

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Attorney General Balderas Issues a Scam Advisory Warning New Mexicans Against Serial Disabilities Lawsuits

Santa Fe, NM---Attorney General Hector Balderas today issued an advisory warning to New Mexicans about serial lawsuit scams that target people with disabilities and harm those communities and our justice system, and to encourage individuals with disabilities and the disability rights community to be vigilant against these scams. Individuals who bring serial lawsuits claim to have potential clients' best interests at heart, but they in fact undermine vital protections by bringing illegitimate claims for personal profit.

"No individual should take advantage of a person with a disability and undermine the very laws that are designed to protect them," said Attorney General Balderas. "We will always take action to protect vulnerable New Mexicans from those who prey on them."

The Attorney General is tasked with this protection by state law, which mandates that he prosecute or defend the State "when, in his judgment, the interest of the state requires such action." NMSA 1978, Section 8-5-2(B) (1975). This duty includes the obligation to protect the public and the justice system where attorneys or members of the public abuse laws intended to protect the rights of people with disabilities for their own gain by filing frivolous, serial lawsuits that harm the legitimate rights of people with disabilities to live their lives free of discrimination.

The Office of the Attorney General offers the following guidance to anyone who is approached by a company or an attorney who wants them to participate in a lawsuit:

- Search for the company or individual's name into your preferred web browser and see if they have been involved in any scam-like activity. You can even search for phone numbers to see if other people have reported them as scams;
- Before you give up your personal information, talk to someone you trust. Con artists want you to make decisions in a hurry. They might even threaten you. Slow down, check out the story, do an online search, consult an expert — or just tell a friend;

- Contact local disability rights organizations, as well as the Office of the Attorney General if you believe that you are being scammed or if your rights have been violated. We can assist you in ensuring the individual who has approached you is not attempting to scam you;
- Above anything, trust your instinct and do not give your personal information to, or become involved with, anyone who you are unfamiliar with, or who is unwilling to prove to you the validity of their claims.

If you believe that you or someone you assist has been approached by someone to participate in an illegitimate lawsuit, or if your rights have been violated, please contact the Office of the Attorney General at www.nmag.gov, or by phone at 1-844-255-9210.

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