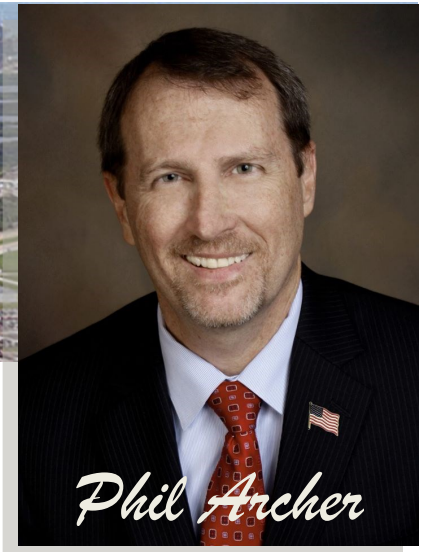




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# The Monthly Brief

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## AG SCAM RESOURCES

Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody provides a valuable resource for consumers in their battle against fraud. The website [“Scams At A Glance”](#) provides detailed and up-to-date information, with help to avoid becoming a victim of commonly reported scams.

In addition, the site also offers free, easy to read brochures (in both English and Spanish) that can be downloaded, printed and shared with seniors and others with limited technical skills or internet access.

Topics with brochures on the site include:

[IRS Impostors](#): Scams usually begin with a phone call from someone posing as an IRS agent claiming that a person failed to file their tax return or owes back taxes.

[Tax Identity Theft](#): warning signs that a fraudulent tax return may have been submitted and tips to help prevent tax identity theft.

[Price Gouging](#): During a declared state of emergency, bad actors might try to take advantage by unfairly raising the price of essential items and supplies.

[Phantom Debit](#): Is any debt that does not exist, has already been paid or has previously been discharged.

Other scam topics include [Coronavirus Scams](#), [Moving Scams](#), [Sweetheart Scams](#), [Identity Theft](#), [Holiday](#), [Technical Support](#), [Veteran](#) and [Natural Disaster Scams](#).

For more about these and other scams, or to download free brochures to print or email, visit [www.myfloridalegal.com/scams-at-a-glance](http://www.myfloridalegal.com/scams-at-a-glance)

\*FL AG Ashley Moody

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## AI Helping Scammers

One of the ways scammers remain relevant is using technology. They are always looking at new ways to steal money and information. These days that is happening in the world of artificial intelligence—commonly known as AI. Using this tech with only a few seconds of someone’s voice (captured from social media videos), [criminals can use AI voice-cloning](#) to create a computer generated version that can say anything. Imagine getting a phone call from a child or grandchild saying they are in trouble and need money. Normally we’d be skeptical, but [the voice you hear now sounds exactly like your loved one, or in this video the Michigan Attorney General](#).

AI “chatbots” can clean up many of the grammar errors that are common to scam emails or texts. This removes a typical red flag that consumers have gotten good at spotting. We’re also seeing online ads for AI tools you can download and use for free. This can be dangerous as crooks are using these ads to take victims to fake websites that install malware or try to obtain your personal information.

Remember that no matter how convincing, scams will always ask for money or sensitive information. Urgency created by an unexpected/unsolicited email is your warning to disengage. Always verify by calling a known good number or family member. Never trust a link in an email, text, or online ad. Type in the destination website yourself to ensure you aren’t sent to a fake version of the site. Learn more by visiting the [Michigan Attorney General](#), the [FTC](#) and [Fox Business](#).

\*AARP, FTC, FoxBusiness, MIAG

## A DEADLY CRYPTO SCAM

Being scammed can be financially devastating, but for some, the emotional toll is even worse. A recent [CNN report](#) featured the heartbreaking story of Dennis Jones who was an avid runner, photographer and loving father adored by his children and grandchildren.

Sadly, Dennis took his own life after losing his savings to a scammer posing as a woman who befriended him online. Likely part of a southeast Asian criminal network, the scammer built a relationship and then convinced Dennis to invest in crypto currency. Initially showing incredible profits, ultimately his funds disappeared from the fake investment site. Realizing he’d been scammed, his family tried to step in and help but it was too much for Dennis and suddenly he was gone.

Countless victims have been targeted in a scam criminals call [“Pig Butchering”](#) because they “fatten up” victims before taking everything they have. A massive global criminal operation largely run by Chinese gangs, have assembled an army of scammers. Posing as potential love interests they target middle-class Americans stealing an estimated \$4 billion dollars last year [according to the FBI](#).

What happened to Dennis was uncovered by his children after his death when they found messages he exchanged on social media. He was embarrassed, heartbroken, and hid what happened from his family. Learn the warning signs of impostor scams by visiting the [AARP](#) and [USA.gov](#) . If you or someone you know is struggling with suicidal thoughts or mental health matters, please visit [988 Lifeline](#) or dial 988 in the US.

\* CNN News, AARP, USAgov, 988 Lifeline