



# 2019 YEAR IN REVIEW



Office of the NYS Attorney General  
**Letitia James**

# Table of Contents

<b>Message from Attorney General James .....</b>	<b>04</b>
<b>Funds Recovered for New York State .....</b>	<b>06</b>
<b>Standing Up to Washington .....</b>	<b>08</b>
<b>Key Issues .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Fighting for Women's Rights .....	11
Leading the Fight Against Climate Change and Protecting Our Environment .....	16
Defending Immigrant Communities .....	19
Safeguarding LGBTQ+ Rights .....	25
Addressing the Opioid Epidemic .....	29
Ensuring the Health and Safety of Our Children .....	32
Supporting Affordable Housing and Standing Up for Tenants' Rights .....	36
Putting Workers First .....	40
Combating Gun Violence .....	43
Taking Dangerous Drugs Off Our Streets .....	46
Protecting Consumers .....	48
Standing Up to Wall Street .....	52
Rooting Out Public Corruption .....	55
Ensuring Quality Healthcare for All New Yorkers .....	58
<b>About the Attorney General's Office .....</b>	<b>60</b>



LETITIA JAMES  
New York State Attorney General

## Dear Friends,

When I took office one year ago, I made a commitment to use every tool at my disposal to protect New Yorkers. For the past twelve months, that's exactly what my team and I have been doing. We have challenged the federal government's attempts to deny our basic rights, opened an investigation into the NRA's charitable practices, filed the nation's most extensive lawsuit against the manufacturers and distributors of opioids, and led 46 states in an investigation into Facebook over antitrust concerns. We have also fought to ensure the health and safety of our children by suing e-cigarette company JUUL, defended women's reproductive rights, and protected consumers from deceptive and fraudulent Wall Street practices. We have been hard at work.

As I close out my first year as your Attorney General, I want to take a moment to share some of the work the office has done on behalf of all New Yorkers.

We've had some major legal victories this year. We fought all the way to the United States Supreme Court to maintain the integrity of the census, and won. We shut down President Trump's Foundation and forced him to personally pay \$2 million for abusing his charity for political purposes. We held Equifax accountable for a data breach that affected millions of Americans in the largest data breach settlement ever. We held Google and YouTube liable for illegally tracking and collecting children's personal information and secured a \$170 million national settlement. We stopped the federal government from its attempts to allow more pollution in our air and water. Through our wins, we have collected more than \$1.1 billion for New York.

We also helped New Yorkers outside of the courtroom. We spearheaded groundbreaking legislation to ensure bad actors cannot evade justice by closing the double jeopardy loophole. We took thousands of guns off our streets through our statewide gun buyback program. We funded over \$85 million for affordable housing throughout the state, and we've allocated over \$1 million to provide body-worn cameras for police departments all across New York State.

I also traveled around the state to hear from you. I visited addiction treatment facilities, where I met with those devastated by the nation's opioid epidemic. I spoke to aspiring lawyers at law schools. I convened the first ever Attorney General roundtable with Native American leaders. I visited our armed service members at Fort Drum. As Attorney General, I represent every single person in New York, and it is my honor to talk to you, hear from you, serve you, and protect you.

As I begin my second year in office, I look forward to continuing the great work we have started and building on the office's legacy of prioritizing the rights and interests of all New Yorkers.

Thank you,

*Letitia James*



In 2019, Attorney General James collected over **\$1.1 billion** for New York State, including:

Over **\$168 million**  
recovered for Medicaid

Over **\$165 million**  
in unpaid debts to the State

Over **\$34 million**  
from negotiated settlements

Over **\$21 million**  
in restitution for New Yorkers

Over **\$250K** in seized assets

Additionally, Attorney General James has distributed:

Over **\$137 million**  
to the New York State General Fund

Over **\$85 million**  
to affordable housing programs

Over **\$1 million**  
for body-worn cameras to police departments all across New York State





## STANDING UP TO WASHINGTON

Over the past year, Attorney General James has been leading the fight to take on the discriminatory, regressive, and dangerous policies of the federal government. The Trump Administration has attacked our most basic rights and has advanced countless policies that directly impact New York and put our residents in harm's way.

From attempting to roll back regulations that are critical to protecting our planet, to restricting access to healthcare and women's reproductive care, to blocking immigrants from a life of freedom and opportunity, to trying to hurt our workers and undermine our unions, the Trump Administration has attacked the very fabric of our society.

Since taking office in January 2019, Attorney General James has filed 29 lawsuits against the Trump Administration. Because of her efforts, many of the unlawful actions taken by the Trump Administration have been stopped in their tracks. From blocking a question about citizenship from being added to the 2020 census, to preventing rules that would allow doctors and medical professionals to openly discriminate, to ensuring that poverty is not legal grounds for denying someone a pathway to citizenship, Attorney General James has successfully fought to protect New Yorkers.

In order to most effectively fight back against these encroachments, Attorney General James created a new Federal Initiatives Unit within the Attorney General's Office specifically to take up these cases. The Federal Initiatives Unit will continue to ensure that the rights of all New Yorkers are not compromised by the federal government.

## Protecting New Yorkers from Regressive Federal Policies





## KEY ISSUES

## FIGHTING FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The Trump Administration has continued to roll back the clock on women's rights. From restricting access to reproductive care, to attempting to deny the right to seek an abortion, the Administration has been relentless. States across the country are using the Administration's actions as cover to enact their own regressive policies. In the face of these of these actions, Attorney General James has been a staunch advocate for women's rights. From her landmark legislation to ban questions about salary history in New York City, which is now the law across New York State, to her advocacy to ensure access to healthcare for all women, Attorney General James has always fought to protect and advance women's rights.





## Protecting Access to Reproductive Care

Healthcare is a basic right and that includes access to reproductive care. In an effort to restrict women's access to this care, the Trump Administration enacted baseless and dangerous restrictions to the Title X program, which provides essential family planning and healthcare services to millions of Americans, especially low-income communities. Attorney General James, leading a multistate coalition, filed a lawsuit, which is ongoing, to prevent the federal government from denying this necessary care to New Yorkers and Americans across the country.

Countless New Yorkers depend on healthcare facilities that receive Title X funding to get basic care such as cancer screenings, STI testing and treatment, health exams, and birth control. While Title X funds cannot be used to provide abortions, the new rule prevents doctors from even discussing abortions or referring patients for abortions, even if the patient's life is in jeopardy. Patients trust that their doctors will give them sound medical advice, but this rule forces providers to choose between much-needed federal funding or providing accurate advice. Stripping these funds from these facilities has already had, and will continue to have, devastating impacts on millions of people across the country who rely on these facilities for basic care. Attorney General James will continue to fight back against this dangerous rule.



*The day after filing a lawsuit to challenge the Trump Administration's new rules designed to undermine Title X, Attorney General James convened a roundtable with healthcare providers, professionals, and advocates to discuss how the proposed changes to the rule would impact New Yorkers. The roundtable provided an opportunity for these experts to discuss their concerns, share input on the Attorney General's lawsuit, and identify how attendees could best work together to ensure patients were able to maintain access to the care they deserve.*



## Supporting a Woman's Right to Choose

More than 45 years ago, Roe v. Wade made it clear that women hold the right to have safe, legal abortions. Yet this year alone, ten states have tried to skirt the United States Supreme Court by passing hostile and restrictive laws to prevent women from making choices about their own bodies. Although this is not happening in New York, Attorney General James has taken legal action to stop these laws from taking effect in other states, because a woman's right to choose is fundamental to the health of our society. She has led several multistate coalitions in filing briefs to challenge these restrictive laws.

## Protecting Survivors of Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is a real problem that demands a real response, which is why Attorney General James ordered two companies that sell do-it-yourself sexual assault evidence kits to cease and desist their operations. These kits, which are sold online, have raised widespread concerns because they are marketed as an alternative to seeking professional medical care. By law, New York State provides sexual assault exams, evidence collection, and counseling services at no charge to survivors, so it is misleading and unethical for a company to profit from selling these kits. Additionally, evidence collected from kits is crucially important in sexual assault cases, and there are significant concerns that evidence collected from the do-it-yourself kits would be inadmissible in court. Proper medical attention and accurate evidence collection are critical to supporting survivors and Attorney General James will continue to ensure that justice is served in these serious cases.







