

# THE STATE CENTER CONSUMER PROTECTION REPORT

January 2019

## About the State Center Consumer Protection Report

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*The Center for State Enforcement of Antitrust and Consumer Protection Laws* ("State Center") is pleased to present the latest edition of the State Center Consumer Protection Report ("Consumer Protection Report") Published in partnership with [StateAG.org](http://StateAG.org), the Consumer Protection Report is a monthly compilation of state attorney general press releases on local and national consumer protection efforts, including investigations, court cases, consumer alerts and advocacy initiatives. It makes no effort to prioritize, analyze or comment on the information presented in the press releases and their potential impact on consumers.

The Consumer Protection Report relies solely and exclusively on state attorney general press releases, and thus is not an exhaustive representation of state attorney general consumer protection activity.

The Consumer Protection Report is produced through the State Center's State AG Consumer Protection Initiative: a website featuring all current and previous editions of the Report, and a [database](#), allowing visitors to conduct key-word and drop-down menu searches of all previous editions.

- *For more information on the State AG Consumer Protection Initiative, please visit our website: [www.statecenterinc.org/cpi-newsletter](http://www.statecenterinc.org/cpi-newsletter) .*
- *If an office would like their consumer protection activity included in subsequent newsletters, please contact us.*
- **Newsletter sign up:** *To sign up for the monthly Consumer Protection Report, please sign up [here](#).*



**For more information about the State Center and StateAG.org, please visit our websites:**

State Center: <http://www.statecenterinc.org>

StateAG.org: [www.stateag.org](http://www.stateag.org)

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## Consumer Protection Cases

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### ALASKA

January 28, 2019

**Attorney General alleges fraudulent distribution by opioid manufacturer Mallinckrodt**

(Anchorage, AK) – As part of the State’s ongoing efforts in battling Alaska’s opioid crisis, Attorney General Kevin G. Clarkson filed a lawsuit today against opioid manufacturer Mallinckrodt PLC, Mallinckrodt LLC and SpecGX LLC, a Mallinckrodt subsidiary.

The lawsuit alleges that for more than a decade, Mallinckrodt engaged in a deceptive marketing campaign that minimized the risks of opioids, especially the serious risks of addiction, and sought to convince doctors that there was a significant upside to their use for chronic pain by exaggerating their purported benefits. The State alleges these claims are unsupported by the scientific evidence and were, and remain, too often fatally false. The State claims that Mallinckrodt relayed, and continues to relay, its deceptive messages to prescribers, which it has spread through marketing materials, websites, and in-person sales calls. The suit also describes how the company relied upon and sponsored speakers’ programs, professional associations, and third-party groups...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.law.state.ak.us/press/releases/2019/012819-Mallinckrodt.html>

January 18, 2019

**Attorney General files lawsuit alleging business identity theft**

(Anchorage, AK) – Yesterday, the Alaska Attorney General’s Office filed a lawsuit in Anchorage Superior Court alleging that a California man stole the identity of eight Alaska businesses. The complaint alleges multiple violations of Alaska’s Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Act. The state is seeking injunctive relief, remediation and civil penalties for the violations.

The complaint states that in June, 2018, Christopher Gabriel Webb accessed the registration portal maintained by the Alaska Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing and set up several shell corporations, including Energy Capital Group, LLC., Defense Enterprises, LLC, E2 Ventures, LLC, and Engineering Laboratories.

The lawsuit goes on to state that Webb changed the ownership of seven Alaska businesses to the shell companies, falsely swearing that he was authorized to make the changes. Business identity theft occurs when the underlying business ownership of a corporation or LLC is changed without the original owner’s knowledge or consent....

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.law.state.ak.us/press/releases/2019/011819-Webb.html>

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## ARIZONA

January 29, 2019

### **AG Brnovich Files Reply in ABOR Tuition Case and Requests Transfer to AZ Supreme Court**

Attorney General Mark Brnovich filed an appeal on Monday in the State's lawsuit against the Arizona Board of Regents regarding their board's tuition setting policies. The response brief presents purely legal questions that fundamentally impact the rule of law and judicial review in Arizona state government. The brief states that the Superior Court's dismissal for lack of jurisdiction must be reversed for two independent reasons. First, A.R.S. § 35-212 authorizes all counts (Counts I-VI) of the First Amended Complaint ("FAC"). Second, A.R.S. § 41-193(A)(2) independently authorizes Counts I-VI. By dismissing the FAC, the Superior Court improperly thwarted judicial review of ABOR's actions.

This appeal raises the question of whether Arizona law enables the Attorney General to go to court and obtain judicial review to protect the rights of the people. Over the past sixteen years, the Arizona Board of Regents ("ABOR") has raised tuition and mandatory fees for in-state undergraduates as...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/ag-brnovich-files-reply-abor-tuition-case-and-requests-transfer-az-supreme-court>

January 18, 2019

### **Two Phoenix Tax Preparers Indicted For Allegedly Preparing False Tax Returns for Clients**

PHOENIX -- Attorney General Mark Brnovich announced a State Grand Jury indicted Karen Hernandez and Pedro Arvizu, two tax preparers, for allegedly preparing false Arizona State resident personal income tax returns submitted to the Arizona Department of Revenue.

The Arizona Department of Revenue's Criminal Investigations Unit conducted the investigation and alleges that during the 2016 and 2017 tax filing seasons Hernandez and Arvizu prepared 16 false returns while working as tax preparers for Tax Xpress. Both Hernandez and Arvizu are accused of preparing returns with false itemized deductions included on Schedule A. Taxpayers, who entrusted their tax filings with Hernandez and Arvizu, were unaware that false information was included in their returns.

For the taxpayers, these false entries resulted in higher refunds or reduced the taxes due. It is alleged that including a Schedule with false deductions was done to increase the fees the taxpayers would owe to Tax Xpress. The...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/two-phoenix-tax-preparers-indicted-allegedly-preparing-false-tax-returns-clients>

January 09, 2019

### **AG Brnovich Files Consumer Fraud Lawsuit Against Mercedes-Benz**

PHOENIX – Fresh off a \$40 million consumer recovery case against Volkswagen, Attorney

General Mark Brnovich filed a Consumer Fraud Lawsuit against Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC and its parent Daimler AG on Tuesday for allegedly defrauding Arizonans through the sales of certain “clean diesel” cars.

The State alleges Mercedes-Benz deceived customers with false representations of its BlueTEC vehicles, which it marketed as the most environmentally conscious diesel option in the world. Attorney General Brnovich alleges Mercedes-Benz employed a defeat device to make its vehicles appear to emit lower levels of pollution when under certain testing conditions but, in actual driving conditions, the vehicles emitted much higher levels.

Arizona consumers were allegedly subjected to misleading advertisements about the affected diesel vehicles. The lawsuit alleges Mercedes-Benz aggressively and consistently marketed BlueTEC as “the world’s cleanest and most advanced diesel” with “ultra-low emissions, high fuel economy and responsive performance” that emits “up to 30% lower greenhouse-gas...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/ag-brnovich-files-consumer-fraud-lawsuit-against-mercedes-benz>

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## ARKANSAS

January 30, 2019

### **Rutledge Demands OG&E Concessions to Protect Rate Payers**

LITTLE ROCK – Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge today announced a settlement with Oklahoma Gas and Electric (OG&E) to protect ratepayers from over \$3.1 million in unjustified anticipated rate increases, with the company making several major monetary and non-monetary concessions.

“Protecting Arkansans’ wallets also means overseeing utility companies in the services they provide,” said Attorney General Rutledge. “There are over 66,000 OG&E customers in Arkansas and I take seriously the duty of reviewing and challenging any utility company’s proposals to raise rates that will harm Arkansans’ pocketbooks.”

On October 1, OG&E requested a \$6.4 million increase in rates under its formula rate plan - a 6% increase in retail rates for all major rate classes. Rutledge challenged the requested increase in filings made December 28, as did the general staff of the Arkansas Public Service Commission and the Arkansas River Valley Energy Consumers group, an affiliation of several large business customers.

Rutledge has...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/news-releases/rutledge-demands-og-e-concessions-to-protect-rate-payers/>



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## CALIFORNIA

January 30, 2019

### **Attorney General Becerra Announces \$935,000 Settlement with Aetna over Allegations that it Revealed Californians' HIV Status**

SACRAMENTO – California Attorney General Xavier Becerra today announced a \$935,000 settlement resolving allegations that Aetna Inc. (Aetna) violated California health privacy laws in connection with its 2017 breach of patient confidentiality. Due to a mailing error, a vendor for Aetna sent letters to 1,991 Californians that revealed through an oversized clear window on mailed envelopes that the recipient was taking HIV-related medication.

“A person’s HIV status is incredibly sensitive information and protecting that information must be a top priority for the entire healthcare industry,” said Attorney General Becerra. “Aetna violated the public’s trust by revealing patients' private and personal medical information. We will continue to hold these companies accountable to prevent such a gross privacy violation from reoccurring.”

Aetna is a health insurance company based in Connecticut. On July 28, 2017, Aetna mailed letters to approximately 12,000 people nationwide, including 1,991 Californians. The letters revealed through an enlarged window on the...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-becerra-announces-935000-settlement-aetna-over-allegations-it>

January 25, 2019

### **Attorney General Becerra: Owner of Elder Care Facility in San Luis Obispo Convicted Following the Death of Patient with Dementia**

SACRAMENTO – California Attorney General Xavier Becerra today announced that Christopher Skiff, owner and licensee of the Manse on Marsh Residential Care Facility for the Elderly in San Luis Obispo, has been convicted and sentenced following the death of a patient with dementia. Last month, after a four-week jury trial, Skiff was convicted of elder abuse and involuntary manslaughter in connection with the death of a resident in the care of the facility. On December 21, 2014, 65-year-old Mauricio Edgar Cardenas, who suffered from dementia, went missing from the Manse facility for several hours. He was found ten miles away, having been accidentally struck by a motorist while crossing the road in the dark. Skiff will no longer be able to operate elder care facilities.

“Today’s sentencing brings justice to the family of Mauricio Edgar Cardenas,” said Attorney General Becerra. “My heart breaks for this family and the tragic loss they...”

- **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-becerra-owner-elder-care-facility-san-luis-obispo-convicted>

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## DELAWARE

January 16, 2019

### **Residents Of Two Newark Apartments To Receive Funds As A Result Of DOJ Consumer Fraud Action**

Residents of two apartment complexes in Newark are eligible to receive some funds as a result of an action by the Delaware Department of Justice Consumer Protection Unit alleging the apartments were advertised to have amenities that they did not have or which were not operational. The owners and property manager of Hidden Creek are also prohibited in the future from renting residential apartment units anywhere in the state suffering the same types of issues.

The Consumer Protection Unit last week settled its suit, which was filed in March 2017, against Metrodev Newark, LLC, the owners of the former Autumn Park Apartments on Winterhaven Drive, Water Polo IV, L.P. the owners of Hidden Creek Commons on Hobart Drive, and the Metropolitan Management Group, Inc., the entity hired as property manager for the two complexes.

Anyone who was a tenant at Autumn Park between March 13, 2012 and June 30, 2017, or a...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://news.delaware.gov/2019/01/16/apst/>

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## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

January 25, 2019

### **AG Racine Announces Austin Royster Funeral Home to Pay \$300,000 for Deceiving Grieving Families about Funeral Costs and Services**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine today announced a settlement with Austin Royster Funeral Home and its Chief Operating Officer (COO), Jamelle Royster, requiring them to pay \$280,000 in relief to more than 60 eligible consumers who paid for funeral services they never received or suffered other financial losses at the hands of this business. In 2017, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) filed suit against the Brightwood funeral home and Jamelle Royster for misleading seniors, disabled individuals, and grieving families; overcharging for funeral services; charging for services it did not provide; and doing business without the proper licenses. In addition to securing relief for harmed consumers, today's settlement resolving OAG's 2017 lawsuit requires the funeral home and Jamelle Royster to pay \$20,000 in penalties to the District, permanently terminates the funeral home operation, and blocks Jamelle Royster from doing any kind of funeral business in the...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.dc.gov/release/ag-racine-announces-austin-royster-funeral-home>

January 15, 2019

**AG Racine Takes Action to Preserve Affordable Housing, Protect Tenants' Rights**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine today announced four recent actions by the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to ensure that tenants across the District, regardless of their income level or neighborhood, can live in safe, habitable housing. OAG has filed a lawsuit against the owner of an apartment building in Brightwood Park for forcing tenants to live in deplorable conditions. In two separate OAG lawsuits against slumlords, the court has appointed third party receivers to oversee the rehabilitation of several neglected apartment buildings in Brightwood and Deanwood. In a separate court ruling, OAG has obtained a judgment for more than \$22,000 in restitution for an Anacostia tenant in a wrongful-eviction case.

“Slumlords shouldn’t be able to neglect their properties and drive tenants out of their homes, no matter what the tenants’ background or income level is,” said AG Racine. “As part of our efforts to preserve our...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.dc.gov/release/ag-racine-takes-action-preserve-affordable-housing>

January 08, 2019

**AG Racine Sues Washington Sports Club for Misleading District Consumers About Membership Cancellation Policies, Billing Practices, and Fees**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine today filed a lawsuit against Town Sports International (TSI), LLC, the operators of Washington Sports Clubs, over its deceptive cancellation and billing practices. The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) alleges that TSI is violating both consumer protection laws and a 2016 settlement agreement by misleading consumers about the terms of membership agreements, failing to inform them of the gym’s cancellation policies, and continuing to charge them even after they attempt to cancel their gym memberships, among other deceptive business practices. OAG is seeking to stop TSI’s illegal conduct, provide relief for consumers who were harmed, and impose civil penalties.

“It’s clear that Washington Sports Club is still making money by deceiving consumers, and that is not acceptable,” said AG Racine. “We are filing this lawsuit to protect District consumers and to warn businesses that if they profit by misleading or hiding information,...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.dc.gov/release/ag-racine-sues-washington-sports-club-misleading>

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## FLORIDA

January 31, 2019

**Company Selling Fake Twitter Followers Permanently Banned**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today announced that a company selling

fake Twitter followers to celebrities, professional athletes, comedians, television actors and others is permanently banned from the practice. The lifetime ban comes after an investigation by the Florida Attorney General's Office into the social media company Devumi. The company, formerly based in Palm Beach, sold hundreds of millions of fake followers, known as bots, to an estimated 200,000 customers nationwide.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Social media fraud is serious deception and can give users unwarranted influence. Through the use of bots, consumers may be tricked into believing a product, person or message is much more popular than it actually is. It should go without saying, don't believe everything you see on the internet, and this is just one example of how technology can be used to create false realities."

The Florida Attorney General's Office recently secured an agreement with Devumi...

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/OCD5F8EE14B7C6FA85258393007103EB>

January 30, 2019

**Consumers Provided Refunds in Camp Warrior Shutdown**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today announced consumer refunds for parents of campers planning to attend a now shuttered summer camp. The refunds come after an investigation and litigation brought by the Florida Attorney General's Office resulting in a consent judgment against Camp Warrior, LLC, Camp Indian Springs, and owner Derek Hart. According to the investigation, the defendants accepted deposits from consumers before closing in June 2018 and failed to provide consumers with refunds. The court order provides full restitution for all affected consumers that requested a refund.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "These parents spent a lot of time and money researching summer camps and making reservations for their children. But when it came time to send their kids to this camp, there was nowhere for them to go. Not only did the conduct of the defendants cost parents hundreds of dollars, they ruined summer plans for dozens of Florida..."

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/180B07532AB56D2D8525839200751022>

January 22, 2019

**Refunds for Consumers Misled About Toll Fees**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody's Office obtained a court enforceable agreement with Dollar Thrifty Automotive Group, Inc., a holding company that owns the Dollar and Thrifty car rental companies. The settlement agreement resolves an investigation regarding Dollar Thrifty's practices involving add-on fees for cashless tolls in Florida and other related add-on charges.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Companies owe it to their consumers to be upfront about all of their services and the prices and fees that accompany them. This case not only affected Floridians, but people visiting Florida from all over the country. I am hopeful that this settlement will provide relief to consumers harmed by the company’s actions and prevent future harm.”

Attorney General Moody’s Office investigated allegations that Dollar Thrifty companies did not sufficiently disclose that consumers would be charged an additional fee of \$15 per toll they incurred on cashless toll roads in Florida, up to a maximum...

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/9B8E6D9D013832278525838A0073F068>

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## GEORGIA

January 22, 2019

### **Carr: Another Pleads Guilty in Scheme to Neglect and Exploit At-Risk and Elder Georgians**

ATLANTA, GA – Attorney General Carr today announced that on Friday, January 18, 2019, Perry Kirka pleaded guilty to one count of Identity Fraud. As a result of Mr. Kirka’s plea, he was sentenced to five years to serve on probation and ordered to pay \$2,000,000.00 in restitution to the Department of Community Health (DCH). As special conditions of his probation, Mr. Kirka is required to terminate his license to practice as a pharmacist, terminate his enrollment in the Georgia Medicaid program, and is barred from participating in the business of Paylow Pharmacy or any pharmacy in the state.

“We will not tolerate the abuse, neglect or exploitation of older or at-risk Georgians in our state, period,” said Attorney General Chris Carr. “Those who commit these horrific crimes will be prosecuted, and I am very proud of our Medicaid Fraud Control Division and all of the statewide partners who played a...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://law.georgia.gov/press-releases/2019-01-22/carr-another-pleads-guilty-scheme-neglect-and-exploit-risk-and-elder>

January 03, 2019

### **Carr Announces Lawsuit Against Opioid Manufacturers and Distributors**

ATLANTA, GA – The Office of Attorney General Chris Carr today filed a lawsuit in the Superior Court of Gwinnett County against opioid manufacturers and distributors\* to seek justice for their alleged role in fueling the opioid crisis and its catastrophic effects on Georgia citizens.

“No Georgia community is a stranger to the devastating effects of the opioid crisis,” said Attorney General Chris Carr. “We are bringing this lawsuit quite simply to seek justice for the citizens of Georgia. It is imperative that we recover for the widespread damage that has been caused by this epidemic.”

The lawsuit alleges that, in an effort to increase opioid use and thereby increase profits, the named opioid manufacturers embarked on a false and deceptive marketing campaign that grossly understated the dangerous addiction risks of opioids, while overstating their benefits. The complaint also alleges that to promote and add credibility to these false and deceptive...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://law.georgia.gov/press-releases/2019-01-03/carr-announces-lawsuit-against-opioid-manufacturers-and-distributors>

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## INDIANA

January 24, 2019

### **AG Curtis Hill warns Hoosiers to be skeptical of solicitors claiming affiliation with local schools**

Attorney General Curtis Hill is warning Hoosiers to exercise caution before entering into financial transactions with solicitors claiming affiliations with local schools. In recent years, the Office of the Attorney General has received multiple complaints about scams involving fraudulent sales of supposed sponsorships benefiting school programs or sports teams. On Jan. 23, 2019, the Office of the Attorney General filed a civil action in Delaware County against Boost Sports Integrative Media LLC – which does business under the name High School Sports Advertising and Sports Media Advertising. Claiming charitable purposes, this company entered into consumer transactions with Indiana businesses under the guise of an affiliation or partnership with local school corporations – namely, Yorktown High School and Muncie Central High School.

Boost Sports Integrative Media LLC, however, failed to establish sponsorship, approval or affiliation with the schools before soliciting the targeted businesses. Further, it failed to deliver the products it...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://calendar.in.gov/site/oag/event/ag-curtis-hill-warns-hoosiers-to-be-skeptical-of-solicitors-claiming-affiliation-with-local-schools/>

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## IOWA

January 23, 2019

### **Florida man again accused of violating Iowa law over telemarketing calls**

DES MOINES – The Iowa attorney general alleges that a Florida man associated with a telemarketing company has again run afoul of Iowa's Consumer Fraud Act, seven years after being banned from soliciting Iowans.

John Michael Zampieri III of Destin, Fla., and Life Quest of America, based in Mobile, Ala., have been barred from calling or mailing Iowans under a consent judgment entered by Polk County Judge Celene Gogerty. In addition, Zampieri and the company must pay \$12,000 to Iowa consumers who purchased Life Quest products, as well as pay \$12,000 to the state.

The Iowa Attorney General's office alleged that Life Quest, a for-profit company, employed

telemarketers who lied about being blind while selling products such as freezer bags, light bulbs and air fresheners at extreme markups. The telemarketers also lied about the extent to which sales benefited the disabled, according to the consent judgment.

Zampieri and Life Quest denied the allegations...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/newsroom/florida-blind-telemarketing-calls-alabama-zampieri/>

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## KENTUCKY

January 16, 2019

### **With Ruling by Federal Judge, All of Beshear's 9 Opioid Lawsuits now in Kentucky Courts**

FRANKFORT, KY. (Jan. 16, 2019) – Kentucky Attorney General Andy Beshear announced today that the nine opioid lawsuits he has filed against pharmaceutical companies for allegedly flooding Kentucky communities with dangerous prescription drugs are all now before judges in Kentucky courts.

Beshear has filed lawsuits against AmerisourceBergen, Cardinal Health, Endo Pharmaceuticals, Insys, Johnson & Johnson's Janssen, Mallinckrodt, McKesson Corporation, Teva and Walgreens on state law allegations that they directly contributed to the state's drug epidemic.

