Date August 27, 2021

Attorney General Moody's Week In Review - Aug. 27, 2021

This week, I met with attorneys general from across the nation, along with members of my Statewide Council on Human Trafficking, in separate meetings to discuss current trends in human trafficking and how we can work together to combat this abhorrent crime. That is what the upcoming 2021 Human Trafficking Summit is all about—continuing to coordinate across agencies, industries, and state lines to stop trafficking and rescue survivors.
Ending human trafficking is a mission close to my heart, but we will never be successful working in silos—we must unite in Florida and throughout our great country. By joining forces, we can stop traffickers and rescue survivors—that's the goal of the Human Trafficking Summit and I encourage all stakeholders in Florida and nationwide to attend.

The summit is once again being offered, for free, in a virtual format this year. The event launches Oct. 5.

Registrants will get an opportunity to participate in presentations delivered by subject-matter experts from across the country, with topics covering legal and law enforcement, service delivery, policy and research, and medical and health care.

To learn more about the virtual Human Trafficking Summit and how to register, visit HumanTraffickingSummit.com.

Participating in our virtual summit and learning how to report human trafficking can help us save lives. Working together, we can end this form of modern-day slavery, and build a Stronger, Safer Florida.



In The News

Florida Atty. Gen. Ashley Moody Warns Of New COVID Relief Scam, CBS 4 Miami

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Attorney General Ashely Moody warns of COVID-19 relief scams, ABC 7 Suncoast

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Florida attorney general warns of coronavirus relief scam, WPBF West Palm Beach

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Settlement reached in domestic violence coalition cases, FOX 35 Orlando

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Florida, Domestic Violence Agency Settle Fight Over CEO Pay, WUSF Public Media

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Protecting Floridians

Attorney General Moody and DCF Secure $5 Million Following Action Against FCADV and Former CEO Tiffany Carr



Attorney General Ashley Moody and Governor Ron DeSantis announced a global settlement agreement requiring the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence and former FCADV CEO Tiffany Carr to repay the state and domestic violence centers millions of dollars. The settlement follows legal action taken by Attorney General Moody and by the Florida Department of Children and Families in March 2020 to preserve FCADV assets and recover misused state grant funds paid to Carr as excessive compensation. The agreement, which remains subject to court approval, resolves multiple pending civil actions but has no bearing on the ability of law enforcement to bring criminal charges associated with the misuse of taxpayer and charitable funds. Additionally, under the settlement agreement, all parties agree to a judicial dissolution of FCADV—establishing a process to liquidate and dissolve the organization.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “For several years, FCADV and Tiffany Carr concocted to pay herself an excessive compensation scheme, millions of dollars meant to benefit domestic violence victims. When uncovered, this scheme threatened to disrupt funding to domestic violence centers. I am pleased that

through these actions, we succeeded in getting rid of the bad management, dismantling the organization, implementing a new system to serve victims of domestic violence and recouping millions of misappropriated funds.

“Nonprofit officers and directors who administer taxpayer funds take note: you have a heightened responsibility to use that money prudently. This is a positive step towards restoring faith in the system and returning funds to the rightful recipients—ensuring domestic violence survivors receive the services and help they need to heal in a safe and secure environment.” Read More



end Federal

Attorney

General Ashley Moody sent a letter to United States Attorney General Merrick Garland to ensure the Biden administration will faithfully defend a long-standing federal immigration statute that prohibits illegal re-entry to the U.S. by illegal aliens. Attorney General Moody is joined by attorneys general from 19 other states in the request.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “The president does not have the power to pick and choose the laws he must enforce—he must take care that all laws of the United States are faithfully executed. We need assurance that the Biden administration will defend long-standing federal immigration laws passed to protect Americans. The president needs to prioritize the safety and security of the American people over reckless political games.

“I am joining my colleagues from across the nation to ensure Biden’s Department of Justice will defend a long-standing federal immigration statute. Our nation’s security depends on it.” Read More

CONSUMER ALERT: Attorney General Moody Warns of New Coronavirus Relief Scam



Attorney General Ashley Moody issued a Consumer Alert warning Floridians about a new phishing scam that offers fake COVID-19 relief funds. Scammers are impersonating Federal Trade Commission Chair Lina Khan in phishing emails, claiming the recipient is eligible for financial relief and requiring personal and financial information in exchange for the nonexistent funds.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “These brazen scammers are impersonating a federal agency charged with investigating and shutting down scams. Floridians need to be on the lookout for these phishing emails and report them to the FTC. We have seen so many new scams during the pandemic, but this latest trick is extremely flagrant. The best way to beat this scam is to immediately send these messages directly to the FTC and be sure to never reply or click on any links in the email.” Read More

CONSUMER ALERT: Attorney General Moody Warns of Malware that Drains Cellphone Batteries and Bank Accounts



Attorney General Moody is warning consumers about a new malware attack that targets mobile phone users. Accidentally downloading this malware gives scammers the ability to steal sensitive information—including mobile payment app logins, banking credentials and remote control of a target's phone.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "This pandemic has changed the way we send and receive money—moving more of these transactions online and increasing the popularity of mobile payment apps. This opens the door wider to hackers, phishing scammers and vicious malware attackers. Unknowingly falling for their traps could lead to devastating financial losses."

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City Manager Arrested for Role in Extorting More Than $3 Million from Florida Developer



Attorney

General Ashley Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution, following a Florida Department of Law Enforcement investigation, charged Tamarac City Manager Michael Cernech with conspiracy to commit racketeering for his role in attempting to extort $3.4 million from 13th Floor Investments d/b/a SPL Holdings. Cernech is an alleged co-conspirator to father-and-son duo Bruce and Shawn Chait in the extortion scheme.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "The defendant conspired with convicted felons, using his position of authority to relay false information to the highest levels of city government to further this multimillion-dollar extortion scheme—disgraceful. My Statewide Prosecutors, working with FDLE investigators, have exposed the corruption and now the defendant and his co-conspirators will have to answer for their crimes." Read More

Events

This week, Attorney General Ashley Moody convened the quarterly meeting of the Statewide Council on Human Trafficking. The council received presentations on the proposed Florida Unified Human Trafficking Database and the Florida Human Trafficking Profile Report. Attorney General Moody then moderated the Attorney General Responses to Human Trafficking virtual panel for the National Association of Attorneys General Southern Region Meeting.



Attorney General Moody at a news conference with Governor Ron DeSantis in Orlando announcing a multimillion-dollar global agreement requiring the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence and former FCADV CEO Tiffany Carr to repay the state and domestic violence centers millions of dollars. To watch the news conference, click here.



Attorney General Moody delivering remarks at the Foundation of Chiropractic Progress's Drug-Free Pain Management Awareness Month Kickoff in Orlando.