## **LEADING THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE AND PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT**

With every passing day, the need to combat climate change and protect our environment increases. Attorney General James has been at the forefront of efforts to fight policies that hurt New Yorkers, our natural resources, and our planet. She was recently recognized as the top defender of environmental protections against actions by the federal government by New York University's School of Law State Energy and Environmental Impact Center. Since 2017, no other state attorney general's office has taken more legal action against federal agencies regarding environmental issues than the New York Attorney General's Office. In total, New York has taken 129 legal actions against the Trump Administration to protect our environment.

The Trump Administration has done everything in its power to reverse regulations that protect our planet, including crucial limits on greenhouse gas emissions. The Environmental Protection Agency's new "Affordable Clean Energy" rule, also known as the "Dirty Power" rule, essentially repealed nationwide limits on pollution from existing fossil fuel power plants, one of the largest sources of climate change pollution. This rule allows these power plants to continue emitting massive amounts of pollution, which is why Attorney General James is leading a coalition of states and cities in an ongoing lawsuit to stop it. This catastrophic rule only props up dirty and expensive coal power plants and leaves New Yorkers and all Americans to foot the bill.

## **Fighting Against Climate Change**

For decades, General Electric (GE) dumped millions of pounds of highly toxic chemicals, known as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), into the Hudson River. While GE was legally required to dredge the river to remove PCBs, these deadly chemicals continue to contaminate the river and make fish too dangerous to eat. Nonetheless, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently issued GE a Certificate of Completion for the dredging, signaling that the company is now off the hook for any additional PCB clean-up. There is no doubt that the clean-up of PCBs is incomplete, so Attorney General James and Governor Andrew Cuomo filed an ongoing lawsuit against the EPA for allowing GE to walk away from its responsibility to clean up the toxic mess it created. PCBs are a serious and persistent threat to the health and welfare of New Yorkers, and Attorney General James will not allow a company or a federal agency to get away with putting our residents or our environment in harm's way.

## **Holding Big Polluters Accountable**



## Protecting the Air We Breathe

One of the greatest contributors to air pollution are the trucks that travel our streets every day and emit dangerous amounts of soot, carbon dioxide, and smog-causing pollutants. In an effort to make our air cleaner, Attorney General James funded a first-of-its-kind all-electric delivery truck program in New York City. The program funds battery-powered, emission-free delivery trucks for six nonprofit organizations. Not only are these trucks better for the health of our planet, but also for New Yorkers who breathe in this toxic air. In New York City alone, soot pollution contributes to an estimated 2,300 deaths and 6,300 emergency room visits and hospitalizations for respiratory and cardiovascular disease every year, according to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Attorney General James is studying the performance of the trucks, and will use the findings to promote these vehicles across the state. Zero-emission, all-electric trucks are the future and Attorney General James will continue to fight for clean air for New Yorkers.



## DEFENDING IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

New York is one of the most diverse states in the country and is proudly home to one of the largest immigrant populations in the world. As the federal government has ramped up efforts to deny immigrants basic legal rights and pathways to opportunity, Attorney General James has used the power of the law to challenge these discriminatory and unlawful rules and protect our immigrant communities.





## Making the Census Count

Every single person in this country deserves to be counted – regardless of their immigration status – and the census is the most effective tool we have to determine the true number of people residing in our country. That is why Attorney General James took a lawsuit to stop the Trump Administration’s attempts to add a question about citizenship to the 2020 census to the United States Supreme Court. In July 2019, the Supreme Court sided with Attorney General James and ruled that the question could not be added to the census. Adding a question about citizenship would have incited widespread fear in immigrant communities and greatly impaired the accuracy of population counts. Our democracy depends on an accurate census – from determining the allocation of federal funds to deciding Congressional representation – any undercounting would have disastrous impacts on New York and states across the country. The Supreme Court recognized the vital importance of preserving the integrity of the census, a huge victory for our democracy.



## Stopping Discriminatory Immigration Policy

For generations, the United States has been a haven for immigrants seeking opportunity and upward mobility. But the Trump Administration tried to turn history on its head and implement a discriminatory policy to prevent many immigrants who came here lawfully from obtaining permanent status. Attorney General James is leading a multistate coalition in a lawsuit to stop the Trump Administration’s attempts to change the “Public Charge Rule,” changes that would penalize immigrants who have received any type of public assistance from receiving visas or green cards. The lawsuit is ongoing, but implementation of the rule has been halted, a major victory for immigrants. This attempted reversal of over 130 years of immigration policy would have meant millions of legal immigrants who use vital government safety-net programs, like Medicaid or food stamps, for even nominal periods of time, would have been deprived of a pathway to citizenship. This unlawful re-interpretation of the Public Charge Rule was an attempt to exclude and deny citizenship to countless immigrants, and would not only hurt immigrants, but would have widespread impacts on millions of people in New York and across the country. Quite simply, under this rule, more children would go hungry, more families would go without medical care, healthcare premiums would rise, and more people would be living in the shadows and on the streets. Because of Attorney General James’ actions, the courts stopped this rule from taking effect in October 2019 – a victory for the rule of law, for our values, and for all Americans.

### DAILY NEWS

NY Attorney General Letitia James joins legal fight to save immigrant Dreamers from Trump anti-immigrant attack

### The Washington Post

New York Attorney General, Brooklyn District Attorney Sue ICE Over Courthouse Arrests

### New York Law Journal

NY AG James Proposes Bill Protecting Undocumented Employees From Exposure

### STATE OF POLITICS

AG James Wins Stay In ‘Public Charge’ Rule Taking Effect

### POLITICO

James hails Supreme Court ruling blocking census citizenship question



## FIGHTING FOR DACA RECIPIENTS

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program has allowed more than 700,000 undocumented young people who came to this country as children to live, study, and work in the U.S. without fear of arrest or deportation. When President Trump attempted to terminate the program, Attorney General James took the case to the United States Supreme Court to protect DACA and the hundreds of thousands of people who depend on it. DACA recipients are employed, they go to school, and they pay billions of dollars in taxes. Sending young people back to countries where they have few or no ties would cause serious hardship to them, would weaken our economy, and would dishonor our values as a nation. Attorney General James will continue to fight to protect this program and the young people whose lives depend on it.



Eliana Fernández, Make the Road New York

## Keeping ICE out of our Courts

The presence of immigration officials in and around our courthouses has had a chilling effect on our ability to ensure that justice is served. Over the past two years, arrests by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents have caused a major disruption to state court operations. In President Trump's first two years in office, ICE courthouse arrests skyrocketed by more than 1,700 percent in New York, according to the Immigrant Defense Project. Immigrants, who could be targeted by ICE at the courthouse, have stopped coming forward as witnesses, and have stopped protecting their own rights out of fear. Attorney General James, in partnership with Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez and the Legal Aid Society, filed a lawsuit, which is ongoing, against the Trump Administration to prevent ICE agents from making civil immigration arrests without a judicial warrant or court order in and around New York State courthouses.

## Defending the Green Light Law

This year, New York passed the Green Light Law, a critical measure to allow immigrants – regardless of their immigration status – to obtain driver's licenses. The Green Light Law makes our roads safer and our economy stronger by giving immigrants a chance to legally drive in our state. That is why Attorney General James has staunchly – and successfully – defended this law against multiple legal challenges.



# Protecting Immigrants from Workplace Retaliation

## DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Under Attorney General James' leadership, the Attorney General's Office created its first-ever Office of Diversity and Inclusion. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion will help to ensure that the agency better reflects the great diversity of New York State by advising the agency on hiring and promotion practices, procurement processes, and internal policies, as well as offering employee trainings and a year-round guest lecture series. The establishment of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion reflects Attorney General James' steadfast commitment to creating a truly diverse and inclusive workplace.



