

EXHIBIT A

Opioid Abatement Fund (Texas) Settlement

Opioid Council

As part of the settlement agreement and upon its execution, the parties will form the Texas Opioid Council (Council) to establish the framework that ensures the funds recovered by Texas (through the joint actions of the Attorney General and the state's political subdivisions) are allocated fairly and spent to remediate the opioid crisis in Texas, using efficient and cost-effective methods that are directed to the hardest hit regions in Texas while also ensuring that all Texans benefit from prevention and recovery efforts.

I. Structure

The Council will be responsible for the processes and procedures governing the spending of the funds held in the Texas Abatement Fund, which will be approximately 70% of all funds obtained through settlement and/or litigation of the claims asserted by the State and its subdivisions in the investigations and litigation related to the manufacturing, marketing, distribution, and sale of opioids and related pharmaceuticals.

Money paid into the abatement fund will be held by an independent administrator, who shall be responsible for the ministerial task of releasing funds solely as authorized below by the Council, and accounting for all payments to and from the fund.

The Council will be formed when a court of competent jurisdiction enters an order settling the matter, including any order of a bankruptcy court. The Council's members must be appointed within sixty (60) days of the date the order is entered.

A. Membership

The Council shall be comprised of the following thirteen (13) members:

1. *Statewide Members.*

Six members appointed by the Governor and Attorney General to represent the State's interest in opioid abatement. The statewide members are appointed as follows:

- a. The Governor shall appoint three (3) members who are licensed health professionals with significant experience in opioid interventions;
- b. The Attorney General shall appoint three (3) members who are licensed professionals with significant experience in opioid incidences; and
- c. The Governor will appoint the Chair of the Council as a non-voting member. The Chair may only cast a vote in the event there is a tie of the membership.

2. *Regional Members.*

Six (6) members appointed by the State's political subdivisions to represent their designated Texas Health and Human Services Commission "HHSC" Regional Healthcare

Partnership (Regions) to ensure dedicated regional, urban, and rural representation on the Council. The regional appointees must be from either academia or the medical profession with significant experience in opioid interventions. The regional members are appointed as follows:

- a. One member representing Regions 9 and 10 (Dallas Ft-Worth);
- b. One member representing Region 3 (Houston);
- c. One member representing Regions 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19 (West Texas);
- d. One member representing Regions 6, 7, 8, 16 (Austin-San Antonio);
- e. One member representing Regions 1, 2, 17, 18 (East Texas); and
- f. One member representing Regions 4, 5, 20 (South Texas).

B. Terms

All members of the Council are appointed to serve staggered two-year terms, with the terms of members expiring February 1 of each year. A member may serve no more than two consecutive terms, for a total of four consecutive years. For the first term, four (4) members (two (2) statewide and two (2) for the subdivisions) will serve a three-year term. A vacancy on the Council shall be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment. The Governor will appoint the Chair of the Council who will not vote on Council business unless there is a tie vote, and the subdivisions will appoint a Vice-Chair voting member from one of the regional members.

C. Governance

1. Administration

The Council is attached administratively to the Comptroller. The Council is an independent, quasi-governmental agency because it is responsible for the statewide distribution of the abatement settlement funds. The Council is exempt from the following statutes:

- a. Chapter 316 of the Government Code (Appropriations);
- b. Chapter 322 of the Government Code (Legislative Budget Board);
- c. Chapter 325 of the Government Code (Sunset);
- d. Chapter 783 of the Government Code (Uniform Grants and Contract Management);
- e. Chapter 2001 of the Government Code (Administrative Procedure);
- f. Chapter 2052 of the Government Code (State Agency Reports and Publications);
- g. Chapter 2261 of the Government Code (State Contracting Standards and Oversight);
- h. Chapter 2262 of the Government Code (Statewide Contract Management);

- i. Chapter 262 of the Local Government Code (Purchasing and Contracting Authority of Counties); and
- j. Chapter 271 of the Local Government Code (Purchasing and Contracting Authority of Municipalities, Counties, and Certain Other Local Governments).

2. *Transparency*

The Council will abide by state laws relating to open meetings and public information, including Chapters 551 and 552 of the Texas Government Code.

- i. The Council shall hold at least four regular meetings each year. The Council may hold additional meetings on the request of the Chair or on the written request of three members of the council. All meetings shall be open to the public, and public notice of meetings shall be given as required by state law.
- ii. The Council may convene in a closed, non-public meeting:
 - a. If the Commission must discuss:
 - 1. Negotiation of contract awards; and
 - 2. Matters specifically exempted from disclosure by federal and state statutes.
 - b. All minutes and documents of a closed meeting shall remain under seal, subject to release only order of a court of competent jurisdiction.