A ruling this week by a federal judge moved Beshear's case against Walgreens back to Boone Circuit Court where Beshear first filed it, and means all of Beshear's opioid lawsuits are now in Kentucky courts.

Beshear's lawsuit against Walgreens for its dual role as distributor and pharmacy was the only case remaining in federal court after the company had the case removed from a Kentucky court over the summer.

The federal judge's Jan. 14 ruling, however, said his court...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=697>

January 04, 2019

### **Beshear Secures \$1.7 Million in Loan Debt Relief for nearly 700 Students who Attended Spencerian Colleges**

FRANKFORT, KY. (Jan. 4, 2019) – Attorney General Andy Beshear today announced a consumer protection settlement benefiting nearly 700 students in Kentucky and Southern Indiana who attended one of the state's for-profit colleges, Spencerian.

Under the terms of the settlement, Sullivan University, which owned Spencerian, has agreed to forgive more than \$1.7 million in private loan debt and provide other benefits to 668 students who attended Spencerian and received an institutional student loan between Jan. 1, 2007, through Dec. 31, 2011.

Beshear's office finalized the settlement with Sullivan Jan. 3, 2019.

The nearly 700 students who received Career Education Fund or CEF loans to attend Spencerian had the balance of their loans forgiven as of Sept. 21, 2018. The settlement outlines in more detail the amounts of debt forgiveness for the group of students.

“My office is pleased that Sullivan has agreed to resolve this matter by forgiving nearly \$2 million in student loans...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=692>

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## MARYLAND

January 31, 2019

### **Attorney General Frosh Announces Settlement with LPL Financial**

BALTIMORE, MD (January 31, 2019)—Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today announced a settlement with LPL Financial LLC requiring the firm to repurchase from investors certain securities and to pay civil penalties that could total more than \$26 million nationwide. The settlement stems from a multistate investigation regarding LPL’s failure to establish and maintain reasonable policies and procedures to prevent the sale of unregistered, non-exempt securities by LPL to its customers.

Under the terms of the settlement, LPL will offer to repurchase from Maryland investors securities held in LPL accounts determined to have been unregistered, non-exempt equity or fixed-income securities sold since October 1, 2006. Each repurchase offer will include 3 percent simple interest per year. Other requirements were agreed upon for investors holding affected securities sold or transferred from an LPL account.

“As a result of this multistate settlement, Maryland investors will have their money returned plus interest,” stated Attorney General Frosh. “Before investing...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2019/013119.pdf>

January 04, 2019

### **Attorney General Frosh, Securities Division Sanction Fraudulent Ponzi Scheme Promoter**

BALTIMORE, MD (January 4, 2019) - Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh announced today that his Securities Division obtained an injunction against Ronald D. Morley, Diane Morley, and the Morleys’ companies, the New Wealth, LLC, Main Street Estate Group, Inc. and Jenny DB Properties, LLC, for violations of Maryland law related to the sale of fraudulent securities of Summit Trust Company and other issuers.

The civil complaint charged the defendants with 11 counts of violating the Maryland Securities Act in connection with their involvement in multiple fraudulent offerings of unregistered securities issued by the Morleys’ companies and by Summit Trust Company, a Nevada chartered trust company. Simultaneously with the filing of the complaint, the Morleys consented to the entry of both an administrative Consent Order and a civil Final Judgment and



Consent Order for Permanent Injunction that, among other things, assesses a civil monetary penalty of \$3,999,715 against the Morleys....

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2019/010419.pdf>

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## MASSACHUSETTS

January 31, 2019

### **AG Healey Obtains \$5 Million for Affected Consumers in Judgment Against Insurance Broker**

Boston — A Peabody-based insurance agency has been ordered by a Massachusetts judge to pay over \$5 million in restitution to its small business customers for overcharging them for insurance products, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today.

The final judgment, entered by Suffolk Superior Judge Robert Ullman, requires the Kilgore Insurance Agency, agent Andrew W. Crowther, Jr., and the agency's owners, Cyrus Kilgore and Jeffrey Kilgore, to pay nearly \$5.2 million in restitution for overcharging clients, primarily small business owners, by padding insurance premiums with significant hidden "agency fees."

"Kilgore Insurance and its owners orchestrated a scheme to charge consumers millions in undisclosed, excessive, and illegal agency fees," AG Healey said. "We are pleased that with this action, overcharged consumers will receive restitution."

The judgment follows a 22-day trial and a subsequent appeal. The defendants sought further review by the Supreme Judicial Court, but their request was denied.

According to the...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://www.mass.gov/news/ag-healey-obtains-5-million-for-affected-consumers-in-judgment-against-insurance-broker>

January 25, 2019

### **AG Healey Secures Loan Relief for Students Misled by Online Education Company**

Boston — Attorney General Maura Healey announced today that MSW Capital, LLC, a Florida-based debt buyer, will discharge thousands of dollars of loans made to Massachusetts students to finance expensive and ineffective online study materials and educational services.

Under the terms of an assurance of discontinuance, filed by the AG's Office in Suffolk Superior Court on Thursday, MSW Capital will discharge approximately \$39,000 in loan debt and provide \$1,400 in refunds to Massachusetts students made in connection with their purchases from The College Network, Inc., a for profit company that provided online study guides and education services to students. MSW Capital will also request the removal of negative loan information from the students' credit reports.

"The College Network repeatedly misled Massachusetts students and provided inadequate education services at a high cost," said AG Healey. "With this settlement, more students are receiving the relief they need."

The AG's Office alleges that between January...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.mass.gov/news/ag-healey-secures-loan-relief-for-students-misled-by-online-education-company>

January 16, 2019

### **Rite Aid Will Pay \$177,000 to Naloxone Fund and Will Update Opioid Dispensing Practices in Settlement with AG Healey**

Boston — Rite Aid of Massachusetts will contribute \$177,000 to the state's Municipal Naloxone Fund and correct its procedures to settle allegations that its dispensing of controlled substances, including opioids, failed to follow regulations designed to prevent substance use disorder, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today.

"In our efforts to combat the opioid epidemic, pharmacies are on the front lines," AG Healey said. "Today's settlement with Rite Aid will update their practices and provide more lifesaving doses of naloxone to first responders, helping keep this fund available for as long as it is needed."

In an assurance of discontinuance filed in Suffolk Superior Court today, the AG's Office alleges that some Rite Aid pharmacies dispensed controlled substances in exchange for out-of-pocket payments rather than billing MassHealth. The AG's Office alleges that in doing so, Rite Aid violated MassHealth regulations by failing to monitor drug utilization patterns of MassHealth members enrolled in the...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.mass.gov/news/rite-aid-will-pay-177000-to-naloxone-fund-and-will-update-opioid-dispensing-practices-in>

January 09, 2019

### **Tax Preparation Company to Refund Consumers for Misleading and Deceptive Advertisements**

Boston — Tax preparation company Jackson Hewitt Tax Service Inc. will pay more than \$187,000 to resolve allegations that it violated Massachusetts consumer protection laws by posting misleading and deceptive advertisements, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today.

In an assurance of discontinuance filed in Suffolk Superior Court, Jackson Hewitt agreed to provide more than \$93,000 in refunds to Massachusetts residents who purchased tax preparation services from locations in Massachusetts. Jackson Hewitt further agreed to a payment of more than \$93,000 to the state.

"This company profited from running misleading advertisements that harmed Massachusetts taxpayers," said AG Healey. "This settlement will provide relief to affected consumers and put tax preparers on notice throughout the upcoming tax season to follow our laws."

The AG's Office alleged that from December 2016 through April 2017, certain consumers who used Jackson Hewitt's tax preparation services at locations in Massachusetts may have received

discounts that amounted to less than...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.mass.gov/news/tax-preparation-company-to-refund-consumers-for-misleading-and-deceptive-advertisements>

January 08, 2019

### **Major Insurance Company Settles Allegations of Discrimination for Denying Policies to Consumers Using HIV Prevention Medication**

Boston — Following allegations of discrimination against consumers, Mutual of Omaha Insurance Company has agreed to no longer deny coverage to individuals using HIV prevention medication and will offer affected consumers an opportunity to reapply for insurance.

The assurance of discontinuance, filed today in Suffolk Superior Court, resolves allegations that since 2014, Mutual of Omaha routinely denied life insurance and long-term care insurance policies to consumers in Massachusetts taking a medication known as Truvada for the purpose of preventing HIV. When taken for this purpose, referred to as Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), Truvada is highly effective in preventing HIV transmission. The AG's Office alleges the coverage was denied based on the usage of Truvada.

"Consumers looking to protect themselves from HIV transmission should not be excluded from buying insurance," AG Healey said. "Under this settlement, Mutual of Omaha will provide relief to affected consumers who faced this discrimination. We are pleased to join..."

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.mass.gov/news/major-insurance-company-settles-allegations-of-discrimination-for-denying-policies-to>

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## **MICHIGAN**

January 29, 2019

### **Southeast Michigan Man Charged with Investment Fraud, Totaling \$124,529**

LANSING – Attorney General Dana Nessel earlier this month charged Stanley Alan Williams, Jr., 41, of Auburn Hills, with multiple felonies for investment fraud in the 46th District Court in Southfield.

Williams, Jr. is charged with the following:

Two counts of embezzlement by an agent, a felony with a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison or a \$25,000 fine or both;

Two counts of larceny by conversion, a felony with a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison or a \$15,000 fine or three times the value of the property, whichever is greater;

Four counts of securities fraud, a felony with a maximum sentence of five years in prison or a \$500,000 fine or both; and

Two counts of using a computer to commit a crime, a felony with a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison or a \$10,000 fine or both.

Williams, Jr. operated two purported investment companies, Karmanos...

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916\\_81983\\_47203-488534--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-488534--,00.html)

January 29, 2019

**Attorney General Dana Nessel and Better Business Bureau Put Michigan Rental Car Company on Notice**

LANSING — The Michigan Department of Attorney General and the Better Business Bureau (serving Detroit and Eastern Michigan) have received more than 400 complaints against a rental car company headquartered in Michigan. Executive Car Rental has a total of 12 locations in Michigan and four in Florida. The Department of the Attorney General and the BBB have received complaints from 44 states, one Army Post Office, one Canadian province and one from Germany.

On Friday, Jan. 25, Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel issued a notice of intended action and a cease and desist order to the car rental company for several alleged violations of the state's Consumer Protection Act, including;

Causing a probability of confusion or of misunderstanding as to the legal rights, obligations, or remedies of a party to a transaction.

Failing to reveal a material fact, the omission of which tends to mislead or deceive the consumer, and...

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916\\_81983\\_47203-488537--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-488537--,00.html)

January 16, 2019

**Attorney General Dana Nessel Charges Southeastern Michigan Woman with Conducting a Criminal Enterprise**

LANSING - Michigan residents deserve a government that protects their investments, said Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel as charges were filed against Beth L. Jaslove, of Birmingham.

Beth L. Jaslove was arraigned earlier this month in the 48th District Court for Oakland County. Jaslove is charged with the following:

One count of conducting a criminal enterprise – commonly known as racketeering, a felony with a maximum sentence of up to 20 years and/or \$100,000; and

27 counts of larceny by false pretenses including:

One count of \$100,000 or more, a felony with a maximum sentence of up to 20 years and/or \$35,000, or three times the value;

Four counts over \$20,000 but less than \$50,000, a felony with a maximum sentence of 15 years and/or \$15,000 or three times the value; and

22 counts of \$1,000-\$20,000, felonies with a maximum sentence of five years and/or \$10,000. Through her business, the Center for...

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916\\_81983\\_47203-487618--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-487618--,00.html)

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## NEVADA

January 04, 2019

### **Attorney General Laxalt, District Attorney Wolfson and Sheriff Lombardo Announce Sentences of April Parks and Co-defendants in Nevada's Largest Elder Exploitation Case**

Las Vegas, NV – Today, Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt, Clark County District Attorney Steve Wolfson, and Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Sheriff Joseph Lombardo announced that court-appointed guardian April Parks and her co-defendants Mark Simmons and Gary Neal Taylor were sentenced in Clark County District Court. Parks was the owner of A Private Professional Guardian, LLC, a business she and her co-defendants used to financially exploit elderly wards they were appointed by the court to serve.

Today's sentencing follows guilty pleas entered on November 5, 2018 in two cases. In the first case, Parks pleaded guilty to five felony offenses, including two counts of Elder Exploitation, a category "B" felony, two counts of Theft, a category "B" felony, and one count of Perjury, a category "D" felony. Simmons pleaded guilty to one count of Elder Exploitation, one count of Theft, and one count of Perjury. Taylor, who was named...

- **Original Press Release:**  
[http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2019/Attorney\\_General\\_Laxalt,\\_District\\_Attorney\\_Wolfson\\_and\\_Sheriff\\_Lombardo\\_Announce\\_Sentences\\_of\\_April\\_Parks\\_and\\_Co-defendants\\_in\\_Nevada%E2%80%99s\\_Largest\\_Elder\\_Exploitation\\_Case/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2019/Attorney_General_Laxalt,_District_Attorney_Wolfson_and_Sheriff_Lombardo_Announce_Sentences_of_April_Parks_and_Co-defendants_in_Nevada%E2%80%99s_Largest_Elder_Exploitation_Case/)

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## NEW HAMPSHIRE

January 22, 2019

### **Former Bank Manager Indicted for Stealing from Elderly Customer**

Concord, NH – Attorney General Gordon J. MacDonald announces the indictment of Britt K. Landsperger, age 46, of Stratham for theft by unauthorized taking from C.M., age 68.

Ms. Landsperger was indicted in Rockingham County Superior Court with seven class A felony counts of theft by unauthorized taking. Between 2013 and 2018, Ms. Landsperger obtained or exercised unauthorized control over money from seven TD Bank accounts belonging to C.M., with a purpose to deprive C.M. thereof, and the value of the money removed from each account exceeded \$1,500.

Ms. Landsperger was also charged with one misdemeanor A count of theft by unauthorized taking alleging that on or about January 20, 2017, Ms. Landsperger obtained or exercised unauthorized control over money from a single TD Bank account belonging to C.M. and the value of the money removed did not exceed \$1,000.

During the course of the thefts, Ms. Landsperger was an employee of TD...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.doj.nh.gov/news/2019/20190122-landsperger-indictment.htm>

January 18, 2019

### **Former Attorney David A. Horan Indicted for Stealing from Elderly Client**

Concord, NH – Attorney General Gordon J. MacDonald announces the indictment of David A. Horan, age 67, of Manchester for theft by unauthorized taking from M.B., age 79.

Mr. Horan was indicted in Hillsborough County Superior Court-North with two class A felony counts of theft by unauthorized taking. The first indictment alleges that on January 22, 2014, Mr. Horan obtained or exercised unauthorized control over money belonging to M.B., that had been placed in Horan's client trust account to purchase Boston Red Sox tickets, with a purpose to deprive M.B. thereof, and the value of the money account exceeded \$1,500.

The second indictment alleges that on or between January 17, 2014 and December 31, 2014, Mr. Horan obtained or exercised unauthorized control over money belonging to M.B., by writing himself multiple checks using money that had been placed in Horan's client trust account, with a purpose to deprive M.B. thereof, and the...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.doj.nh.gov/news/2019/20190118-horan-indictment.htm>

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## **NEW JERSEY**

January 29, 2019

### **New Jersey Bureau of Securities Files Suit Against Princeton Couple for Allegedly Defrauding Members of Their Social Circle in Scam Investments and Using Investor Funds to Bankroll Lavish Lifestyle**

NEWARK – Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal and the Division of Consumer Affairs announced today that the Bureau of Securities (“the Bureau”) has filed suit against a Princeton couple, alleging the pair schemed to fraudulently sell investments in gas and oil projects to members of their social circle and then used a significant portion of investor funds on luxury vacations, country club payments, and other personal expenses.

Ford F. Graham allegedly raised more than \$5 million through a series of loans and fraudulent sales of unregistered securities from unsuspecting individuals and investors located in at least five states, including fraudulently selling at least \$1.9 million of unregistered securities to New Jersey investors.

The suit, filed in Mercer County today, alleges that between January 2012 and January 2014 Graham, often with the active participation of his wife, Katherine B. Graham, represented the unregistered securities to potential investors as low-risk, high-reward investment opportunities

in...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases19/pr20190129a.html>

January 24, 2019

**State Board of Medical Examiners Permanently Revokes Licenses of Two Doctors Convicted in Unrelated Criminal Cases**

TRENTON – Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal and the Division of Consumer Affairs announced today that the state Board of Medical Examiners has permanently revoked the licenses of two physicians as a result of their criminal convictions in unrelated cases.

Dr. George Beecher, an ear, nose and throat specialist in Warren, N.J. who conspired to supply a drug ring with tens of thousands of high-dose opioid painkillers, agreed to surrender his medical licenses for permanent revocation under a plea agreement reached with the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice last month.

Dr. Zahid Aslam, an NJ-licensed OB-GYN practitioner who conspired to commit bank fraud in Delaware, agreed to surrender his medical licenses for permanent revocation under a plea agreement reached with the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Delaware in November. “There is no room in New Jersey’s medical profession for physicians who break the law, as these two men did,” said...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases19/pr20190124a.html>

January 16, 2019

**New Jersey’s “Safe Care Cam” Program Leads to Abuse Charges Against Private Caretaker Allegedly Caught on Hidden Camera Assaulting 90-Year-Old Woman Residing in Bergen County Assisted Living Facility**

TRENTON – Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal and the Division of Consumer Affairs today announced that a woman hired to provide private care to a 90-year-old stroke victim residing in a Bergen County assisted living facility has been arrested and charged with assaulting her elderly charge as a result of video footage captured by a hidden camera on loan from the Division’s Safe Care Cam program.

Police in Park Ridge charged Mitsou Gottheim, 50, of Nanuet, New York, with endangering the welfare of an incompetent person and simple assault, both disorderly persons offenses, after viewing video footage allegedly showing Gottheim physically assaulting the elderly woman, who is bedridden and unable to communicate verbally because of a stroke.

The video, turned over to police by the victim’s daughter, allegedly shows Gottheim slapping the elderly woman’s hand and roughly pushing her head back onto the pillow several times as she attempted to sit up...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases19/pr20190116c.html>

January 10, 2019

**State Board of Medical Examiners Temporarily Suspends License of Physician Who Allegedly Indiscriminately Authorized Medicinal Marijuana for Thousands of Patients**

TRENTON – Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal and the Division of Consumer Affairs announced today that the State Board of Medical Examiners (“the Board”) has temporarily suspended the license of a physician participating in the State’s Medicinal Marijuana Program (“MMP”) amid allegations he created a multimillion dollar enterprise by indiscriminately authorizing marijuana use for thousands of patients he met in hotel conference centers across the state.

Dr. Anthony Anzalone, 66, who has been a registered participant in the MMP since 2012, must wind down his medical practice within the next 30 days and cease practicing medicine altogether on February 8, under the terms of an Interim Consent Order he entered with the Board on Wednesday. His license will remain temporarily suspended until the allegations against him are resolved.

“State legislatures may relax their laws against marijuana – and many already have – but there are limits to what state law allows, and...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases19/pr20190110a.html>

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NEW YORK

January 30, 2019

**Attorney General James Announces Groundbreaking Settlement With Sellers Of Fake Followers And “Likes” On Social Media**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Letitia James today announced a precedent-setting settlement over the sale of fake followers, “likes,” and views on social media platforms, including Twitter and YouTube, using fake activity from false accounts. The settlement prohibits Devumi LLC and related companies (“Devumi”) from engaging in any of the same misconduct going forward. This settlement marks the first finding by a law enforcement agency that selling fake social media engagement and using stolen identities to engage in online activity is illegal.

“Bots and other fake accounts have been running rampant on social media platforms, often stealing real people’s identities to carry out fraud,” said Attorney General Letitia James. “As people and companies like Devumi continue to make a quick buck by lying to honest Americans, my office will continue to find and stop anyone who sells online deception. With this settlement, we are sending a clear message that anyone...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-announces-groundbreaking-settlement-sellers-fake-followers-and>



January 30, 2019

**Attorney General James And Governor Cuomo Announce Investigation Into Apple Facetime Privacy Breach**

NEW YORK-- Attorney General Letitia James and Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced an investigation into Apple's failure to warn consumers about the FaceTime bug and slow response to addressing the issue. The bug jeopardized the privacy of consumers in New York by allowing users to receive audio and video from the device of the person they are calling even before the person has accepted or rejected the call.

"New Yorkers shouldn't have to choose between their private communications and their privacy rights," said Attorney General Letitia James. "This FaceTime breach is a serious threat to the security and privacy of the millions of New Yorkers who have put their trust in Apple and its products over the years. My office will be conducting a thorough investigation into Apple's response to the situation, and will evaluate the company's actions in relation to the laws set forth by the State of...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-and-governor-cuomo-announce-investigation-apple-facetime>

January 23, 2019

**Attorney General James Announces Settlements With Two Sham CO-Ops To Return 90 Apartments To Rent Stabilization Program**

NEW YORK—Attorney General Letitia James today announced settlements with two former cooperative corporations in New York City and the return of 90 apartments to the rent-stabilization program. Labe Twerski, the president of the co-op corporations, violated state law by using the cooperatives as rental buildings for decades, and depriving tenants of protections to which they are entitled under rent stabilization laws. Under the settlements, all tenants residing in the buildings (located at 447-448 Central Park West on the Upper West Side and 4395 Broadway in Washington Heights) will be entitled to rent-stabilized leases at affordable rents.