Every person deserves a workplace free of harassment, intimidation, and abuse, yet immigrants are too often victims of these exploitative work practices. Every year, 6.5 million undocumented workers experience wage theft and nearly 40 percent of undocumented immigrants reported experiencing wage theft in the prior week, according to the National Employment Law Project. In an effort to protect immigrant workers from this abuse, Attorney General James introduced a bill, which is now law, that makes it illegal for employers to discriminate or retaliate against immigrant employees by threatening to contact immigration authorities if they report workplace violations. This law will go a long way in protecting our workers and taking on unscrupulous and predatory employers.

## SAFEGUARDING LGBTQ+ RIGHTS

Attorney General James has long been an ally of the LGBTQ+ community. As the federal government has enacted policies to deny the rights of LGBTQ+ Americans, Attorney General James has taken legal action to stop these discriminatory rules. From standing up for transgender students' right to use bathrooms of their choice, to suing the federal government over rules that would allow doctors to openly discriminate and deny care to LGBTQ+ people, to protecting members of the LGBTQ+ community from workplace discrimination, Attorney General James has used every tool at her disposal to ensure that this community is not denied the basic rights they deserve.



## Supporting Transgender Rights

Across the country, states, municipalities, and school districts have tried to ban individuals from using the bathroom of their choice. These laws and regulations are targeted against transgender individuals, who may choose to use a bathroom other than their perceived gender. In 2015, a transgender student in Virginia, Gavin Grimm, sued his school for denying him access to the men's bathrooms. Attorney General James led a multistate coalition in filing a brief in support of Gavin's case, now in the Court of Appeals. The brief argues that "discrimination against transgender people has no legitimate basis, and serves only to injure a group that is feared for being different."

“

*“Trans’ rights are human rights, and we will fight for equal protection under the law for every community. No individual should ever fear discrimination, especially at their school... This is about more than bathroom use, but about ensuring that transgender students are treated as equals, and transgender individuals are not discriminated against.”*

— ATTORNEY GENERAL JAMES

## Stopping Employment Discrimination

No one should be treated differently because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Yet across the country, LGBTQ+ employees are at risk of termination and discrimination with little recourse. Three such cases made it to the United States Supreme Court, and in July, Attorney General James led a multistate coalition in filing a legal brief to protect workers from discrimination. The brief argued that the Civil Rights Act means employees cannot be fired or treated differently in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. All three cases are awaiting a decision from the Supreme Court.

## Preserving Access to Healthcare

In May 2019, the Trump Administration issued the so-called “Refusal of Care Rule,” which was an unlawful attempt to allow healthcare providers to openly discriminate and refuse to provide necessary services to patients for religious, moral, ethical, or other reasons. Attorney General James led a multistate lawsuit against the Trump Administration for promulgating this rule that would make it easier for companies and healthcare providers to deny coverage or care. This rule would have meant hospitals and doctors could refuse to treat LGBTQ+ individuals, and companies could refuse healthcare for services like contraception and medically necessary abortions. In November, a federal court ruled in favor of Attorney General James and stopped the rule from taking effect. Attorney General James will continue to use every tool at her disposal to protect the rights of all individuals.





## ADDRESSING THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

The opioid epidemic has had a devastating effect on communities around New York State, leaving a trail of broken families and lost lives in its wake. Attorney General James believes in a long-term, comprehensive approach to protecting families and communities from drug abuse and addiction.

## Taking on the Perpetrators of the Opioid Epidemic

For more than two decades, the opioid epidemic has wreaked havoc in every corner of New York and Attorney General James is leading the charge to hold the perpetrators of this epidemic accountable. She filed the nation's most extensive lawsuit against opioid manufacturers, distributors, and the Sackler family, a family that took in billions in profit from opioid sales, for their roles in the epidemic that has taken hundreds of thousands of lives. The lawsuit alleges that through years of false and deceptive marketing, and by ignoring their duties to prevent the unlawful diversion of opioids, six national prescription opioid manufacturers, four national prescription drug distributors, and the Sackler family are largely responsible for creating the opioid epidemic that has devastated New York, causing widespread addiction, overdose deaths, suffering, and economic ruin. In 2017 alone, more than 3,200 New Yorkers died from opioid overdoses, a more than three-fold increase since 2010, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. As the Sackler family and the other defendants grew richer, New Yorkers' health grew poorer and our state was left to foot the bill.

Attorney General James' lawsuit, and thousands of other cases around the country, ultimately led Purdue Pharma, the maker of OxyContin, to file for bankruptcy in September 2019. She is committed to holding these companies accountable and achieving some semblance of justice for the thousands of New Yorkers who have lost their lives and the many more who remain harmed by opioids.

**Newsday**

**Sackler family must answer for opioid epidemic, state AG Letitia James says**

The Washington Post

**N.Y. attorney general exposes \$1 billion in wire transfers by Sackler family**

The New York Times

**New York Sues Sackler Family Members and Drug Distributors**

**AP**

**New York pursuing Sacklers' financial records in opioid case**

NBC NEWS

**Opioid suit: New York targets billionaire family behind OxyContin**



## Meeting with Communities Impacted by the Opioid Epidemic

In order to truly tackle the opioid epidemic, we need to address the problem from every angle. Attorney General James knows that this comprehensive approach must include education and treatment, in addition to the robust legal action her office has taken against drug manufacturers and distributors. Over the course of her first year, Attorney General James hosted multiple roundtables and visited treatment facilities and resource centers throughout the state to gain a better understanding of the unique challenges impacting communities in New York.

Attorney General James hosted roundtables in the Hudson Valley, the North Country, Buffalo, Binghamton, and on Staten Island and brought together treatment providers, elected officials, and impacted families to discuss the problems in different areas of the state and how she could best support these communities. Attorney General James also visited treatment facilities and resource centers in Buffalo, on Long Island, and on Staten Island.







## **ENSURING THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OUR CHILDREN**

The health and safety of our children is one of Attorney General James' top priorities. From protecting the right to nutritious school lunches, to suing companies that intentionally market dangerous products to our children, to ensuring our schools are safe and inclusive environments, Attorney General James has been relentless in her pursuit of challenging companies and people who try to put our children in harm's way.

More than 1.6 million New York children rely on school lunch to be a healthy, nutritious, and filling meal. For some, it is the only dependable meal of the day. That's why Attorney General James led a multistate coalition in suing the Trump Administration for gutting health and nutrition standards for school lunches. The lawsuit, which is ongoing, argues that rolling back sodium limits and removing whole grain requirements was done without the necessary scientific basis, and without the required public notice and opportunity to comment.

## **Upholding Nutritional Standards for School Lunches**

When children use the internet, parents should have peace of mind that their child's information is not being mined. A 2000 law, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, requires just that: internet companies are not allowed to save or collect data from children under 13 without parental consent. After an investigation, Attorney General James determined that YouTube, and its parent company Google, knowingly and illegally tracked and served targeted advertisements to children under the age of 13. Attorney General James secured a settlement with the companies, which required them to implement policies to prevent this data collection in the future and pay a record \$170 million in penalties, \$34 million of which went to New York State.

## **Safeguarding Children's Online Privacy**

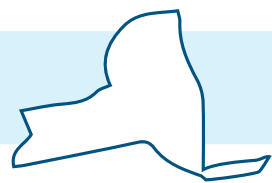
Vaccines ensure the health and safety of our children, our families, and our communities. In 2019, an outbreak of measles occurred in several New York counties, caused by unvaccinated children attending school and daycare. In response to this public health crisis, Governor Cuomo signed a law to end religious exemptions from mandatory vaccinations for students. This law protects New Yorkers and will help to prevent another potential outbreak. Several groups have sued to stop the law, but Attorney General James, on behalf of the State of New York, has vigorously defended it. A court sided with Attorney General James in one such case, although other similar challenges to the law are ongoing.

## **Ensuring Children Are Vaccinated**



## Protecting Children from Vaping

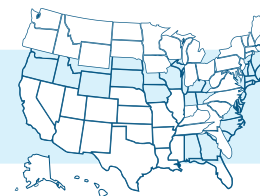
Vaping use among young people has skyrocketed in the past several years, coinciding with the introduction of JUUL – the largest e-cigarette company – into the market. Attorney General James sued JUUL for using deceptive advertising and marketing practices, and illegally selling their product to minors. Her lawsuit alleges that JUUL took a page straight out of Big Tobacco’s playbook, by glamorizing vaping while downplaying the risks, and illegally sold product to minors, getting millions addicted to nicotine. In New York, it is estimated that 220,000 minors vape on a regular basis. It is also reported that 1 in 4 minors have tried e-cigarettes, according to the New York State Department of Health. The lawsuit is ongoing.



