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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

SSS: Look Out for Online Shopping Scams Promoting 'Summer Deals'



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Continuing the Summer Scams Series, Attorney General Ashley Moody is issuing a Consumer Alert to warn Floridians about potential online shopping scams. Many online retailers host huge summer sales. Scammers may mimic these legitimate events to target consumers with malware, phishing texts and other messages designed to steal personal or financial information.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Summer sales are a popular way for online retailers to attract customers and promote seasonal items. Scammers know this and may exploit these shopping events by posing as representatives of major retailers to steal money or personal information from unsuspecting consumers. As we continue our Summer Scam Series, I am asking consumers to take a few proactive steps to avoid fake emails, text messages and websites designed to impersonate legitimate companies.”

Attorney General Moody warns Floridians about four tactics used by scammers to target online shoppers:

- Copycat websites that look dangerously similar to, or even exactly like, the legitimate store’s website. Pay close attention to the website URL.
- Fake security alert emails claiming a target’s online account is compromised—often asking for users to verify billing names, addresses and telephone numbers. These messages can be linked to malware or may be used to steal information. Verify the message’s legitimacy by calling the company and asking about the email.
- Falsified order confirmations and package delivery updates use the same fake email concept of the security-alert scam, except they target different steps in the ordering

process—making the entire scam seem more realistic.
- Spoofed phone calls can be made to look like they originate from a legitimate company's number. These phone calls may offer raffles, warn about security issues, ask the receiver to take a survey or use other tactics. Most companies will not call and attempt to convince a customer to pay for anything over the phone, ask for a customer's personal information or offer an unexpected refund. Hang up immediately if this is the case.

Ahead of the popular online shopping day, Cyber Monday, Attorney General Moody released tips to help online shoppers avoid retail-related scams. To view the tips, click here.

To view other recent Consumer Alerts, visit Attorney General Moody's Consumer Alert webpage at MyFloridaLegal.com/ConsumerAlert.

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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.