



PRESS RELEASE

AG Gansler Announces Settlement with Operator of Misleading Website

Florida man who ran Joomsef.net posted deceptive criminal histories online

Baltimore, MD (October 7, 2013) - Maryland Attorney General Douglas F. Gansler announced today that his Consumer Protection Division has reached a settlement with Stanislav Komsky, the operator of Joomsef.net. The website developed and published webpages on individual Maryland consumers that contained publicly available information regarding traffic citations issued against them. These webpages, however, exaggerated the traffic offenses by representing that consumers had been "booked" or arrested, and by displaying a space on each webpage reserved for a photograph of the consumer that was captioned "Mugshot Unavailable," wrongly suggesting that a mugshot had been taken.

"The Internet should be a resource for sharing information, not a vehicle for spreading misinformation," said Attorney General Gansler. "Businesses cannot be allowed to post half-truths on the Internet to make a quick buck."

Consumers learned they had been listed on Joomsef.net either by searching the Internet themselves or when searches on their backgrounds were performed by others, including prospective employers. In order to fully view the information about the "charged" offenses, Joomsef.net required a fee of \$9.99. Consumers who wished to have the information taken down had to pay Komsky from \$39.99 to \$89.99, depending on how rapidly they wanted it removed.

The Division alleged Komsky's exaggeration of consumers' criminal histories and charging of fees to have the information removed from his website were unfair or deceptive trade practices. In order to resolve the alleged violations, Komsky has agreed to cease publishing false or misleading information about consumers' backgrounds -- criminal or otherwise -- and has taken down the Joomsef.net website, which had been active for 84 days. Komsky also agreed to refund the payments he collected from consumers to view or remove information from his website and to pay the Division a \$7,500 civil penalty.

Consumers may call the Division's hotline at 410-528-8662 or 888-743-0023 for more information regarding the settlement.