**New York**

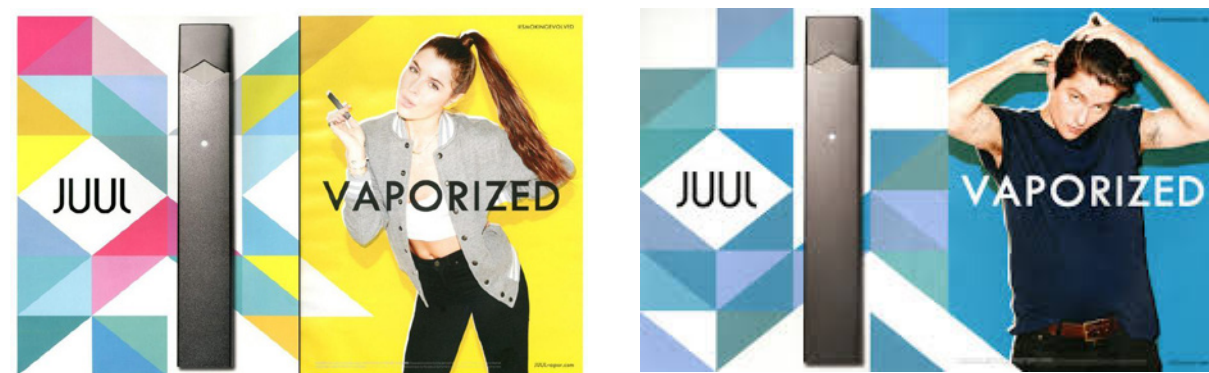
From 2014 - 2018 e-cigarette usage has  
**INCREASED**  
by  
**160%**  
**IN HIGH SCHOOLERS<sup>1</sup>**

**Nationwide**



From 2014 - 2017 e-cigarette usage has  
**DOUBLED**  
in  
**MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOLERS<sup>2</sup>**

### JUUL Advertisements at launch, 2015



<sup>1</sup> New York State Department of Health. (2019). Electronic Cigarette Use by Youth Increased 160% Between 2014 and 2018. StatShot 12(I). Retrieved from [health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco\\_control/reports/statshots/volume12/nl\\_electronic\\_sig\\_use\\_increase.pdf](https://health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/reports/statshots/volume12/nl_electronic_sig_use_increase.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> New York State Department of Health. (2017). Youth Cigarette Use at All Time Low, ENDS Use Doubles. StatShot 10(I). Retrieved from [health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco\\_control/reports/statshots/volume10/nl\\_youth\\_cigarette\\_and\\_ends\\_use.pdf](https://health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/reports/statshots/volume10/nl_youth_cigarette_and_ends_use.pdf)

Earlier this year, a New York school made national news after it was discovered that a teacher held mock slave auctions for fifth grade students. Attorney General James began an investigation and found that, although the teacher was fired after the incident became public, the school had received parental complaints about the school’s lack of racial sensitivity, which were not adequately handled. In a settlement secured by Attorney General James, the school must ensure equal educational access for students regardless of race, provide all students at the school an environment free from harassment and discrimination, hire a Chief Diversity Officer, develop a staff diversification plan, and create a new code of conduct, among other changes. Every young person – regardless of race – deserves a school environment that is free from harassment, bias, and discrimination.

## Ending School Discrimination

There is nothing more important than the safety of our children and that is why Attorney General James is suing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for allowing a dangerous pesticide to contaminate our food, despite knowing the real dangers. Scientists at the EPA have twice recommended that chlorpyrifos, a widely-used pesticide with well-documented harms to infant’s and young children’s neurological development, be banned from use, yet the Trump Administration has refused to ban this dangerous pesticide. Attorney General James will continue to fight for the health and safety of our children.

## Keeping Toxic Chemicals Out of Our Children's Food







## SUPPORTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND STANDING UP FOR TENANTS' RIGHTS

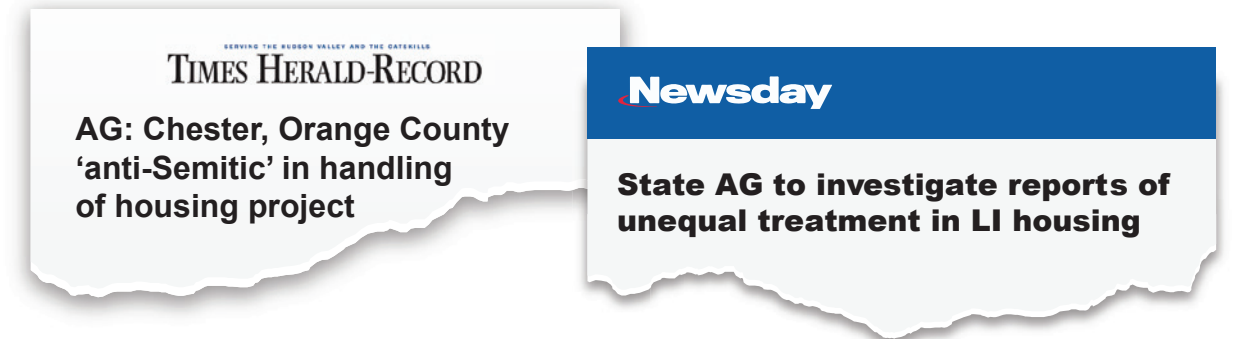
Throughout her career, Attorney General James has been a champion of tenants' rights. From holding New York's worst landlords accountable, to enacting legislation to enforce tenants' rights, she has always fought for tenants. In this past year alone, she has taken legal action against unscrupulous landlords, launched an investigation and taken legal action to tackle housing discrimination, expanded access to affordable housing, and led the charge to enact a landmark new law to hold landlords criminally liable for harassing tenants.



## Tackling Housing Discrimination

There is zero tolerance for discrimination of any kind in New York and that is why Attorney General James took action in two housing discrimination cases. In the Town of Chester in Orange County, New York, local elected officials have engaged in a concerted effort to block construction of a housing development to prevent members of the Hasidic Jewish community from moving to Chester. Attorney General James is seeking to intervene in a lawsuit over these anti-Semitic housing practices. The actions taken by local elected officials are not only immoral, but blatantly illegal. New York has a longstanding commitment to ensure equal housing opportunities for all residents – regardless of race, gender, or religious identity – and Attorney General James will always ensure this commitment is upheld.

Following an extensive Newsday report into the real estate industry on Long Island, Attorney General James launched an investigation into allegations of discriminatory practices. The ongoing investigation is looking at allegations that several real estate agencies steered potential buyers to neighborhoods with compositions that matched their own race or ethnicity, directing white buyers toward areas with the highest white representations and buyers of color to more integrated neighborhoods. Agencies also allegedly subjected buyers of color to more restrictive conditions, such as requiring mortgage pre-approval to view properties.



Every tenant deserves a safe, decent home free from harassment by their landlord. Yet for years, a major New York City landlord violated the law to scam predominantly immigrant, low-and middle-income tenants out of thousands of dollars. In March 2019, Attorney General James and the Tenant Protection Unit of New York State Homes and Community Renewal announced a lawsuit against the landlord, Zara Realty Holding Corp., for repeatedly violating rent stabilization laws and harassing tenants. The lawsuit, which is ongoing, is another example that Attorney General James will not tolerate abusive landlords.

## Holding Bad Landlords Accountable



## Expanding Affordable Housing

For too many New Yorkers, housing is simply unaffordable and unattainable. To create opportunity for more New Yorkers to own and rent homes, Attorney General James has provided nearly \$10 million to municipalities throughout the state through two housing programs. Grants were awarded to nine cities and counties to expand the Community Land Trust (CLT) Initiative. CLTs acquire and renovate distressed properties, provide training and technical assistance to homeowners, and create permanent affordable housing for low- and middle-income families. The grantees include the Cities of Albany, Buffalo, New York, Rochester, and Schenectady, as well as Broome, Nassau, Suffolk, and Tompkins Counties.