"My office is dedicated to preserving and promoting access to affordable, rent-stabilized housing for the people of New York," said Attorney General Letitia James. "Landlords should be on notice that they cannot circumvent our state's rent stabilization laws through the use of sham co-ops. We will always crack down on landlord greed and protect the...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-announces-settlements-two-sham-co-ops-return-90-apartments-rent>

January 16, 2019

**Attorney General James And Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Announce \$11 Million Settlement With Sterling Jewelers (D/b/a Kay Jewelers And Jared)**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Letitia James and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

today announced an \$11 million settlement with Sterling Jewelers Inc. (“Sterling”) (doing business as Kay Jewelers, Jared The Galleria of Jewelry, and several other brands). The settlement resolves an investigation that revealed that Sterling signed consumers up for store credit cards without the consumers’ knowledge or consent. Sterling also enrolled consumers in a credit insurance product without consumers’ knowledge or consent and misrepresented the terms of the store cards. Pursuant to the settlement, Sterling will pay \$11 million in penalties. “By tricking consumers into enrolling in store credits cards, Sterling Jewelers betrayed customers’ trust and violated the law,” said Attorney General Letitia James. “This settlement holds the company accountable for its misconduct and ensures that no more consumers are deceived.”

Sterling is based in Ohio and operates approximately 1,500 jewelry stores, including around 130 stores in New York.

Sterling offers...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-and-consumer-financial-protection-bureau-announce-11-million>

January 08, 2019

### **Attorney General James Announces Sentencing Of Brooklyn Resident For Deed Theft Of Two Residential Properties**

BROOKLYN – Attorney General Letitia James today announced the sentencing of Marilyn Sanchez, 49, of Brooklyn, for filing two fraudulent deeds and supporting documents with the New York City Register’s Office in order to fraudulently acquire ownership of two separate residential homes in Brooklyn, New York. Today in Kings County Supreme Court, Sanchez was sentenced to 60 days in jail, followed by five years of probation. Sanchez also agreed to transfer ownership of the two property deeds back to the lawful owners. Today’s sentencing marks the first deed theft ruling resulting from an OAG investigation.

“Too often scammers turn the American Dream of homeownership into a nightmare,” said Attorney General Letitia James. “I’m pleased our office’s investigation has resulted in the return of these stolen deeds to their rightful owners. No one should have to worry about their property being stolen by scammers, and I encourage New Yorkers to follow my...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-announces-sentencing-brooklyn-resident-deed-theft-two>

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## **NORTH CAROLINA**

January 31, 2019

### **Attorney General Josh Stein Gets Interim Relief Against Hurricane Michael Price Gouger**

(RALEIGH) Attorney General Josh Stein this week won interim relief against a tree removal company he filed a price gouging lawsuit against earlier this month. Judge Keith O. Gregory

granted a preliminary injunction against National Emergency Restoration Services LLC and extended the temporary restraining order against its Director of Operations Ricardo (“Rick”) Aleman. The order prohibits the company from doing or charging for tree removal or related work in North Carolina until the trial. The injunction also prohibits the company from collecting on tree-related work in North Carolina until the case is resolved.

“Ripping off North Carolinians picking up the pieces after Hurricane Michael is immoral and illegal,” said Attorney General Josh Stein. “I’m grateful the court has blocked this operator from taking advantage of others as we continue this case to hold them accountable.”

Attorney General Stein’s complaint against National Emergency Restoration Services and Aleman alleges that National Emergency...

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Gets-Interim-Relie-\(1\).aspx](https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Gets-Interim-Relie-(1).aspx)

January 28, 2019

### **Attorney General Josh Stein Gets Temporary Restraining Order Against Contractor**

(RALEIGH) Attorney General Josh Stein today was granted a temporary restraining order against a contractor involved in a lawsuit he filed over alleged deceptive trade practices. The temporary restraining order prohibits George Edward Hall, Patricia Roberts, Carolina Structures, Inc., Titan Concrete, Inc., Valley Sheds Plus, LLC, Carolina Buildings, LLC, Titan Outdoor Impressions, Inc., Kahuna Concrete, and Affordable Contractors from soliciting and engaging in contracting work or accepting payment for work from consumers pending a preliminary injunction hearing.

“I’m grateful that these contractors won’t be able to take advantage of anyone else in North Carolina as this case continues,” said Attorney General Josh Stein. “If you agree to do a job for someone and take their money, you have to follow through. My office will hold you accountable if you betray customers.”

The suit alleges that Hall, an unlicensed contractor, and Roberts, who assists his daily business operations, operate a contracting...

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Gets-Temporary-Res-\(1\).aspx](https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Gets-Temporary-Res-(1).aspx)

January 23, 2019

### **Attorney General Josh Stein Files Suit Against Contractor over Deceptive Trade Practices**

(RALEIGH) Attorney General Josh Stein today filed a suit against George Edward Hall, Patricia Roberts, Carolina Structures, Inc., Titan Concrete, Inc., Valley Sheds, LLC, Carolina Buildings, LLC, Titan Outdoor Impressions, Inc., Kahuna Concrete, and Affordable Contractors over an alleged contractor scheme in the Triangle area. The suit alleges that these defendants take money from consumers without doing the work they’ve promised to perform. The lawsuit seeks a temporary restraining order, preliminary injunction, and other civil penalties for victims.

“It’s simple: when you take someone’s money and agree to do a job, you have to follow

through,” said Attorney General Josh Stein. “My office is taking these contractors to court to keep them from taking advantage of more North Carolinians.”

The suit, filed over deceptive trade practices, alleges that Hall, an unlicensed contractor, and Roberts, who assists his daily business operations, operate a contracting business under multiple names. Hall enters into...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Files-Suit-Against-Con.aspx>

January 16, 2019

### **Attorney General Josh Stein Takes Alleged Price Gouger to Court**

(RALEIGH) Attorney General Josh Stein today filed a lawsuit against National Emergency Restoration Services LLC and its Director of Operations Ricardo (“Rick”) Aleman for allegedly price gouging a Guilford County homeowner for tree removal during the state of emergency declared for Hurricane Michael. In his lawsuit, the Attorney General requests that the court prohibit Aleman and his company from conducting any similar business in the state of North Carolina and also assess civil penalties as punishment.

“North Carolina was devastated by hurricanes in 2018,” said Attorney General Josh Stein. “It is unconscionable that some would take advantage of a desperate situation to scam money. We are asking the court to put a stop to this action – and I hope it will serve as a message to any other would-be price gougers out there. My office will not allow price gouging to go unchecked.”

The complaint alleges that National...

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Takes-Alleged-Pric-\(2\).aspx](https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Takes-Alleged-Pric-(2).aspx)

January 15, 2019

### **Attorney General Josh Stein Gets Temporary Restraining Orders Against Two Out-of-State Price Gougers**

(RALEIGH) Attorney General Josh Stein today was granted temporary restraining orders against two companies involved in separate price gouging lawsuits he filed involving tree removal and flood repair in eastern North Carolina after Hurricane Florence. These mark the fourth and fifth lawsuits Attorney General Stein has filed in response to price gouging after Hurricane Florence hit North Carolina in September 2018.

The first lawsuit alleges that Georgia-based tree removal service Georgia Tree Company LLC excessively charged an Onslow County homeowner \$19,500 for removing four trees and committed prohibited debt collection practices. The second lawsuit alleges that Secure Restoration Inc., a Florida-based company, charged homeowners in Craven County excessive amounts for flood remediation work, agreed to do the work at one price but then demanded a much higher price when the work was done, and committed prohibited debt collection

practices.

“These out-of-state operators violated North Carolina’s price gouging statute and took...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Gets-Temporary-Restraint.aspx>

January 03, 2019

### **THREE UNLICENSED CONTRACTORS BANNED FROM DOING BUSINESS IN NORTH DAKOTA**

BISMARCK, ND – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem issued Cease and Desist Orders banning three North Dakota unlicensed contractors from conducting any further business in the state. Timothy Jacobson of Fairmount, Tyler Giles of Fargo, and Patrick Peltier of Bottineau, violated the state’s consumer fraud and contractor licensing laws.

Attorney General Stenehjem reiterated the importance of homeowners making sure a contractor has a North Dakota license, before handing over any money.

All three unlicensed contractors took thousands of dollars in advance payments from homeowners, but failed to do any work. After receiving complaints from affected homeowners, consumer protection investigators were able to make an initial contact with each unlicensed contractor, but thereafter each ignored communications from the Attorney General’s office. Mail sent to their last known addresses was returned and the current whereabouts of Jacobson, Giles, and Peltier are unknown.

Contractors performing work valued at \$4,000 or more must be licensed by the Secretary...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://attorneygeneral.nd.gov/news/three-unlicensed-contractors-banned-doing-business-north-dakota>

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## PENNSYLVANIA

January 29, 2019

### **Attorney General Josh Shapiro Files Lawsuit Against Deceptive Driveway Paving Company in Northwestern PA**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Josh Shapiro today announced a lawsuit against an Alabama driveway paving company owner on claims that he sold defective driveway paving services to unsuspecting consumers in Northwestern Pennsylvania from at least 2015 through October 2017.

Timmy L. Jeffery traveled into Northwestern Pennsylvania to sell driveway paving services through his Alabama company, Roadway Blacktop. Jeffery frequently approached senior citizens in their yards or homes to pressure them into buying his asphalt driveway paving services on the spot. Jeffery often told unsuspecting consumers he could offer them a “good deal” because he was performing work for a neighbor and had asphalt in his truck that he needed to use. He also utilized mailbox flyers to solicit other unwitting customers.

“This individual scammed several Pennsylvanians who thought they were paying for a quality

asphalt driveway — only to find that they had been ripped off and received a shoddy, unstable,...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/taking-action/press-releases/attorney-general-josh-shapiro-files-lawsuit-against-deceptive-driveway-paving-company-in-northwestern-pa/>

January 16, 2019

### **Attorney General Shapiro Files Suit Against Delaware County Man for Posing as Immigration Attorney**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Josh Shapiro announced today that his Bureau of Consumer Protection filed a lawsuit against Syed Qumrazzaman a/k/a Syed Zaman for scamming Pennsylvanians by falsely identifying himself as an attorney and collecting at least \$20,000 for immigration assistance services that he was not licensed to provide – and never did. The lawsuit states that the defendant solicited legal clients by word of mouth at religious services, even though he was not a licensed attorney. Zaman used his stature in the community to gain confidence and defraud people looking for legal aid. During meetings that were conducted out of his residential apartment, Mr. Zaman verbally advised clients of the forms he would prepare and submit on their behalf and how much those services would cost. On at least one occasion, Zaman met with clients in front of the Courthouse at 9th and Market Streets in Philadelphia. When his clients...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/taking-action/press-releases/attorney-general-shapiro-files-suit-against-delaware-county-man-for-posing-as-immigration-attorney/>

January 11, 2019

### **Attorney General Josh Shapiro Holds Pennsylvania Woman Accountable for Scamming Veterans with Uncertified Claims Benefits Assistance**

HARRISBURG – Attorney General Josh Shapiro today announced his Bureau of Consumer Protection and Office of Military and Veterans Affairs have settled a case against a Pennsylvania woman for scamming veterans by making misrepresentations in advertising services pertaining to long term health care, including Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Claims Benefit consultation and assistance. This was in violation of the Pennsylvania’s Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law.

Advertisements for Veterans Resource Solutions, LLC stressed the importance of having a benefit consultant and specifically indicated that only trained Veterans Service Officers or VA accredited agents are able to navigate this long, tedious, and precise process. As a result of these advertisements, Kimberly Dunn, of Allegheny County, misrepresented herself and agents in her organization, Veterans Resource Solution, LLC, as being VA accredited agents able to apply for benefits on behalf of veterans.

The advertisements also made other misrepresentations. They stated that if veterans...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/taking-action/press-releases/attorney-general-josh-shapiro-holds-pennsylvania-woman-accountable-for-scamming-veterans-with-uncertified-claims-benefits-assistance/>

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## TEXAS

January 29, 2019

### **AG Pax-ton Seeks Court Enforce-ment of Set-tle-ment Agree-ment Against Tobac-co Com-pa-nies to Obtain Over \$125 Mil-lion for Texas**

Attorney General Ken Paxton today asked a U.S. District Court to enforce terms of the Texas tobacco settlement agreement requiring major cigarette companies to pay more than \$125 million to the state of Texas.

In 2015, ITG Brands LLC acquired three cigarette brands from R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and one cigarette brand from Lorillard Tobacco Company, both of which signed the comprehensive settlement agreement with Texas over smoking-related health care costs. Since the acquisition, neither ITG Brands LLC nor R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company has made the required payments to Texas for sales of the four cigarette brands – Kool, Maverick, Salem and Winston. These companies remain obligated under the comprehensive settlement agreement for sales of these cigarettes.

“Taxpayers of Texas are owed over one hundred million dollars in back payments from the tobacco settlement, and my office is going to make sure that the tobacco companies live up to the terms of...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/news/releases/ag-paxton-seeks-court-enforcement-settlement-agreement-against-tobacco-companies-obtain-over-125>

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## UTAH

January 30, 2019

### **Utah Escalates Legal Action Against Purdue Pharma**

SALT LAKE CITY – Today, the Utah Attorney General’s Office filed an administrative action against Purdue Pharma L.P., Purdue Pharma Inc., The Purdue Frederick Company, Richard Sackler, M.D., and Kathe Sackler, M.D., as part of the State’s efforts to hold accountable the opioid companies and individuals that created and fueled the opioid epidemic throughout Utah. In the filing, under Utah Code § 13-2-6, the Division of Consumer Protection of the Department of Commerce issued an administrative action, in the form of a citation, against the defendants alleging violations of the Utah Consumer Sales Practices Act. An administrative proceeding allows the State to seek to prove its claims and obtain a judgment, injunctive relief, and civil penalties more promptly than state district court proceedings.

Based on evidence that has emerged over the last year, this administrative action alleges that not only Purdue, but two of its owners, Richard and Kathe Sackler, participated in...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://attorneygeneral.utah.gov/utah-escalates-legal-strategy-against-purdue-pharma/>

January 11, 2019

### **Utah Opioid Litigation: RFP Findings and Contract**

The Utah Attorney General's Office has issued its Opioid RFP Procurement Findings as well as its Opioid RFP Contract with Motley Rice, LLC; Fears Nachawati; Ferrer, Poirot & Wansbrough; and Prince, Yeats & Geldzahler.

Both can be viewed here:

Opioid Procurement FindingsDownload

Opioid RFP ContractDownload

The State of Utah filed a lawsuit last May against Purdue Pharma in Carbon County, one of the counties hardest hit by the opioid epidemic. For a quick overview of this office's work to combat the opioid crisis (as of March 2018), click here.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://attorneygeneral.utah.gov/update-opioid-litigation-rfp/>

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## WASHINGTON

January 25, 2019

### **AG Ferguson sues LuLaRoe over pyramid scheme**

OLYMPIA — Attorney General Bob Ferguson today announced a lawsuit against multi-level marketing business LuLaRoe and several of its "home office" executives, alleging that the company's former bonus structure constituted a pyramid scheme. The lawsuit also asserts that LuLaRoe's claims regarding sustainability, profitability and inventory refunds are unfair and deceptive.

Ferguson's lawsuit asserts that LuLaRoe's bonus structure and misrepresentations violated the Antipyrarnid Promotional Scheme Act and the state Consumer Protection Act. Ferguson asks the court to require LuLaRoe and its executives to stop its unlawful actions. If the court rules that LuLaRoe violated the law, the Attorney General's Office will seek the maximum penalties of \$2,000 per violation, as well as costs, fees and other relief. Ferguson also will seek restitution for affected Washington consumers, but the total amount of restitution the office will seek is still undetermined.

"LuLaRoe tricked consumers into buying into its pyramid scheme with deceptive claims of...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.atg.wa.gov/news/news-releases/ag-ferguson-sues-lularoe-over-pyramid-scheme>



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## WYOMING

January 20, 2019

### **EZ-Coco, Inc. (Case No. 2018-14)**

EZ-Coco, Inc. is a Wyoming Corporation that sells coconut openers and accessories online. The Attorney General received reports that some consumers never received the products that they had purchased online. The company agreed to resolve the matter by entering into an Assurance of Voluntary Compliance prohibiting it from misrepresenting its ability to deliver merchandise or fulfill orders. The Assurance of Voluntary Compliance further requires EZ-Coco, Inc. to give consumers who have complained an opportunity to receive either a full refund or the product. The company must also fulfill the unfulfilled orders of all consumers who have not yet complained.

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://ag.wyo.gov/cpu/resolved-matters>

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## Multistate Cases

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### Student Debt Relief From For-Profit Colleges

1. ALABAMA - (2019-01-03) Attorney General Steve Marshall Announces Multistate Agreement with CEC, For-Profit Education Company, to Waive Loan Collections and Reform Practices <https://ago.alabama.gov/documents/news/CEC%20settlement%201-2019.pdf>
2. ALASKA - (2019-01-07) For-profit education company to forgo collecting loans, change practices in agreement with Alaska, 48 Ags <http://www.law.state.ak.us/press/releases/2019/010719-Education.html>
3. ARIZONA - (2019-01-03) AG Brnovich Announces \$22 Million in Debt Relief for Arizona Students Who Attended Certain For-Profit Schools <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/ag-brnovich-announces-22-million-debt-relief-arizona-students-who-attended-certain>
4. ARKANSAS - (2019-01-04) Rutledge Announces Loan Forgiveness Settlement with For-Profit Education Company <https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/news-releases/rutledge-announces-loan-forgiveness-settlement-with-for-profit-education-company/>
5. COLORADO - (2019-01-04) AG Coffman Gets over \$7.2M in Debt Relief for Students of For-Profit Education Company, Career Education Corp. <https://coag.gov/press-room/press-releases/01-04-19>
6. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA - (2019-01-03) AG Racine Announces Career Education Corp. Will Provide \$2 Million in Debt Relief to District Student Borrowers Over Deceptive Recruiting <https://oag.dc.gov/release/ag-racine-announces-career-education-corp-will>
7. GEORGIA - (2019-01-04) Carr Announces Settlement with For-Profit Education Company, Relief for More Than 16,000 Students <https://law.georgia.gov/press-releases/2019-01-04/carr-announces-settlement-profit-education-company-relief-more-16000-0>
8. IDAHO - (2019-01-03) Wasden Announces Settlement with For-Profit Education Company <https://www.ag.idaho.gov/newsroom/wasden-announces-settlement-with-for-profit-education-company/>

9. INDIANA - (2019-01-03) AG Curtis Hill announces multistate settlement with for-profit education company <https://calendar.in.gov/site/oag/event/ag-curtis-hill-announces-multistate-settlement-with-for-profit-education-company/>
10. IOWA - (2019-01-03) For-profit school to forgo collecting loans, change practices in agreement with Miller, 48 Ags <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/newsroom/for-profit-school-education-cec-career-ags-intercontinental/>
11. KANSAS - (2019-01-03) AG Derek Schmidt: More than 1,000 Kansas students to receive loan forgiveness <https://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2019/01/03/ag-derek-schmidt-more-than-1-000-kansas-students-to-receive-loan-forgiveness>
12. KENTUCKY - (2019-01-07) Beshear: For-Profit College Settlement to Eliminate \$2.3 Million in Debt for more than 1,300 Kentuckians <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=693>
13. MARYLAND - (2019-01-03) Career Education Corporation to Stop Collecting on Loans, Change Practices in Agreement with Maryland, 48 Other Attorneys General <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2019/010319.pdf>
14. MASSACHUSETTS - (2019-01-03) AG Healey Secures \$11 Million in Debt Relief for Massachusetts Students in Settlement with For-Profit Education Company <https://www.mass.gov/news/ag-healey-secures-11-million-in-debt-relief-for-massachusetts-students-in-settlement-with-for>
15. MICHIGAN - (2019-01-03) For-profit education company to forgo collecting loans, change practices in agreement with Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel, 48 Ags [https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916\\_81983\\_47203-486483--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-486483--,00.html)
16. MISSISSIPPI - (2019-01-04) For-profit education company to forgo collecting loans from 1,858 Mississippians <https://www.ago.state.ms.us/releases/for-profit-education-company-to-forgo-collecting-loans-from-1858-mississippians/>
17. MISSOURI - (2019-01-04) AG Schmitt Announces For-Profit Education Company to Forgo Collecting Loans and Will Change Practices <https://ago.mo.gov/home/news-archives/2019-news-archives/ag-schmitt-announces-for-profit-education-company-to-forgo-collecting-loans-and-will-change-practices>
18. MONTANA - (2019-01-03) For-Profit Education Company to Forgo Collecting Loans, Change Practices in Multi-State Agreement <https://dojmt.gov/for-profit-education-company-to-forgo-collecting-loans-change-practices-in-multi-state-agreement/>
19. NEBRASKA - (2019-01-09) Attorney General Peterson Announces Settlement with Career Education Corp. <https://ago.nebraska.gov/news/attorney-general-peterson-announces-settlement-career-education-corp>
20. NEVADA - (2019-01-03) Attorney General Laxalt, 48 AGs Announce Agreement with For-Profit Education Company to Reform Practices and Forgo Collection of Student Loans [http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2019/Attorney\\_General\\_Laxalt,\\_48\\_AGs\\_Announce\\_Agreement\\_with\\_For-Profit\\_Education\\_Company\\_to\\_Reform\\_Practices\\_and\\_Forgo\\_Collection\\_of\\_Student\\_Loans/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2019/Attorney_General_Laxalt,_48_AGs_Announce_Agreement_with_For-Profit_Education_Company_to_Reform_Practices_and_Forgo_Collection_of_Student_Loans/)
21. NEW HAMPSHIRE - (2019-01-03) New Hampshire Joins 47 States and the District of Columbia, in Settlement with Career Education Corporation for over \$550 million in student debt relief <https://www.doj.nh.gov/news/2019/20190103-student-debt.htm>

