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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wisconsin Department of Justice Announces Largest Big Tech Settlement in History

Meta to Pay Up to $17 Billion – Up to $313 million to Wisconsin – and Implement Sweeping Child-Safety Reforms on Instagram and Facebook

MADISON, Wis. — Today, the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) announced a landmark $17.1 billion multistate settlement with Meta Platforms, Inc. — the largest state consumer protection settlement involving a single company in history outside the Big Tobacco settlements of the 1990s – that would result in up to $313 million being directed to Wisconsin.

In addition to the payment, Meta must also implement a sweeping set of safety features designed to protect children on Instagram and Facebook. The agreement resolves claims by 47 States and D.C., Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands that the company designed Instagram with addictive features, knowingly exposed young users to serious mental harms, and intentionally misled the public about the safety of its platforms, among other things. This settlement is a monumental victory for the protection of America's children and would fundamentally transform how social media products are designed and offered for kids and teens. The settlement is subject to court approval. Wisconsin would receive $219 million, and it could receive up to $313 million if certain industry conditions are met in the future.

"This resolution provides for several changes that prioritize kids' well-being over Meta's profits—as it should have been all along," said AG Kaul. "This is a monumental step in changing the role of social media in kids' lives for the better."

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The settlement requires Meta to implement a series of safety features on Instagram and Facebook in the settling jurisdictions, including:

- Strict daily time limits and "productive pauses" for children: Instagram and Facebook would impose a combined two-hour daily time limit with mandatory pauses after 15 minutes of continuous use and again at 60 and 90 minutes to interrupt extended periods of scrolling. These limits remain in effect for five years. If Snapchat, TikTok, and YouTube adopt comparable terms, the daily limit on each platform would drop to 60 minutes for 10 years.
- "Nighttime blocks" restricting children's access from 12:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.
- Limited school-time access for children, eliminating push notifications on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. during the school year.
- Robust age assurance measures to more effectively verify the age of young users.
- Safer, age-appropriate content controls, including stronger safeguards against bullying, content promoting eating disorders, and content related to suicide and self-harm.
- Stronger, more user-friendly parental controls.
- Limits on social comparison features, including certain beauty filters and visible "like" counts, that have been linked to poor mental health outcomes in kids and teens.
- Both the implementation and efficacy of the features would be regularly assessed by an independent auditor and a committee of settling states.

These would be groundbreaking changes to Instagram and Facebook and more significant and comprehensive than previously ordered by any court. And perhaps most importantly, this settlement represents a down payment toward an industry-wide social media experience that is safer for kids.

Beginning in 2021, nearly every attorney general in the country cooperated to investigate the social media industry for allegedly designing and promoting platforms to children and teens despite known harms. After a bipartisan, nationwide investigation uncovered that Meta allegedly designed Instagram's features to addict children while internally documenting the resulting mental health harms and failing to warn parents, attorneys general across the country sued Meta individually or as part of a consolidated federal lawsuit. This settlement resolves those cases as well as

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other claims by the settling states and territories. The settlement also involves a payment from Meta arising from its sharing of nonpublic information about Facebook users with third parties, like Cambridge Analytica, leading up to the 2016 election.

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

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