

**Date** December 04, 2020

## **Attorney General Moody's Week In Review - Dec. 4, 2020**



Floridians have dealt with many challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many are struggling financially. That is why I am glad to announce that our Consumer Protection Division has recovered more than \$2 million for consumers! These efforts would not be possible without the help of the many Floridians who contacted our office.

The Price Gouging Hotline remains active and my Consumer Protection Division is still assisting consumers and reviewing complaints related to price increases on commodities essential to protect against COVID-19 and other concerns related to the pandemic's impact on consumer transactions.

In addition to recovering more than \$2 million, our office:

- Received approximately 5,300 consumer contacts about the price of essential commodities;

- Made more than 10,000 referrals and contacts to merchants about allegations of price gouging, refunds and scams;
- Issued 107 subpoenas to further price gouging investigations; and
- Worked with online platforms to deactivate 258 posts offering items for outrageous prices.

Our team is still assisting consumers with extreme price increases for commodities and services related to COVID-19. We will continue to work diligently to stop those exploiting this health crisis to target Floridians.

For more information about price gouging, please click [here](#).

Price gouging can be reported to my office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM, visiting [MyFloridaLegal.com](http://MyFloridaLegal.com) or downloading the NO SCAM smartphone app. For tips on reporting price gouging, click [here](#).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

## **In The News**

**Ashley Moody says \$2 million recovered for consumers, Florida Politics**

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**Florida Attorney General secures more than \$2 Million in COVID-19 recoveries for Florida consumers, ABC 7 Sarasota**

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**Florida Attorney General issues consumer alert for holiday shopping season, WCTV Tallahassee**

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**Cyber Monday and Beyond: Online Holiday Shopping Tips, NBC 6 South Florida**

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**Feeling Charitable On 'Giving Tuesday'? Make Sure You Are Giving To A Real Charity, CBS 4 Miami**

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**AG Moody Urges Congress to Extend CARES Act, The Capitolist**

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## Protecting Floridians



emic Impacts

Attorney

General Ashley Moody is urging Congress to extend the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act funding until the end of 2021. By extending funding, state and local governments will continue to have access to financial aid and resources for COVID-19 related expenses. Attorney General Moody, along with 48 other attorneys general, sent a letter to Congressional leadership requesting that the Dec. 30, 2020 deadline be extended.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "COVID-19 has had a devastating financial impact for both individuals and our communities as a whole. We must remain mindful that our communities will continue to need financial resources to help our state and local economies recover from these challenging times." [Read More](#)

**Attorney General Moody Provides Tips for Safe Giving on Giving Tuesday**



Attorney General Ashley Moody is warning of the potential for charity fraud on Giving Tuesday. Going into the season of giving, Floridians should take extra precautions to ensure that their generous donations are not being misappropriated by fraudsters or unscrupulous organizations.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "The holiday season is a time when many give generously to organizations and those in need. Unfortunately, as charitable donations increase during this season, so does the potential for charity fraud. I want to encourage all Floridians who plan to give to others this holiday season to beware of scammers who try to take advantage of their generosity. One of the best ways to avoid charity fraud and stop these scammers in their tracks is by donating to established, well-known organizations." [Read More](#)

**PCSO Organized Retail Crime Unit Arrests Suspects Involved in Multi-million Dollar Theft Ring**

Attorney General Ashley Moody

# NEWS ALERT



Polk County Sheriff's Office Organized Retail Crime Detectives, working with the Attorney General's Office of Statewide Prosecution, Ashley Moody, Attorney General, and the Georgia Bureau of Investigations, developed five suspects—all from Georgia—during an investigation that started in August of 2019 at the Auburndale Walmart where three men were conducting suspicious merchandise returns. Two suspects have been arrested, one suspect died of natural causes, and two suspects are at large—both have warrants for their arrest. There are three additional suspects that investigators are attempting to identify.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “While much of the country was busy social distancing and taking measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the criminals executing this expansive retail theft scheme were driving to Walmart stores throughout the country, replacing new televisions with damaged or used ones and fraudulently returning them for a massive ill-gotten pay day. Thanks to great legal and investigative work by my Statewide Prosecutors and Sheriff Judd’s Deputies, the members of this odious retail theft ring were caught and will face justice for their crimes.”

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## MFCU Announces Arrest of Woman for Exploiting Disabled Adults



Attorney General Ashley Moody’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit announced the arrest of a former group home employee on charges related to the exploitation of several of the home’s residents. Charges resulting from the MFCU investigation into allegations at the Thomas House include exploitation, credit card fraud and identity theft of disabled adults.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Many Floridians live in group homes and they deserve to feel safe and secure in those facilities. It’s extremely upsetting that anyone would use their position of employment at a group home to exploit residents depending on them for their care. Today’s arrest should remind criminals that my Medicaid Fraud Control Unit will continue to investigate and bring to justice anyone trying to exploit Florida’s Medicaid program and its recipients.” [Read More](#)

## Events

This week, Attorney General Ashley Moody joined Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd for a news conference announcing the arrests of individuals involved in an organized retail theft operation. For more information about this multistate retail theft ring, click [here](#).

