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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General Moody Demands Meta Cease Child Exploitation on Instagram



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is demanding Meta immediately cease monetizing child exploitation and prohibit child-modeling accounts on Instagram. The call comes after news reports revealed the social media platform monetized minor accounts and actively promoted the accounts of young girls to those with overt sexual interest in minors. Attorney General Moody, along with 26 other attorneys general, today sent a letter to Meta to protect children online and stop this activity.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “As Florida's Attorney General, and as a mother, it is vital that we do all we can to protect our youth online. Reports show that Meta refuses to implement procedures to protect children’s safety on Instagram—allowing child exploitation and promoting accounts of young girls to those with overt sexual interest in minors. This is terrifying. Meta must prohibit child-modeling accounts immediately.”

Attorney General Moody is demanding Meta immediately cease promoting child exploitation on Instagram. In a letter to the tech corporation, Attorney General Moody and the coalition of states explain, “The Wall Street Journal recently reported that Meta refused to implement recommended procedures to protect children’s safety on Instagram even after Meta’s own staff determined the platform lacked ‘basic child-safety protections.’ ‘Two teams inside Meta raised

alarms in internal reports’ after finding that ‘hundreds’ of ‘parent-managed minor accounts’ were being used to sell ‘content, often featuring young girls in bikinis and leotards’ to ‘overwhelmingly male’ subscribers who were ‘often overt about sexual interest in the children’...Meta has turned Instagram into a source for content that is banned even by OnlyFans, a platform that monetizes both sexual and nonsexual content.”

Attorney General Moody is joined by the attorneys general of the following states in sending the letter to Meta today: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia and Wyoming.

To read the full letter, click [here](#).

Attorney General Moody continues to fight to protect children online. In January, Attorney General Moody called on Congress to push child-safety initiatives at a hearing with social media CEOs. The U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing entitled “Big Tech and the Online Child Sexual Exploitation Crisis,” where witnesses included X Corp. CEO Linda Yaccarino, TikTok CEO Shou Chew, Snap Inc. CEO Evan Spiegel, Discord Inc. CEO Jason Citron and Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg. To learn more, click [here](#).

Last October, Attorney General Moody took legal action against Meta—alleging that the company knowingly designed and deployed harmful features on Instagram and its other social media platforms that purposefully aim to addict children and teens. The complaint alleges that Meta knew of the harmful effects of its platforms, including Facebook and Instagram, on young people. Instead of taking meaningful steps to mitigate these harms, Meta misled the public about the effects associated with use of its platform. The company deceived users of the extent of the psychological and health impacts suffered by young users addicted to the use of its platforms. The complaint further alleges that Meta knew that young users, including those under 13, were active on the platforms and knowingly collected data from these users without parental consent. To view Florida’s civil action, click [here](#).

Last July, Attorney General Moody invited Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg to testify before the Statewide Council on Human Trafficking about the results of a concerning Florida human trafficking survey. Attorney General Moody and the council conducted a statewide study with Florida law enforcement agencies on documented instances since 2019 in which social media was used to facilitate human trafficking, trafficking operations or control victims. The survey went out to 80 law enforcement agencies, going to all 67 sheriffs’ offices and police departments in major Florida cities. Results show that 146 of the 271 reported instances of social media platform use in human trafficking are attributable to Meta platforms—more than half of the reported instances involved. View more information [here](#).

Since then, Meta made [minor changes](#) to enhance youth protections, including a new “nightly nudges” setting that prompts users to put Instagram or Facebook away for the night. However, the setting is not compulsory, and Meta has yet to respond to Florida.

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