

**Letitia James**

New York State Attorney General

Attorney General James Announces Over \$6.6 Million for the Capital Region to Combat Youth Vaping Epidemic

Funds from \$112.7 Million Settlement with JUUL for its Role in the Youth Vaping Epidemic

Money Will Help Young New Yorkers Quit Vaping and Support Anti-Vaping Programs

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NEW YORK – New York Attorney General Letitia James today announced the Capital Region will receive over \$6.6 million from a historic \$462 million multistate settlement that she secured from JUUL Labs Inc. (JUUL) for its role in the youth vaping epidemic that led to a dangerous rise in underage e-cigarette use nationwide. New York state will receive a total of \$112.7 million through this settlement, which Attorney General James will distribute to every county, Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), and the five largest cities in the state to support programs that will help reduce and prevent underage vaping.

“E-cigarettes are dangerous and addictive products, but JUUL launched its business by marketing them to children and deceiving its customers about the harm they cause,” said **Attorney General James**. “Young people across our state are now facing serious mental and physical health challenges because of JUUL’s tactics. The funds from this settlement will help leaders in the Capital Region tackle the youth vaping epidemic and reach the most vulnerable kids in their schools and communities. I thank my partners in government who will use these funds to keep New York youth safe.”

The funds will be split between counties and BOCES in the Capital Region:

Counties

- Albany County will receive \$1,055,715.55
- Columbia County will receive \$285,180.93
- Greene County will receive \$292,672.78
- Rensselaer County will receive \$605,331.97
- Saratoga County will receive \$984,376.05
- Schenectady County will receive \$523,014.31
- Warren County will receive \$381,885.14
- Washington County will receive \$419,833.43

BOCES

- Capital Region BOCES will receive \$1,062,991.22
- Questar III BOCES will receive \$468,013.79
- Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex BOCES will receive \$596,111.01

After JUUL launched in 2015, e-cigarette use among New York high school students skyrocketed. By 2019, the proliferation of vaping led to a national outbreak of severe vaping-related illnesses, with [more than 2,500 hospitalizations](#). In October 2019, a 17-year-old male from the Bronx died due to a vaping-related illness, making him the first reported vaping-related fatality in New York, and the youngest vaping-related fatality in the United States.

In November 2019, [Attorney General James sued JUUL](#) for its deceptive and misleading marketing that glamorized vaping and targeted young people. In April 2023, Attorney General James [secured the largest multistate agreement](#) with JUUL and its former directors and executives for their role in fueling the youth vaping epidemic. JUUL misled consumers about the nicotine content of its products, misrepresented the safety and therapeutic value of its products by stating that they were safer than cigarettes, and failed to prevent minors from purchasing its products in stores across the country.

The settlement funds will be used for evidence-based measures to combat underage vaping and e-cigarette addiction. Counties and BOCES must dedicate the settlement funds they receive to programs in five categories:

- Public education campaigns to prevent e-cigarette use among young people.
- Community, school, and university-based anti-vaping programs.
- Vaping cessation services in communities, schools, and colleges.
- Enforcement of vaping laws and regulations.
- Public health research into e-cigarette use among young people and the effectiveness of anti-vaping programs.

In addition to paying New York \$112.7 million, the settlement required JUUL to make significant changes to its sales and marketing tactics, including:

- Refraining from any marketing that targets youth, including using anyone under the age of 35 in promotional material or funding, operating youth education/prevention campaigns, or sponsoring school related activities.
- Limiting the amount of retail and online purchases an individual can make.
- Performing regular retail compliance checks at five percent of New York's retail stores that sell JUUL's products for at least four years.
- Treating synthetic nicotine as nicotine.
- Refraining from providing free or nominally priced JUUL pods as samples to consumers.
- Excluding product placement in virtual reality systems.
- Increasing funding to a document depository by up to \$5 million and adding millions of relevant documents to the depository to inform the public on how JUUL created a public health crisis.

"Rensselaer County is committed to keeping harmful products out of the hands of children and minors, and ensuring their health, safety and quality of life," **Rensselaer County Executive Steve McLaughlin**.

