal.com or downloading the NO SCAM smartphone app.

For tips on reporting price gouging, click here.

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.