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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

CA: Scammers Know Stimulus Payments Coming



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—With stimulus payment deposits starting to flow in, Attorney General Ashley Moody is issuing a Consumer Alert to warn Floridians that scammers will try to take advantage of the unprecedented injection of cash into the U.S. economy. Millions of Americans with banking information on file with the Internal Revenue Service are beginning to receive direct deposits, and Floridians should take steps now to avoid falling prey to scams designed to steal payments, banking account numbers or other sensitive personal information.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Two trillion dollars are being pumped into the U.S. economy as millions of Americans are losing jobs. Commerce has drastically slowed in an attempt to stop the spread of COVID-19. Anytime a government offers financial relief to individuals or businesses, scammers will devise schemes to steal as much of it as possible.

“That is why I am asking Floridians to keep their guard up as the federal government begins to disseminate these individual payments. Stay up to date about how and when you might receive your stimulus payment and be suspicious of anyone requesting personal or financial information in exchange for an expedited deposit.”

Floridians who already provided banking information to the IRS by virtue of filing their taxes have now begun to receive direct deposits and DO NOT NEED to take action. The IRS will follow up by mailing confirmation notices to beneficiaries within a few weeks after payments are made. Anyone who receives a notice, but does not receive a payment, should contact the IRS immediately.

The IRS will not initiate contact with anyone by email, phone call, text messages or social media to request personal or financial information. The IRS emphasizes on its website that there is no sign-up requirement to receive a payment.

Shortly after President Donald J. Trump signed the coronavirus stimulus package into law, Attorney General Moody issued a Consumer Alert with the following tips asking Floridians to NEVER:

- Respond to text messages, emails or ads directing you to click on a link;
- Provide any personal or financial information in response to an unsolicited message;
- Trust Caller ID displays claiming a call is from the IRS—as spoofing technology allows scammers to change phone displays to impersonate government agencies; and
- Make any advance payment in order to secure or expedite access to a benefit.

That message is even more important now as checks are going out. To view the alert in its entirety, click here.

To view previous Consumer Alerts about emerging COVID-19 related scams, click here.

Anyone who encounters a coronavirus stimulus package scam or any other types of COVID-19 fraud, should contact the Florida Attorney General's Office at 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or 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.