Date October 29, 2021

Attorney General Moody's Week In Review - Oct. 29, 2021



With Halloween approaching this weekend, many Floridians are preparing to celebrate by getting costumes ready and purchasing candy to hand out to trick-or-treaters. But the celebration can quickly turn to real fright if planning and safety precautions are not part of the festivities.
Ahead of Halloween, I am issuing tips for safe trick-or-treating. As a parent, I know it is very important we make clear plans with our children before going out into neighborhoods, especially in the evening and at night.

If your plans include trick-or-treating, follow the tips below to make sure everyone in your group stays safe:

- Be sure children walk in well-lit areas and stay in sight of a trusted adult;
- Plan a safe route and make sure everyone in the group knows the returning address, telephone number and how to call 911 in case of an emergency;
- Never enter a stranger’s home or vehicle;
- Throw away candy that is unwrapped or looks suspicious; and

- Watch for trick-or-treaters when driving.

In addition, parents and guardians can visit the Florida Department of Law Enforcement website to see a list of all registered sex offenders and predators living within a five-mile radius of any Florida neighborhood. Florida law prohibits sex offenders from distributing candy or other items to children on Halloween. Notify authorities if you encounter a registered sex offender handing out candy.

By following these simple steps, you can enjoy the festivities without any real scares, and help us build a Stronger, Safer Florida.



In The News

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Protecting Floridians

Attorney General Moody Fights for Florida, Sues Biden Over Unlawful Vaccine Mandate



Following through on a promise to hold President Joe Biden accountable for his unlawful vaccine mandate, Attorney General Ashley Moody took legal action to stop his egregious federal overreach. Attorney General Moody's lawsuit seeks an immediate end to the unlawful requirement that federal government contractors ensure that all employees receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Florida companies, public and private, receive millions of dollars in federal contracts annually and will be negatively impacted by the unlawful requirements.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "I have never seen such blatant disregard for the Constitution or the laws governing our country. President Biden does not have the authority to force millions of Americans to receive a shot, nor does he have the ability to punish Florida economically for not abiding by his authoritarian, unlawful and unconstitutional executive order.

"I promised to challenge this gross abuse of power and to stand up for hardworking Floridians and that is exactly why I am suing this President and his reckless administration. As Attorney General, I have an obligation to defend the rule of law, Florida's workers and our state against heavy-handed federal overreach." Read More



Attorney

General Ashley Moody is fighting to protect Floridians from online human trafficking by filing an amicus brief with 24 other attorneys general in the Doe v. Facebook, Inc. case. Survivors of child sex trafficking brought common-law and statutory claims against Facebook alleging that it failed to warn of, and benefited from, human trafficking on its internet platforms. The Supreme Court of Texas previously held that 47 U.S.C. § 230 barred the plaintiff's common-law claims and immunized Facebook from liability under a broad interpretation of that statute. Attorney General Moody argues in a cert petition filed with the U.S. Supreme Court that that overbroad interpretation improperly preempts state law and denies compensation to trafficking victims.

Child sex trafficking is one of history's most heinous crimes. The petitioner in Doe v. Facebook, Inc. alleges that she was trafficked through Facebook's online platform. Additionally, the petitioner argues that Facebook did not properly inform her of the dangers of human trafficking on the platform because its business model depends on maximizing contacts between users—including contacts with minors. As chair of Florida's Statewide Council on Human Trafficking, Attorney General Moody has great interest in protecting Floridians from human trafficking and enabling survivors to obtain redress for the egregious harms they suffer.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Big Tech should be helping us end human trafficking, not providing an avenue for predators to solicit and groom minors.

Victims of child sex trafficking should be able to hold platforms like Facebook accountable for not doing enough to stop human traffickers from exploiting their platform to victimize minors. What Facebook is allowing is wholly irresponsible, and we will continue fighting Big Tech to protect our children." Read More



Scheme

Attorney

General Ashley Moody and Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis announced the arrest of Ricardo Villarroel Duerto, owner of Villa Pavers and Pools, for allegedly defrauding nearly 100 homeowners throughout the state in excess of $1 million. Authorities also arrested Luis Alvarez Daboin of Conquer Pools, along with Villa Pavers and Pools salespersons Michael Borrego Fernandez and Laura Ballester Alpizar, for involvement in the scheme. Attorney General Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution will prosecute the defendants.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "These defendants intentionally ripped off Florida families trying to obtain pools and better their homes—causing more than a million dollars in fraud. I am grateful for CFO Patronis and DFS investigators for taking action and stopping this scheme affecting Floridians across the state. My Statewide Prosecutors will make it known to all parties involved that we will not permit shady contractors stealing Floridians' hard-earned money." Read More

