

Date February 08, 2019

Attorney General Moody's Week In Review - Feb. 8, 2019



Florida's opioid litigation aims to hold responsible the nation's largest opioid manufacturers, distributors and pharmacies for their role in causing this deadly crisis. This week, the first hearing in our case was held in a Pasco County courtroom. Standing before Judge Declan Mansfield of the Sixth Judicial Circuit of Florida, I argued on behalf of the state that we need to go to trial as soon as practicable.

On the campaign trail, I talked about the devastating reality that Florida lost 14 people to opioid overdoses every day. As I traveled the state, I had mothers cry on my shoulder as they told me of losing their child to this epidemic. Now, 17 people a day are dying from opioid abuse in Florida.

This crisis is ravaging our state, and it is not going away on its own. What we seek through our litigation is to make sure this doesn't happen again. We have put the defendants on notice. They must provide the remediation necessary to compensate the state for the harm caused by this devastating crisis as well as to abate its enormous impact both upon our citizens and our institutions going forward.

We will also seek legislation this session to establish a Statewide Task Force on Opioid Drug Abuse to help identify ways to reduce the demand for opioids, decrease the supply, and save lives.

Ending the opioid crisis is a top priority, and as Florida's Attorney General, I will continue to do everything in my power to combat the substantial harm it is having on Florida families—including staying actively and purposefully engaged in our opioid litigation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'A'.

In The News

Florida Attorney General appears in court during first hearing on opioid lawsuit, WFLA

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State, drugmaker attorneys meet for first hearing in Florida opioid lawsuit, ABC Action News

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Roofing scammers stole nearly \$500,000 from Volusia-Flagler residents after hurricanes, officials say, Daytona Beach News Journal

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Florida attorney general bars social-media company from shady practices, Palm Beach Post

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Two South Florida doctors charged with doling out painkillers at 'pill mills', Miami Herald

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Protecting Floridians

10 Suspects Arrested in Multimillion Dollar Health Insurance Scheme



Attorney General Ashley Moody and Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis announced the arrests of 10 suspects in a multimillion dollar insurance fraud operation, spanning multiple counties in Florida. According to a two-year investigation by the Florida Attorney General's Office of Statewide Prosecution and the Department of Financial Services, the suspects participated in an organized crime ring that established fake medical clinics by renting small office spaces. The suspects then billed insurance companies using the personal information of several doctors and insurance subscribers. The fraudulent clinics were located in Hillsborough, Lee, Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties. The suspects allegedly submitted 23,708 claims worth more than \$40 million.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "This organized crime scheme cost health insurance companies millions and stretched from Hillsborough to Miami-Dade County. Insurance fraud is a serious crime that forces higher premiums on all ratepayers, and as Attorney General, I will continue to work with our great law enforcement partners to investigate and bring to justice any criminal organization exploiting Florida's insurance market." [Read More](#)

Man Arrested in Connecticut for Florida Bank Fraud and Identity Theft

Attorney General **Ashley Moody**

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Connecticut

authorities arrested a Florida man on charges related to bank fraud and identity theft throughout multiple counties in Florida. According to an investigation by the Florida Attorney General's Office of Statewide Prosecution and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Gerardo Taboada, 57, orchestrated fraudulent withdrawals from numerous PNC Banks in Hillsborough, Indian River, Manatee, Palm Beach, Pinellas and Sarasota counties. The defendant allegedly stole more than \$43,000 from PNC Bank accounts statewide.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Identity theft and bank fraud are serious crimes that wreak havoc on people's lives and finances. We will continue to work with law enforcement to investigate and prosecute any individual or organization impersonating Floridians to drain their bank accounts." [Read More](#)

Heroin Trafficker Sentenced to 15 Years in Prison

Attorney General **Ashley Moody**

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The Florida

Attorney General's Office of Statewide Prosecution secured a 15-year prison sentence for a man trafficking heroin in Florida. Jose Albino Rodriguez, 44, pleaded guilty to trafficking in heroin and conspiracy to traffic in heroin. The Honorable Judge Christopher Sabella sentenced Rodriguez to 15 years in Florida State Prison.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Every day Florida loses 17 people to the opioid crisis, and we must continue fighting to keep heroin and other deadly drugs off our streets. As Attorney General, I will work tirelessly with our great law enforcement partners to stop the flow of opioids into our state. I want to thank our local and federal law enforcement partners for their great investigative work on this case and for helping us put another heroin trafficker behind bars." [Read More](#)



Two South

Florida doctors were arrested on charges related to the unlawful dispensing of opioids.

Ariana Fajardo Orshan, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, George L. Piro, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Miami Field Office, Shimon R. Richmond, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Inspector General (HHS-OIG), Miami Regional Office, Adolphus P. Wright, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Miami Field Office, Brian Swain, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Secret Service (USSS), Miami Field Office, and Ashley B. Moody, Florida Attorney General, made the announcement. [Read More](#)

Events

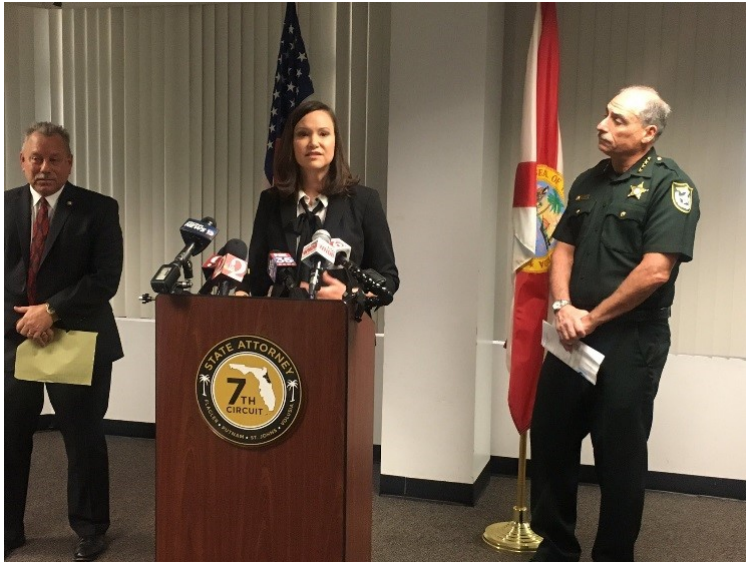
This week, Attorney General Ashley Moody joined Governor Ron DeSantis and Florida Cabinet members to flip the switch to open the Florida State Fair in Tampa Bay.



Attorney General Moody visiting with local law enforcement, including Hillsborough County Sheriff Chad Chronister and City of Tampa Police officers on Heroes Day at the Florida State Fair.



Attorney General Moody detailing arrests made in a roofing fraud case at a news conference in Daytona Beach, alongside State Attorney R.J. Larizza and Volusia County Sheriff Michael Chitwood.



Attorney General Moody welcoming First Lady Casey DeSantis to the Attorney General's Office at the Florida Capitol to discuss the work being accomplished on behalf of all Floridians.



Attorney General Moody meeting with Florida's new Secretary of State Laurel Lee. Attorney General Moody and Secretary Lee both served as judges together in the 13th Judicial Circuit of Florida.





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Attorney General Moody encouraging members of the Future Business Leaders of America Phi Beta Lambda Florida Chapter. FBLA-PBL is dedicated to helping students and professionals improve leadership skills and academic goals.

