

Date June 11, 2021

Attorney General Moody's Week In Review - June 11, 2021



As more and more Floridians receive their COVID-19 vaccination, it is important to be on the lookout for an emerging scam in our state: vaccine survey scams. The Better Business Bureau has received reports of scammers contacting Floridians by email, text message and phone call offering compensation in exchange for completing a fake COVID-19 vaccine survey. Their goal—to access personal information.

Scammers can use this information to steal money, set up new credit cards in the victim's name or commit identity theft.

To avoid this devious scheme:

- Know that scammers may impersonate the CDC, vaccine providers or other medical organizations;
- Do not automatically trust the number listed on your caller ID;
- Ignore solicitations requesting personal information or payment; and

- Avoid clicking on links in emails or text messages offering compensation in exchange for filling out COVID-19 vaccination surveys.

You can report vaccine survey scams, or other suspicious activity, to my office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or online at [MyFloridaLegal.com](https://www.MyFloridaLegal.com).

By knowing scammers' tricks and reporting fraud, you can help us build a Stronger, Safer Florida.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

In The News

Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody issues Consumer Alert about COVID-19 vaccine survey scam, WCTV

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Don't fall for COVID-19 vaccine survey scams, Moody warns Floridians, News 4 Jax

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Attorney General Ashley Moody issues tips to avoid phantom debt collector scams, WCTV

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Ashley Moody Secures More Funds for Floridians in Settlement With Keurig Over Antitrust Case, Florida Daily

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State Attorney General Warns About Post-Hurricane Scams, WJCT

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Ashley Moody Offers Tips for National Safety Month, Florida Daily

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Protecting Floridians

Attorney General Moody Encourages Support of Law Enforcement in Recognition of National Safety Month



This National Safety Month, Attorney General Ashley Moody is encouraging Floridians to take a proactive approach to personal safety and to support law enforcement officers working to protect their communities. Law enforcement officers are on the frontlines every day risking their well-being for the safety of others. To help officers in this mission, Attorney General Moody is urging Floridians to take steps to increase personal safety.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “During National Safety Month, take stock of your general safety routine. Many crimes are crimes of opportunity, so reduce the chances a criminal might have to wrong you—keep your doors locked, try not to walk alone late at night and park in well-lit areas. Be aware of your surroundings and notify law enforcement if you see something suspicious. Our law enforcement officers work so hard to serve and protect our communities, but they can’t be everywhere. Show support and gratitude for the risks they take to protect us all by taking charge of your own personal security.” [Read More](#)

Bradenton Tiler Arrested for Elderly Exploitation

Attorney General **Ashley Moody**

NEWS ALERT



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Following an

investigation by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, tile-and-marble worker Jason DeCicco, 45, of Bradenton, was arrested for exploitation of the elderly, a first-degree felony. The case is being prosecuted by Attorney General Ashley Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution.

Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "The facts of this case are sickening—the defendant targeted a senior, moved into her home and stole more than \$120,000. We must protect seniors from criminals who target them. I am glad my Statewide Prosecutors, working with FDLE, were able to stop this fraud and arrest the suspect. We will aggressively prosecute this case to help ensure the defendant can never again swindle a Florida senior." [Read More](#)

Plant City Resident Arrested for Stealing More Than \$180,000 from Taxpayer-Funded Program



Attorney General Ashley Moody announced the arrest of Ratonia Thompson by the Plant City Police Department for stealing more than \$180,000. Over the course of four years, Thompson allegedly stole from the taxpayer-funded program, instead of distributing the funds to caregivers.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “The scheme concocted by this con artist not only exploited a disabled Floridian and the Florida Medicaid program, it also put the financial well-being and good standing with the IRS of other caregivers in jeopardy.

“Thanks to the work of my MFCU, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, this fraud scheme was thwarted, and the perpetrator arrested.” [Read More](#)



Attorney

General Ashley Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution secured a conviction against a defendant on multiple counts of credit card fraud and identity theft. Defendant NyKeshia Smith, a former convenience store employee, defrauded several customers by obtaining information from credit cards during transactions. Smith used the stolen information on shopping sprees. In one instance, a senior victim left a debit card behind in the card reader after a transaction and Smith then stole the card.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "I hope this fraudster enjoyed her victim-funded shopping sprees because she will be paying for it with hard time in state prison. We will not allow fraudsters to rip off consumers in Florida—especially our great seniors. I am proud of the work of my Statewide Prosecutors in securing a guilty verdict for this criminal." [Read More](#)

Former Florida Mortgage Broker Arrested in Alleged Mortgage Loan Modification and Investment Fraud Schemes

Attorney General **Ashley Moody**

NEWS ALERT



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The Office of

Financial Regulation announced that Thomas Errico was arrested on a charge of communications fraud for his alleged role in a fraudulent mortgage loan modification and investment scam.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Proud of my Office of Statewide Prosecution and the Office of Financial Regulation for their work in bringing this criminal to justice. I will continue to fight for Floridians and use every resource available to protect our citizens from fraudsters seeking to manipulate and deceive others."

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Events



Police

Attorney General Moody speaking to members of the Jacksonville Bar Association at a luncheon in Jacksonville.



Attorney General Moody presenting the Florida Bar Consumer Protection Lawyer of the Year Award virtually. This year's award goes to Carol DeGraffenreidt, Bureau Chief for the Attorney General's West Palm Beach Consumer Protection Division.

