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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release Look out of COVID-19 Vaccine Survey Scam Emerging in Florida



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today issued a Consumer Alert warning Floridians about a COVID-19 vaccine survey scam that is making its way to Florida. Earlier this year, the Better Business Bureau warned of scammers contacting citizens by email, text message or phone call offering compensation in exchange for completing a COVID-19 survey. Unfortunately, these are not legitimate surveys and citizens may be duped into sharing personal information. Once a victim's information is stolen via the fake survey, scammers may use it to access bank accounts, set up credit cards and/or steal identities.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "As we approach nearly half of the population of Florida being fully vaccinated, scammers are finding new ways to exploit this milestone to steal sensitive information. Please be on the lookout for mysterious emails, text messages or phone calls claiming to be from Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson asking you to fill out a survey about your vaccine. Reports of these fake survey scams are beginning to surface in Florida, and vaccinated Floridians need to make sure they do not fall for this scam."

The COVID-19 vaccine survey scam reportedly involves messages from scammers impersonating relatives, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, vaccine providers or other sources. The content of the messages may offer reward money or prizes for filling out the phony survey after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine, as reported by the Department of Justice.

Attorney General Moody is providing the following tips to help Floridians avoid COVID-19 vaccine related scams:

- Do not automatically trust the number listed on the caller ID, especially unsolicited calls;
- Hang up or ignore someone who reaches out asking for personal information or requests payment;
- Avoid clicking on links in email or text messages offering compensation for COVID-19 vaccinations; and
- Be especially wary of communications with misspellings or poor grammar.

Attorney General Moody is reminding newly-vaccinated Floridians to protect sensitive information from scammers by refraining from posting COVID-19 vaccination cards online.

The CDC recently released a <u>smartphone-based tool that uses text messages and web surveys</u>. This is not a fake survey and is recommended by the CDC to help provide personalized health check-ins for citizens after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.

Report survey scams or any other suspicious activity to the Florida Attorney General's Office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or by visiting MyFloridaLegal.com.

Since the COVID-19 emergency declaration, Attorney General Moody has issued more than 30 Consumer Alerts with information about emerging scams and tips to avoid fraud. To view the latest alerts and to stay up to date on COVID-19 related scams, visit the Attorney General's Consumer Alert webpage by clicking here.

For all the Attorney General's COVID-19 related releases and additional COVID-19 tips and resources, click <u>here</u>.

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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.