Attorney General James also awarded grants to non-profit housing organizations serving 12 cities and counties across New York State to help preserve multifamily housing. The “Landlord Ambassador Program” engages property owners who are at risk of losing their buildings and connects them to resources to ensure they can maintain ownership. The program provides landlords of small- and medium-sized multifamily dwellings with low-cost financial resources to repair occupied, distressed homes, as well as preserve these homes as part of the region’s affordable housing stock. The grants will support affordable housing efforts in the City of Newburgh, and Chemung, Clinton, Columbia, Dutchess, Essex, Hamilton, Nassau, Putnam, Schuyler, Steuben, and Ulster Counties.



## Addressing Zombie Homes

Zombie homes, or vacant and abandoned homes that are in disrepair during prolonged foreclosure proceedings, are a blight on New York’s communities. Attorney General James awarded \$9 million in grants to address zombie homes. The grants, provided to 48 municipalities, go towards increasing housing code enforcement, tracking and monitoring vacant properties, and bolstering legal enforcement capacity to ensure banks and mortgage companies comply with local and state law. These funds will help to revitalize communities throughout the state.



## Protecting Tenants from Harassment

For far too long, unscrupulous landlords have gotten away with subjecting rent-regulated tenants to dangerous and inhumane conditions in an attempt to force them out of their homes. From shutting off heat and hot water, to exposing tenants to hazardous materials, to using construction to make buildings deliberately uninhabitable, landlords have engaged in dangerous campaigns of tenant harassment. Yet, they previously could not be held criminally accountable for this abusive behavior. Attorney General James spearheaded the passage of a new law to change that and now, it will finally be possible to hold landlords criminally accountable when they engage in this type of tenant harassment. Because of this new law, tenants will no longer have to meet an unreasonably high bar to demonstrate that they are being harassed. Instead, landlords will now face justice when they intentionally subject their tenants to unsafe, disruptive, or uninhabitable conditions. This law will enable Attorney General James and other law enforcement agencies to more effectively hold landlords accountable for this kind of behavior and ensure that tenants are protected.





## PUTTING WORKERS FIRST

Too many hard-working New Yorkers face harassment, wage theft, and other forms of workplace exploitation. These factors, coupled with the federal government's new rules to roll back worker protections, have left workers more vulnerable than ever before. Attorney General James has always stood up for workers and this year is no different. She has taken on companies that intentionally cheat workers out of their fair wages, challenged the federal government's policies that put profits over people, and passed a new law to criminalize forms of workplace retaliation.



Home health aides work tirelessly to care for our sick and elderly loved ones, and deserve every dollar they earn. Yet for several years, home health aides working for Allcare were cheated out of their earned wages. When those same employees complained to management, they were threatened with deportation. After a lengthy and substantive investigation, Attorney General James secured back pay and benefits for over 100 workers. She also secured thousands of dollars for those workers who were threatened with deportation.

## Taking on Workplace Harassment

Car wash workers similarly work hard in often difficult conditions. After filing a lawsuit against Tropical Breeze Car Wash for underpaying workers and refusing to pay overtime and sick leave, Attorney General James secured more than half a million dollars for workers. Tropical Breeze also agreed to implement new policies, informing employees of their rights under the law, and to provide and require training for its employees and managers.

## Ensuring Workers are Paid Their Fair Share

The Trump Administration has time and again taken the side of corporations over working people. Earlier this year, both the United States Department of Labor and the National Labor Relations Board proposed rules that would make it easier for companies to deny liability for labor violations. The proposed rules would mean that subcontracted and franchised employees would have little to no recourse against parent companies. Attorney General James led a multistate coalition to oppose the rule.

## Supporting Workers' Rights



## Recouping Stolen Wages

When a Brooklyn landlord cheated workers out of their wages and evaded taxes, Attorney General James took action to hold them accountable. Through an investigation with the New York City Comptroller's Office, Attorney General James found that the owners of Brooklyn Warehouse illegally underpaid workers and cheated New York City and State out of millions. As a result of the investigation, these landlords were forced to pay nearly \$415,000 in back wages and interest to the building service employees who had been cheated out of their wages. They also paid approximately \$2.5 million in damages to the City and State for fraudulently obtaining a tax break under New York's "Section 421-a" program, while failing to simultaneously follow the program's prevailing wage requirement. Attorney General James will continue to ensure that workers are paid their fair share and that companies cannot cheat the system to enrich themselves.



## COMBATING GUN VIOLENCE

Gun violence is a public health epidemic in New York and across the nation. Every loss of life and injury from gun violence is a devastating reminder of our shared responsibility to face this crisis head on and to support the communities that have suffered from its effects. Attorney General James is committed to catching criminals who traffic illegal weapons onto our streets, and holding them accountable. She has taken legal action to protect states' rights to enact common sense gun safety regulations, including leading a multistate coalition to protect New York's right to implement these critical measures, which is currently being heard by the United States Supreme Court. She has also partnered with law enforcement agencies across the state to host gun buyback programs and get illegal guns out of our communities. She will continue to pursue every avenue available to reduce gun violence in New York.



## Stopping the Sale of Ghost Guns

The New York Attorney General's Office was the first law enforcement agency in the nation to charge people for selling so-called ghost guns, or guns that are manufactured from parts sold over the Internet. These guns do not have serial numbers, so they are untraceable by law enforcement. Continuing on these enforcement efforts, in September 2019, Attorney General James directed 16 websites to cease and desist selling nearly complete assault weapons to consumers in New York. Attorney General James will continue to go after those that skirt the law to manufacture illegal and deadly assault weapons.

## Taking Unwanted Guns off Our Streets

Our neighborhoods are safer when unwanted firearms are off our streets and out of our homes. Attorney General James' Gun Buyback Program provides a safe option for New Yorkers to get rid of guns they do not want, on a "no questions asked" basis. In 2019, Attorney General James partnered with local law enforcement agencies to host 24 gun buyback events at houses of worship and community centers all across the state. As a result of these events, the office recovered over 2,700 guns.

## Improving Transparency in Law Enforcement

Body-worn cameras for police officers are critical tools for promoting public safety and increasing transparency and accountability. After successfully advocating for the New York City Police Department to utilize body-worn cameras, Attorney General James has now awarded more than \$1 million to 13 local law enforcement agencies throughout New York to fund programs for body-worn cameras. Body-worn cameras are commonsense tools that provide increased transparency and accountability, but many local law enforcement agencies do not have the resources needed to purchase them. Attorney General James will continue to fund programs that keep all New Yorkers safe.







## TAKING DANGEROUS DRUGS OFF OUR STREETS

Attorney General James has zero tolerance for those who flood our communities with dangerous drugs that claim lives. Her office has taken down numerous drug trafficking rings throughout the state.

## Combating Organized Drug Rings

During her first year in office, Attorney General James' Organized Crime Task Force (OCTF) broke up 10 drug trafficking rings in 20 major cities and counties around the state, made more than 180 felony arrests, and convicted more than 200 individuals for their crimes. As a result of the work of the OCTF and law enforcement partners around the state, significant amounts of illegal drugs were seized over the course of the year: 33.5 kilograms of cocaine, 1.7 kilograms of heroin, 230 grams of fentanyl, and more than 178 grams of methamphetamine.

In the most significant opioid-related bust of the year, Attorney General James arrested and charged 28 individuals with 181 crimes for their alleged involvement in a large narcotics trafficking ring operating in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Westchester. These individuals were profiting off the opioid epidemic by selling tens of thousands of prescription oxycodone pills to countless customers. Over the course of the investigation, in partnership with the DEA Westchester Tactical Diversion Squad, Attorney General James seized approximately 1,200 oxycodone pills of varying dosages. It is estimated that these individuals sold more than \$2 million worth of oxycodone pills during the 10-month investigation.