"This welcome funding is a win for public health, for our education system, and for municipal leaders who now have new tools in their arsenal to protect our kids," said **State Senator Jake Ashby**. "It's paramount that young people understand the serious health risks associated with vaping, and these prevention programs will keep many of them from ever starting," said Ashby."

“Today's allocation of over \$6.6 million to the Capital Region marks a crucial step in the ongoing fight against youth vaping,” said **Assemblymember John T. McDonald III, RPh.** “These funds, secured through the Attorney General's settlement with JUUL Labs Inc., will allow our communities to implement vital programs aimed at preventing underage vaping and supporting those affected. By investing these funds in public education, cessation services, and enforcement, we are prioritizing the health and safety of our young people. I commend Attorney General James for her work on this case and I am committed to working collaboratively to ensure these resources make a meaningful impact in our region.”

“This \$6.6 million settlement fund will support important programs in our district to combat youth vaping,” said **Assemblymember Scott Bendett.** “The funds will enable us to start educational campaigns, commence cessation services, and enforce vaping regulations that protect our youth from the harmful effects of e-cigarettes. As a father and the ranking member of the Food, Farm and Nutrition Committee, creating a healthier future for our children will always be a priority.”

“E-cigarettes pose a health risk, especially for our youth, by potentially leading to nicotine addiction and long-term health issues,” said **Assemblymember Angelo Santabarbara.** “Companies must prioritize the well-being of our community and avoid targeting young adults with misleading marketing. I commend Attorney General James for her efforts to protect our youth and address this critical issue. This settlement is another step towards safeguarding our community's health.”

“Underage vaping is an epidemic that is putting our youth at risk of serious long-term health effects,” said **Assemblymember Patricia Fahy.** “These funds, secured by Attorney General James will help advance and support anti-vaping initiatives and educational programming that will educate young New Yorkers about the dangers of vaping – known and unknown. I commend Attorney General James’ diligence in ensuring companies pay for their role in perpetuating this health crisis.”

“I am pleased that Saratoga, Washington and Warren counties along with WSWHE BOCES will be receiving significant funds to invest in prevention and recovery services that help protect our children and save lives,” said **Assemblymember Carrie Woerner.** “We must hold accountable companies that are poisoning our communities by targeting our vulnerable young people with vaping products and marketing campaigns. I am

grateful for Attorney General James' continued work in battling the e-cigarette epidemic and fighting for the health our youth."

"This settlement proves what we already knew: e-cigarettes are dangerous and addictive. It's shameful that JUUL targeted our youth with their products," said **Gary Hughes, Chair of the Schenectady County Legislature**. "While JUUL's marketing practices have already caused significant damage, Schenectady County will use the settlement money to improve our education and enforcement efforts to prevent further harm to our youth. On behalf of Schenectady County, I thank Attorney General James for her dedication to this issue and for securing this significant settlement."

The settlement was led by Senior Advisor and Special Counsel M. Umair Khan, Assistant Attorneys General Hailey DeKraker and Noah Popp, and Healthcare Deputy Bureau Chief Leslieann Cachola. The settlement was also brought about by the work of Assistant Attorneys General Sarah Millings, Michael Reisman, and Abigail Kasowitz; Consumer Frauds Bureau Chief Jane Azia; Senior Assistant Solicitor General Dennis Fan, Deputy Solicitor General Judith Vale; Special Assistant Attorney General Emily Auletta; former Deputy Director of Research and Analytics Megan Thorsfeldt and Data Scientist Jasmine McAllister; Chief Scientist Jodi Feld, Information Technology Manager Corey Nugent, Information Technology Specialists Hewson Chen and Paige Podolny; E-Discovery Document Review Manager Carol Cheng; Civil Recoveries Section Chief Martin Mooney; and former Special Counsel Morenike Fajana, former Healthcare Bureau Chief Lisa Landau, and former Section Chief Amy Schallop. The Division for Social Justice is led by Chief Deputy Attorney General Meghan Faux and the Division for Economic Justice is led by Chief Deputy Attorney General Chris D'Angelo. Both the Division for Economic Justice and the Division for Social Justice are overseen by First Deputy Attorney General Jennifer Levy.