



## ATTORNEY GENERAL PETER F. NERONHA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 4, 2021

CONTACT: Kristy dosReis  
(401) 274-4400 x2234  
[kdosreis@riag.ri.gov](mailto:kdosreis@riag.ri.gov)  
Twitter [@AGNeronha](https://twitter.com/AGNeronha)

### **Rhode Island to receive \$2.59 million as part of multi-state settlement with McKinsey & Co. for the firm's role in "turbocharging" the opioid epidemic**

*State's lawsuit against major opioid manufacturers and distributors remains ongoing*

PROVIDENCE, RI – Attorney General Peter F. Neronha has joined a coalition of attorneys general from 47 states, the District of Columbia and five U.S. territories in a \$573 million settlement with one of the world's largest consulting firms, McKinsey & Company, resolving investigations into the company's role in working for opioid companies, helping those companies promote their drugs, and profiting from the opioid epidemic.

Rhode Island will receive \$2.59 million from the multistate settlement, which will be used solely to address the impact of the opioid epidemic on Rhode Islanders through treatment, rescue, recovery, and prevention programs. This is the first multi-state opioid settlement to result in substantial payment to the states to address the epidemic. Proceeds for each state were determined by a formula based mainly on population.

"Far too many lives have been lost or devastated in Rhode Island as a result of the opioid crisis. We recognize that there is no settlement amount that will bring those lives back or undo the pain and suffering so many families are going through," said Attorney General Neronha. "We remain committed to continuing to aggressively pursue our litigation against the major companies that manufactured and distributed opioids and hold them accountable for the role they played in Rhode Island's opioid epidemic."

In addition to providing funds to address the crisis, the agreement calls for McKinsey to prepare tens of thousands of its internal documents detailing its work for Purdue Pharma and other opioid companies for public disclosure online. In addition, McKinsey agreed to adopt a strict document retention plan, continue its investigation into allegations that two of its partners tried to destroy documents in response to investigations of Purdue Pharma, implement a strict ethics code that all partners must agree to each year, and stop advising companies on potentially dangerous Schedule II and III narcotics.

Today's filings describe how McKinsey contributed to the opioid crisis by promoting marketing schemes and consulting services to opioid manufacturers, including OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma, for over a decade. The [complaint](#), filed with the settlement, details how McKinsey advised Purdue on how to maximize profits from its opioid products, including targeting high-volume opioid prescribers, using specific messaging to get physicians to prescribe more OxyContin to more patients, and circumventing pharmacy restrictions in order to deliver high-dose prescriptions.

When states began to sue Purdue's directors for their implementation of McKinsey's marketing schemes, McKinsey partners began emailing about deleting documents and emails related to their work for Purdue.

The opioid epidemic has led to considerable harm to individuals and communities in Rhode Island over the last 20 years. [Since 2014, nearly 2,170 Rhode Islanders](#) have died from an opioid overdose. On an economic level, these deaths—and the impacts on Rhode Islanders who have struggled opioid addiction—have created considerable costs to the state in the form of health care, child welfare, criminal justice, and other programs, as well as lost economic opportunity and productivity. On a social level, opioid addiction, abuse, and overdose deaths have torn families apart, damaged relationships, and eroded the social fabric of communities.

Today's filing is the latest action our Office has taken to combat the opioid epidemic. In 2018, our Office filed a lawsuit (*State of Rhode Island v. Purdue Pharma*) against a group of major opioid distributors and manufacturers seeking to hold them accountable for their role in creating and fueling the ongoing opioid crisis in Rhode Island. That litigation is ongoing and currently in the discovery phase.

The states' investigation was led by an executive committee made up of the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee, and Vermont. The executive committee is joined by the attorneys general of Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, the District of Columbia, and the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

[An at-a-glance overview of the settlement is provided here.](#)

[View the complaint here.](#)

###



Office of the  
Attorney General

# Settlement with McKinsey & Co. for firm's role in the opioid crisis

## Rhode Island to receive \$2.59 million

Rhode Island and 46 states (excluding NV, WA, and WV) plus the District of Columbia and five U.S. territories have reached a \$573 million settlement with McKinsey & Co., for the firm's work on behalf of opioid manufacturers that contributed to the opioid crisis. This marks the first multi-state opioid settlement to result in substantial payment to the states to address the epidemic.

McKinsey will pay a total of \$478 million to the 47 states, DC, and five territories in the first year, then four annual payments of \$23 million, and agrees to not work for clients related to opioids. Rhode Island will receive \$2.59 million over five years, with \$2.14 million being paid in the first year. The proceeds for each state were determined by a formula based principally on population.

### McKinsey's role in opioid crisis

Starting in 2004, McKinsey worked with opioid manufacturers — including Purdue Pharma — to design unfair trade practices, recommending deceptive marketing strategies to encourage healthcare providers to prescribe opioids.

McKinsey worked on aggressive marketing campaigns for Purdue to encourage doctors to prescribe long courses of high-dose, extended release OxyContin, driving increased opioid sales and profits. McKinsey's work with Purdue spanned 15 years and involved a variety of projects to increase opioid sales.

### Legal basis

McKinsey's work on deceptive marketing strategies for opioids violated Rhode Island's Deceptive Trade Practices Act. These unfair trade practices injured Rhode Island consumers and directly and proximately caused the State's injuries.

### How settlement funds will be used

The Attorney General's Office will work with other state agencies, public health experts, and community stakeholders to put a framework in place to ensure the funds are used solely to address the impact of the opioids epidemic on Rhode Islanders — through treatment, rescue, recovery, and prevention programs — and are distributed in a manner that is evidence-based, transparent, equitable, and efficient.

### Nearby states: recovery amounts

State (population)	Recovery (million)
RI (1.06 million)	\$2.59
MA (6.89 million)	\$13.23
CT (3.75 million)	\$7.51
VT (624,000)	\$1.54
NH (1.35 million)	\$3.33
ME (1.34 million)	\$3.14
DE (974,000)	\$2.58