In another case, Attorney General James arrested and convicted 63 individuals for their roles in two major narcotics trafficking rings that transported heroin, fentanyl, and cocaine to Jefferson, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, and St. Lawrence Counties. Attorney General James' investigation, in partnership with multiple upstate law enforcement agencies, resulted in the recovery of approximately 4,700 bags of heroin and fentanyl, approximately two kilograms of cocaine, more than \$75,000 in cash, and multiple firearms.

Attorney General James is committed to tackling organized drug trafficking from every angle and that includes going after those who illegally sell these dangerous drugs on our streets.

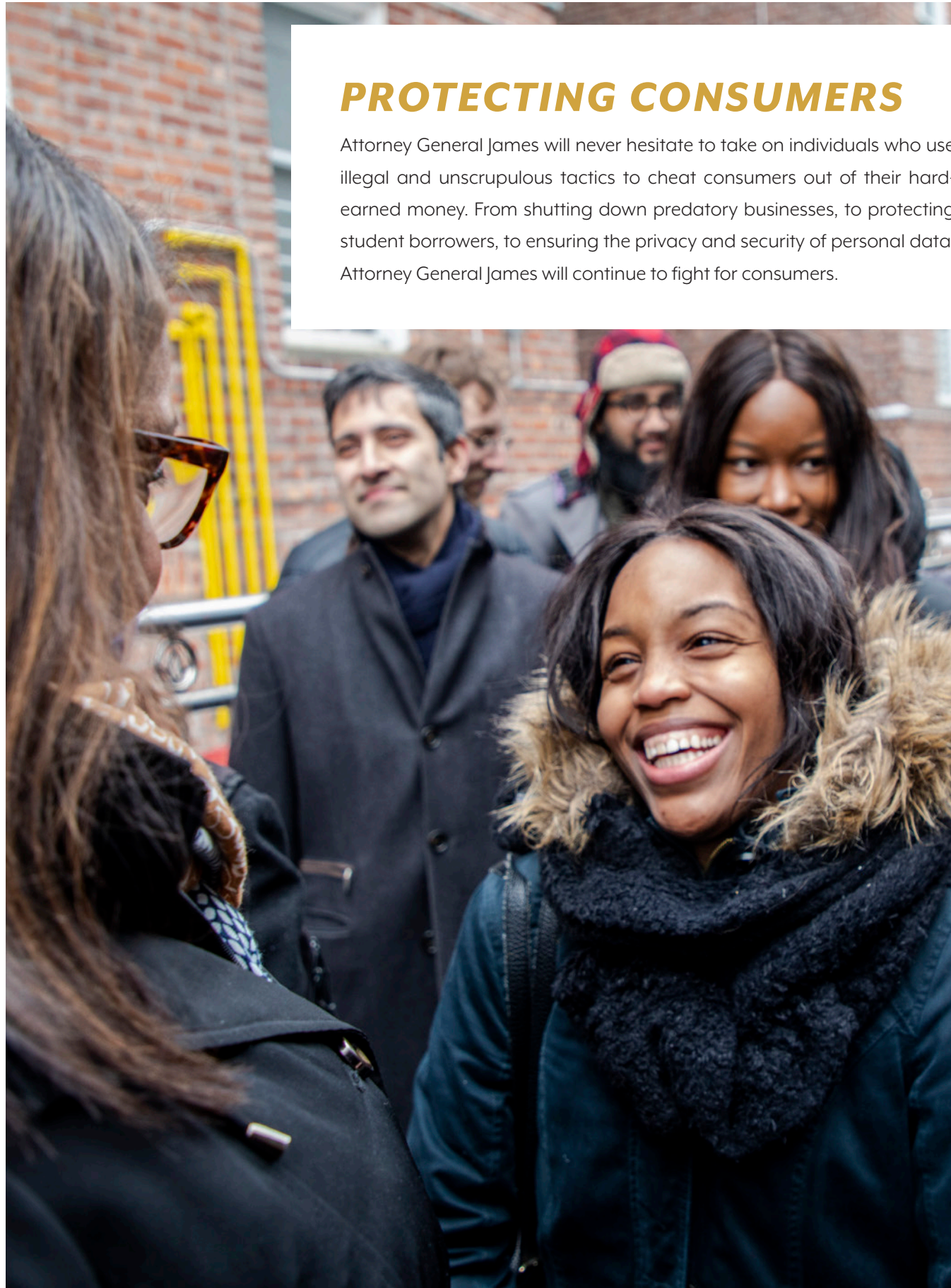
**Broke up  
Drug Rings in**  
**20**  
cities & counties  
across NYS

**Made  
over**  
**180**  
felony arrest

**Convicted  
over**  
**200**  
individuals

**Recovered**  
**33.5**  
kg of cocaine,  
1.7 kg of heroin,  
and 230 gm of fentanyl





## PROTECTING CONSUMERS

Attorney General James will never hesitate to take on individuals who use illegal and unscrupulous tactics to cheat consumers out of their hard-earned money. From shutting down predatory businesses, to protecting student borrowers, to ensuring the privacy and security of personal data, Attorney General James will continue to fight for consumers.

## Challenging Anti-Competitive Mergers

When T-Mobile and Sprint – the nation’s third and fourth largest mobile telecommunications companies—decided to embark on a controversial merger that would reduce competition in the mobile marketplace, Attorney General James stepped in and sued to block the merger. Leading a multistate coalition, Attorney General James is exposing how this megamerger would be bad for consumers, bad for workers, and bad for innovation. This merger would cut access to affordable, reliable wireless service for millions of Americans and would disproportionately harm communities of color, senior citizens, and lower-income communities. This is exactly the sort of consumer-harming, job-killing megamerger our antitrust laws were designed to prevent.

## Shutting Down Predatory Businesses

In July 2019, Attorney General James shut down Buffalo-based debt collection kingpin Douglas MacKinnon and his companies. MacKinnon routinely inflated debts to try to collect more than consumers were legally obligated to pay. Not only did MacKinnon force unsuspecting debtors to pay more than they owed, but he illegally threatened to have them arrested for not complying with these predatory practices. After an exhaustive investigation, Attorney General James took legal action to shut down this elaborate rip-off scheme that defrauded thousands of individuals. MacKinnon was ordered to pay more than \$66 million to consumers and in penalties.



## Defending Student Borrowers

Attorney General James has worked tirelessly over the last year to protect New York's student borrowers, many of whom have been tricked into paying more than they owe. Attorney General James secured a \$9 million settlement for student borrowers after federal student loan servicer ACS Education Services intentionally steered borrowers away from more affordable repayment plans towards other, more expensive options.

She also sued the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) for failing to properly administer the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program – a program that provides forgiveness of student loan debt after a borrower works for ten years in a public service job. PHEAA's failures caused loan balances for New York borrowers to go up and repayment periods to increase. Borrowers were also improperly denied loan forgiveness despite their public service.

## Holding Companies Accountable for Data Breaches

In 2017, Equifax's data breach exposed the personal information of nearly half of America's consumers, putting sensitive information about millions of Americans at risk. Attorney General James co-led a multistate coalition investigation, that resulted in a settlement requiring the company to provide \$425 million to compensate consumers, as well as to pay \$175 million in fines. This was the largest data breach settlement reached in history. Equifax was also required to offer affected consumers free credit-monitoring services for up to 10 years to prevent against identity theft.

In 2015, after being notified that a series of cyberattacks had compromised the accounts of nearly 20,000 of its customers, Dunkin' Donuts failed to take appropriate action. The company did not inform impacted customers, did not conduct an investigation to fully ascertain the scope of the cyberattacks, and took no meaningful steps to prevent against future data breaches. As a result of this negligence, Attorney General James filed a lawsuit against Dunkin' Donuts for its failure to protect consumer data. In the ongoing lawsuit, Attorney General James is fighting for full restitution for customers and for the company to implement policies to ensure this never happens again.

## Standing Up to National Grid

For nearly six months, New Yorkers across the state were denied gas service by National Grid. The moratorium affected thousands of families and business owners who were unable to get access to this critical energy source, impacting their ability to heat their homes or even cook a meal. The company implemented this moratorium after New York State denied construction of a new gas pipeline that would have had detrimental effects on the environment and water supply. Attorney General James is conducting an ongoing investigation into whether the company misled its customers and New York State about the need for widespread service disruptions.

