



Navigating Mississippi's Opioid Settlements

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In 2023, Mississippians lost over 250 loved ones to opioid overdose. The impact of those deaths and of the countless other lives affected by opioid addiction cannot be reversed. But we can hold those responsible accountable for their part.

Over the past several years, my office has entered into settlements with over a dozen companies that played a part in creating and amplifying the opioid crisis. These include drug manufacturers, distributors, pharmacy chains, and even companies that created the marketing plans that fed the epidemic.

Eight of these settlements, totaling an estimated \$367 million over eighteen years, included what the defendants called incentive payments, but are more aptly called clawbacks. If Mississippi did not achieve certain benchmarks, the companies would claw back some of our money.

I am pleased to say that by creating a plan and pursuing it strategically, Mississippi was able to meet these benchmarks. The cooperation of Mississippi's counties was crucial. Without your help, Mississippi would not be getting our full settlement.

One clawback required specific local governments sign participation agreements. Each settlement includes exactly what counties and municipalities are covered and only those covered receive funds from that settlement. Your community may not be included in every settlement. Some may not be included in any.

The factors and formula used to determine which local governments were in the settlements and how much their ultimate recovery would be were the product of a complicated multistate process involving a national funds administrator. Local funds are distributed directly by Brown Greer and if you have questions about your payments, please contact Emily Sirney at (888) 441-2010, extension 6101.

Another clawback required part of the State's funds be used for abatement, and each settlement agreement defined what abatement means. To avoid this clawback, my office has been working with the Legislature to ensure that 70% of the money going to the State General Fund will be used for abatement activities. As a result, all the funds that your county receives can be used for any public purpose, not strictly for abatement.

My office has also recommended to the Legislature creation of a State-administered fund to distribute that abatement money. And we recommended that county and municipal leaders be represented on the committee administering these funds. I look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature and with Mississippi's counties to put the rest of this plan into action and help Mississippi rebuild after the opioid epidemic.