May 8, 2020

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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

AG Moody Highlights New Domestic Violence Reporting App

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is highlighting a free, new mobile app created by security and home automation company ADT, that can help domestic violence victims signal for help without alerting their abusers. The app, SoSecure, is available for free download on both iOS and Android and provides domestic violence victims with the ability to discreetly 'call' for help with a simple swipe on their mobile phone. SoSecure can help victims, isolated with abusers while social distancing, inconspicuously put out a call for help—without ever needing to speak. Once users engage the SOS feature within the app, they can discreetly connect via SMS chat or speak with a live, professionally trained ADT monitoring agent to relay information about their situation. ADT can then place an emergency call to authorities on behalf of the victim, so the abuser is not alerted.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "When I was a young lawyer, I volunteered to assist domestic violence victims seeking protection because justice requires us to fight for the most vulnerable among us. Now, as the Chief Legal Officer of Florida, I'm continuing that fight working through my office and with public and private entities to help protect crime victims. ADT's new app, SoSecure, will help victims of domestic violence call for help discreetly. Their ability to access an individual's location and text, instead of call, will help safeguard a victim from alerting an abuser—giving law enforcement more time to act, before the abuser even knows help was sought."

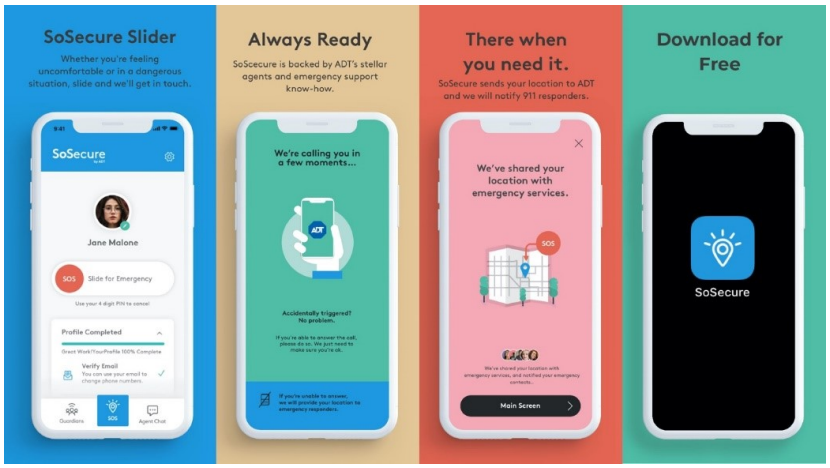
Domestic violence calls have increased during the COVID-19 stay-at-home period. For example, Cape Coral police report that between March 8 and April 20, the department responded to 389 domestic violence calls during COVID-19 compared to 289—100 fewer calls—during the same time frame last year. SoSecure provides an additional, new option for domestic violence victims to call for help while sheltering in place with their abuser.

Leah Page, VP, Mobile Security & Strategic Projects at ADT, said, "We believe everyone deserves to feel safe, and with SoSecure, we are able to offer ADT security to everyone. Should a user find themselves in a domestic violence situation where they can't verbally call for help, SoSecure makes it possible for the victim to discreetly connect with a trusted ADT resource, without alerting their abuser."

SoSecure offers several benefits that can be helpful to people in abusive situations, including:

- GPS Coordination: When a user triggers an alert through SoSecure, the app gains access to the user's GPS coordinates (something not all 911 centers are set up to receive) to help determine where they are located;

- Discreet Chat: Users can discreetly connect via SMS chat or speak with a live ADT monitoring agent 24/7 via the app to relay information, such as the type of first responder support they might require, and/or confirm whether or not they are in fact experiencing an emergency; and
- Emergency Contact Notification: SoSecure enables users to include emergency contact information, so family and friends can be alerted in case of an emergency.



Anyone who is a victim of violence should contact local law enforcement immediately by calling 911. The Florida Domestic Violence Hotline number is 1(800) 500-1119. For a list of local domestic violence services, including safe shelter and abuse counseling, visit the Attorney General's Victims Services Directory by clicking here. Many nonprofits are now offering telephone counseling and video sessions for victims who feel safe enough to utilize these services. Options may vary by organization.

Attorney General Moody is reminding victims that, despite these challenging times, resources are still available. For more information, click here.

Through another recently announced effort between the Attorney General's Office and Uber, free rides are available to domestic violence shelters in the areas of Florida that have seen the highest call volumes, including Hillsborough, Orange and Pinellas counties. For more information, click here.