## Strengthening Data Security Laws

As security breaches have increased in frequency and severity, it is imperative that stronger laws are enacted to protect consumers' personal information. Attorney General James took action by advancing the Stop Hacks and Improve Electronic Data Security (SHIELD) Act, a new law that strengthens data security and consumer privacy protections. The SHIELD Act updates New York's laws by increasing the requirements on companies to protect consumer data and disclose data breaches. Additionally, it broadens the Attorney General's oversight in this critical area. New Yorkers can rest assured that companies they entrust with their personal information will be held to the highest standards for keeping it secure.



### SMART SENIORS

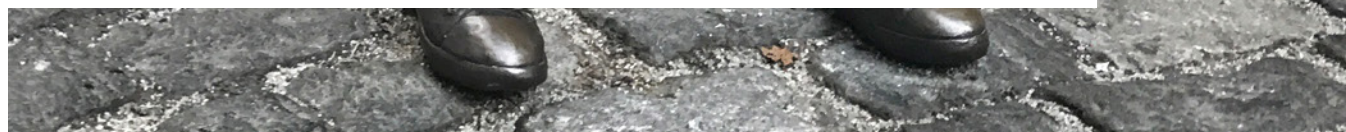
Too many seniors fall victim to telephone and internet scams and have few options for recourse. But these scams can be prevented if seniors are educated and know what to avoid. Attorney General James' "Smart Seniors" program focuses on educating and informing seniors about these scams. As part of the program, staff from the Attorney General's Office visits senior centers, assisted living facilities, libraries, houses of worship, senior clubs, and other locations across the state to teach seniors about the warning signs, how to avoid becoming a victim, and where to seek help if they have been targeted. Public awareness is key, and Attorney General James will continue to work with seniors in New York to protect them from these scams.





## **STANDING UP TO WALL STREET**

From Main Street to Wall Street, no one is above the law. Attorney General James has used the powers of her office to take on corporate greed and deliver justice to victims of financial fraud. From sham funds, to fraudulent brokers, to deceptive schemes, Attorney General James remains committed to finding and prosecuting the bad actors who rob New Yorkers and destabilize markets.



## **Taking on White Collar Crime**

There is no safe haven for white collar fraudsters in New York and that is why Attorney General James filed a lawsuit against Laurence G. Allen and the various corporate entities he controls for defrauding investors and stealing more than \$13 million to enrich himself and his companies. Through his sham private equity funds, Allen used other people's savings as his personal piggy bank and as a tool to prop up his failing businesses. Attorney General James will continue to use every available resource to pursue those who abuse and manipulate the system and cheat hardworking New Yorkers out of their savings.

## **Shutting Down a Foreign Currency Trading Scheme**

Attorney General James convicted a former Wall Street stockbroker for stealing more than \$489,000 from investors. Jason Amada claimed to be an experienced and licensed foreign currency trader and operator of multiple legitimate investment management firms; however, Amada did not have the appropriate and necessary licenses. Furthermore, his investment firms were actually shell corporations with no employees, no genuine operations, and were not registered with any regulatory authorities to trade foreign currencies. Instead of investing his clients' savings in profitable funds, Amada played fast and loose, using their money for personal expenses. He furthered his scheme by creating fake account statements that showed he was making profits for investors. Following Attorney General James' investigation, Amada pleaded guilty and was sentenced to three to six years in prison.



## Holding Cryptocurrency Exchanges Accountable

Cryptocurrency, a new type of digital asset, has exploded in popularity in recent years. New York State has led the way in requiring cryptocurrency businesses to operate according to the law. Attorney General James took action to place iFinex, Inc., operator of cryptocurrency platforms Bitfinex and Tether Limited, under a court order that limits certain activities and requires the company to turn over documents and other information. In obtaining that order, Attorney General James alleged that these entities engaged in a cover-up to hide the loss of \$850 million dollars. The companies worked together to hide Bitfinex's massive, undisclosed losses and inability to handle customer withdrawals. As with any other type of investment vehicle, Attorney General James will vigilantly protect investors from fraud and illegality in virtual currency.

## Expanding Laws to Take on Financial Crimes

Attorney General James is committed to holding corporations accountable for financial misconduct through the powers of the Martin Act, a key law that allows the Attorney General to investigate and prosecute financial fraud. She introduced a bill, which is now law, to ensure that the statute of limitations to prosecute crimes under the Martin Act was restored to six years. This law strengthens two of the Attorney General's most critical tools in combating corporate greed and delivering justice for victims of financial fraud. New York State will continue to protect residents from scams and unscrupulous businesses and prevent the type of irresponsible behavior that led to the last financial crisis.

## **ROOTING OUT PUBLIC CORRUPTION**

No one is above the law, no matter how rich, no matter how powerful, no matter what political party. Attorney General James has made it a priority to ensure that, in New York, those holding elected office and seeking public trust will always be held accountable for their misdeeds. Since 2011, the Attorney General and State Comptroller have worked together to fight corruption through their Joint Task Force on Public Integrity. They have brought charges against dozens of individuals implicated in public corruption schemes around the state – resulting in the return of over \$11 million to taxpayers.



## Holding Corrupt Public Officials Accountable

After an investigation conducted by Attorney General James, Mount Vernon Mayor Richard Thomas was convicted of stealing campaign funds and lying about those funds in disclosure forms to the New York State Board of Elections. Mayor Thomas illegally used the stolen campaign funds to pay his personal credit card bills, car payments, auto insurance payments, and to make purchases at Nordstrom, the Home Depot and at numerous restaurants. By using his campaign funds to line his own pockets, Thomas broke the law and violated the public trust. As part of a plea agreement, Thomas agreed to resign his office as Mayor of Mount Vernon. Attorney General James also secured the conviction of former City of Mount Vernon Corporation Counsel Lawrence Porcari for abusing his position as a public official to engage in a scheme that defrauded the Mount Vernon Board of Water Supply out of hundreds of thousands of dollars to pay for the personal legal expenses of Mayor Thomas and a public relations firm. This case demonstrates Attorney General James' commitment to rooting out corruption in every corner of New York and upholding the integrity of public office.

## Enforcing Campaign Finance Laws

In June 2019, New York City Council candidate Albert Alvarez pleaded guilty to stealing public funds and accepting straw donations. A straw donation is an illegal contribution in which someone uses another person's money to make a political contribution in his or her own name. After an investigation, Attorney General James uncovered a scheme in which Alvarez accepted straw donations that were funded by money stolen from a non-profit daycare center. Staff members at the daycare center gave cash to other employees to contribute to Alvarez's campaign, in violation of campaign finance laws. New York City offers public matching funds programs for qualified candidates and Alvarez used these straw donations to fraudulently take advantage of the city's matching funds program. One of the executives at the daycare center, Anna Mendez, was also convicted for her role in this scheme.

## Cracking Down on Bribery

In November, Attorney General James announced the indictments of a former top executive at British Airways and an executive at a freight company for a bribery and money laundering scheme at JFK Airport. Attorney General James alleged that from 2011 to 2016, Steven Clark, a British Airways Executive, received more than \$5 million from Jeff Kinsella, the CEO of Ground Services International (GSI) for the purpose of influencing Clark's conduct related to his position at British Airways. British Airways leases JFK Terminal 7 from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and under this arrangement, British Airways selects service providers, such as GSI, that work at Terminal 7. Additionally, Kinsella granted Clark an undisclosed five percent ownership interest in GSI, and when Kinsella sold GSI, Clark received \$3.6 million for his secret ownership interest in the company. Attorney General James' indictments of both men send a clear message: pay-to-play schemes will not fly in New York.

## Closing the Double Jeopardy Loophole

As the state's top law enforcement officer, Attorney General James has a responsibility to ensure that individuals who commit crimes under New York State law are held accountable for those crimes, regardless of their proximity to power. That is why she led the charge to close New York's "double jeopardy" loophole, which could have allowed any president to abuse the presidential pardon power by unfairly granting a pardon to a family member or close associate and possibly allow that individual to evade justice altogether. No one is above the law, and this commonsense measure will provide a reasonable and necessary check on presidential power.