22. NEW JERSEY - (2019-01-03) AG Grewal Announces Settlement with For-Profit Education Company Resulting in \$493.7 Million in Debt Relief for Student Loan Borrowers  
<https://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases19/pr20190103a.html>
23. NEW MEXICO - (2019-01-03) Student Loan Company will Forgo Collecting in New Mexico as AG Balderas, 48 Attorneys General Reach Settlement  
[https://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Student\\_Loan\\_Company\\_will\\_Forgo\\_Collecting\\_in\\_New\\_Mexico\\_as\\_AG\\_Balderas\\_48\\_Attorneys\\_General\\_Reach\\_Settlement.pdf](https://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Student_Loan_Company_will_Forgo_Collecting_in_New_Mexico_as_AG_Balderas_48_Attorneys_General_Reach_Settlement.pdf)
24. NEW YORK - (2019-01-04) Attorney General James And Superintendent Vullo Announce \$9 Million Settlement Of Federal Student Loan Servicing Claims With Acs Education Services  
<https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-and-superintendent-vullo-announce-9-million-settlement-federal>
25. NORTH CAROLINA - (2019-01-03) Attorney General Josh Stein Announces Nearly \$500 Million in Debt Relief for Students in Settlement with Career Education Corp.  
[https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Announces-Nearly-\\$500.aspx](https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Announces-Nearly-$500.aspx)
26. NORTH DAKOTA - (2019-01-16) SETTLEMENT WITH FOR-PROFIT NATIONAL EDUCATION COMPANY BENEFITS ITS FORMER STUDENTS <https://attorneygeneral.nd.gov/news/settlement-profit-national-education-company-benefits-its-former-students>
27. OHIO - (2019-01-03) Attorney General DeWine Announces \$12 Million in Debt Relief for Ohioans in Multistate Settlement with For-Profit College  
[https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/January-2019/Attorney-General-DeWine-Announces-\\$12-Million-in-D](https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/January-2019/Attorney-General-DeWine-Announces-$12-Million-in-D)
28. OKLAHOMA - (2019-01-04) Attorney General Hunter Announces More than 1,100 Oklahomans to Receive Debt Relief as Part of Settlement with Career Education Corporation  
<http://www.oag.ok.gov/attorney-general-hunter-announces-more-than-1100-oklahomans-to-receive-debt-relief-as-part-of-settlement-with-career-education-corporation>
29. OREGON - (2019-01-04) Oregon Leads Settlement with For-Profit Education Company; \$6.1 Million for Oregon Students <https://www.doj.state.or.us/media-home/news-media-releases/oregon-leads-settlement-with-for-profit-education-company-6-1-million-for-oregon-students/>
30. PENNSYLVANIA - (2019-01-03) Attorney General Shapiro Announces For-Profit College Company Will Provide \$493 Million in Debt Relief for Over 179,000 Students Nationwide  
<https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/taking-action/press-releases/attorney-general-shapiro-announces-for-profit-college-company-will-provide-493-million-in-debt-relief-for-over-179000-students-nationwide/>
31. SOUTH CAROLINA - (2019-01-04) For-profit education company to forgo collecting loans, change practices in agreement with SC Attorney General Wilson, 48 Ags  
<http://www.scag.gov/archives/37349>
32. SOUTH DAKOTA - (2019-01-07) FOR-PROFIT EDUCATION COMPANY FORGOES COLLECTING LOANS AND CHANGES PRACTICES IN MULTI-STATE AGREEMENT  
<https://atg.sd.gov/OurOffice/Media/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?id=2145>

33. TENNESSEE - (2019-01-03) For-profit education company to forego collecting loans, change practices in agreement with Tennessee, 48 Ags  
<https://www.tn.gov/attorneygeneral/news/2019/1/3/pr19-01.html>
34. TEXAS - (2019-01-03) AG Pax-ton Obtains \$50 Mil-lion in Debt Relief for Tex-ans Vic-tim-ized by Career Edu-ca-tion Corporation <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/news/releases/ag-paxton-obtains-50-million-debt-relief-texans-victimized-career-education-corporation>
35. UTAH - (2019-01-09) For-Profit College Settlement Cancels \$500M in Student Debt  
<https://attorneygeneral.utah.gov/settlement-cancels-student-debt/>
36. VERMONT - (2019-01-17) Attorney General Donovan Resolves Consumer and Environmental Protection Cases; \$3 Million Coming to The State  
<https://ago.vermont.gov/blog/2019/01/17/attorney-general-donovan-resolves-consumer-and-environmental-protection-cases-3-million-coming-to-the-state/>
37. VIRGINIA - (2019-01-04) VIRGINIA STUDENTS TO RECEIVE OVER \$8 MILLION IN LOAN FORGIVENESS THROUGH SETTLEMENT WITH CAREER EDUCATION CORPORATION  
<https://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/1358-january-4-2019-virginia-students-to-receive-over-8-million-in-loan-forgiveness-through-settlement-with-career-education-corporation>
38. WASHINGTON - (2019-01-03) AG Ferguson obtains more than \$7M in student debt relief for thousands of Washingtonians from for-profit college <https://www.atg.wa.gov/news/news-releases/ag-ferguson-obtains-more-7m-student-debt-relief-thousands-washingtonians-profit>
39. WEST VIRGINIA - (2019-01-03) Attorney General Morrissey Reaches Multistate Settlement with For-Profit Education Company <https://mailchi.mp/wvago/wva-ag-reaches-multistate-settlement-with-for-profit-education-company?e=5699e8e411>
40. WYOMING - (2019-01-03) Career Education Corporation <http://ag.wyo.gov/cpu/resolved-matters>

#### \$1.5M Settlement with Neiman Marcus over 2013 Data Breach

1. ARIZONA - (2019-01-08) AG Brnovich Announces Data-Breach Settlement with Retailer Neiman Marcus <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/ag-brnovich-announces-data-breach-settlement-retailer-neiman-marcus>
2. ARKANSAS - (2019-01-08) Rutledge Settles with Neiman Marcus Over 2013 Data Breach  
<https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/news-releases/rutledge-settles-with-neiman-marcus-over-2013-data-breach/>
3. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA - (2019-01-08) AG Racine Announces Neiman Marcus To Pay \$1.5 Million For 2013 Data Breach <https://oag.dc.gov/release/ag-racine-announces-neiman-marcus-pay-15-million>
4. GEORGIA - (2019-01-08) Carr and Others Reach Settlement with Neiman Marcus over 2013 Data Breach <https://law.georgia.gov/press-releases/2019-01-08/carr-and-others-reach-settlement-neiman-marcus-over-2013-data-breach>
5. IDAHO - (2019-01-08) Wasden Announces Idaho's Participation in \$1.5M Settlement with Retailer Neiman Marcus over 2013 Data Breach <https://www.ag.idaho.gov/newsroom/wasden-announces-idahos-participation-in-1-5m-settlement-with-retailer-neiman-marcus-over-2013-data-breach/>

6. INDIANA - (2019-01-09) AG Curtis Hill joins \$1.5 million settlement with retailer Neiman Marcus over 2013 data breach <https://calendar.in.gov/site/oag/event/ag-curtis-hill-joins-15-million-settlement-with-retailer-neiman-marcus-over-2013-data-breach/>
7. IOWA - (2019-01-08) AG Miller joins \$1.5 million settlement with Neiman Marcus over data breach <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/newsroom/neiman-marcus-data-breach-hacking-ags/>
8. KENTUCKY - (2019-01-08) Beshear: Neiman Marcus to Pay Commonwealth more than \$17,000 over 2013 Data Breach <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=695>
9. MARYLAND - (2019-01-08) Attorney General Frosh Announces Settlement with Neiman Marcus Over 2013 Data Breach <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2019/010819.pdf>
10. MASSACHUSETTS - (2019-01-08) AG Healey Joins \$1.5 Million Multistate Settlement With Neiman Marcus Over 2013 Data Breach <https://www.mass.gov/news/ag-healey-joins-15-million-multistate-settlement-with-neiman-marcus-over-2013-data-breach>
11. MICHIGAN - (2019-01-08) AG Dana Nessel Joins \$1.5M Settlement with Retailer Neiman Marcus over 2013 Data Breach [https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916\\_81983\\_47203-486945--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-486945--,00.html)
12. MISSOURI - (2019-01-08) AG Schmitt Announces \$1.5M Multistate Settlement with Retailer Neiman Marcus over 2013 Data Breach <https://ago.mo.gov/home/news-archives/2019-news-archives/ag-schmitt-announces-1.5m-multistate-settlement>
13. NEBRASKA - (2019-01-11) AG Peterson Joins \$1.5M Settlement with Retailer Neiman Marcus over 2013 Data Breach <https://ago.nebraska.gov/news/ag-peterson-joins-15m-settlement-retailer-neiman-marcus-over-2013-data-breach>
14. NEVADA - (2019-01-08) Attorney General Aaron Ford Reaches \$1.5M Settlement with Retailer Neiman Marcus Over 2013 Data Breach [http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2019/Attorney\\_General\\_Aaron\\_Ford\\_Reaches\\_\\$1\\_5M\\_Settlement\\_with\\_Retailer\\_Neiman\\_Marcus\\_Over\\_2013\\_Data\\_Breach/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2019/Attorney_General_Aaron_Ford_Reaches_$1_5M_Settlement_with_Retailer_Neiman_Marcus_Over_2013_Data_Breach/)
15. NEW JERSEY - (2019-01-08) AG Grewal: Neiman Marcus Agrees to Improve Cybersecurity, Pay \$1.5 Million Penalty after Breach of Payment Card Data <https://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases19/pr20190108a.html>
16. NEW YORK - (2019-01-08) Attorney General James Announces \$1.5M Settlement With Retailer Neiman Marcus Over Data Breach <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-announces-15m-settlement-retailer-neiman-marcus-over-data>
17. NORTH CAROLINA - (2019-01-08) Attorney General Josh Stein Announces \$1.5M Settlement with Neiman Marcus over 2013 Data Breach [https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Announces-\\$1-5M-Settle.aspx](https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Announces-$1-5M-Settle.aspx)
18. PENNSYLVANIA - (2019-01-08) Attorney General Josh Shapiro Secures \$1.5M Settlement with Retailer Neiman Marcus over Data Breach <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/taking-action/press-releases/attorney-general-josh-shapiro-secures-1-5m-settlement-with-retailer-neiman-marcus-over-data-breach/>
19. SOUTH CAROLINA - (2019-01-11) AG Alan Wilson Joins \$1.5M Settlement with Retailer Neiman Marcus over 2013 Data Breach <http://www.scag.gov/archives/37354>

20. SOUTH DAKOTA - (2019-01-15) AG JASON RAVNSBORG JOINS \$1.5M SETTLEMENT WITH RETAILER NEIMAN MARCUS OVER 2013 DATA BREACH  
<https://atg.sd.gov/OurOffice/Media/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?id=2150>
21. TENNESSEE - (2019-01-09) AG Slatery joins \$1.5M settlement with Neiman Marcus over 2013 data breach <https://www.tn.gov/attorneygeneral/news/2019/1/9/pr19-02.html>
22. TEXAS - (2019-01-08) AG Paxton Announces \$1.5 Million Settlement with Neiman Marcus over Data Breach <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/news/releases/ag-paxton-announces-15-million-settlement-neiman-marcus-over-data-breach>
23. VIRGINIA - (2019-01-09) AG HERRING REACHES \$1.5M SETTLEMENT WITH RETAILER NEIMAN MARCUS OVER 2013 DATA BREACH <https://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/1362-january-9-2019-herring-reaches-1-5m-settlement-with-retailer-neiman-marcus-over-2013-data-breach>

#### Settlement with Encore Capital, Midland Credit Management, and Midland Funding

- NEBRASKA - (2019-01-15) Attorney General Peterson Announces Settlement with Encore Capital, Midland Credit Management, and Midland Funding  
<https://ago.nebraska.gov/news/attorney-general-peterson-announces-settlement-encore-capital-midland-credit-management-and>

#### \$120 million settlement with Johnson & Johnson and DePuy regarding false and misleading statements concerning metal-on-metal hip implant devices

1. ALABAMA - (2019-01-22) Attorney General Steve Marshall Announces Multistate Settlement with Johnson & Johnson and Medical Device Business Services Inc. Regarding Deceptive Practices in Promotion of Hip Implant Devices  
<https://ago.alabama.gov/documents/news/JJ%20DePuy%20settlement%201-2019.pdf>
2. ARIZONA - (2019-01-23) AG Brnovich Announces Multimillion-Dollar Hip Implant Settlement  
<https://www.azag.gov/press-release/ag-brnovich-announces-multimillion-dollar-hip-implant-settlement>
3. ARKANSAS - (2019-01-22) Rutledge Reaches Settlement Over Illegal Promotion of Hip Implants  
<https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/news-releases/rutledge-reaches-settlement-over-illegal-promotion-of-hip-implants/>
4. CALIFORNIA - (2019-01-21) Attorney General Becerra Announces \$120 Million Settlement against Johnson & Johnson for Deceptive Marketing of Hip Replacement Products  
<https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-becerra-announces-120-million-settlement-against-johnson>
5. CONNECTICUT - (2019-01-22) ATTORNEY GENERAL TONG ANNOUNCES \$120 MILLION MULTISTATE SETTLEMENT REGARDING UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE MARKETING OF HIP IMPLANT DEVICES <https://portal.ct.gov/AG/Press-Releases/2019-Press-Releases/AG-TONG-ANNOUNCES-MULTISTATE-SETTLEMENT-REGARDING--DECEPTIVE-MARKETING-OF-HIP-IMPLANT-DEVICES>
6. DELAWARE - (2019-01-25) Delaware Joins 44 Other States and District of Columbia in Settlement Over Misleading Information Regarding Hip Implants  
<https://news.delaware.gov/2019/01/25/jjs/>



7. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA - (2019-01-22) AG Racine and Counterparts from 45 States Reach \$120 Million Settlement with Johnson & Johnson for False Claims About Hip Implant Devices <https://oag.dc.gov/release/ag-racine-and-counterparts-45-states-reach-120>
8. FLORIDA - (2019-01-23) Multistate Action to Protect Floridians Seeking Hip Replacements <http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/BB7DBB52BC674E058525838B005802AF>
9. GEORGIA - (2019-01-23) Carr and 45 Attorneys General Nationwide Reach a \$120 Million Settlement Regarding False and Misleading Statements Concerning Medical Devices <https://law.georgia.gov/press-releases/2019-01-23/carr-and-45-attorneys-general-nationwide-reach-120-million-settlement>
10. IDAHO - (2019-01-23) Wasden Announces Idaho's Participation in \$120 Million Settlement with Johnson & Johnson and Subsidiaries over Hip Implants <https://www.ag.idaho.gov/newsroom/wasden-announces-idahos-participation-in-120-million-settlement-with-johnson-johnson-and-subsidiaries-over-hip-implants/>
11. ILLINOIS - (2019-01-22) RAOUL ANNOUNCES \$120 MILLION SETTLEMENT WITH JOHNSON & JOHNSON AND MEDICAL DEVICE BUSINESS INC. OVER FALSE & MISLEADING STATEMENTS [http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2019\\_01/20190122.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2019_01/20190122.html)
12. INDIANA - (2019-01-22) AG Curtis Hill reaches \$120 million settlement with makers of hip implants <https://calendar.in.gov/site/oag/event/ag-curtis-hill-reaches-120-million-settlement-with-makers-of-hip-implants/>
13. IOWA - (2019-01-22) Miller and 45 AGs reach \$120 million settlement over hip implants <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/newsroom/hip-implants-johnson-depuy-settlement-ag/>
14. KENTUCKY - (2019-01-22) Beshear Secures nearly \$1.5 Million for Kentucky in Settlement with Hip Implant Manufacturer <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=701>
15. MAINE - (2019-01-23) Maine Joins Multistate Settlement with DePuy and Johnson & Johnson <https://www.maine.gov/ag/news/article.shtml?id=1024748>
16. MARYLAND - (2019-01-22) Attorney General Frosh Reaches \$120 Million Settlement with Medical Device Manufacturer <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2019/012219.pdf>
17. MASSACHUSETTS - (2019-01-22) Johnson & Johnson, Depuy Orthopaedics Pay \$120 Million to Settle 46-state Investigation Into Misleading Marketing <https://www.mass.gov/news/johnson-johnson-depuy-orthopaedics-pay-120-million-to-settle-46-state-investigation-into>
18. MICHIGAN - (2019-01-23) Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel and 45 Attorneys General reach \$120 M settlement with Johnson & Johnson, DePuy Orthopaedics, Inc. [https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916\\_81983\\_47203-487988--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-487988--,00.html)
19. MISSOURI - (2019-01-23) AG Schmitt and 45 Other Attorneys General Reach a \$120 Million Settlement Regarding False and Misleading Statements About Metal-On-Metal Hip Implant Devices <https://ago.mo.gov/home/news-archives/2019-news-archives/ag-schmitt-and-45-other-attorneys-general-reach-120-million-settlement-regarding-false-misleading-statements-metal-on-metal-hip-implant-devices>
20. NEVADA - (2019-01-22) Attorney General Aaron Ford, 44 States Reach \$120M Settlement with Johnson & Johnson and Related Entities Over Marketing of Metal-On-Metal Hip Implants [http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2019/Attorney\\_General\\_Aaron\\_Ford,\\_44\\_States\\_Reach\\_\\$120M\\_Set](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2019/Attorney_General_Aaron_Ford,_44_States_Reach_$120M_Set)

[tlement with Johnson   Johnson and Related Entities Over Marketing of Metal-On-Metal Hip Implants/](#)

21. NEW HAMPSHIRE - (2019-01-23) New Hampshire Joins 44 States, District of Columbia, in Settlement with Johnson & Johnson and Medical Device Business Inc. FKA DePuy, Inc., DePuy Orthopedics, Inc., and DePuy Orthopaedics, Inc. for \$120 Million  
<https://www.doj.nh.gov/news/2019/20190123-depuy-settlement.htm>
22. NEW MEXICO - (2019-01-22) AG Balderas Announces \$120 million settlement with Johnson & Johnson subsidiary over marketing practices  
[https://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/AG\\_Balderas\\_Announces %24120 million settlement with Johnson   Johnson subsidiary over marketing practices.pdf](https://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/AG_Balderas_Announces_%24120_million_settlement_with_Johnson_Johnson_subsidary_over_marketing_practices.pdf)
23. NEW YORK - (2019-01-22) Attorney General James and 45 Attorneys General Nationwide Reach \$120 Million Settlement with Johnson & Johnson and DePuy Inc. Over Misleading Information about Hip Replacement Devices <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-and-45-attorneys-general-nationwide-reach-120-million>
24. NORTH CAROLINA - (2019-01-25) Attorney General Josh Stein Settles with Johnson & Johnson for \$120 Million <https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Settles-with-Johnson-J.aspx>
25. OHIO - (2019-01-22) Attorney General Yost and 45 Attorneys General Reach a \$120 Million Settlement with Johnson & Johnson and Certain Johnson & Johnson Owned Companies About Metal-on-Metal Hip Implant Devices <https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/January-2019/Attorney-General-Yost-and-45-Attorneys-General-Rea>
26. PENNSYLVANIA - (2019-01-22) Attorney General Shapiro and 45 AGs Secure \$120 Million Settlement with Johnson & Johnson, DePuy Orthopedics  
<https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/taking-action/press-releases/attorney-general-shapiro-and-45-ags-secure-120-million-settlement-with-johnson-johnson-depuy-orthopedics/>
27. SOUTH CAROLINA - (2019-01-22) SC Attorney General Alan Wilson & 45 attorneys general reach \$120 million settlement with Johnson & Johnson and DePuy regarding false and misleading statements concerning metal-on-metal hip implant devices  
<http://www.scag.gov/archives/37550>
28. TENNESSEE - (2019-01-24) Attorney General Herbert H. Slatery III and 45 Attorneys General reach \$120 million settlement concerning hip implant devices  
<https://www.tn.gov/attorneygeneral/news/2019/1/24/pr19-03.html>
29. TEXAS - (2019-01-22) AG Paxton Announces \$120 Million Settlement with Johnson & Johnson for Falsely Marketing Hip Replacement Devices  
<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/news/releases/ag-paxton-announces-120-million-settlement-johnson-johnson-falsely-marketing-hip-replacement-devices>
30. VERMONT - (2019-01-22) Vermont To Receive Over \$1.2 Million in a Settlement Regarding Hip Implant Devices <https://ago.vermont.gov/blog/2019/01/22/vermont-to-receive-over-1-2-million-in-a-settlement-regarding-hip-implant-devices/>



