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OFFICE OF THE
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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

VIDEO CONSUMER ALERT: Attorney General Moody Warns Floridians About Malvertising



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is issuing a Consumer Alert to warn Floridians about a concerning cybercrime tactic called malvertising. Scammers are leveraging sponsored links and ads on search engines to mimic frequently visited pages, leading unsuspecting users to malware-infected websites. A report from Malwarebytes Threat Intelligence shows that [more than 800 malvertising-related attacks occurred in the first six months of 2023](#), an average of almost five attacks per day. The team claims the number of unreported attacks is probably much higher.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Cybercriminals are relentless in devising new ways to target victims. We’re warning Floridians about a concerning new cyberscam tactic called malvertising—where fraudsters use sponsored hyperlinks and ads to lure unsuspecting users to click on dangerous links that contain malware, compromising their devices and personal information. Be vigilant for malware—always double-check the legitimacy of a link or ad on a search engine before clicking.”

Once a malvertising link is clicked, the user is redirected to a website that may appear similar to the intended site but is actually installing malware. This malware can range from spyware and ransomware to viruses capable of stealing sensitive information such as passwords, financial data and personal documents.

Attorney General Moody is offering the following tips to Floridians:

- **Verify URLs:** Before clicking on any links, carefully inspect the URL to ensure it matches the legitimate website's domain—hover over a URL to preview the entirety of the web address;
- **Use Reliable Security Software:** Install reputable antivirus and anti-malware software on all devices and keep software up to date;
- **Read the Description:** Look for grammatical errors or overly promotional language in a site description; and
- **Exercise Caution:** Beware of unsolicited emails, pop-up ads and requests for personal information, especially from unfamiliar sources.

Victims of cybercrimes should report incidents to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement [Computer Crime Center](#).

Anyone who encounters a cybercrime can also file a complaint with the Internet Crime Complaint Center at [IC3.gov](#).

To view other Consumer Alerts, visit [MyFloridaLegal.com/Consumer Alert](#).

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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](#). To view recent Consumer Alerts and for other information about avoiding scams, visit [MyFloridaLegal.com/ConsumerAlert](#).