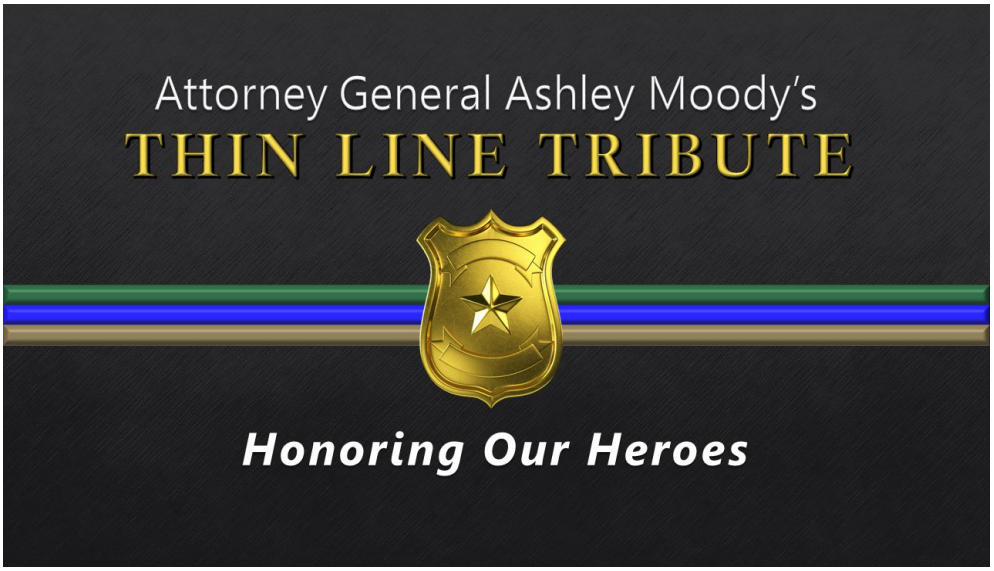
Attorney General Moody Announces Arrest of Caregiver Abusing Florida Seniors



Attorney General Ashley Moody’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, with the assistance of the Escambia County Sheriff’s Office, arrested a former senior caregiver for abusing senior residents. According to the MFCU investigation, Twicka Jones, aka Tumicka Jones or Nikki Jones, pushed two elderly dementia residents resulting in them falling to the ground.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Our seniors in assisted living facilities deserve the utmost care and respect. Especially dementia patients who may already feel vulnerable or scared. I am sickened by this caregiver’s actions, and my Medicaid Fraud Control Unit will hold her responsible for these crimes." Read More

Attorney General Moody Honors Kissimmee Police Department with Thin Line Tribute



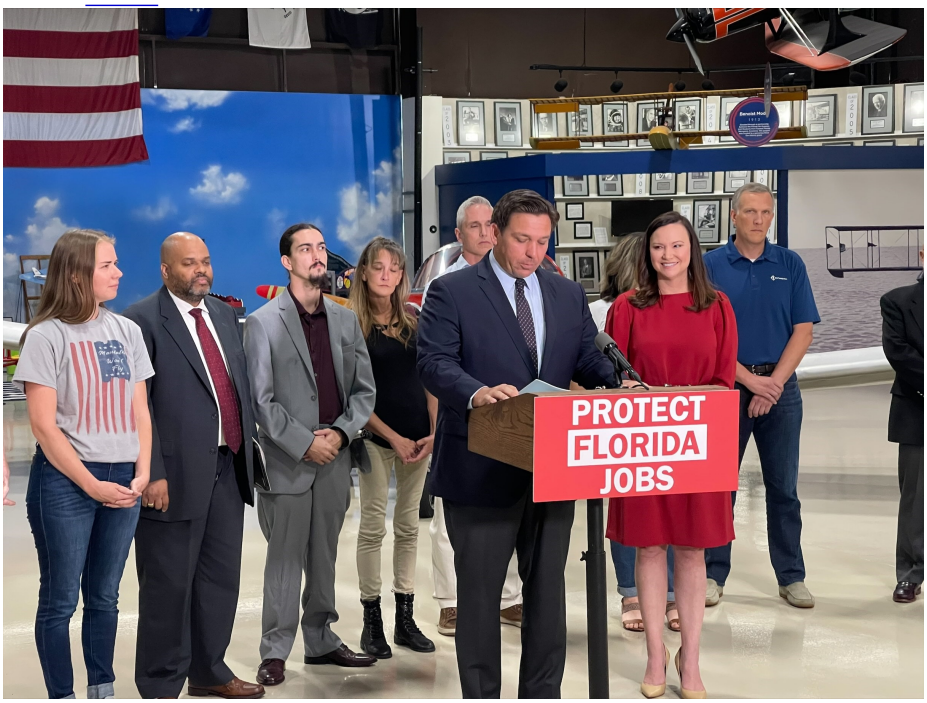
Attorney General Ashley Moody stopped by the Kissimmee Police Department to continue her Thin Line Tribute initiative. Thin Line Tribute recognizes the courageous and often thankless work of frontline law enforcement officers. Attorney General Moody visited KPD to show appreciation and thank the frontline officers for their daily efforts to protect Floridians.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Serving as a police officer is dangerous, stressful and so often, thankless. Making matters worse, there are staffing shortages at law enforcement agencies across the country and in some cases, leadership that hurts instead of helps our frontline heroes. In Florida, we back the blue—and I was honored to meet and thank some of the best frontline law enforcement officers in the state this morning at KPD through our Thin Line Tribute.”

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Events

This week, Attorney General Ashley Moody and Governor Ron DeSantis announced legal action against the Biden administration over its unlawful vaccine requirements for millions of federal contractors and their employees. To view the announcement, click here.



Attorney General Moody honoring frontline law enforcement officers of the Kissimmee Police Department as part of the Thin Line Tribute initiative.



Attorney General Moody speaking at the 2021 Florida Chamber Annual Meeting & Future of Florida Forum in Orlando.

