

Mayor Adams and Attorney General James Fight Opioid Crisis With First of \$286 Million in Payments for New York City

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Video available at: <https://youtu.be/OJYr23Tp2Fs>

Nearly \$89 Million to Be Distributed to New York City This Year From Historic Opioid Settlements

Funds Will Be Used for Opioid Treatment and Prevention Across All Five Boroughs

NEW YORK – New York City Mayor Eric Adams and New York Attorney General Letitia James today announced the first of up to \$286 million coming to New York City, beginning this week, to combat the opioid crisis that continues to ravage communities across the city. To address record overdose rates, New York City will receive \$88.9 million this year — \$11.5 million this week alone — to fund opioid prevention and treatment programs in all five boroughs. The funds are the first round of payments from the approximately \$1.5 billion that Attorney General James has secured for the state from the historic settlements with manufacturers and distributors of opioids.

"Big Pharma raked in billions of dollars while people's lives were lost and destroyed from opioids," said **Mayor Adams**. "One New Yorker dies from an opioid overdose every four hours. Too many New Yorkers have suffered from death and addiction and too many families and communities have been torn apart. It's time to end this public health crisis, and the \$286 million New York City will be receiving thanks to Attorney General James" good work will be critical in funding opioid treatment programs, education efforts, and other support programs across all five boroughs. This money will

help us save lives and I thank Attorney General James for her partnership in fighting to end the opioid crisis."

"Pharmaceutical companies that flooded New York communities with opioids are finally paying for the harm and devastation they caused," said **Attorney General James**. "For far too long, opioid makers and distributors created more pain and suffering than they claimed to cure. The settlements my office secured from these companies are a result of our unwavering commitment to hold the powerful accountable and protect New Yorkers. Mayor Adams has been a dedicated partner in this fight, and we will not rest until our communities are free from the scourge of opioids. The money distributed today will help us turn the tide on the opioid crisis and ensure that every New Yorker struggling with addiction gets the help they need."

Today's payments are the first of many to New York City to tackle the opioid crisis. The first payments come from settlements with opioid distributors — AmerisourceBergen Corporation, Cardinal Health, Inc., and McKesson Corporation. Later this year, New York City will receive additional payments from the settlements with Endo Health Solutions, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, and Allergan.

As a result of these historic opioid settlements, New York City will receive \$88,943,457 in 2022, and up to \$286,137,783 over the course of the payout of the different settlements. More funds could possibly be awarded from a trial victory against Teva Pharmaceuticals USA, where a dollar figure has not yet been determined.

Today's announcement also goes hand-in-hand with an announcement made by U.S. President Joseph Biden today, where he reiterated his commitment to fighting the opioid epidemic. The new strategy announced today tackles two major drivers of overdoses — untreated addiction and drug trafficking — and seeks to remove barriers to effective treatment, as well as to harm reduction services. At the same time, the president's strategy lays out actions that will disrupt drug traffickers' financial networks, supply chains, and delivery routes.

"So many fellow New Yorkers across the city have been touched by the opioid epidemic," said **Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Anne Williams-Isom**. "Families have lost a mom, a dad, a sister, or a brother to addiction or overdose. Today's announcement gives us hope though; it is about holding pharmaceutical companies accountable and about investing in programs and systems that work to

support individuals and families to work toward a healthier tomorrow. Thank you to the mayor and to the attorney general for their advocacy and commitment to these issues and to the wellbeing of every New Yorker."

"We have lost too many New Yorkers — family members, friends, and neighbors — to overdose," said **New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan**. "It's critical that we continue to invest in bold and innovative solutions to this crisis and help more New Yorkers get connected to harm reduction and treatment services. I thank Mayor Adams and Attorney General James for their leadership on this important public health issue."

"Mayor Eric Adams and Attorney General Letitia James have long fought to address the opioid epidemic that has ravaged this city, and I'm thankful for this settlement that will go to help our patients," said **Dr. Mitchell Katz, president and CEO, NYC Health + Hospitals**. "From our Street Health Outreach and Wellness vans to our inpatient behavioral health services, we take care of all New Yorkers no matter where they are and offer whatever treatment they need."

