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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Resources Still Available for Domestic Violence Victims



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—In recognition of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, Attorney General Ashley Moody is reminding victims of domestic violence that help is still available—even with Florida under a stay-at-home order. Abuse counselors are offering more communication options for victims of domestic violence and shelters are implementing policies to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic. Attorney General Moody is urging anyone isolated with an abuser to contact law enforcement and seek help to escape abuse.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "There are reports that domestic violence calls to some law enforcement agencies are up but calls for safe shelter and counseling are down in some locations. Victims do not have to stay isolated with their abusers. Domestic violence shelters remain open around the state. Help is available and the professionals devoted to assisting victims of domestic violence are taking steps to protect victims from COVID-19 while also helping them escape abusive situations."

Anyone who is a victim of violence should contact local law enforcement immediately by calling 911. The Florida Domestic Violence Hotline 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.

Through the federal Victims of Crime Act, the Attorney General's Office provides funding to non-profit organizations providing qualifying services to victims of crime, including victims of domestic violence. For more information on VOCA or other types of services provided, click here.

One week every April is designated as National Crime Victims' Rights Week. The Florida Constitution and Florida Crime Victims' Bill of Rights give crime victims or their lawful representatives, including the next of kin of homicide victims, many rights, including the right to be informed, to be present, and to be heard when relevant, at all crucial stages of criminal proceedings, to be free from harassment, intimidation or abuse, and to have the safety of the victim and the victim's family considered when setting bail or pretrial release conditions.

To learn more about National Crime Victims' Rights Week, click here.