

**Letitia James**

New York Attorney General

Attorney General James Secures Up to \$17.1 Billion and Groundbreaking Reforms from Meta to Protect Children on Social Media

New York Will Receive Up to \$1.15 Billion Intended for Education and Services to Help Young People Struggling with Unhealthy Social Media Use
Meta Must Limit Minors' Time on Facebook and Instagram, Restrict Addictive Features and Inappropriate Content. Largest Single-Company Settlement in OAG History Sets New Standards for Future Settlements with Social Media Companies

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NEW YORK – New York Attorney General Letitia James and a bipartisan coalition of 50 other attorneys general today [secured up to \\$17.1 billion from social media giant Meta](#), along with transformative changes to Facebook and Instagram to stop addictive and harmful social media use among young people. In 2023, [Attorney General James and a coalition of 32 other attorneys general sued Meta](#) for designing and implementing features that it knew to be harmful to children and teens in order to maximize their time on its social media platforms. Under a landmark settlement with Attorney General James and the coalition, subject to court approval, Meta will pay up to \$17.1 billion to the states. This is the largest settlement reached with a single company in the history of the Office of the Attorney General (OAG). The funds are intended to support mental health services, education programs, and other efforts to repair and reduce the harm caused by unhealthy social media use among young people.

Meta must also take steps to verify the ages of its users and restrict the time minors can spend on its platforms to a maximum of two hours per day. In addition, Meta will restrict minors from accessing its platforms at night and prevent notifications from being sent to minors during school hours and in the evening. Children and their parents will have the option to opt out of addictive algorithmic feeds, and Meta will implement other features to prevent unhealthy social media use. The settlement establishes a transformative

framework for repairing the harms of addictive social media and will enact stricter restrictions if other social media companies reach similar settlements in future cases, such as Attorney General James' [ongoing lawsuit against TikTok](#).

“Children in New York and nationwide are suffering while companies like Meta reap immense profits by intentionally addicting them to their social media platforms,” said **Attorney General James**. “We cannot allow social media companies to continue fueling the growing rates of low self-esteem, isolation, and depression among our youth. With significant new resources for our communities and comprehensive restrictions on Meta’s platforms for young people, we are taking a major step towards breaking the cycle of social media addiction. This groundbreaking plan sets a standard of reforms for all social media platforms, and I will continue to work to extend these protections across the industry.”

In October 2023, Attorney General James and 32 other attorneys general sued Meta for building its social media business by intentionally exploiting young people with features that its employees and executives knew to be addictive and harmful. The lawsuit alleged that Meta designed algorithms meant to recommend content that would keep users on its platform for as long as possible and deployed features like “infinite scroll” and incessant notifications to make it harder for young users to disengage. The lawsuit also alleged that Meta’s social media platforms can have disastrous effects on young people’s mental health by steering young people towards dangerous content, including posts promoting eating disorders and self-harm. Meta then deceptively claimed that its features were not manipulative and that its platforms were safe, causing further damage.

Payments to States

Meta will pay at least \$12.1 billion to the coalition states. If other major social media companies reach similar settlements with states, this amount will increase to \$17.1 billion. New York will receive at least \$819 million and up to \$1.15 billion. The funds are intended for a variety of educational and mental health services for young people to repair the harms of unhealthy social media use and prevent future damage. Initiatives that could receive funds include grants to schools to implement phone-free classrooms, training for mental health professionals to serve students, after-school or summer programming for young people, and public health programs.

Changes to Meta Platforms

To help alleviate the youth mental health crisis fueled by its social media platforms, Meta will make significant changes to limit the time that users under the age of 18 can spend on its platforms, the content they see, and the addictive features to which they are exposed. Meta will take steps to verify the ages of its users to identify those under 18, using a process similar to New York's [nation-leading Safe for Kids Act](#), which was advanced by Attorney General James and signed into law by Governor Hochul in 2024. The settlement builds on the Safe for Kids Act's requirements to provide even stronger protection for New York children online.

Meta will also impose strict time limits on all users under 18, limiting them to two hours of time per day across Facebook and Instagram, with exceptions for messaging features. Users under 18 will also not be able to access these platforms between midnight and 6 a.m. or receive push notifications between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. In addition, Meta will limit notifications during school hours. To encourage young people to break the cycle of endless scrolling and take breaks, Meta will pause content and send mindfulness reminders to users under 18 after 60 and 90 minutes of cumulative use every day, and send reminders during any session of continuous use that lasts longer than 15 minutes.

Meta must also take a variety of steps to prevent minors from being shown inappropriate and unhealthy content on its platforms. Users under 18 will be given the option to select non-algorithmic feeds, showing content only from accounts that the user has followed in chronological order. Parents will have the ability to enable a non-algorithmic feed as the default for their children if they are using Meta's Parental Supervision feature. In addition, young users will be barred from seeing "likes" and other reactions on posts and will have in-app tools to report inappropriate, offensive, unwanted, or illegal content.

Users must have a parent's explicit permission to disable these time and content restrictions. The restrictions will last at least five years on Meta's platforms and will strengthen if other major social media platforms reach similar settlements with states. A second phase of stricter limits lasting ten years will also apply if these other platforms reach settlements. This phase will restrict night access from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. and disable all push notifications. It will also limit users under 18 to 60 minutes on each Meta platform per day.

Meta must also continue to improve its existing content restrictions and account limits that prevent young users from encountering inappropriate content. These existing features include:

- Content policies designed to help limit teens' exposure to age-inappropriate content;
- A ban on cosmetic filters for users under 18, including filters that change skin tones;
- Content policies that prevent targeting teen users with bullying or harassing content;
- Policies to give parents the ability to impose more restrictive content settings on their supervised children's accounts;
- Restrictions that prevent teen users from friending or following age-inappropriate accounts and not recommending these accounts to teen users; and
- Settings that default teen users into private accounts on Instagram and appropriate privacy settings on Facebook.

Joining Attorney General James in securing this settlement are the attorneys general of Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, American Samoa, the District of Columbia, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico.

Attorney General James is a leader in holding social media companies accountable for the impact of their platforms. In July 2026, Attorney General James [announced the final rules for the SAFE for Kids Act](#) designed to protect children from the harms of social media addiction. In March 2026, Attorney General James [joined a bipartisan coalition opposing federal legislation that would weaken state protections for children online](#). In February 2026, Attorney General James [urged Congress to pass the Senate's Kids Online Safety Act](#). In October 2025, Attorney General James [announced social media companies had to start reporting their content moderation policies to combat hate](#). In October 2024, Attorney General James [sued TikTok for harming children's mental health](#).

For New York, this matter was handled by Assistant Attorneys General Nathaniel Kosslyn and Masha Heifetz and Senior Enforcement Counsel Jordan Adler of the Bureau of

Internet and Technology, which is led by Bureau Chief Kim Berger and Deputy Bureau Chief Clark Russell, along with Special Counsel Cristy Phillips of the Division of Economic Justice, and Assistant Attorney General Alex Finkelstein and former Senior Enforcement Counsel Kevin Wallace of the Executive Division. The Bureau of Internet and Technology is a part of the Division of Economic Justice, which is led by Chief Deputy Attorney General Chris D'Angelo and overseen by First Deputy Attorney General Meghan Faux.