## Net Neutrality

- KENTUCKY - (2019-01-18) Oral Arguments in Beshear's Fight to Block FCC's Rollback of Broadband Protections or Net Neutrality Set for Feb. 1 <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=699>

## Multistate Settlements With Fiat Chrysler And Bosch Totaling \$171 Million For Alleged Violations Of State Environmental And Consumer Protection Laws

1. ARIZONA - (2019-01-10) AG Brnovich Announces Consumer Protection Settlements With Fiat Chrysler and Auto Supplier Bosch <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/ag-brnovich-announces-consumer-protection-settlements-fiat-chrysler-and-auto-supplier>
2. ARKANSAS - (2019-01-17) Rutledge Reaches Settlement for Illegal Diesel Emissions <https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/news-releases/rutledge-reaches-settlement-for-illegal-diesel-emissions/>
3. CALIFORNIA - (2019-01-10) Attorney General Becerra, California Air Resources Board Announce Joint California-Federal Settlement Valued at More than \$500 million with Fiat Chrysler for Use of "Defeat Devices" <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-becerra-california-air-resources-board-announce-joint>
4. COLORADO - (2019-01-29) Attorney General Phil Weiser Announces Consumer Protection/Environmental Settlements with Fiat Chrysler, Auto Supplier Robert Bosch for Undermining Auto Emissions Regulations with Unlawful Defeat Devices in Diesel Vehicles <https://coag.gov/press-room/press-releases/01-29-19>
5. CONNECTICUT - (2019-01-10) AG Tong Announces Multistate Settlements with Fiat-Chrysler and Bosch over Defeat Devices in Certain Diesel Passenger Vehicles <https://portal.ct.gov/AG/Press-Releases/2019-Press-Releases/AG-Announces-Multistate-Settlements-with-Fiat-Chrysler-Bosch-over-Defeat-Devices-in-Diesel-Vehicles>
6. DELAWARE - (2019-01-10) Delaware Part Of Proposed Environmental And Consumer Protection Penalty Settlements With Fiat Chrysler And Auto Supplier Robert Bosch For Allegedly Undermining Auto Emissions Regulations And Harming Consumers By Adding Unlawful "Defeat Devices" To Diesel Vehicles <https://news.delaware.gov/2019/01/10/fcb/>
7. IDAHO - (2019-01-10) Wasden Announces Proposed Settlement with Fiat Chrysler and Bosch over Diesel Emissions <https://www.ag.idaho.gov/newsroom/wasden-announces-proposed-settlement-with-fiat-chrysler-and-bosch-over-diesel-emissions/>
8. INDIANA - (2019-01-10) AG Curtis Hill announces settlements with Fiat Chrysler and supplier <https://calendar.in.gov/site/oag/event/ag-curtis-hill-announces-settlements-with-fiat-chrysler-and-supplier/>
9. IOWA - (2019-01-10) Miller announces proposed settlements with Fiat Chrysler, Bosch over 'defeat devices' <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/newsroom/fiat-chrysler-bosch-defeat-devices-emissions-ags/>
10. KENTUCKY - (2019-01-10) Beshear Finalizing Settlements with Automaker Fiat Chrysler, Auto Parts Supplier Bosch <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=696>

11. MARYLAND - (2019-01-10) Attorney General Frosh Announces Settlements with Fiat Chrysler and Bosch to Resolve Diesel Cheating Allegations  
<http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2019/011019.pdf>
12. MASSACHUSETTS - (2019-01-10) AG Healey Announces Landmark Settlements With Fiat Chrysler and Bosch for Cheating Emissions Tests <https://www.mass.gov/news/ag-healey-announces-landmark-settlements-with-fiat-chrysler-and-bosch-for-cheating-emissions>
13. MICHIGAN - (2019-01-10) Attorney General Dana Nessel Announces Multi-Million Dollar Settlements with Fiat Chrysler and Supplier Robert Bosch  
[https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916\\_81983\\_47203-487192--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-487192--,00.html)
14. MISSOURI - (2019-01-16) AG Schmitt Announces Settlements with Fiat Chrysler and Auto Parts Supplier Bosch for Adding Unlawful "Defeat Devices" to Diesel Vehicles  
<https://ago.mo.gov/home/news-archives/2019-news-archives/ag-schmitt-announces-settlements-with-fiat-chrysler-and-auto-parts-supplier-bosch-for-adding-unlawful-defeat-devices-to-diesel-vehicles>
15. NEVADA - (2019-01-10) Attorney General Aaron Ford Announces Settlement with Fiat, Bosch over Allegations of Emissions Fraud  
[http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2019/Attorney\\_General\\_Aaron\\_Ford\\_Announces\\_Settlement\\_with\\_Fiat\\_Bosch\\_over\\_Allegations\\_of\\_Emissions\\_Fraud/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2019/Attorney_General_Aaron_Ford_Announces_Settlement_with_Fiat_Bosch_over_Allegations_of_Emissions_Fraud/)
16. NEW JERSEY - (2019-01-11) AG Grewal: NJ to Receive \$5-Million-Plus from Fiat Chrysler and Robert Bosch for Alleged Consumer Fraud, Environmental Violations  
<https://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases19/pr20190111c.html>
17. NEW YORK - (2019-01-10) Attorney General James Announces Landmark Multistate Settlements With Fiat Chrysler And Bosch Totaling \$171 Million For Alleged Violations Of State Environmental And Consumer Protection Laws <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-announces-landmark-multistate-settlements-fiat-chrysler-and>
18. NORTH CAROLINA - (2019-01-10) Attorney General Josh Stein Announces \$5.3M in Proposed Settlements with Fiat Chrysler and Robert Bosch for Emission Rule Violations  
[https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Announces-\\$5-3M-in-Pro.aspx](https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Announces-$5-3M-in-Pro.aspx)
19. OREGON - (2019-01-11) Oregon Plays Key Role in \$171 Million Settlement with Fiat Chrysler and Robert Bosch for Environmental Breaches <https://www.doj.state.or.us/media-home/news-media-releases/oregon-plays-key-role-in-171-million-settlement-with-fiat-chrysler-and-robert-bosh-for-environmental-breaches/>
20. PENNSYLVANIA - (2019-01-11) Attorney General Josh Shapiro Announces \$8.4 Million Settlement with Fiat Chrysler and Auto Supplier Robert Bosch for Harming Consumers and Undermining Auto Emissions Regulations <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/taking-action/press-releases/attorney-general-josh-shapiro-announces-8-4-million-settlement-with-fiat-chrysler-and-auto-supplier-robert-bosch-for-harming-consumers-and-undermining-auto-emissions-regulations/>
21. RHODE ISLAND - (2019-01-11) SETTLEMENTS NEGOTIATED BETWEEN STATE AGs, INCLUDING RHODE ISLAND, AND FIAT CHRYSLER AND AUTO SUPPLIER ROBERT BOSCH FOR ALLEGEDLY UNDERMINING AUTO EMISSIONS REGULATIONS AND HARMING CONSUMERS BY ADDING UNLAWFUL "DEFEAT DEVICES" TO DIESEL VEHICLES <https://www.ri.gov/press/view/35018>

22. VERMONT - (2019-01-17) Attorney General Donovan Resolves Consumer and Environmental Protection Cases; \$3 Million Coming to The State  
<https://ago.vermont.gov/blog/2019/01/17/attorney-general-donovan-resolves-consumer-and-environmental-protection-cases-3-million-coming-to-the-state/>

## Wells Fargo Bank Settlement

1. DELAWARE - (2019-01-07) Wells Fargo Customers Will Have Chance to Be Compensated Under 50 State Settlement That Includes Delaware <https://news.delaware.gov/2019/01/07/wf/>
2. NORTH DAKOTA - (2019-01-02) NORTH DAKOTA TO RECEIVE \$1.2 MILLION FROM WELLS FARGO BANK <https://attorneygeneral.nd.gov/news/north-dakota-receive-12-million-wells-fargo-bank>
3. UTAH - (2019-01-01) Protecting Utah Consumers: Wells Fargo Settlement  
<https://attorneygeneral.utah.gov/wells-fargo-settlement/>
4. VERMONT - (2019-01-17) Attorney General Donovan Resolves Consumer and Environmental Protection Cases; \$3 Million Coming to The State  
<https://ago.vermont.gov/blog/2019/01/17/attorney-general-donovan-resolves-consumer-and-environmental-protection-cases-3-million-coming-to-the-state/>

## Coalition Urging FDIC to Include Strong Consumer Protections for Small-Dollar Bank Loans

1. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA - (2019-01-22) AG Racine Leads 14-State Coalition Urging FDIC to Include Strong Consumer Protections for Small-Dollar Bank Loans <https://oag.dc.gov/release/ag-racine-leads-14-state-coalition-urging-fdic>
2. ILLINOIS - (2019-01-23) ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL URGES FDIC TO INCLUDE STRONG CONSUMER PROTECTIONS FOR SMALL-DOLLAR LOANS MADE BY BANKS  
[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2019\\_01/20190123.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2019_01/20190123.html)
3. NORTH CAROLINA - (2019-01-22) Attorney General Josh Stein Fights to Protect North Carolinians from Payday Loans and Abusive Lending <https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Fights-to-Protect-Nort.aspx>
4. VIRGINIA - (2019-01-23) HERRING URGES FDIC TO INCLUDE STRONG CONSUMER PROTECTIONS FOR SMALL-DOLLAR LOANS MADE BY BANKS <https://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/1371-january-23-2019-herring-urges-fdic-to-include-strong-consumer-protections-for-small-dollar-bank-loans>

## Medicaid Fraud

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### Settlement with Walgreens

1. ARKANSAS - (2019-01-29) Walgreens Took Advantage of Medicaid and Patients  
<https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/news-releases/walgreens-took-advantage-of-medicaid-and-patients/>
2. DELAWARE - (2019-01-25) Delaware Part of Settlement of Fraud Suit With Walgreens  
<https://news.delaware.gov/2019/01/25/wf-2/>

3. ILLINOIS - (2019-01-28) ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL ANNOUNCES MORE THAN \$260 MILLION SETTLEMENTS WITH WALGREENS  
[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2019\\_01/20190128.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2019_01/20190128.html)
4. MARYLAND - (2019-01-25) Attorney General Frosh Announces \$209 Million Settlement with Walgreens to Resolve Allegations of Fraudulent Over-Dispensing of Insulin Pens  
<http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2019/012519.pdf>
5. MARYLAND - (2019-01-25) Attorney General Frosh Announces \$60 Million Settlement with Walgreens to Resolve Medicaid False Claims Act Allegations  
<http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2019/012519a.pdf>
6. MICHIGAN - (2019-01-25) Attorney General Nessel Announces \$1.7 MM Settlement with Walgreens [https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916\\_81983\\_47203-488326--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-488326--,00.html)
7. MINNESOTA - (2019-01-23) Attorney General Ellison's office settles three multistate healthcare-related fraud and deceptive-marketing cases, recoups \$3.1M for Minnesota  
[http://www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/Communications/20190123\\_Settlement.asp](http://www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/Communications/20190123_Settlement.asp)
8. NEW MEXICO - (2019-01-24) AG Balderas Announces Settlement of over \$200 million with Walgreens over Fraudulent over-dispensing of Insulin pens  
[https://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/AG\\_Balderas\\_Announces\\_Settlement\\_of\\_over\\_%24200\\_million\\_with\\_Walgreens\\_over\\_Fraudulent\\_over\\_dispensing\\_of\\_Insulin\\_pens.pdf](https://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/AG_Balderas_Announces_Settlement_of_over_%24200_million_with_Walgreens_over_Fraudulent_over_dispensing_of_Insulin_pens.pdf)
9. NEW YORK - (2019-01-22) Attorney General James Announces \$8 Million Settlement In Principle With Walgreens Over False Claims Billed To New York's Medicaid Program For Prescription Drugs <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-announces-8-million-settlement-principle-walgreens-over-false>
10. NEW YORK - (2019-01-22) Attorney General James Announces Settlement With Walgreens Boots Alliance Over Medicaid Fraud Allegations For Over-Dispensing Insulin Pens  
<https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-announces-settlement-walgreens-boots-alliance-over-medicaid>
11. SOUTH DAKOTA - (2019-01-24) WALGREENS CO. TO PAY \$60 MILLION TO SETTLE MEDICAID FALSE CLAIMS ACT ALLEGATIONS  
<https://atg.sd.gov/OurOffice/Media/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?id=2151>
12. SOUTH DAKOTA - (2019-01-24) WALGREENS TO PAY \$209.2 MILLION TO RESOLVE ALLEGATIONS RELATED TO FRAUDULENT OVER-DISPENSING OF INSULIN PENS  
<https://atg.sd.gov/OurOffice/Media/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?id=2152>

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## ARKANSAS

January 28, 2019

### **Rutledge Announces Arrest of Dentist for Illegally Billing Medicaid**

LITTLE ROCK – Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge today announced the arrest of a North Little Rock dentist for making false statements on billing records to the Arkansas Medicaid Program.

Dr. Brian Moore, 47, of Maumelle, is accused of billing the Arkansas Medicaid Program for

services not rendered between January 24, 2016 and December 31, 2017, totaling about \$9,000. Following an investigation by the Attorney General's Office, Moore was arrested today at his North Little Rock business. He is charged with two counts of Medicaid fraud, a Class B felony and a Class A misdemeanor.

"Moore has taken advantage of his young Medicaid patients and the Arkansas Medicaid Program," said Attorney General Rutledge. "I will not tolerate people cheating the Medicaid system and will continue to prosecute those who abuse this important safety net."

Records indicate Moore submitted false dental information on patients between the ages of 2 and 21 so that the...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/news-releases/rutledge-announces-arrest-of-dentist-for-illegally-billing-medicaid/>

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## ARKANSAS

January 08, 2019

### **Rutledge Announces Arrest of Preferred Family Healthcare Therapist for Fraudulently Billing Medicaid**

LITTLE ROCK – Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge today announced the arrest of a mental health therapist at Preferred Family Healthcare (PFH).

Kandice Robinson, 33, of Bartlett, Tenn., is accused of billing the Arkansas Medicaid Program for services not rendered between August 15 and November 1, 2017, totaling about \$4,950.

Following an investigation by the Attorney General's Office, Robinson turned herself in at Pulaski County District Court. She is charged with one count of Medicaid fraud, a Class C felony.

"Robinson is another PFH employee accused of lying and charging Medicaid for services she did not provide," said Attorney General Rutledge. "People cheating the Medicaid system are stealing from taxpayers and hurting the system, which is designed to protect Arkansas's most vulnerable. I will not tolerate this behavior as the Attorney General."

Medicaid fraud occurs when providers use the Medicaid program to obtain money to which they are not entitled. To report Medicaid...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/news-releases/rutledge-announces-arrest-of-preferred-family-healthcare-therapist-for-fraudulently-billing-medicaid/>

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## CONNECTICUT

January 29, 2019

### **STATE REACHES FALSE CLAIMS ACT SETTLEMENT WITH WEST HAVEN BEHAVIORAL ANALYST REGARDING IMPROPER BILLING FOR AUTISM SERVICES**

A West Haven behavioral analyst has agreed to pay \$20,000 and will be suspended from participating in Connecticut's Medicaid program for three years for allegedly submitting false

claims for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) services, Attorney General William Tong and state Department of Social Services (DSS) Commissioner Roderick L. Bremby announced today. Settlement funds will be returned to the Connecticut Medical Assistance Program (CMAP). The state alleged that Harry Voulgarakis and his related entities HVM Psychological Services, Shoreline Social Learning, and Shoreline Center for Social Learning violated the Connecticut False Claims Act by billing for ASD services that were not rendered during the time period beginning on June 10, 2015 through at least May 2018.

"Harry Voulgarakis violated the public trust by defrauding the state of thousands of dollars in Medicaid funds. But more importantly, he deprived children with Autism Spectrum Disorder of expert observation and direction services needed to advance their care...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://portal.ct.gov/AG/Press-Releases/2019-Press-Releases/FALSE-CLAIMS-ACT-SETTLEMENT-WITH-BEHAVIORAL-ANALYST>

January 17, 2019

### **New Haven Behavioral Health Provider Agrees to Settlement, Suspension to Resolve False Claims Act Allegations**

A former New Haven behavioral health clinician group and its owner have agreed to pay \$100,000 and will be suspended from participating in Connecticut's Medicaid program for ten years for allegedly engaging in a systematic and long-term pattern of submitting false claims to the program, Attorney General William Tong and state Department of Social Services (DSS) Commissioner Roderick L. Bremby said today.

New Haven resident Lamaara Davis (Davis) is the owner and CEO of the Davis Group, LLC (Davis Group) which conducted business in New Haven under the name "Caring Family Solutions" and provided, among other services, temporary child care, afterschool programs, support groups for children and summer camps. The Davis Group enrolled in the Connecticut Medical Assistance Program (CMAP) – the state's Medicaid program – as a behavioral health clinician group in 2014.

A state investigation, initiated by a fraud referral from the DSS, found that from April 2014 through April...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://portal.ct.gov/AG/Press-Releases/2019-Press-Releases/New-Haven-Behavioral-Health-Provider-Agrees-to-Settlement-to-Resolve-False-Claims-Act-Allegations>

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## KANSAS

January 24, 2019

### **Dickinson County woman ordered to repay more than \$2,500 for Medicaid fraud**

ABILENE – (January 24, 2019) – A Dickinson County woman was ordered yesterday to repay more than \$2,500 to the Kansas Medicaid Program after being found guilty of Medicaid fraud-

related charges, Attorney General Derek Schmidt said.

Ashley Loomis, 29, of Abilene, pleaded no contest in November and was found guilty in Dickinson County District Court of one felony count of making a false claim to the Medicaid Program and one felony count of conspiracy to commit making a false claim to the Medicaid Program. On Wednesday, Dickinson County District Judge Benjamin J. Sexton ordered Loomis to repay \$2,532.85 to the Kansas Medicaid Program. Judge Sexton also sentenced Loomis to 24 months probation with an underlying prison sentence of 16 months. Convictions such as this one may also result in a period during which the defendant is prohibited from being paid wages through a government health care program.

An investigation by the...

- **Original Press Release:** [https://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2019/01/24/dickinson-county-woman-ordered-to-repay-more-than-\\$2-500-for-medicaid-fraud](https://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2019/01/24/dickinson-county-woman-ordered-to-repay-more-than-$2-500-for-medicaid-fraud)

January 17, 2019

**Riley County nurse sentenced to 21 months for Medicaid fraud, drug crimes, related charges**

TOPEKA – (January 17, 2019) – A Riley County nurse has been sentenced to 21 months in prison after being found guilty of Medicaid fraud and related charges in three Kansas counties, Attorney General Derek Schmidt said.

Kathleen M. Kleuskens, 57, of Ogden, entered pleas and was found guilty in October of a total of 10 charges filed by the attorney general's office in Clay, Geary and Pottawatomie counties. Earlier this month, Clay County District Judge John F. Bosch sentenced Kleuskens to 20 months in the Department of Corrections and Geary County Senior District Judge Robert J. Fleming sentenced Kleuskens to 21 months in the Department of Corrections. On Thursday, Pottawatomie County District Judge Jeff Elder sentenced Kleuskens to 21 months in the Department of Corrections. The sentences in the three counties were ordered to be served concurrently with each other. Convictions such as this one may also result in a...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2019/01/17/riley-county-nurse-sentenced-to-21-months-for-medicaid-fraud-drug-crimes-related-charges>

January 14, 2019

**Lansing nurse sentenced to 21 months for Medicaid fraud, drug charges**

KANSAS CITY, Kan. – (January 14, 2019) – A Lansing nurse was sentenced last week to 21 months in prison after pleading guilty to Medicaid fraud and related charges, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt said.

Erin Grae Whitlow, 29, of Lansing, pleaded guilty in November to one count of Medicaid fraud, one count of felony possession of a controlled substance and two counts of felony mistreatment of a dependent adult. Wyandotte County District Judge Jennifer L. Myers on Thursday sentenced Whitlow to 21 months in the Department of Corrections. Convictions such as this one may also result in a period during which the defendant is prohibited from being paid



wages through a government health care program.

The charges stemmed from an investigation by the attorney general's Medicaid Fraud and Abuse Division and the Bonner Springs Police Department, which revealed that Whitlow stole morphine from vials during a time she was employed as...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2019/01/14/lansing-nurse-sentenced-to-21-months-for-medicaid-fraud-drug-charges>

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## MASSACHUSETTS

January 30, 2019

### **Dorchester Doctor Pleads Guilty to Illegally Charging Patients Cash for Suboxone and Overcharging MassHealth for Vivitrol**

Boston — A Dorchester doctor pleaded guilty in connection with a scheme to charge patients cash for opioid dependence treatment already covered by MassHealth, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today. As a part of sentencing, a judge has ordered him to resign his medical license.

