

Dec 7, 2021

Contact Kylie Mason

Phone 850-245-0150



Attorney General Ashley Moody News Release



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today announced more than \$11 million in recoveries for consumers regarding cancellations, purchases and scams related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Attorney General Moody's Consumer Protection Division has assisted consumers throughout the pandemic with concerns involving outrageous price increases on commodities essential to slowing the spread of COVID-19, as well as working with businesses to resolve issues related to the pandemic's impact on consumer transactions.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "We have secured millions of dollars in relief for consumers nationwide following reports to my office about cancellations, purchases and scams related to the COVID-19 pandemic. My Rapid Response Team worked with a sense of urgency to quickly address reports of price gouging and other unfair trade practices in real time to reduce harm to consumers and increase awareness about potential price gouging and other financial matters arising from the pandemic. We continue to work diligently to protect Floridians and build a Stronger, Safer Florida."

In November, Attorney General Moody announced the results of actions against travel company BookIt Operating, LLC. The company acted as a third-party intermediary for airlines, car rentals and hotels but failed to disclose to consumers that it did not have the funds for current bookings in the absence of new incoming bookings. That led to more than \$7 million in recoveries for travelers who had been left empty handed. To view the news release on the actions against BookIt, click [here](#).

In addition to recovering more than \$11 million for consumers, the Florida Attorney General's

Office made more than 12,000 referrals and contacts to merchants about allegations of price gouging, failure to make refunds or credits for cancellations, scams and other concerns. Attorney General Moody's Rapid Response Team deactivated nearly 300 posts on online platforms that were offering outrageous prices or making deceptive COVID-19 related claims.

During a declared state of emergency, violators of the price gouging statute are subject to civil penalties of \$1,000 per violation, up to a total of \$25,000 for multiple violations committed in a single 24-hour period and additional penalties for violations of other applicable laws. The COVID-19 state of emergency expired on June 26. For more information on price gouging, please click [here](#).

Since the pandemic began, 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, visit Attorney General Moody's Consumer Alert web page by clicking [here](#).

#

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](https://www.myfloridalegal.com). To view recent Consumer Alerts and for other information about avoiding scams, visit [MyFloridaLegal.com/ConsumerAlert](https://www.myfloridalegal.com/ConsumerAlert).