### ELECTION DAY HOTLINE

The integrity of our elections is the foundation of our democracy and we must do everything to protect and ensure access to the polls. In order to ensure this right, Attorney General James opened an Election Day Hotline during early voting and on election days in New York for voters to report problems or concerns that they experienced at the polls. Attorney General James will continue to activate this vital resource during voting periods to ensure that all New Yorkers can exercise their right to vote.





## ENSURING QUALITY HEALTHCARE FOR ALL NEW YORKERS

Healthcare is a basic right. As the Trump Administration has waged an assault on our affordable healthcare system, Attorney General James has fought back to protect the Affordable Care Act and the safety it provides millions of New Yorkers and Americans. She has also taken on companies in New York that seek to undermine our system by cheating taxpayers and putting patients in harm's way.

### ATTORNEY GENERAL'S HEALTHCARE BUREAU HELPLINE / (800) 428-9071

When insurance companies wrongly deny claims, or when a healthcare provider overbills, consumers should know that Attorney General James has their backs. The Attorney General's Healthcare Bureau Helpline is a free service available to all New Yorkers. The Helpline resolved almost 2,000 complaints this year, saving or returning more than \$1.9 million in healthcare expenses to New Yorkers.

While the federal government has been relentless in its efforts to gut our healthcare system, Attorney General James has taken action to fight back and protect access to affordable care. In addition to continuing a lawsuit to uphold the protections granted under the Affordable Care Act, Attorney General James challenged a rule issued by the Department of Labor to expand Association Health Plans. This rule would make it easier for insurance providers to offer substandard healthcare plans in states with lax regulatory standards. Furthermore, the rule would allow those plans to be sold in other states, like New York, that maintain strong protections for healthcare consumers. This would make countless Americans vulnerable to inadequate and unregulated health coverage, putting millions in harm's way. Attorney General James will continue to use every legal tool at her disposal to defend access to quality, affordable healthcare.

## Challenging Rules Allowing Inadequate Coverage

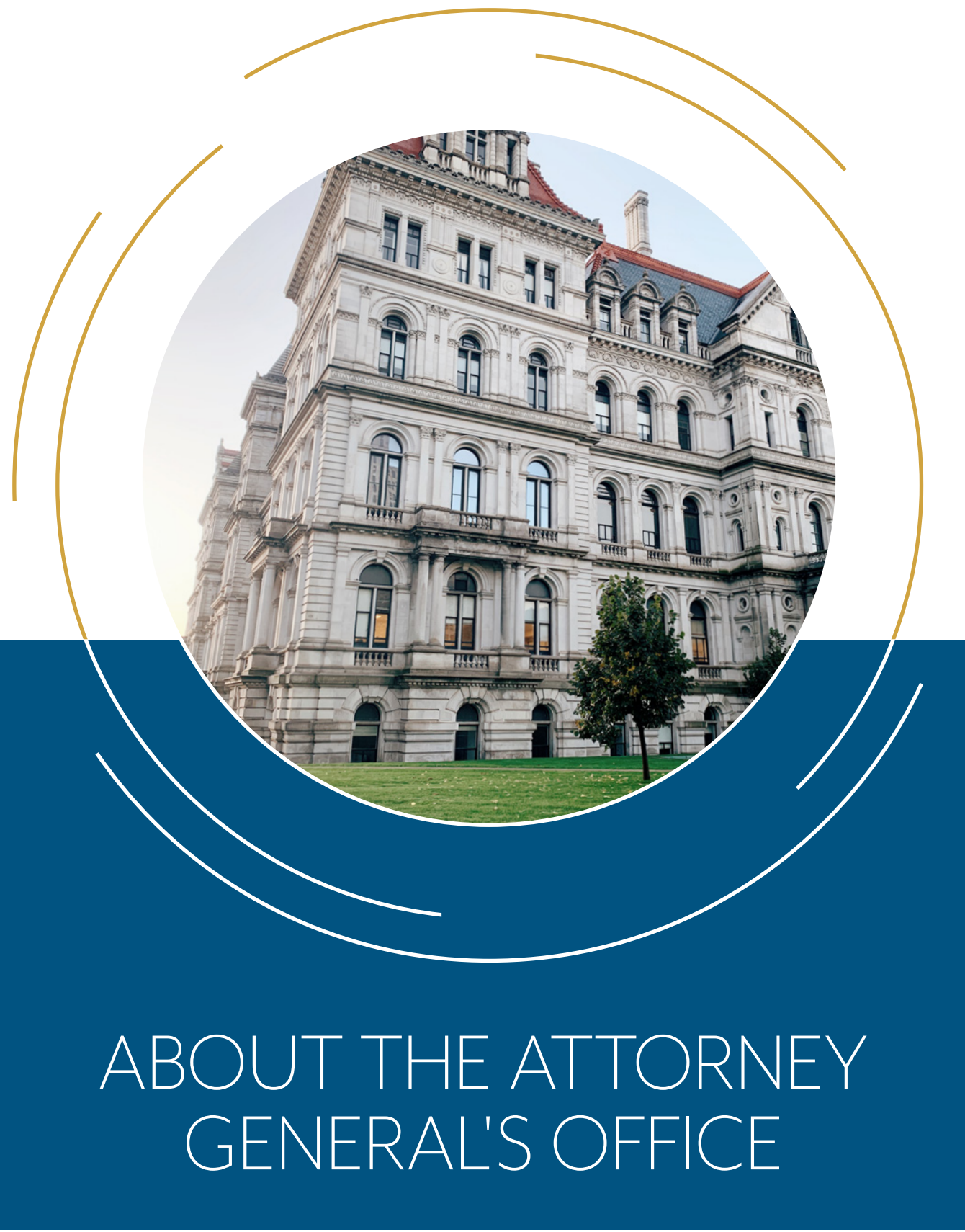
Medicaid is a national program to provide health services to low-income Americans. Unfortunately, some unscrupulous actors seek to defraud the Medicaid program to line their own pockets - stealing taxpayer dollars and putting patients at risk. Attorney General James' Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigates, penalizes, and prosecutes individuals and companies responsible for improper or fraudulent Medicaid billing schemes. This year Attorney General James brought 95 major investigations to conclusion, recovering over \$168 million that had been illegally billed to New York State's Medicaid programs. These recoveries send a strong message to healthcare providers: Medicaid fraud and substandard care for New York patients will not be tolerated.

## Rooting Out Medicaid Fraud

Attorney General James took legal action against the largest not-for-profit healthcare provider in Western New York, after an investigation into the death of a 16-month old child under care. As part of a settlement agreement, Kaleida Health agreed to pay \$500,000 in restitution, and implement major reforms in staffing and supervision procedures to protect their patients.

## Holding Healthcare Providers Accountable





# ABOUT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

As head of the Department of Law, the Attorney General is both the “People’s Lawyer” and the State’s chief legal officer. The Attorney General serves as the guardian of the legal rights of the citizens of New York, its organizations, and its natural resources. Additionally, the Attorney General advises state agencies, and defends actions and proceedings on behalf of the State.

The Attorney General’s Office serves all New Yorkers in numerous matters affecting their daily lives. The Office protects consumers and investors, oversees charitable institutions, ensures public health and the health of the environment, safeguards civil rights, and the rights of workers and businesses across the State.

The Attorney General’s authority also includes the activities and investigations of the State Organized Crime Task Force and Medicaid Fraud Control Unit.

The legal functions of the Attorney General’s Office are divided primarily into five major divisions: Appeals and Opinions, State Counsel, Criminal Justice, Economic Justice, and Social Justice.

The Attorney General’s Office has more than 1,800 employees located in 16 offices throughout the State of New York. The office employs over 650 attorneys as well as forensic accountants, legal assistants, scientists, investigators and support staff.

## CONTACT US

**Office of the New York State  
Attorney General**

The Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224  
(518) 776-2000

**ag.ny.gov**

(800) 771-7755  
(800) 788-9898 – TTD/TTYL

**@NewYorkStateAG**







Office of the New York State Attorney General

**Letitia James**

**[ag.ny.gov](http://ag.ny.gov)**  
**(800) 771-7755**



**@newyorkstateag**