Dr. Ashok Patel, age 62, of Hanover, and his medical practice, Ambama Clinic, each pleaded guilty in Suffolk Superior Court on Tuesday to charges of Larceny over \$250 (2 counts), Medicaid False Claims (1 count) and Excess Charges (1 count). Patel was indicted in Suffolk Superior Court in September 2017.

“Dr. Patel illegally charged patients seeking treatment for substance use disorder and turned those away who could not pay,” said AG Healey. “We must continue to combat the opioid epidemic on all fronts, including going after those who seek to illegally profit off the opioid crisis and put up barriers to life-saving treatment.”

After Patel's guilty plea was...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.mass.gov/news/dorchester-doctor-pleads-guilty-to-illegally-charging-patients-cash-for-suboxone-and>

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## MISSOURI

January 11, 2019

### **St. Louis County woman ordered to repay more than \$5,000 for Medicaid fraud**

Jefferson City, Mo. — Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt announced that a St. Louis County woman was ordered to repay more than \$5,000 to the MO HealthNet program after pleading guilty to Medicaid fraud-related charges.

“Missourians have a rightful expectation that Medicaid dollars will be spent on services, not on fraudsters,” said Schmitt. “My office takes its responsibility to protect Missouri taxpayers seriously and will continue to ensure Medicaid dollars are spent on those who need it most.”

Joyce Terry pled guilty to the class C felony of Medicaid Fraud in the Circuit Court of St. Louis



County. Terry was a recipient of Medicaid services through the Consumer Directed Services Program in the St. Louis area from 2012 through 2018. Consumer Directed Services are in-home personal care services that Medicaid pays for but allows the Medicaid recipient to choose and hire her own personal care attendant. The recipient is then...

➤ [Original Press Release:](#)

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## NEW HAMPSHIRE

January 16, 2019

### **Owner of a New Hampshire Home Care Services Company Arrested for Medicaid Fraud**

Concord, NH – Attorney General Gordon J. MacDonald announces that Richard A. Gaudette, age 62, of Danville, was arrested Tuesday and charged with one class B felony count of Medicaid Fraud, in violation of RSA 167:61-a.

The charge alleges that between February 2013 and September 2017, Mr. Gaudette, as the owner of Happy at Home Care and Assistance, LLC, a company licensed to provide in-home, personal care services to Medicaid beneficiaries, submitted fraudulent claims to the State for reimbursement from Medicaid funds. These claims were fraudulent, either in whole or in part, because the services on which they were based were never actually provided.

Specifically, Mr. Gaudette claimed and received reimbursement for in-home, personal care services during periods when Happy at Home clients were not at home, but instead in hospitals, long-term care facilities, or, in one instance, deceased. The State alleges that Mr. Gaudette acted knowingly, and with a purpose to...

➤ [Original Press Release: https://www.doj.nh.gov/news/2019/20190116-gaudette-medicaid-fraud.htm](https://www.doj.nh.gov/news/2019/20190116-gaudette-medicaid-fraud.htm)

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## NEW YORK

January 15, 2019

### **Attorney General James Announces \$9 Million Settlement With Orthodontist For Allowing Uncertified Employees To Perform Orthodontic Procedures**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Letitia James announced today a \$9 million settlement with “Diamond Braces” for allowing uncertified employees to perform orthodontic procedures and then improperly billing Medicaid for payment for such procedures. “Diamond Braces” is a chain of dental offices operating in twelve locations in New York State, including dental offices in all five boroughs and in Nassau and Rockland Counties.

“It is unacceptable that uncertified individuals would ever perform orthodontic work in New York,” said Attorney General Letitia James. “Diamond Braces falsely billed Medicaid for these services, cheating our state out of millions of dollars. We will never tolerate these deceptive business practices that break the laws designed to keep patients safe.”

In the settlement, Oleg Drut, DDS, and Diamond Braces admitted that Diamond Braces employees who were uncertified by the New York State Education Department (“NYSED”) performed some intraoral procedures. Drut and Diamond Braces also admitted to...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-announces-9-million-settlement-orthodontist-allowing>

January 09, 2019

### **Attorney General James Announces State Prison Sentence Of Former Owner Of Brooklyn Medical Supply Company In Million Dollar Medicaid Fraud Scheme**

NEW YORK, NY – Attorney General Letitia James today announced the state prison sentence of Kester Atumonyogo, 49, of Baldwin, New York, for defrauding the State Medicaid program of over one million dollars. Today, the Honorable Danny Chun of Brooklyn Supreme Court sentenced the defendant to one-and-one-third to four years following the defendant’s September 5th guilty plea to Health Care Fraud in the First Degree, a class B felony; Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony; and Welfare Fraud in the Third Degree, a class D felony.

“It is unconscionable that an individual would use a Medicaid fraud scheme as a means to exploit children with disabilities and their families for their own personal gain,” said Attorney General Letitia James. “My office will continue to hold fraudsters accountable for stealing from the Medicaid program and anyone else who tries to take advantage of our State’s vulnerable families....

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-announces-state-prison-sentence-former-owner-brooklyn-medical>

January 08, 2019

### **Attorney General James Announces Conviction Of “Three-Quarter House” Director Charged With Defrauding Medicaid Through A Kickback Scheme**

NEW YORK, NY — Attorney General Letitia James announced the conviction of Robert H. Corrado, 57 and Interline Employee Assistance Program, Inc. (Interline) for engaging in a systematic kickback scheme and violating patients’ rights. In 2017, the Attorney General’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (“MFCU”) secured an indictment and filed several civil causes of action against Robert Corrado, Kristina Corrado, and Interline seeking to recover monies improperly obtained as a result of their criminal conduct. Since 2015, MFCU’s “three-quarter house” investigations have brought down three groups of fraudulent housing and treatment providers, including Narco Freedom, the Baumblit Group, and Interline.

“The defendants exploited individuals struggling with homelessness and substance abuse in order pad their bottom line,” said Attorney General Letitia James. “This series of investigations disrupted a dismal culture where housing was used as bait for the most vulnerable New Yorkers just to have an excuse to bill Medicaid. We will never tolerate...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-announces-conviction-three-quarter-house-director-charged>

January 08, 2019

**Attorney General James Announces The Criminal Convictions Of Two Licensed Nurses And The Former Director Of A Brooklyn Hospital For Larceny Scheme**

BROOKLYN –Attorney General Letitia James today announced the convictions of Keisha Demas, 42, Alla Noginsky, 55, and Marco Vanni, 53, of Brooklyn, NY, for stealing approximately \$750,000 from Interfaith Medical Center (“Interfaith”), a Brooklyn not-for-profit community-based hospital that recently came out of bankruptcy. The Attorney General's office charged that at varying times Demas and Noginsky were paid for “no-show” jobs at the hospital over a 5 year period. During this period, Demas also received Medicaid benefits she was not entitled to and failed to remit her income taxes to the State of New York. In total, Demas defrauded Medicaid of over \$30,000 and underpaid the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance by nearly \$40,000.

“For years these defendants stole from a community based hospital, while lining their own pockets at the expense of its patients,” said Attorney General James. “Our office will continue to investigate all forms of fraud...”

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/attorney-general-james-announces-criminal-convictions-two-licensed-nurses-and-former>

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## OHIO

January 24, 2019

**Ohio Attorney General Yost Calls on the State Medical Board to Immediately Suspend License of Dr. William Husel Due to Allegations of Failure to Properly Administer Drugs to at least 34 Patients**

(COLUMBUS, OH)—Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost today called for the State Medical Board of Ohio to immediately suspend Dr. William Husel’s, D.O., license to practice medicine in Ohio amid allegations that he ordered excessively high doses of fentanyl and other drugs for critically ill or near end-of-life patients at the Mount Carmel Health System.

“It looks like we may have a killer with a medical license and access to fentanyl on the loose,” said Attorney General Yost. “It’s time to yank his license and let the police do their work.”

Multiple lawsuits were filed in the past two weeks by the families of the victims in Franklin County Common Pleas Court alleging that Husel ordered excessive, lethal doses of narcotic pain medication for at least 34 patients who were critically ill or near death under his care. The hospital has announced that Husel, other physicians, nurses and pharmacists have been terminated or...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/January-2019/Ohio-Attorney-General-Yost-Calls-on-the-State-Medi>

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## OKLAHOMA

January 04, 2019

### **Owners of Oklahoma City Diabetic Supply Company Sentenced for Medicaid Fraud**

OKLAHOMA CITY – A husband and wife duo who were previously charged with 115-counts of Medicaid fraud by a federal grand jury have been sentenced to prison and have been ordered to pay \$268,796.70 in restitution to the state’s Medicaid program.

U.S. District Judge Stephen P. Friot sentenced Lawrence Vasquez, 62, to 20 months in federal prison and three years of probation and his wife Eunja Vasquez, 56, to five years of probation and 15 days of weekend incarceration for submitting fraudulent claims for unnecessary medical supplies to Medicaid beneficiaries through their Edmond company, Mercy Diabetic Supply Inc. Mercy Diabetic Supply is not affiliated with Mercy Health System.

The two pleaded guilty last summer after Attorney General Mike Hunter’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigated the company. Investigators found the couple were falsifying Medicaid claims for insulin pump supplies for patients who didn’t use insulin pumps for treating diabetes. Some of the claims the...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.oag.ok.gov/owners-of-oklahoma-city-diabetic-supply-company-sentenced-for-medicaid-fraud>

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## PENNSYLVANIA

January 30, 2019

### **CASE UPDATE: York County Man Pleads Guilty to Falsifying Educational Credentials and Medicaid Fraud**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Josh Shapiro today announced that a York County man pled guilty to multiple charges related to falsifying his educational credentials and not disclosing his full criminal history before he took a job working with children with disabilities.

Kenneth Banks, 69, of West Cottage Pace, York, was arrested on May 4, 2018 and charged with Medicaid fraud, forgery, tampering with public records and other related charges. An investigation was initiated by the Office of Attorney General after receiving a referral from the defendant’s employer, T.W. Ponessa, a behavioral health agency. Banks is charged with Medicaid fraud for intentionally submitting false information on his application for obtaining a position funded by Medicaid.

Banks was employed by Ponessa from October 3-23, 2017 as a Mobile Therapist and Behavior Specialist Consultant, which required the defendant to work with children who had intellectual disabilities and autism-related conditions. These positions require the individual to...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/taking-action/updates/case-update-york-county-man-pleads-guilty-to-falsifying-educational-credentials-and-medicaid-fraud/>

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## TENNESSEE

January 24, 2019

### **AG Slatery applauds decision releasing TennCare from 2014 injunction**

Nashville- "We are pleased with the Court's decision and with its conclusion that there is no evidence of on-going systemic problems in TennCare's process of making timely determinations of the eligibility of applicants for Medicaid coverage," said Herbert H. Slatery III.

The Wilson v. Long decision, issued by Federal District Court Judge William Campbell Jr., stems from a 2014 lawsuit alleging that thousands of people claimed their applications for Medicaid coverage were not resolved because of a flawed processing system. Years of litigation ensued to determine what went wrong and identify solutions. The Court recognized TennCare's efforts in facilitating reviews of these applications to the federally facilitated marketplace (not state). "As the court found, currently over 99% of TennCare applications are processed within the timeframes required by federal regulations, said General Slatery. "The State appreciates that the Court recognized the complexity of the TennCare program, TennCare's past and ongoing practice of identifying...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.tn.gov/attorneygeneral/news/2019/1/24/pr19-04.html>

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## VIRGINIA

January 09, 2019

### **Psychiatrist Sentenced To Prison for Healthcare Fraud and Wire Fraud**

Abingdon, VIRGINIA - A psychiatrist who previously worked in Lebanon, Virginia was sentenced to imprisonment for a term of seven months, United States Attorney Thomas T. Cullen and Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring announced. In addition, United States District Judge James P. Jones ordered Cervantes to pay a fine of \$25,000.00 and restitution in the amount of \$3,131.20. After release from prison, Cervantes will be required to serve a two year term of supervised release.

Alfredo Cervantes, 61, previously pled guilty to one count of health care fraud and one count of wire fraud. As a condition of his guilty plea, Cervantes, whose medical license and DEA registration were revoked in 2015, agreed never to practice medicine again.

"Health care providers who betray the trust placed in them by the public and their patients will be held accountable for their conduct," United States Attorney Cullen stated today. "I am...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/1361-january-9-2019-psychiatrist-who-worked-in-lebanon-va-sentenced-to-prison-for-healthcare-fraud-and-wire-fraud>

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## WEST VIRGINIA

January 27, 2019

### **Attorney General Morrisey Announces Record-Breaking Year for Disability Fraud Unit**

CHARLESTON — Attorney General Patrick Morrisey’s disability fraud partnership achieved its most successful year in 2018, pushing its total savings to more than \$14.3 million since the unit’s inception in West Virginia.

The partnership generated nearly \$6.2 million in projected savings for state and federal governments during calendar year 2018 – a 10.2 percent increase from calendar year 2017.

“This record-breaking year marks yet another a great return on investment for this partnership,” Attorney General Morrisey said. “Rooting out fraud and waste in government remains a top priority of our office, and I know our success with disability fraud can be duplicated if lawmakers grant our office authority to fight Medicaid fraud.”

The 2018 year-end tally included a final quarter savings of \$1,481,383.

The Cooperative Disability Investigations Unit, a partnership with the Social Security Administration, investigates suspicious or questionable disability claims. It investigates beneficiaries, claimants and any third party who...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://mailchi.mp/wvago/wva-ag-announces-record-breaking-year-for-disability-fraud-unit-704693?e=5699e8e411>

January 25, 2019

### **Attorney General Morrisey Receives Mounting Support to Fight Medicaid Fraud**

CHARLESTON — Attorney General Patrick Morrisey continues to receive broad support from lawmakers and newspapers across West Virginia in his push to strengthen the state’s fight against Medicaid fraud.

Senate Bill 318, if passed, would move West Virginia’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit from the state Department of Health and Human Resources to the Attorney General’s Office. The move would save taxpayers many millions each year and bring West Virginia in line with the majority of other states.

“Medicaid dollars are there to provide medical care for our low-income residents and families who legitimately need the assistance – not waste, fraud and abuse,” Attorney General Morrisey said. “A responsible government, accountable to its citizens, cannot condone such thievery. It must attack waste, fraud and abuse at every level, and our effectiveness in rooting out more than \$14.3 million in disability fraud proves the success we can have in fighting Medicaid fraud.”

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➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://mailchi.mp/wvago/wva-ag-receives-mounting-support-to-fight-medicaid-fraud?e=5699e8e411>

## Consumer Advocacy

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### ARIZONA

January 31, 2019

#### **Final Batch of \$1,000 Volkswagen Restitution Checks to be Mailed to More than 1,800 Arizonans**

PHOENIX -- Attorney General Mark Brnovich announced today that \$1,000 Volkswagen (VW) restitution checks are in the mail to an additional 1,809 Arizonans. This is the final of three batches of restitution checks mailed to more than 6,700 Arizona consumers who responded to eligibility claim forms.

Additionally, all eligible consumers, who received an initial payment of \$964.00 in October and November 2018, will also receive an additional \$36 check to bring their final total to \$1,000. All checks must be deposited or cashed within 90 days of receiving in the mail.

The restitution money to Arizona consumers is the result of a 2016 false-advertising lawsuit filed by the Attorney General's Office against VW for its so-called "Clean Diesel" cars. Earlier this year, a \$40 million settlement was reached, and VW agreed to pay Arizona consumers up to \$10.5 million for every qualifying vehicle sold and leased in the state between 2008 and...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/final-batch-1000-volkswagen-restitution-checks-be-mailed-more-1800-arizonans>

January 24, 2019

#### **Arizona Attorney General's Office and Chandler Police Host A Shred-A-Thon and Prescription Drug Take-Back Event**

**What:** The Attorney General's Office, Chandler Police Department, and PROSHRED Security will be hosting a Shred-A-Thon and Prescription Drug Take-Back Event. The cost is free and will be open to the public.

**When:** Saturday, January 26th at 9:00AM – 12:00PM

**Where:** Chandler Police Department 250 E. Chicago Street, Chandler, AZ 85225

**Why:** Shredding your personal or sensitive documents is an important step to ensure your identity is not stolen. Getting rid of old prescription drugs is key in keeping opioids out of the hands of our youth.

If there are any questions regarding this event please contact Community Outreach (602) 542-2123 or at [CommunityServices@azag.gov](mailto:CommunityServices@azag.gov).

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/arizona-attorney-generals-office-and-chandler-police-host-shred-thon-and-prescription>

January 23, 2019

**Consumer Alert: AG Brnovich Warns of Increase in Social Security Administration Scams**

Attorney General Mark Brnovich is warning Arizonans about con artists pretending to be from the Social Security Administration (SSA) scheming to obtain victims' Social Security numbers and access to their financials. In many cases, scammers go as far as spoofing the SSA's number so as to appear to be from the government.

There are several versions of the scam. In one, the caller claims your Social Security number has been linked to a crime or an illegal activity. The caller says that your number has been blocked and that you will need to pay a fee to reactivate it. Social Security does not suspend or block numbers, ever.

In another variation, the caller claims someone has used your Social Security number and your bank account could be seized. The caller urges you to quickly withdraw or transfer your money (sometimes onto gift cards) and will either take your money or gain access...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/consumer-alert-ag-brnovich-warns-increase-social-security-administration-scams>

January 04, 2019

**Deadline to Obtain Hundreds Of Dollars From GM Settlement Approaching**

PHOENIX – Attorney General Mark Brnovich is reminding Arizonans who were identified as possible Eligible Consumers in the ignition switch-related settlement with General Motors LLC to return the Consumer Release they received from the Settlement Claims Administrator. A pre-paid envelope was included with a return address to Analytics Consulting, P.O. Box 2006, Chanhassen, MN 55317-2006.

The release must be signed and postmarked no later than January 9, 2019 to receive a payment of a minimum of \$200.

The Arizona Attorney General and General Motors reached the settlement in March 2018 regarding certain GM vehicles that were recalled in 2014. Any Arizona resident who purchased an eligible new or certified pre-owned GM vehicle from a GM dealer located in Arizona between July 10, 2009 and July 10, 2014, and did not resell the vehicle before the announcement of the involved recall, may be an "Eligible Consumer." Read the full Consent Judgment.

If you...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/deadline-obtain-hundreds-dollars-gm-settlement-approaching>



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## CALIFORNIA

January 30, 2019

### **Attorney General Becerra: Bankruptcy Should Not Be Used as a Means to Evade Responsibility for Care of Patients**

SACRAMENTO — California Attorney General Xavier Becerra today issued the following statement after a Los Angeles bankruptcy court denied a petition to suspend the sale of St. Louise and O'Connor hospitals, owned and operated by Verity Health Systems of California (Verity) to the County of Santa Clara, until existing patient protections and services at these hospitals were assured. Attorney General Becerra is entrusted with the responsibility under the state constitution and statutes to protect California patients' access to care. The Attorney General's Office has fought to safeguard a set of important healthcare services that the Santa Clara community relies upon, including access to coronary care, emergency care, and intensive care services, like neonatal intensive care services.

"Our message in court has been clear and simple. We take our responsibility to protect the health and safety of California patients and the Santa Clara community seriously," said Attorney General Becerra. "From ensuring...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-becerra-bankruptcy-should-not-be-used-means-evade>

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## CONNECTICUT

January 24, 2019

### **Consumer Advisory: AG Tong, Consumer Counsel Katz Warn Ratepayers of Potential Errors on Electric Bills**

Reforms passed in 2014 created new consumer protections for customers of third-party electric suppliers, but one reform – a disclosure of the next month's electric rate on your electric bill – hasn't worked as it should. In some cases, electric bills have reported a completely inaccurate rate.

While a fix is in the works, Attorney General William Tong and Consumer Counsel Elin Swanson Katz said today that consumers who purchase electricity from third-party electric suppliers should carefully review their electric bills, and report any irregularities to state regulators. Customers should also carefully consider whether they are getting the best deal or whether a switch to the standard service rate would help save them money.

"While some people do experience savings by shopping the electric supplier market, many consumers are still being overcharged to the tune of millions of dollars each year, and this billing problem only compounds the issue," said Attorney General...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://portal.ct.gov/AG/Press-Releases/2019-Press-Releases/Consumer-Advisory-AG-Tong-Consumer-Counsel-Warn-Ratepayers-of-Potential-Errors-on-Electric-Bills>

January 24, 2019

### **ATTORNEY GENERAL TONG PRAISES PURA DECISION LOWERING RATES ACROSS ALL PUBLIC UTILITIES**

Attorney General William Tong issued the following statement today praising a decision by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority to ensure that corporate tax cuts for public utilities enacted in December 2017 are fully passed on to consumers in the form of lower rates:

"This decision today means lower rates across the board for Connecticut consumers across all regulated utilities. Ratepayers shoulder the burden of utility taxes, and the Office of the Attorney General fought to ensure every dollar saved due to corporate tax cuts will be used to drive down rates. My office will continue to fight on behalf of Connecticut ratepayers and to identify any and all avenues to recover savings and lower costs," said Attorney General Tong. In January 2018, PURA opened a proceeding to determine what adjustments to rates would be appropriate to account for the corporate tax reductions contained in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act enacted by...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://portal.ct.gov/AG/Press-Releases/2019-Press-Releases/ATTORNEY-GENERAL-TONG-PRAISES-PURA-DECISION-LOWERING-RATES-ACROSS-ALL-PUBLIC-UTILITIES>

January 23, 2019

### **AG Tong, Banking Commissioner Perez Caution Federal Workers to Beware of Predatory Online Payday Lenders during Ongoing Federal Shutdown**

While many Connecticut financial institutions are stepping up to the plate to provide no-interest, low-interest loans and other financial assistance to furloughed federal workers during the ongoing government shutdown, Attorney General William Tong and Department of Banking Commissioner Jorge Perez today cautioned workers to avoid predatory online payday lenders who may seek to exploit struggling workers with unaffordable and potentially illegal payday loans or disguise themselves as participants in Governor Lamont's zero-percent public-private loan program passed by the legislature yesterday.

