

# Attorney General Bill McCollum News Release

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## McCollum Files Lawsuit Against Central Florida Companies for Loan Modification Scams

**TALLAHASSEE, FL – Attorney General Bill McCollum today announced that his office has filed a lawsuit against two Central Florida companies and their owner over allegations they charged up-front fees for foreclosure rescue-related services. National Payment Modification Company and The Bostonian Group, LLC, which conducts business under the name People’s First, allegedly charge up to \$2,500 in up-front fees to homeowners trying to rescue their homes from foreclosure.**

**Also named in the lawsuit is William Rodriguez, the owner of both companies, who was a founding owner of Wineberg, Lopez, & Rodriguez Company. The Attorney General’s Office sued Wineberg, Lopez, & Rodriguez Company in March and obtained an emergency injunction barring the company from charging homeowners any fee in advance for providing foreclosure-related rescue services. That case is still pending in Orange County Circuit Court.**

**An investigation conducted by members of the Attorney General’s Economic Crimes Division, working as part of the Attorney General’s Mortgage Fraud Task Force, determined that both companies charge the up-front fee and divide it into five equal payments secured by post dated checks. Each check, according to the lawsuit, is associated with a separate “sub-contract” or step in the loan modification process. Consumers complained that both companies cash the post-dated checks even though the companies have not begun negotiations or even contacted the consumers’ lenders.**

**The Attorney General’s Office is seeking permanent injunctions prohibiting the companies from charging up-front fees, restitution on behalf of injured consumers, civil penalties of \$15,000 for each violation, and reimbursement for attorney’s fees and costs related to the investigation. The Attorney General’s Office has filed numerous civil lawsuits to enforce the state law prohibiting companies from charging up-front fees for foreclosure-related rescue services and is currently investigating over 75 additional companies. More information about the lawsuits and information for homeowners is available online at:**

**<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/mortgagefraud>.**