"The opioid epidemic has had a devastating impact on communities throughout our city and has taken too many lives," said **New York City Corporation Counsel Sylvia Hinds-Radix**. "The opioid crisis was fueled by the manufacturers and distributors who put profits over people. These settlements will result in hundreds of millions of dollars for services to those struggling with opioid addiction and will save more lives. I want to thank the dedicated Law Department staff and our outside counsel who worked tirelessly on the city's litigation and provided expert legal guidance, as well as the New York attorney general who was a great partner in the litigation and instrumental in achieving these settlements."

"Our work on the frontlines of the opioid crisis puts us in direct touch with families affected by unimaginable loss, and we must leverage those special bonds of trust to prevent additional overdose deaths," said **New York City Chief Medical Examiner Dr. Jason Graham**. "This funding can support and expand our critical activities to provide real-time data to partner agencies, generate a comprehensive picture of what led to each overdose fatality, and connect surviving family members in need with life-saving services. This is how we can honor the lives lost to the opioid epidemic."

"NYC Health + Hospitals is the leading provider of substance use disorder treatment for women and families with addiction," said **Dr. Machel Allen, chief medical officer, NYC Health + Hospitals**. "We will invest these dollars in the development of family centered models of prevention and care, initiated during pregnancy, and continuing throughout early childhood development. I thank Mayor Adams and Attorney General James for their continued fight for our patients."

"This funding couldn't come at a more critical time for our patients and for our workforce," said **Rebecca Linn-Walton, PhD, LCSW, senior assistant vice president in the Office of Behavioral Health, NYC Health + Hospitals**. "Substance Use Disorder is pain shared not just between patients, but families, communities, and the health care workers who treat them. This much-needed resource will save lives. What a meaningful thanks to those who have worked so tirelessly to treat substance use throughout the crisis, in the middle of a pandemic. We thank you. As someone whose life was saved by treatment, I thank you too."

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) recently released data showing a record number of overdose deaths citywide — 1,233 in just the first six months of 2021 compared to 965 over the same period in 2020 — which also match nationwide trends. Funds from these opioid settlements will help support citywide addiction prevention, treatment, recovery and harm reduction programs for all New Yorkers.

"I cannot commend Attorney General James enough for her steadfast leadership in securing settlements from opioid manufacturers that levied incalculable harm in our city," said **New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera, chair, Senate Committee on Health**. "These settlement funds will be critical in helping our city heal by expanding harm reduction and overdose prevention services to address the opioid overdose crisis."

"Opioid manufacturers are mass scale drug dealers that have gotten away with creating the worst epidemic in recent history," said **New York State Senator Brad Hoylman**. "No amount of money will undo the immeasurable harm they've cost New York families, but \$286 million is a good place to begin. Mayor Adams and Attorney General James are slowly turning around New York City's opioid crisis back with this new funding, which is rightfully paid for by the manufacturers and distributors themselves."

"The funding to help New Yorkers cope with the opioid crisis abatement announced today by Attorney General James and Mayor Adams will support education, prevention, harm reduction, and other important public health efforts. It's only fair that the cost of this settlement is borne by the very drug companies that over-marketed opioids to millions, and I salute the attorney general's leadership in defending the public interest," said **New York Assemblymember Richard Gottfried, chair, Assembly Committee on Health**.

"We must do everything we can to address the opioid epidemic in our state and in our nation," said **New York State Assemblymember Harvey Epstein**. "Funding initiatives that will support people and help to troubleshoot mental illness and addiction is the approach we must take. With this additional funding I believe we should take a comprehensive approach to addiction and helping New Yorkers find a path forward."

"The opioid epidemic is far from over as a major public health crisis in New York City and has only intensified during the pandemic," said **Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine**. "These funds will save lives and will give New York City desperately needed resources to prevent opioid overdoses and get people effective treatment. This historic settlement finally held corporations accountable for their role in creating this public health crisis and the first installment couldn't come soon enough to mitigate further harm caused by this tragic addiction crisis. I want to thank Attorney General James and Mayor Adams for their tireless work in securing and dispersing these funds."

"The opioid epidemic is among the greatest public health crises facing New York City, and we need every tool available to increase access to the services that can provide safe treatment options and help end addiction," said **New York City Councilmember Carlina Rivera, chair, Committee on Criminal Justice**. "I am grateful to Attorney General Letitia James for her fierce advocacy, and for continuing to stand up to some of the biggest corporations on behalf of all of the people of New York. These funds will save countless lives and give our city the resources we so urgently need to combat this crisis."

