

Feb 29, 2024

Contact Kylie Mason

Phone (850) 245-0150



OFFICE OF THE
ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

VIDEO: Attorney General Moody Launches Cold Case Investigations Unit to Help Florida Law Enforcement with Select Unsolved Cases



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is announcing the launch of Florida’s Cold Case Investigations Unit to assist law enforcement with unsolved homicides. Standing with Palm Beach County Sheriff Ric Bradshaw and Executive Director Callahan Walsh today at the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Attorney General Moody announced the new unit under the Office of Statewide Prosecution. OSP has authority to prosecute crimes that cross multiple jurisdictions. CCIU’s mission is to help law enforcement agencies that may lack resources needed to pursue potential leads in unsolved homicide investigations or to provide additional support with evidence testing in difficult cases. The unit is already producing results, helping investigate and prosecute the 2010 murder of a 16-year-old Alachua County boy.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “There are hundreds of thousands of unsolved murders in the U.S. and that number is growing every year. Florida law enforcement does a great job fighting crime, but when a challenging case goes cold it can be difficult to find the resources to revive the investigation. Our Cold Case Investigations Unit will serve as a resource to law enforcement agencies statewide to help give select unsolved cases new life.”

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children Executive Director Callahan Walsh said, "The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children applauds Attorney General Moody for the launch of the Cold Case Investigations Unit. This initiative will provide law enforcement agencies across the state with essential resources, empowering them to seek answers and deliver justice to victims and families affected by unsolved crimes. NCMEC has seen firsthand the significant impact of advancing technology, where evidence previously offering limited insights now holds the potential to reveal critical answers. We are proud to collaborate with Attorney General Moody and Florida law enforcement in their ongoing efforts to resolve cold cases."

According to [Project Cold Case](#), there are more than 20,000 open homicide cold cases in Florida since 1965. Florida ranks sixth in the nation for the number of unsolved homicide cold cases—behind California, New York, Texas, Illinois and Michigan.

Nationwide, unsolved cases are on the rise. One news [report](#) states that clearance rates—the percentage of crimes leading to arrests—for violent or property crimes, have dropped to the lowest levels since the Federal Bureau of Investigation began tracking the information in the 1960s. In 2022, police departments nationwide, on average, solved only 37%. One of the reasons for this decrease across the country is a nationwide police shortage. According to a 2021 International Association of Chiefs of Police survey, [78%](#) of agencies across the country reported having difficulty in recruiting qualified candidates.

Attorney General Moody [launched Be A Florida Hero](#) in 2021 to spread the word around the country about the benefits of becoming a Florida law enforcement officer. Along with the Florida Law Enforcement Bonus program, since July 2022, Florida's law enforcement ranks grew by more than 4,000, including more than 900 officers from out-of-state. Attorney General Moody's CCIU can provide additional assistance to Florida law enforcement agencies to solve select unsolved homicide cases.

CCIU recently helped the Alachua County Sheriff's Office make an arrest in a 13-year-old cold case. In 2010, during an attempted home burglary, a man shot a 16-year-old boy four times, killing the victim. At the time, with no eyewitness account and very little forensic evidence, the case became cold due to a lack of leads. In September 2021, investigators took action on a DNA CODIS hit on a shirt collected near the crime scene, due to the DNA-matched person being arrested for a felony.

This individual, after making a statement to Attorney General Moody's Statewide Prosecutors, admitted participating in the burglary of the victim's home, but did not kill the victim. The individual identified the shooter as Timothy Thomas. CCIU investigators helped authorities arrest Thomas after a grand jury returned an indictment on Thomas. Thomas is already serving a life sentence for attempting to kill a police officer in Key West.

To learn more about CCIU, click [here](#).

#

The Florida Cold Case Investigations Unit was established to assist local law enforcement agencies, particularly those facing resource constraints by dedicating additional support to select unsolved cases. The Florida Cold Case Investigations Unit consists of a small group of

*dedicated investigators and attorneys working on cases as requested by law enforcement. Anyone interested in or looking for more information on cold cases in Florida should contact the relevant local law enforcement agency. Anyone with information about unsolved cases can report anonymously by calling **TIPS and may be eligible for a large cash reward.*