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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

CA: Fraud Prevention Tips for International Fraud Week



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—This week is International Fraud Awareness Week and Attorney General Ashley Moody is issuing a Consumer Alert to help Floridians prevent fraud. According to the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, businesses worldwide lose approximately five percent of annual revenues to fraud. In total, fraud costs individuals and businesses across the globe $3.7 trillion every year.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Fighting fraud is one of my top priorities as Attorney General and we have investigators working every day to protect consumers and stop scams. But to truly stop fraud, we need Floridians to join us in this fight by learning how to spot a scam and protect their sensitive information. That is why I am issuing a Consumer Alert in recognition of International Fraud Awareness Week and encouraging Floridians to take steps to guard against common forms of fraud.”

Below are a few general tips to help Floridians avoid fraud:

- Check account statements regularly to ensure there are no fraudulent charges or withdrawals;
- Use credit cards for transactions, if possible. While charges on both debit and credit cards can be disputed if the card number is stolen, with debit charges those funds have already been accessed;

- Review credit reports at least once a year. Consumers have the right to a free credit report annually from the three major credit reporting agencies. To order a credit report, go to AnnualCreditReport.com;
- Do not provide financial or personal information, such as passwords and Social Security Numbers, in response to a solicitation;
- Use strong passwords that incorporate a mixture of capitalized and lowercase letters, numbers and special characters. Do not use the same password across multiple applications or websites;
- Consider enabling multifactor authentication on all accounts that offer it;
- Refrain from opening emails or attachments from unfamiliar senders;
- Be wary of clicking on links in an email, even if it is from a familiar bank or business entity. Call the institution to determine whether the email is legitimate;
- Never call numbers from emails or pop-ups that state the computer has a virus. Instead, find a legitimate computer repair company to address any concerns;
- Do not automatically trust the number listed on the caller ID. Scammers can spoof the caller ID to make it appear as if any number is calling; and
- Just hang up if someone calls and asks for personal information, such as bank account numbers, Social Security numbers or requests wiring money or sending a prepaid debit card. If you believe the caller could be a legitimate business, tell the caller that you will call back. After hanging up, find the number listed online and call to inquire whether the message received is legitimate.

Attorney General Moody's website contains a multitude of resources with specific information about different types of fraud and scams. To learn more about fraud and how to spot scams, click here.

To report fraud, call 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or visit 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.