

Oct 21, 2021

Contact Kylie Mason

Phone 850-245-0150



Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

AG Moody Fights in Court to Support Firefighters Challenging Unlawful Vaccine Mandate

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today announced a legal filing of a brief in support of the plaintiffs in the *Wheat v. Orange County* case. Attorney General Moody's brief supports a challenge by several first responders against the county's vaccine requirements for all county employees. The Attorney General filed the brief Wednesday, the same day the county [fired the Fire Rescue Battalion Chief](#) following the chief's refusal to discipline firefighters who did not comply with the unlawful mandate.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "These local politicians are abusing their authority and trying to ruin the careers of so many of our courageous firefighters. While local leaders may be turning their backs on first responders, I will not. I am proud to stand with Orange County firefighters, and I want all of Florida's first responders to know that they have an Attorney General who will fight for them."

Governor Ron DeSantis said, "Florida's brave first responders have been on the front lines every day, and local governments tossing them aside based on a personal health decision is unconscionable and illegal. We will exhaust every legal option to protect our first responders. I want to thank Attorney General Moody for continuing to uphold the law in our state."

Attorney General Moody filed the brief in Florida's Ninth Judicial Circuit Court in Orange County. The brief outlines the public safety threat that could be created by the local vaccine requirement. The nation, including Florida, is experiencing shortages in the ranks of first responders. The resulting shortages could lead to longer wait times during emergency situations, as outlined in the Attorney General's brief.

The filing goes on to outline the plaintiffs' likelihood to prevail given that the county's policy violates Section 381.00316(2) F.S.S., which forbids a government entity from requiring a person to provide documentation certifying the receipt of a COVID-19 vaccine to gain access to governmental operations in Florida.

Attorney General Moody is asking the court for emergency relief, enjoining the county from requiring all employees to obtain a COVID-19 vaccine.

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

Last month, Attorney General Moody [filed a brief](#) in support of the plaintiffs in the *Darris Friend, et al. v. City of Gainesville* case. Attorney General Moody's brief supported a challenge by city employees, including police officers, against the city's vaccine requirements for all municipal

employees. Following the brief, the judge ruled in favor of the plaintiffs.