"The ongoing opioid epidemic has wreaked havoc on families across the city, and we need to hold the companies who started the crisis accountable for what they did," said **New York City Councilmember Linda Lee, chair, Committee on Mental Health Disabilities and Addictions**. "Every dollar that can be secured from settlements and put to good use saving lives and combatting addiction will prevent

future suffering for New Yorkers amidst this crisis. Thank you to the leadership of Attorney General Letitia James and Mayor Eric Adams for securing and allocating these life-saving funds for opioid education, treatment, and recovery that will impact so many across our city."

"As someone who's worked in the health care profession, I've witnessed firsthand the need for addiction services in this city — especially for our homeless population," said **New York City Councilmember Joann Ariola**. "This abatement will provide the necessary programming needed to treat the disease that is plaguing so many New Yorkers."

"The opioid crisis destroyed lives," said **New York City Councilmember Erik Bottcher**. "Greedy corporations made fortunes off of the pain and suffering of New Yorkers. I'm grateful that Attorney General James was able to hold them accountable and that Mayor Adams is working to help those same New Yorkers."

"My very first law I got passed as a councilmember was about fighting the opioid epidemic in our city," said **New York City Councilmember Justin Brannan**. "Attorney General Letitia James is showing us exactly how it should be done: Hold the companies who have profited off this crisis accountable, take back the money they've made off others pain, and use it to protect our most affected and vulnerable. I am proud of this win for New York, and in partnership with the mayor and our colleagues, I will make sure New York City's share of this money reaches the most effective and needed lifesaving programs and services."

"New Yorkers take care of each other. I'm grateful that Attorney General James was able to hold corporations that profited off the pain of New Yorkers accountable, and I'm proud that Mayor Adams is working to help those same New Yorkers now," said **New York City Councilmember Gale Brewer**.

"This funding for opioid abatement is one of the most significant investments we have seen to reduce the dangerous impacts of opioids in our city," said **New York City Councilmember Eric Dinowitz**. "In particular, the Bronx has struggled with opioid-related overdoses and deaths, and it has put undue pain on our communities. I am heartened to see the benefits of Attorney General James' hard work to hold opioid manufacturers and distributors accountable and now use those funds to prevent future tragedies. New Yorkers deserve opportunities for treatment, recovery, and prevention."

"Despite not receiving mainstream media attention, Black and Brown communities have been harmed by opioid abuse for years. I am thrilled to see increased funding for opioid abatement efforts throughout New York state," said **New York City Councilmember Rita Joseph**. "It's the least our communities deserve after the years of harm that opioids have caused."

"I applaud Attorney General Letitia James and Mayor Eric Adams commitment to funding opioid abatement efforts and reinvesting in our hardest hit communities. Even though compensation will not replace the lives lost, this investment from the nation's most extensive lawsuit will be vital in combating this epidemic," said **New York City Councilmember Julie Menin**.

"It will take decades to heal the wounds caused by the perpetrators of the opioid crisis, but these settlements mark a step toward justice," said **New York City Councilmember Chi Osse**. "I applaud the attorney general for securing these funds and look forward to them going toward righting wrongs, saving lives, and building a stronger New York."

"As opioid deaths reach historic highs in New York City, we must take immediate action to prevent any more tragedies," said **New York City Councilmember Keith Powers**. "I'm proud to have sponsored legislation in the council protecting New Yorkers against overdoses, and this funding will build on that progress by providing high-quality opioid treatment, recovery, and support services. I commend Mayor Adams and Attorney General James for prioritizing this issue and working to protect New Yorkers."

"I would like to thank our attorney general, Letitia James, for her continuous dedication to seeking well-deserved justice in our city," said **New York City Councilmember Althea Stevens**. "Justifying the malpractice of the opioid industry in our community is vital as it has negatively impacted New Yorkers for way too long. Ensuring that funds are secured for settlements is important as it is the first step to holding the opioid industry accountable and points us in the right direction for the future of our city."

"Opioids have ravaged our country and taken too many lives," said **New York City Councilmember Marjorie Velazquez**. "I commend the efforts of the Attorney General Letitia James in holding opioid manufacturers and distributors accountable for their role in perpetuating this epidemic, and Mayor Adams for utilizing this funding to support our communities and help those who suffer from addiction to heal."