"It is so heartening to see Connecticut banks and credit unions coming forward to offer assistance to federal workers and their families who have been negatively impacted by the federal shutdown," said Attorney General William Tong. "But the unfortunate reality is that, in times of trouble, scam artists and predatory online companies often come out of the woodwork to take advantage of tough situations. We're urging all federal workers impacted by...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://portal.ct.gov/AG/Press-Releases/2019-Press-Releases/AG-Tong-Commissioner-Perez-Caution-Federal-Workers-to-Beware-of-Predatory-Online-Payday-Lenders>

January 18, 2019

### **AG, DCP Urge Consumers to Use Gymboree, Crazy 8 Gift Cards**

Attorney General William Tong and state Department of Consumer Protection Commissioner

Michelle H. Seagull today advised Connecticut consumers who may have unused gift cards or merchandise credits to Gymboree, Crazy 8 and Janie and Jack stores to use those credits before the retail outlets close their doors for good.

The Gymboree Group, parent company of the three chains, has filed bankruptcy petitions and announced its plans to liquidate and close all Gymboree and Crazy 8 stores – including nine and three Connecticut locations, respectively. The company is attempting to sell Janie and Jack outlets, including two Connecticut locations.

"As a general rule, it's always a good idea to use gift cards as soon as you can," said Attorney General William Tong. "While they may not expire, situations like bankruptcy and abrupt store closings do happen, and there aren't always a lot of options for consumers who have unused gift cards. In this...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://portal.ct.gov/AG/Press-Releases/2019-Press-Releases/AG-DCP-Urge-Consumers-to-Use-Gymboree-Crazy-8-Gift-Cards>

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## FLORIDA

January 28, 2019

### **Attorney General Moody Issues Tips to Protect Taxpayers for Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.— Attorney General Ashley Moody is urging Floridians to take action to prevent identity theft this tax season in recognition of Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week. To raise awareness about tax identity scams, Attorney General Moody is offering tips to help taxpayers protect sensitive information.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "As Floridians prepare to file taxes, it is important to take steps to make sure sensitive financial information is protected. There are some simple steps every taxpayer can take to guard against identity theft, and in recognition of Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week, my office is offering several tips to help better protect all taxpayers."

Tax identity thieves will sometimes take extreme measures to access personal information, such as searching through trash cans and dumpsters to find bills and documents; calling, emailing or texting individuals to gain personal information; or posing as a legitimate tax preparer.

To guard against these tactics, taxpayers...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/3F2434AAE8D5A275852583900058D7B5>

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## GEORGIA

January 30, 2019

### **Carr Sends Warning to Hotels in Advance of Super Bowl**

ATLANTA, GA – Attorney General Chris Carr is warning hotels that they need to honor existing reservations at the agreed-upon rates.

“Consumers attending the Super Bowl or the surrounding events should be able to count on businesses to honor their contractual agreements,” says Carr. “Hotels and businesses that try to unfairly take advantage of consumers will be held accountable by our office.”

If a hotel attempts to change the terms of an existing reservation, including charging you a higher rate than the one established when the reservation was made, the Attorney General suggests that consumers first try to work with the business directly to resolve the matter. Certain unfair practices, depending on the circumstances, could be a violation of the Georgia Fair Business Practices Act. Consumers who believe that a business has acted unfairly or deceptively may file a complaint with the Georgia Department of Law’s Consumer Protection Division by calling (404)...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://law.georgia.gov/press-releases/2019-01-30/carr-sends-warning-hotels-advance-super-bowl>

January 28, 2019

### **Carr Recognizes Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week**

ATLANTA, GA – During Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week and throughout this tax season, Attorney General Chris Carr is encouraging consumers to protect themselves from tax-related scams. Here’s what consumers need to know:

#### **IRS Impersonation Scams**

In this type of scam, a fraudster contacts consumers by phone, claiming to be an IRS agent and insisting that the consumer owes the IRS money. The caller asks the consumer to pay by wiring money or loading money onto a pre-paid debit card and often threatens arrest or legal action if the consumer does not comply. Consumers can easily be convinced that these calls are real as the scammer may know a consumer’s full or partial Social Security number (SSN) or even use spoofing software that causes the IRS name and/or number to show up in your caller ID.

Here is what you need to know to avoid this scam:

The IRS will never call a...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://law.georgia.gov/press-releases/2019-01-28/carr-recognizes-tax-identity-theft-awareness-week>

January 01, 2019

### **CONSUMER ALERT: Carr Encourages Georgians To Research Health Facilities Before Joining**

ATLANTA — Attorney General Chris Carr is encouraging Georgians to do their research before

joining a health spa.

“Many Georgians may be making regular exercise a New Year’s resolution this year,” said Attorney General Chris Carr. “Joining a gym is a great way to stay in shape, but we want Georgians to do some homework before choosing a facility to help ensure their investment pays off.”

Keep these tips in mind:

Ask friends, family members and co-workers where they work out and why.

Look for one that's convenient — close to your job or home — so you don't have to make a special trip to work out.

What are the annual and monthly fees? Are there additional fees for towels or mats? And does your membership cover guest passes at clubs in other cities?

If you have a specific health problem, can the staff address it with the appropriate exercises? Do...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://law.georgia.gov/press-releases/2019-01-01/consumer-alert-carr-encourages-georgians-research-health-facilities>

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## GUAM

January 25, 2019

### **Reports of Social Security Scam Surface Locally**

Tamuning, Guam- Reports of a Social Security Administration (SSA) scam have recently surfaced. There have been reports of fraudulent calls from people claiming to be from the SSA. The callers are threatening arrest or legal action unless island consumers call a provided phone number.

This is a scam. If you receive a call, residents should just hang up and not engage with these calls. Residents should not provide any personal information.

The Acting Inspector General of Social Security is urging citizens to remain vigilant of telephone impersonation schemes that exploit the SSA’s reputation and authority. SSA employees do not contact citizens by telephone for customer-service purposes. Additionally, SSA employees will never threaten you for information; they will not state that you will face potential arrest or other legal action if you fail to provide information.

Remember, be wary of any calls from a “1-800” number and avoid providing information such...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.guamag.org/press%20releases/2019/SS%20Scam%2001.25.2019.pdf>

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## INDIANA

January 31, 2019

### **Over \$60 million in unclaimed property returned to Hoosiers in 2018**

Attorney General Curtis Hill returned \$61.01 million in unclaimed property during 2018 – \$2.1 million more than the amount returned in 2017.

“Our responsibility to collect, hold and disperse unclaimed property sets us apart from attorneys general across the rest of the United States,” Attorney General Hill said. “We take this role very seriously and work aggressively every single day to return unclaimed property to its rightful owners.”

To reach owners of unclaimed property, the Office of the Attorney General uses mailings; social media; online and print advertisements; and local media coverage. Staff members crisscrossing the state in the Attorney General's Mobile Operations Center (MOC) also help constituents search for unclaimed money. During 2018, in fact, staff members with the MOC helped Hoosiers find \$430,030 in unclaimed money on the Unclaimed Property Division's online database.

In the spring of 2018, the Unclaimed Property Division (UPD) upgraded to a more streamlined claiming process to...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://calendar.in.gov/site/oag/event/over-60-million-in-unclaimed-property-returned-to-hoosiers-in-2018/>

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## IOWA

January 17, 2019

### **Consumer complaints rise 18 percent in 2018**

DES MOINES -- Consumer complaints to the Iowa Attorney General's Office increased 18 percent in 2018 over the previous year, led by complaints related to vehicles, home improvement projects and imposter scams.

In total, the office's Consumer Protection Division received 3,495 complaints, up from 2,961 in 2017. This follows a 5 percent increase from 2016 to 2017.

“It's hard to pinpoint an exact reason for the increase, but we're seeing more complaints in several categories,” Attorney General Tom Miller said. “Our investigators and attorneys attempt to resolve each complaint as fairly and justly as possible. In some cases, we could use the Legislature's help in strengthening Iowa laws to provide justice to consumers.”

Topping the list was auto complaints at 493, which included complaints over repairs, financing, warranties and sales practices for vehicles including cars, motorcycles, ATVs, and trailers.

The number of complaints over imposter scams more than doubled over the last year,...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/newsroom/consumer-complaints-auto-home-imposter-legislature/>

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## KANSAS

January 15, 2019

### **AG Derek Schmidt to testify in US Senate on combating elder fraud**

WASHINGTON – (January 15, 2019) – Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt will testify tomorrow before a U.S. Senate committee on strengthening efforts to combat fraud against older Americans.

Schmidt will testify at the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging as part of the committee's hearing on "Fighting Elder Fraud: Progress Made, Work to Be Done." He will highlight the work of the Kansas attorney general's office and the National Association of Attorneys General to fight elder abuse, particularly scams and rip-offs targeting older Americans.

During his tenure as attorney general, Schmidt has made a priority of building capacity and focusing resources on fraud and abuse investigations and prosecutions, including those involving older Kansans. Additionally, during Schmidt's tenure as National Association of Attorneys General president from 2017-2018, he led NAAG's Presidential Initiative "Protecting America's Seniors: Attorneys General United Against Elder Abuse."

In his testimony, Schmidt makes four specific recommendations:

Continue cooperative efforts among states,...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2019/01/15/ag-derek-schmidt-to-testify-in-us-senate-on-combating-elder-fraud>

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## KENTUCKY

January 28, 2019

### **Beshear: Tax Return Time is Peak Season for Scammers**

FRANKFORT, KY. (Jan. 28, 2019) – As Kentuckians begin electronically filing their state and federal income taxes Jan. 28, Attorney General Andy Beshear is asking them to be prepared for an increase in scams calls.

Beshear said tax season scams typically involve scammers pretending to be an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) agent who claims they need to verify the victim's personal and financial information over the phone or claims that the victim owes back taxes.

Once the scammer has the victim's information, they can steal tax returns and other funds by changing the deposit to a reloadable money card.

"Tax season last year was the busiest time for staff in my office who handle scam reports, and this year I want to ensure Kentuckians are prepared for the barrage of scam calls that may not slow down until April," Beshear said. "It is not only IRS scams that increase during tax season, but..."

- **Original Press Release:** <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=703>

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## LOUISIANA

January 16, 2019

### **Don't Let Scammers Block Your Path to Black & Gold Super Bowl**

NEW ORLEANS, LA – While many Saints fans are finalizing menus and plans for the NFC Championship, Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry is encouraging all who want to watch the game in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome to use extreme caution when purchasing those must-have tickets on the secondary market.

“As our beloved Saints continue down the road to Atlanta, do not let scammers block your path to our next Black and Gold Super Bowl,” said General Landry. “Consumers lose millions of dollars each year through con artists selling phony tickets or through illegal sales, so I strongly encourage Saints fans to take precaution when purchasing tickets to this week’s game.”

General Landry is offering the following tips to consumers who are hoping to buy Saints-Rams tickets:

- Be skeptical of anything that seems too good to be true. Tickets being offered for less than face value should immediately set off alarm bells.
- Stick with...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ag.state.la.us/Article.aspx/9629?TypeId=1&CatId=3>

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## MARYLAND

January 23, 2019

### **Consumer Protection Division Advisory for Unpaid Furloughed Federal Workers Facing Financial Hardship**

BALTIMORE, MD (January 23, 2019) – The Maryland Office of the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division advises federal workers affected by the Trump administration’s partial shutdown to use these consumer-related resources to maintain financial fitness through these tough times. Federal workers who are not receiving their paychecks and are having difficulty making mortgage, student loan, and/or rent payments should be aware that there are resources available to help address certain financial challenges they experience during the shutdown.

**Mortgage Payments** – Many banking institutions have released statements indicating willingness to work with furloughed federal employees who are having trouble making their mortgage payments. Your bank may offer a modified or deferred payment schedule to keep you on track and out of danger of falling behind on your payments. You should immediately visit the official website for your mortgage lender to view what assistance is being offered, or contact their customer service by...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2019/012319.pdf>



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## MASSACHUSETTS

January 22, 2019

### **AG Healey Files Legislation to Protect Massachusetts Residents**

Boston — The first of many of bills that AG Healey plans to file or support this session include legislation to combat human trafficking by regulating bodyworks practices, ban the competitive electric supply market for residential customers, improve the AG's ability to address violations of wage and hour laws, allow continued use of statewide grand juries, ensure the confidentiality of sensitive victim information, and protect bees and other pollinators from dangerous insecticides.

In addition to this initial set of bills, the AG's Office plans to work with the Legislature in the coming months on various other priorities including increasing funding across public school districts, prosecuting illegal gun dealers, expanding violence prevention education to students, ensuring access to reproductive health care, combating wage theft, and protecting students and consumers from unfair practices.

"My office works every day to protect all Massachusetts residents," said AG Healey "These bills will strengthen our ongoing work...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.mass.gov/news/ag-healey-files-legislation-to-protect-massachusetts-residents>

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## MICHIGAN

January 30, 2019

### **Nessel: Energy providers must keep prices affordable**

LANSING — As Michiganders prepare for extremely cold temperatures, Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel and the Michigan Agency for Energy today asked Michiganders to report propane price gouging during the state of emergency to help protect the state's most vulnerable from those who seek to take advantage of the weather-related emergencies by increasing rates.

"Michigan energy providers should heed this warning: Those who take advantage of consumers will be held accountable," Attorney General Nessel said. "A state of emergency does not make it open season on Michigan's most vulnerable residents."

An estimated 320,000 Michigan households use propane as their primary heating fuel. And although propane prices are not regulated, the state actively monitors the market to identify irregularities that may result in supply or price disruptions.

Under the Michigan Consumer Protection Act, a retailer may not charge a price that is "grossly in excess of the price at which similar property or services...

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916\\_81983\\_47203-488601--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-488601--,00.html)

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## MISSOURI

January 30, 2019

### **AG Schmitt Releases List of Top Ten Consumer Complaints of 2018**

Jefferson City, Mo. - The Missouri Attorney General's Office received 116,912 consumer complaints in 2018. The Consumer Complaint Unit received 66,927 complaints and the No-Call Unit received 49,985 complaints. The top 10 Consumer Complaints in 2018 by industry were:

**1. No-Call Complaints (49,985)**

The Missouri Attorney General's Office received 49,985 complaints from consumers regarding No-Call violations and illegal telemarketing calls in 2018. No-Call complaints involve complaints about phone calls to Missouri residents by businesses or organizations soliciting the purchase of goods or services, despite that resident signing up for Missouri's No-Call list.

**2. Retail/Wholesale (2,842)**

The Missouri Attorney General's Office received 2,842 complaints from consumers regarding retail and wholesale companies in 2018. Most of the complaints involved purchases made through the internet, telephone, or mail and involved late deliveries or products that were never delivered. Other complaints involved the purchases of appliances, furniture, and other items with warranty problems, that were defective,...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ago.mo.gov/home/breaking-news/ag-schmitt-releases-list-of-top-ten-consumer-complaints-of-2018>

January 11, 2019

### **AG Schmitt warns of Potential Scams during Winter Storm**

Jefferson City, Mo. – Attorney General Eric Schmitt today issued a consumer alert warning both consumers and businesses about price gouging ahead of the winter storm that is expect to impact a large part of Missouri.

Due to winter storm Gia, forecasters are projecting that most of Missouri will be affected by severe weather, including major accumulation of snow, freezing rain, and ice.

“Unfortunately, there are individuals who see opportunities like this to take advantage of Missourians for their own personal gain,” Attorney General Schmitt said. “My office is here to keep Missouri families safe, and I want Missourians to be alert for scammers who prey upon our citizens in need of help.”

Price gouging refers to artificially inflated prices on necessities after a disaster, natural or otherwise. Missouri law prohibits individuals and businesses from substantially raising their prices for the necessities of life during such an emergency.

The types...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ago.mo.gov/home/news-archives/2019-news-archives/ag-schmitt-warns-of-potential-scams-during-winter-storm>

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## NEVADA

January 29, 2019

### **Attorney General Ford Warns Against Ticket Reseller, Events Scams**

Carson City, NV – Today, Nevada Attorney General Aaron D. Ford warns consumers to be alert when purchasing tickets from a reseller or for events advertised online. Recently, event-related scams are on the rise, and Nevada’s popularity as a tourist destination makes it a prime target for selling fake events and counterfeit tickets.

“My office strives to protect every Nevadan from scammers,” said AG Ford. “I encourage consumers to think carefully about any opportunity that sounds too good to be true. If you notice suspicious activity or fall victim to a ticket reseller or event scam, my office wants to hear from you.”

Scammers use social media platforms and websites that appear legitimate to advertise events that they never intend to host. Generally, these events are advertised on the Internet and through social media as a cultural festival, running event, or food carnival, complete with a description of the event, its date,...

- **Original Press Release:** [http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2019/Attorney\\_General\\_Ford\\_Warns\\_Against\\_Ticket\\_Reseller,\\_Events\\_Scams/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2019/Attorney_General_Ford_Warns_Against_Ticket_Reseller,_Events_Scams/)

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## NEW JERSEY

January 24, 2019

### **Proposed Regulation – Board of Accountancy**

NEWARK – The New Jersey Board of Accountancy has proposed amendments to regulations governing licensure for accountants and the practice of accountancy.

Among other things, the proposal amends existing requirements concerning renewal, reactivation, and reinstatement for public school accountants, certified public accountants, and registered municipal accountants.

The proposed regulation, and information on how to submit a comment by March 8, 2019, can be viewed on the Division of Consumer Affairs’ website here.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases19/pr20190124-rp-1.html>

January 18, 2019

### **Attorney General, Division of Consumer Affairs Warn New Jersey Residents to Beware of Price Gouging During State of Emergency**

Newark – As New Jersey braces for a State of Emergency to take effect during this weekend’s winter storm, the Office of the Attorney General and the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs are warning residents to beware of storm-related price-gouging.

“We will not allow merchants to take advantage of consumers made vulnerable by this winter storm,” said Attorney General Grewal. “We are asking residents to immediately report any merchant that unlawfully increases prices for food, gas, hotel rooms, generators, or other necessary items or services in connection with this State of Emergency. Merchants who violate our price gouging laws face serious consequences.”

New Jersey's price gouging law prohibits excessive price increases during a declared State of Emergency, or for 30 days after the termination of the emergency. In anticipation of this weekend's storm Governor Murphy declared a State of Emergency, which takes effect at noon on January 19.

Excessive price increases are...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases19/pr20190118c.html>

January 17, 2019

#### **Proposed Regulation – Board of Medical Examiners**

NEWARK – The New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs has proposed amendments to regulations regarding continuing education requirements for licensed athletic trainers. The proposal implements P.L. 2017, c. 341, which requires licensed athletic trainers to complete one credit of continuing education in topics concerning prescription opioid drugs every biennial renewal period.

The proposed amendments and information on how to submit a comment by March 8, 2019, can be viewed on the Division's website [here](#).

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases19/pr20190117-rp-1.html>

January 16, 2019

#### **Proposed Regulation – N.J. State Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors; Home Inspection Advisory Committee**

NEWARK – The New Jersey State Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors and the Home Inspection Advisory Committee have proposed amendments and new rules governing professional engineers, professional land surveyors, and home inspectors.

The proposed amendments and new rules make various changes to modernize and update the rules and regulations. This includes updating and modernizing the application process to incorporate the use of records from the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying; incorporating statutory changes to “responsible charge” provisions for professional engineers; adding types of maps land surveyors are to prepare; updating continuing education and inspection report requirements for home inspectors; and adding statutory changes to the licensure renewal process for engineers, land surveyors and home inspectors.

The proposed regulation, and information on how to submit a comment by March 8, 2019, can

be viewed at here.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases19/pr20190116b.html>

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## NEW YORK

January 31, 2019

### **Statement From Attorney General James On NYCHA Agreement**

NEW YORK – In response to today’s announcement of an agreement between the federal government and the City of New York to address the systemic problems at the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), Attorney General Letitia James released the following statement: “My office will keep a close watch on the details of this agreement to ensure that all the benchmarks outlined by the federal government and New York City are completed, and completed with care. After years of mismanagement and extensive maintenance problems, it is imperative that NYCHA residents have a role in this process and finally get relief from the deplorable conditions they have endured for far too long.”

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/statement-attorney-general-james-nycha-agreement>

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## NORTH CAROLINA

January 23, 2019

### **Attorney General Josh Stein Shares the Top 10 Consumer Complaints of 2018**

(RALEIGH) Attorney General Josh Stein today announced the top 10 consumer complaints that his office received in 2018. In the course of investigating the 19,022 complaints submitted to the North Carolina Department of Justice in 2018, NCDNJ secured refunds of more than \$3.3 million for consumers.

