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Contact Kylie Mason

Phone 850-245-0150

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

CONSUMER ALERT: Crowdsourcing Scams Exploit Good Intentions



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is issuing a Consumer Alert about crowdsourcing charity scams. These scams often use a disaster or fake personal tragedy story to exploit people's good intentions. Earlier this week, a suspicious crowdsourcing solicitation quickly raised nearly $1,000 from generous Floridians before being flagged as a potential scam. After Attorney General Moody's Consumer Protection Division began looking into the potential scam, the crowdsourcing platform removed the page and is holding contributions.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Crowdsourcing charity scams are designed to exploit the generous nature of well-intentioned donors. It is truly amazing how many generous people stand ready to give of their resources to help their fellow Floridians, but before giving, donors should take steps to make sure contributions will be used for the stated cause."

Attorney General Moody is offering the following tips to help donors spot and avoid crowdsourcing charity scams:

· Research the webpage creator's background and reviews before donating;

· Know that there are many different crowdsourcing platforms, each with different terms of use and fraud investigation practices;

· Check to see if the platform offers protections to donors should a campaign be found fraudulent;

· Determine what percentage of any funds raised will go to the charity and what percentage goes to the platform; and

· Search to see if there are any identical or extremely similar campaigns. It is possible that a scam artist copies a legitimate campaign to fraudulently attract donors.

Anyone with concerns about a crowdsourcing charity can report those concerns to the Florida Attorney General's Office online at MyFloridaLegal.com or by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM.

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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.