

Oct 20, 2021

Contact Kylie Mason

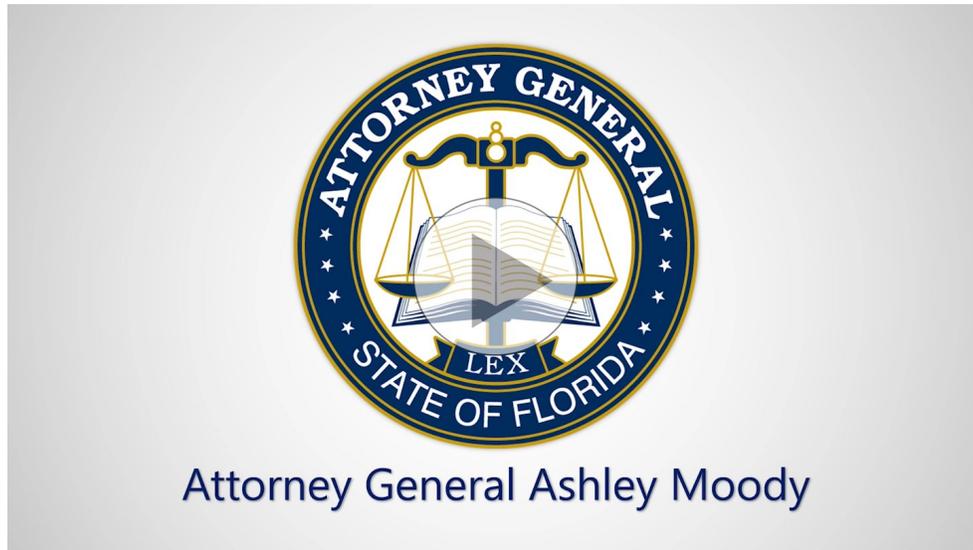
Phone 850-245-0150



OFFICE OF THE
ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

AG Moody Urges Online Safety During Cybersecurity Awareness Month



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—In recognition of Cybersecurity Awareness Month, Attorney General Ashley Moody is urging Floridians to practice safe online habits. Over the past year, [70% of Americans reported spending more time online](#) than ever before. The COVID-19 pandemic forced Floridians to work, learn and socialize more online—creating greater [opportunity for cybercriminals](#) to hack, steal and swindle. This Cybersecurity Awareness Month, Attorney General Moody is encouraging Floridians to stay vigilant and proactive to guard against cybercrime.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "As we increasingly rely on the internet for daily activities, cybercriminals are setting traps to interfere with these activities and steal sensitive information. Cyberspace is the new frontier of criminal activity and in recognition of the month, I am urging all Floridians to develop safe online practices to avoid falling prey to identity theft, malware attacks and other online schemes."

According to a recent Google poll, in addition to Americans reporting an increase in online activity, a majority also [report higher concerns about online safety](#) than ever before. Cybercriminals noticed the shift from in person to online and took full advantage. From [Zoombombers hacking video conferences](#), to imposter websites infected with malware, cybercriminals go to great lengths to carry out online schemes. Cyber scammers even [used the pandemic](#) and technology to scam Floridians through fake COVID-19 tests, vaccination scams and falsely advertising investments for companies searching for a cure to the virus.

Unfortunately, older Floridians are often the targets of cybercrimes and scams. With [older Americans spending more time in front of screens](#), fraudsters are eager to exploit their online activity. Two of the most common scams seniors fall victim to are phishing scams and malware scams. Phishing scams involve sending a message that appears to come from a trusted source. Malware scams involve sending messages with links used to infect a device with a virus. Older Floridians are not the only targets of malicious malware. In August, Attorney General Moody issued a [Consumer Alert warning Floridians](#) about a new malware attack targeting mobile phones—giving scammers the ability to steal sensitive information, including banking credentials.

To avoid malicious malware attacks:

- Never respond to a solicitation requesting financial information, other personal identification information or online cash transfers;
- If a text message, email or phone call appears to be from a bank or other financial institution, look up the company online and make direct contact instead of responding to the solicitation; and
- Only send money to trusted individuals or businesses.

In an effort to help seniors avoid scams, Attorney General Moody launched the [Scams at a Glance](#) program. The online resource provides tips and information through downloadable brochures designed to equip consumers with information and best practices to guard against fraud. The brochures are available in English and Spanish and are accessible through the Scams at a Glance webpage.

To view *Scams at a Glance: Identity Theft* in English, click [here](#).

To view *Scams at a Glance: Identity Theft* in Spanish, click [here](#).

To report a mobile malware scam, contact the Florida Attorney General's Office at 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or file a complaint online at [MyFloridaLegal.com](#).