“There are always scammers trying to trick people into sharing their personal information or giving up their hard-earned money,” said Attorney General Josh Stein. “This behavior isn’t just wrong, it’s illegal. My office will do everything in our power to investigate and resolve consumer complaints for North Carolinians and educate people on how to protect themselves from scams and frauds.”

Attorney General Stein also released the North Carolina Department of Justice’s 2018 annual report today, which discusses the Department’s work to protect consumers from scams and frauds, protect North Carolinians from crime, and defend the state of North Carolina and its people. In 2018,...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-Shares-the-Top-10-Cons.aspx>

January 17, 2019

### **Attorney General Josh Stein and Rep. Jason Saine Announce Legislation to Strengthen Protections against Identity Theft**

(RALEIGH) Attorney General Josh Stein and Rep. Jason Saine today unveiled legislation to strengthen North Carolina's laws to prevent data breaches and to protect affected victims.

"Last year, more than 1.9 million North Carolinians were estimated to have been affected by a data breach," said Attorney General Stein. "This number is way too high. North Carolina's laws on this issue are strong – but they need to be even stronger. Rep. Jason Saine and I want to do everything we can to keep people's personal information safe."

"Over the last year, we have spent numerous hours working with citizen advocates – like AARP, the Attorney General's Office, and the North Carolina business community, to ensure that this bill will create strong protections for North Carolina's citizens' data," said Rep. Jason Saine. "We are strongly committed to getting this right, and creating a strong framework for protecting our most personal information."

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- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-and-Rep-Jason-Sain-\(1\).aspx](https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Attorney-General-Josh-Stein-and-Rep-Jason-Sain-(1).aspx)

January 14, 2019

### **Price Gouging Law in Effect in North Carolina**

(RALEIGH) The price gouging law that protects consumers from scammers is now in effect in North Carolina after Gov. Roy Cooper declared a statewide state of emergency due to this weekend's winter storm. Attorney General Josh Stein notified businesses and consumers today to be on the lookout for any issues.

"After this weekend's winter storm, North Carolina is under a state of emergency and our state's price gouging law is in effect," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "It is against the law to charge excessive prices during a state of emergency. If you see a business taking advantage of this storm, let my office know so we can hold them accountable and protect you from price gougers."

North Carolina has a strong statute against price gouging – charging too much during a time of crisis – that is tied directly to a declaration of a state of emergency. When Gov....

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Price-Gouging-Law-in-Effect-in-North-Carolina-\(1\).aspx](https://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Price-Gouging-Law-in-Effect-in-North-Carolina-(1).aspx)

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## **NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

January 18, 2019

### **Former Chief Prosecutor becomes new Consumer Counsel**

After having served the past two years as Chief Prosecutor for the Criminal Division, Michele

Harris has recently been appointed by Attorney General Manibusan to serve as Consumer Counsel for the OAG. In addition to her many years of prosecution, Harris also has experience in civil litigation and insurance defense which will enable her to effectively oversee consumer investigations and hold violators accountable.

The Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General investigates and enforces violations of the Consumer Protection Act. The office was reinstated in 2015, following Typhoon Soudelor, to combat complaints of price gouging and the sale of defective items. Most recently, the Division issued a price freeze for the Commonwealth to prevent similar issues following Typhoon Yutu.

The OAG strives to build in the market an environment of safe, fair and sustainable consumption where unfair, deceptive and fraudulent businesses are held accountable for their attempts to take...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.cnmioag.org/former-chief-prosecutor-becomes-new-consumer-counsel/>

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## OHIO

January 31, 2019

### **Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost Offers Tips for Avoiding Tax Scams**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Attorney General Dave Yost is urging Ohioans to watch out for scammers this tax season and to protect their personal information and refund dollars.

“Everybody loves a tax refund – especially bad guys, who want yours,” Attorney General Yost said. “They’re rubbing their hands with glee now that it’s tax season, and their favorite criminal tool is your personal information.”

The Attorney General’s Office has received more than 130 reports of tax-related scams in January. The office encourages citizens to follow these steps when filing their taxes:

- File your taxes as soon as possible: Tax identity theft generally occurs when someone steals your personal information to file a tax return and fraudulently obtain your refund. The sooner you file, the less likely it is that someone can file on your behalf.
- Choose a reputable tax preparer: If you use a tax preparer, make sure they have the credentials you’re looking for...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/January-2019/Ohio-Attorney-General-Dave-Yost-Offers-Tips-for-Av>

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## OKLAHOMA

January 23, 2019

### **Attorney General Hunter Issues Consumer Alert on Social Security Administration Phone Scams**

OKLAHOMA CITY – Attorney General Mike Hunter today warned Oklahomans to be aware of phone calls from scam artists claiming to be with the Social Security Administration (SSA) and attempting to steal social security numbers and money.

A scam will typically involve the con artist telling individuals their social security number has been suspended because of suspicious activity, or because it has been involved in a crime. The scammers will then request for the victim to confirm their social security number in order to reactivate it.

In other instances, scammers will tell victims their bank account is about to be seized. In order to keep it safe, the individual needs to put money on a gift card and give them the codes.

Attorney General Hunter said scam phone calls are extremely hard to trace and the best course of action is to hang up the phone.

“Oklahomans need to be on high alert about...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.oag.ok.gov/attorney-general-hunter-issues-consumer-alert-on-social-security-administration-phone-scams>

January 08, 2019

### **Attorney General Hunter Comments on Corporation Commission Ordering ONG to Return \$22 Million to Customers**

OKLAHOMA CITY – Oklahoma Natural Gas (ONG) customers will see lower bills during the new year after the Oklahoma Corporation Commission (OCC) today voted in favor of an order that determines how the company will return money to customers from the 2017 federal tax cuts. The order followed Attorney General Mike Hunter’s motions that asked for the state’s leading investor-owned utility companies to return tax savings to customers. The attorney general filed the motions the same day the tax cuts were passed.

ONG Customers will receive \$22.7 million in savings over the next year. Customers will receive a rate reduction of approximately \$11 million plus \$11.7 million in one-time credits from ONG’s income tax savings after the federal income tax rate fell to 21 percent. The average residential customer will see approximately \$15 in savings next month and a smaller balance in subsequent months for the rest of the year.

Attorney General Hunter...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.oag.ok.gov/attorney-general-hunter-comments-on-corporation-commission-ordering-ong-to-return-22-million-to-customers>



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## OREGON

January 16, 2019

### **Attorney General Rosenblum Releases List of 2019 Legislative Priorities**

Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum today released a list of her policy priorities for the upcoming 2019 Oregon Legislative Session, which starts January 22, 2019.

“While the Oregon Department of Justice works on a variety of bills each legislative session, there are a few policy areas that are especially meaningful to me. I plan to focus on expanding protections for students, consumers and vulnerable Oregonians. We want to build off of the success of the last two legislative sessions, when we were able to help pass landmark legislation in areas including data breach, discriminatory profiling, privacy and student debt,” said Attorney General Rosenblum. “Last, but definitely not least, I will work to address Oregon’s increasing incidents of hate-motivated conduct occurring in all parts of our state. I look forward to working with the Oregon Legislature to accomplish most, if not all, of these goals. “

Hate Crimes:

In May, 2018 Attorney General Rosenblum convened...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.doj.state.or.us/media-home/news-media-releases/attorney-general-rosenblum-releases-list-of-2019-legislative-priorities/>

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## PENNSYLVANIA

January 23, 2019

### **CONSUMER ALERT: Attorney General Josh Shapiro Warns Former Sanford-Brown Students to Beware of Scams Related to Recent Settlement**

HARRISBURG — Earlier this month, Attorney General Josh Shapiro and a coalition of 49 other Attorneys General announced a settlement with Career Education Corporation (CEC), the former operator of Sanford-Brown and Le Cordon Bleu schools. The settlement provides for debt forgiveness of private student loans owed directly to CEC for approximately 12,600 Pennsylvanians, valued at a total of \$38.6 Million. Under the agreement, CEC will be contacting eligible students within the next six weeks.

Unfortunately, in the meantime, the Office of Attorney General’s Bureau of Consumer Protection has received numerous complaints from Pennsylvanians indicating they have been approached by likely scam artists who are telling the consumers they have been “specially selected” and may be “eligible” for CEC settlement dollars. These scammers may request social security information and advance payment for services related to the settlement, and may pitch other student loan reduction services. Attorney General Shapiro is warning consumers not...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/taking-action/consumer-alerts/consumer-alert-attorney-general-josh-shapiro-warns-former-sanford-brown-students-to-beware-of-scams-related-to-recent-settlement/>

January 09, 2019

### **Following Sudden Closing of For-Profit Brightwood Schools, Attorney General Shapiro Provides Update For Students Seeking Information**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Josh Shapiro today announced new information and resources intended to help students who previously attended Brightwood schools across Pennsylvania continue or complete their education.

In December 2018, Education Corporation of America (ECA), owner of Brightwood College, Brightwood Career Institute, Virginia College, Golf Academy of America and Ecotech Institute, announced that it would cease operations that same month. Due to the sudden nature of the closing, more than 1,500 Pennsylvania students at campuses in Philadelphia, Broomall, Harrisburg and Pittsburgh were left with numerous questions regarding their transcripts, loans and transferring credits.

“The sudden closing of Brightwood schools left many students across the Commonwealth unsure of their academic status and the investment they made in their future,” said Attorney General Shapiro. “My office has been working closely with the Pennsylvania Department of Education to help students and their families get answers to questions, and get back on track to complete...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/taking-action/updates/following-sudden-closing-of-for-profit-brightwood-schools-attorney-general-shapiro-provides-update-for-students-seeking-information/>

January 03, 2019

### **Attorney General Josh Shapiro Issues Health Clubs Tips as Consumers Fulfill New Year’s Resolutions**

HARRISBURG – Attorney General Josh Shapiro is announcing a statewide initiative in which his Bureau of Consumer Protection visited more than 75 health club facilities and investigated more than 100 health clubs throughout Pennsylvania and reviewed records of the facilities to ensure compliance with the Pennsylvania Health Club Act.

The initiative marks the first time a Pennsylvania Attorney General has used the Office’s authority under the Health Club Act to spot-check health clubs and immediately obtain documents relevant to compliance with the law. Examples of violations of the Health Club Act include taking upfront payment without first securing financial security, failing to register, or having defective contracts.

Among the issues reviewed included the appropriate registration and financial security with the Office of Attorney General under the Act, compliant contracts, frequency of payments, and associated fees. To date, this ongoing initiative has resulted in 43 settlement agreements, known as Assurances of Voluntary Compliance,...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/taking-action/press-releases/attorney-general-josh-shapiro-issues-health-clubs-tips-as-consumers-fulfill-new-years-resolutions/>

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## RHODE ISLAND

January 29, 2019

### **Attorney General Neronha Warns of Possible Scams Ahead of Super Bowl LIII**

With the Super Bowl around the corner, Attorney General Peter F. Neronha is advising football fans to use caution when purchasing tickets to the game or booking travel.

"While fans are excited and gearing up for the big game, scammers are as well," said Attorney General Neronha. "Be sure to protect yourself from ticket scams and credit card fraud if you are heading to Atlanta this weekend."

Attorney General Neronha offers the following tips:

- When purchasing tickets, try to buy tickets directly from the NFL or an NFL-approved ticket broker. If you do go through a ticket broker or agency, be sure to check that the ticket broker or agency are legitimate. A good resource is the National Association of Ticket Brokers ([www.natb.org](http://www.natb.org)), which provides a comprehensive list of members and helpful tips on ticket buying. Also check with the Better Business Bureau ([www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org)) to find out if any complaints have been...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ri.gov/press/view/35144>

January 24, 2019

### **Attorney General Neronha Issues Consumer Alert for Residents Affected by Aquidneck Island Gas Outage**

Due to the Aquidneck Island Gas Outage incident affecting thousands of residents in Newport and Middletown, Rhode Island Attorney General Peter F. Neronha is reminding affected residents of their rights and advising them to be aware of possible fraud and abuse that may take place in the wake of such emergencies.

To help Rhode Islanders as they recover from this gas outage emergency, Attorney General Neronha offers the following tips:

- If someone attempts to gain access to your home claiming to be an employee or contractor of a utility company, or an insurance company representative, ask for company identification. Utility workers should carry identification and should not hesitate to show it to you. When in doubt, contact National Grid or the insurance company to verify the identity of the worker.
- Beware of online or unsolicited calls or emails from individuals posing as government officials, insurance adjusters or utility company representatives. Do...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ri.gov/press/view/35106>

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## SOUTH DAKOTA

January 29, 2019

### **DIVISION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION OFFERS ASSISTANCE TO CUSTOMERS OF CP AIR**

PIERRE, S.D. - Aerodynamics, Inc., doing business as California Pacific Air (CP Air) recently ceased providing air service to the Pierre and Watertown airports. In the wake of this decision customers have been left trying to obtain new travel arrangements and refunds.

At this time the CP Air website is promising refunds to current ticket holders but the customer service phone lines for CP Air have been, for the most part, unresponsive.

Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg's Division of Consumer Protection is working with City Officials in Pierre and Watertown to give consumers a centralized location to file their complaints.

Consumers trying to obtain a refund can visit: [www.consumer.sd.gov](http://www.consumer.sd.gov) to submit an online complaint with the South Dakota Attorney General's Division of Consumer Protection, or they can contact Consumer Protection by calling 1-800-300-1986.

For any inquiries as to the status of future air carriers in Pierre or Watertown, please contact the respective city governmental offices...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://atg.sd.gov/OurOffice/Media/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?id=2157>

January 07, 2019

#### **ATTORNEY GENERAL RAVNSBORG WARNS CONSUMERS OF ADDITIONAL FAKE SHIPPING COMPANIES**

PIERRE, S.D. – Since November of 2018 the South Dakota Attorney General's office has been warning consumers of fictitious shipping companies operating under the names Sioux Falls Vehicle Carriers and SD Safe Transport. Both companies claimed to be physically located in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, but they never existed.

Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg now asks that South Dakota consumers add the name Sioux Falls Shippers Center to this scam list.

"This is the kind of scam where people are targeted after they buy a vehicle from a website like Craigslist and some other online vehicle auction site. The "seller" will direct the buyer to their shipping company to facilitate the transaction." stated Ravnsborg, "The Attorney General's Consumer Protection Office has received calls from individuals inquiring as to whether the business is legitimate. Our investigators confirm that Sioux Falls Shippers Center does not exist in South Dakota."

Ravnsborg also cautions...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://atg.sd.gov/OurOffice/Media/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?id=2147>

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## TEXAS

January 04, 2019

#### **AG Paxton Issues Consumer Alert on Social Security Scam**

Attorney General Ken Paxton today warned Texans to beware of calls from scam artists pretending to be with the Social Security Administration (SSA) and attempting to fool

unsuspecting people into giving them their Social Security number and money. Recently, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) received a large number of complaints from consumers targeted by the Social Security scam. Crooks tell the would-be victim that their Social Security number has been used in a crime and they must pay a fee to reactivate it or to get a new number. During the call, the person is asked to give out their Social Security number. In other instances of the scam, individuals are told that their bank accounts have been seized and they should transfer their money to the caller for safe keeping, or that they could lose their Social Security benefits because their Social Security number was used to apply for credit cards. Attorney...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/news/releases/ag-paxton-issues-consumer-alert-social-security-scam>

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## VERMONT

January 07, 2019

### **Top Scams of 2018 Released by Attorney General's Office**

Vermonters filed 5,471 scam reports with the Attorney General's Consumer Assistance Program (CAP) in 2018 according to the Attorney General's list of top 10 most commonly reported scams of the year. This amounts to a 4.55% increase in scams from 2017. As new scams emerged, old scams persisted. The IRS scam, which involves scammers claiming to be government officials collecting back taxes, was the most common scam for the fifth year in a row. Vermonters filed 1,429 reports regarding the IRS scam.

Spoofing, when scammers falsify information on Caller ID to appear as though the call comes from a local number, is on the rise. One type of this call is the "reflector" scam, which involves repeated calls coming in from ones' own number. Another new scam this year reported by more than 100 Vermonters was a threatening email containing an old password and demanding money. The number of social security...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ago.vermont.gov/blog/2019/01/07/top-scams-of-2018-released-by-attorney-generals-office/>

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## VIRGINIA

January 22, 2019

### **HERRING WARNS VIRGINIANS ABOUT SCAMS RELATED TO GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN**

RICHMOND (January 22, 2019) – Attorney General Mark R. Herring is warning Virginians who have been furloughed because of the government shutdown, or those who wish to help federal workers, to be vigilant and look out for scams related to the shutdown. Shutdown related scams could include fake employment offers for "side jobs", predatory lenders taking advantage of temporarily unpaid Virginians, and fake charities that claim to be working on

behalf of federal workers.

“As the government shutdown enters its fifth week, it is important for Virginians, especially those who work for the Federal Government, to be vigilant and pay close attention to potential scams,” said Attorney General Herring. “Unfortunately, individuals will capitalize on federal workers’ vulnerabilities and lack of income during this time and try and take advantage of them. People who are affected by the government shutdown have enough to worry about and should not also have...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/1370-january-22-2019-herring-warns-virginians-about-scams-related-to-government-shut-down>

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## WASHINGTON

January 30, 2019

### **AG Ferguson updates student loan survival guide**

OLYMPIA — Attorney General Bob Ferguson today released an updated Student Loan Survival Guide, which provides tips and resources for those impacted by student loans, including high school students thinking about taking out student loans, former college students making repayments and parents who cosigned loans.

Among updates to the guide is information about the new Student Loan Advocate at the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC), a position created by AG-request legislation last year. The advocate is now available to help student loan borrowers understand the terms of their loans and options available to them, such as loan forgiveness and deferment. Student Loan Initiative II-02.png

Students can contact the advocate directly by calling (833) 881-0397, sending an email to [LoanAdvocate@wsac.wa.gov](mailto:LoanAdvocate@wsac.wa.gov) or visiting <https://wsac.wa.gov/loan-advocacy>.

“Too many Washingtonians are struggling to repay more than \$24 billion in student loans, and they’re not getting help from Betsy DeVos’ Department of Education,” Ferguson said. “This guide can help borrowers...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.atg.wa.gov/news/news-releases/ag-ferguson-updates-student-loan-survival-guide>

January 18, 2019

### **Consumer Alert: Resources available to help federal workers during shutdown**

OLYMPIA — Resources are available for federal employees in Washington who are furloughed or working without pay, and other workers who are affected by the partial federal government shutdown, to help them make financial decisions and avoid scams associated with the shutdown.

Consumers who wish to make a complaint to the Attorney General’s Office about a business operating in Washington State may do so at <http://www.atg.wa.gov/file-complaint>.

## Payday loans & tax refund advances

If you have missed paychecks as a result of the shutdown, you may be considering loans or tax refund advances to help make ends meet.

Consumers considering payday loans or tax refund advances should thoroughly investigate the costs of the loan or advance and consider less costly options, which may include:

Obtaining a small loan from a bank or credit union. Many financial institutions are offering low- or no-interest loans to furloughed federal employees

Considering a short-term loan from a family member...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.atg.wa.gov/news/news-releases/consumer-alert-resources-available-help-federal-workers-during-shutdown>

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## WEST VIRGINIA

January 29, 2019

### **Attorney General Morrisey Urges Consumers to Safeguard Tax Information**

CHARLESTON — West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey used this week's opening of tax season to urge consumers to protect personal information and exercise caution when preparing and filing their return.

Sensitive information like Social Security numbers, financial information, birthdates and addresses are among the many things scammers could easily use to their advantage.

"Scammers are aware of tax filing deadlines and could be waiting to take advantage of your personal information," Attorney General Morrisey said. "It's imperative that consumers be mindful of how they handle tax information and who processes tax-related documents on their behalf."

Consumers can greatly reduce the risk of fraud by filing their return well before the April 15 deadline. This gives thieves less time to file a false return since IRS records would show a filed return in the consumer's name. Consumers also should use a secure internet connection and never file their return via publicly available Wi-Fi.

Additional...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://mailchi.mp/wvago/wva-ag-urges-consumers-to-safeguard-tax-information?e=5699e8e411>

January 18, 2019

### **Attorney General Morrisey Reminds College Students to Protect Personal Information When Applying for Financial Aid**

CHARLESTON — West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey reminds students with plans to attend college to safeguard their personal information as they apply for financial aid.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), necessary to qualify for financial aid, requires students to provide a vast quantity of personal information. Scammers recognize that

reality and look for ways to take advantage of the situation.

“Scammers may take advantage of the personal information required to apply for financial aid,” Attorney General Morrissey said. “That’s why it is so important for students to protect themselves as they look to continue their education in hopes to advance learning and future career opportunities.”

Students should file their FAFSA application as soon as possible for states, colleges and scholarship programs that award aid on a first-come, first-serve basis.

To avoid compromising sensitive information, such as Social Security numbers and other personally identifiable data, applicants should...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://mailchi.mp/wvago/wva-ag-reminds-college-students-to-protect-personal-information-when-applying-for-financial-aid?e=5699e8e411>