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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

CA: Protect Your Meetings from Zoombombing



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—With more Floridians than ever before working from home and holding virtual meetings, a new trend called Zoombombing is emerging. Zoombombing occurs when hackers hijack internet video conferences, like those offered by the fast-growing platform Zoom. These hackers often present inappropriate, offensive material or otherwise disrupt the conference. It is not a joke, and what is even more concerning is more children are susceptible to this privacy hack as students are now using video conferencing to learn virtually to obey the statewide stay-at-home order issued to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “To practice social distancing while we continue to operate, my staff and I, like so many other agencies and businesses, are using technology to hold important meetings. My son, just like most students in Florida, is also participating in Zoom virtual learning with his teachers and classmates. So, I want Floridians to be aware that these meetings can be hijacked by hackers, but thankfully, there are some steps you can take to increase privacy and prevent Zoombombing.”

To increase privacy and guard against Zoombombing:

- Create separate passwords for each virtual meeting;
- Establish a Zoom waiting room for meeting participants;
- Lock down the meeting once everyone invited to attend has joined; and

- Do not publicly post meeting links on social media or any other public forum.

Zoom also offers privacy settings to provide hosts an additional level of protection. To enable the extra security features, hosts should click on the settings menu, scroll down to Screen Sharing, find Who Can Share? and then click on Host Only. Finally, the user should save the changes.

After saving the new preferences, subsequent meetings should enact these enhanced privacy features by default. For more virtual meeting security tips, click here.

The Florida Attorney General's Office has reached out to Zoom to learn more about its encryption efforts and other proactive steps the company is taking to better protect its users.

Last month, Attorney General Moody issued tips for the millions of Floridians working remotely to stop the spread of COVID-19. To view that Consumer Alert, click here.

Anyone who believes they are the victim of hacking or a COVID-19 related scam should contact the Florida Attorney General's Office at 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or MyFloridaLegal.com.

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