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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

AG Moody Highlights Efforts to Protect Seniors on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day



TALLAHASEE, Fla.—This World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, Attorney General Ashley Moody is highlighting efforts to protect Florida seniors. Attorney General Moody's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigates allegations of patient abuse, neglect and exploitation in facilities receiving payments under the Medicaid program, such as nursing homes, organizations for the mentally and physically disabled, and assisted living centers. Since 2019, MFCU investigations have resulted in the arrests of 41 suspects in cases involving the abuse, exploitation or neglect of Florida seniors.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Protecting vulnerable Floridians is a mission close to my heart and I am proud of the work my Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigators do to stop patient abuse, exploitation and neglect. Their work not only stops the ongoing mistreatment of seniors, but it also prevents future atrocities by bringing to justice criminals who take advantage of defenseless Floridians."

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day serves as a call to action for individuals, organizations and communities working to end elder abuse, including financial exploitation, neglect and scams.

Attorney General Moody's MFCU works toward this mission in cases involving the Medicaid program. Generally speaking, instances of abuse outside the Medicaid program fall under the jurisdiction of local law enforcement, who work in close partnership with MFCU.

Below are a few examples of cases:

- Former Assisted Living Employee Arrested for Striking 87-Year-Old Alzheimer's Resident in the Face
- Assisted Living Facility Supervisor Arrested for Neglect of a 98-Year-Old Wheelchair-Bound Resident
- Attorney General Moody Takes Action Against Man Who Used Power of Attorney to Steal More Than $40,000 from Florida Senior
- Woman Arrested for Exploiting $14,000 from Elderly Adult in a Nursing Home

To report an abuse situation, individuals may use the Florida Abuse Hotline by calling 1(800) 96-ABUSE, or report online at the Florida Department of Children and Families Abuse Hotline webpage.

Additionally, Attorney General Moody's Consumer Protection Division and Senior Protection Team work to stop scams and fraud targeting older Floridians. The teams have recovered millions of dollars through legal actions involving scams aimed at Florida seniors.

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The Florida Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigates and prosecutes providers that intentionally defraud the state's Medicaid program through fraudulent billing practices. Medicaid fraud essentially steals from Florida's taxpayers. From January 2019 to the present, Attorney General Moody's MFCU has obtained more than $112 million in settlements and judgments.

The Florida MFCU is funded through a grant totaling $27,734,297 for Federal Fiscal Year 2022, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General. The Federal Share of these funds is 75% totaling $20,800,724. The State Matching Share of these funds is 25% totaling $6,933,573 and is funded by Florida.