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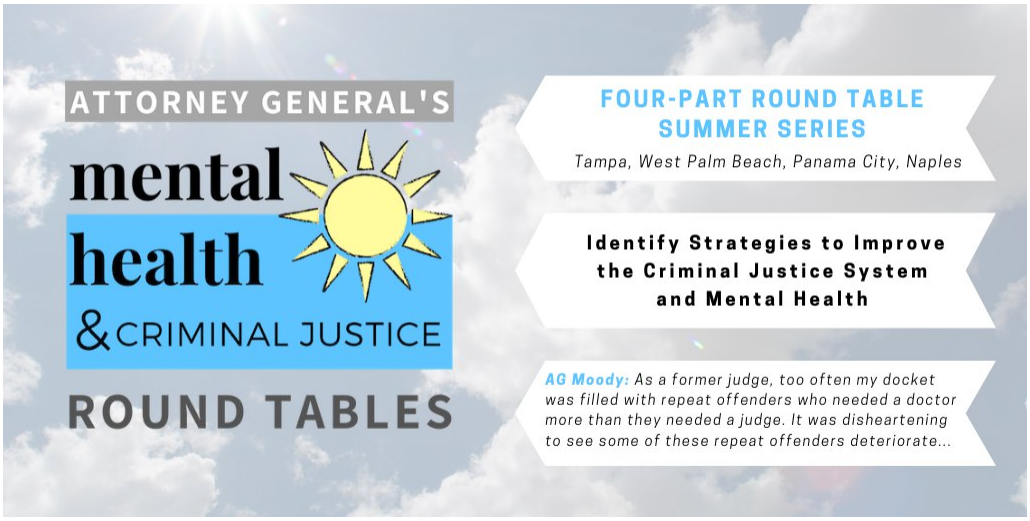
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Mental Health Criminal Justice Round Table Summer Series



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today announced a series of round table events focused on mental health and Florida's criminal justice system. This four-part series will span the summer with round table events scheduled with law enforcement in different cities throughout Florida. Attorney General Moody's interest in identifying more effective strategies to improve the way the criminal justice system interacts with people suffering from mental health issues dates back to her time as a Circuit Court Judge.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "As a former judge, there were times I saw repeat offenders who needed a doctor more than they needed a judge. It was disheartening to see some of these repeat offenders deteriorate, knowing that they were not receiving the medical care they needed. It is in Florida's best interest to take steps to improve in this area in order to reduce recidivism, threats to law enforcement and costs to taxpayers.

"At the same time, we must do everything we can to ensure those with mental health issues that are a danger to our communities are identified and brought to the attention of law enforcement, so we can take the appropriate steps to protect the safety of Floridians."

Attorney General Moody's four-part Mental Health Criminal Justice Round Table Summer Series will bring together law enforcement in an effort to identify best practices and innovative ideas. The first round table is scheduled for later this month, and a full schedule of events is listed below:

Part One: Addressing Mental Health within our Law Enforcement Ranks

Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office
Falkenburg Road Jail Assembly Room
520 North Falkenburg Road
Tampa, Fla. 33619
May 15, 2019 at 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Part Two: Addressing Mental Health Pre-Arrest
Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office
3228 Gun Club Road
West Palm Beach, Fla. 33406
June 26, 2019 at 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Part Three: Addressing Mental Health Post-Arrest
Bay County Sheriff's Office
3421 North Highway 77
Panama City, Fla. 32405
July 10, 2019 at 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. CST

Part Four: Addressing Mental Health in Our Courts
Florida Supreme Court
500 South Duval Street
Tallahassee, Fla. 32399
Aug. 23, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.

Attorney General Moody's announcement is being made in conjunction with the beginning of Mental Health Awareness Month. Americans began recognizing May as Mental Health Awareness Month in 1949, to help raise awareness about resources available to those suffering from mental health issues. This May marks the 70th anniversary of the awareness month. More information is available on Mental Health America's website.