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**ROB BONTA***Attorney General*

Attorney General Bonta Secures Transformative \$17 Billion Settlement with Meta, Proposed Settlement Includes Fundamental Changes to Instagram and Facebook

Press Release / Attorney General Bonta Secures Transformative \$17 Billion S...

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*Meta must make massive transformations that will reduce the risk of harm from its platforms
— and will do it within months.*

OAKLAND — California Attorney General Rob Bonta, as part of a bipartisan coalition of 51 attorneys general, today announced a proposed settlement, which remains subject to court approval through entry of a consent judgment, resolving the Attorney General's lawsuit against Meta Platforms, Inc. (Meta), alleging among other things, that the company designed and deployed harmful features on Instagram and Facebook that drive compulsive use by children and teens to their mental and physical detriment, all the

while misleading users, their families, and the public regarding the existence and severity of these risks. Trial in this case began on August 18 in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. Today's settlement, subject to court approval, provides for strong injunctive terms designed to help protect children from the mental health harms associated with social media, including default daily time limits on social media and a block on overnight use that can only be lifted by a parent, enhanced parental supervision tools, robust age assurance measures to detect users under 18 and children under 13 that are on the platform, and the appointment of an independent auditor to oversee compliance. The proposed settlement also includes a monetary payment of up to \$17 billion to the states over ten years — California alone will receive \$1.5 billion to \$2.1 billion if this settlement is approved by the court.

"Today, we have secured a settlement with Meta that will make social media less dangerous for our kids and make a world of a difference for children and their families," **said Attorney General Bonta**. "Meta has agreed to make massive transformations that will reduce the risk of harm from its platforms — and will do it within months. We are talking about time limits, stopping notifications during school, a block on the app during critical overnight hours, bans on plastic surgery filters, and so much more. Alongside a bipartisan coalition of my colleagues, I am proud to deliver this settlement that addresses the concerns at the core of our lawsuit and institutes real change, real transparency, and real enforceable protections for children on Facebook and Instagram — right now, no more waiting."

TODAY'S SETTLEMENT

How a significant portion of the payment received by California will be spent will ultimately be decided by the Legislature and Governor, but in the proposed settlement it is earmarked for purposes related to the prevention or remediation of mental health or other harms to young Californians associated with social media use. The proposed

settlement critically includes strong injunctive terms designed to help protect teens from the mental health harms associated with social media use, including bans and blocks on features known to be harmful, like:

- A default daily time limit of two hours for users under 18 that can only be lifted by a parent. If other social media platforms agree to similar terms, the daily time limit will drop to one hour.
- A default nighttime block between midnight and 6am for users under 18 that can only be lifted by a parent. If other social media platforms agree to similar terms, the nighttime block will expand to cover 10pm to 7am.
- Default blocks on notifications to users under 18 from 10pm to 7am and during the school day (8am to 3pm from August 15 to June 15.)
- An enhanced mechanism for teens to report potentially harmful content and a requirement that Meta respond to 90% of those reports within six hours.
- A ban on displaying numbers of likes or reactions to users under 18.
- A ban on cosmetic procedure image filters for users under 18.
- An option for users under 18 to have a non-personalized feed, meaning a feed that doesn't use an algorithm to target them with content aimed to keep them endlessly scrolling.
- A commitment from Meta to maintain, review, and improve existing teen content safety measures.

The company will also be required to maintain other protections. For example:

- Meta has agreed to maintain, review, and improve existing teen content safety measures and will create enhanced parent supervision tools.
- Meta will institute robust age assurance measures to detect users under 18, as well as measures to identify and remove kids under 13 from their platforms.
- Meta will bring on an independent auditor with expansive access to information and resources, regular reporting, and the right to communicate concerns to the

Attorneys General.

- Finally, Meta will be subject to an injunction prohibiting it from making further false, misleading, or deceptive statements around its safety features.

BACKGROUND

The lawsuit, filed in 2023, alleged Meta illegally collected and used the data of children under the age of 13 who used its platforms, made decisions in designing its platforms that drove excessive use and put young users at risk, and that it lied to users, their families, and the public about the safety of Facebook and Instagram. In doing so, it violated federal and state laws, including the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, California's False Advertising Law, and California's Unfair Competition Law.

In announcing this settlement, Attorney General Bonta is joined by Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser, Tennessee Attorney General Jonathan Skirmetti, Kentucky Attorney General Russell Coleman, and New Jersey Attorney General Jennifer Davenport. Also joining the settlement are the attorneys general of Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico.

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