3. *Authority*

The Council does not have rulemaking authority. The terms of each Judgment, Master Settlement Agreement, or any Bankruptcy Settlement for Texas control the authority of the Council and the Council may not stray outside the bounds of the authority and power vested by such settlements. Should the Council require legal assistance in determining their authority, the Council may direct the executive director to seek legal advice from the Attorney General to clarify the issue.

D. Operation and Expenses

The independent administrator will set aside up to one (1) percent of the settlement funds for the administration of the Council for reasonable costs and expenses of operating the foregoing duties, including educational activities.

1. *Executive Director*

The Comptroller will employ the executive director of the Council and other personnel as necessary to administer the duties of the Council and carry out the functions of the Council. The executive director must have at least 10 years of experience in government or public administration and is classified as a Director V/B30 under the State Auditor's State Classification. The Comptroller will pay the salaries of the Council employees from the

one (1) percent of the settlement funds set aside for the administration of the Council. The Comptroller will request funds from the Texas Abatement Fund Point of Contact.

2. Travel Reimbursement

A person appointed to the Council is entitled to reimbursement for the travel expenses incurred in attending Council duties. A member of the Council may be reimbursed for actual expenses for meals, lodging, transportation, and incidental expenses in accordance with travel rates set by the federal General Services Administration.

II. Duties/Roles

It is the duty of the Council to determine and approve the opioid abatement strategies and funding awards.

A. Approved Abatement Strategies

The Council will develop the approved Texas list of abatement strategies based on but not limited to the existing national list of opioid abatement strategies (see attached Appendix A) for implementing the Texas Abatement Fund.

1. The Council shall only approve strategies which are evidence-informed strategies.
2. The Texas list of abatement strategies must be approved by majority vote. The majority vote must include a majority from both sides of the statewide members and regional members in order to be approved, e.g., at least four (4) of six (6) members on each side.

B. Texas Abatement Fund Point of Contact

The Council will determine a single point of contact called the Abatement Fund Point of Contact (POC) to be established as the sole entity authorized to receive requests for funds and approve expenditures in Texas and order the release of funds from the Texas Abatement Fund by the independent administrator. The POC may be an independent third party selected by the Council with expertise in banking or financial management. The POC will manage the Opioid Council Bank Account (Account). Upon a vote, the Council will direct the POC to contact the independent administrator to release funds to the Account. The Account is outside the State Treasury and not managed by any state or local officials. The POC is responsible for payments to the qualified entities selected by the Council for abatement fund awards. The POC will submit a monthly financial statement on the Account to the Council.

C. Auditor

An independent auditor appointed by the Council will perform an audit on the Account on an annual basis and report its findings, if any, to the Council.

D. Funding Allocation

The Council is the sole decision-maker on the funding allocation process of the abatement funds. The Council will develop the application and award process based on the parameters outlined below. An entity seeking funds from the Council must apply for funds; no funds will be awarded without an application. The executive director and personnel may assist the Council in gathering and compiling the applications for consideration; however, the Council members are the sole decision-makers of awards and funding determination. The Council will use the following processes to award funds:

1. *Statewide Funds.* The Council will consider, adopt and approve the allocation methodology attached as Exhibit C, based upon population health data and prevalence of opioid incidences, at the Council's initial meeting. Adoption of such methodology will allow each Region to customize the approved abatement strategies to fit its communities' needs. The statewide regional funds will account for seventy-five (75) percent of the total overall funds, less the one (1) percent administrative expense described herein.
2. *Targeted Funds.* Each Region shall reserve twenty-five (25) percent of the overall funds, for targeted interventions in the specific Region as identified by opioid incidence data. The Council must approve on an annual basis the uses for the targeted abatement strategies and applications available to every Region, including education and outreach programs. Each Region without approved uses for the targeted funds from the Council, based upon a greater percentage of opioid incidents compared to its population, is subject to transfer of all or a portion of the targeted funds for that Region for uses based upon all Regions' targeted funding needs as approved by the Council on an annual basis.
3. *Annual Allocation.* Statewide regional funds and targeted funds will be allocated on an annual basis. If a Region lapses its funds, the funds will be reallocated based on all Regions' funding needs.

E. Appeal Process

The Council will establish an appeal process to permit the applicants for funding (state or subdivisions) to challenge decisions by the Council-designated point of contact on requests for funds or expenditures.

1. To challenge a decision by the designated point of contact, the State or a subdivision must file an appeal with the Council within thirty (30) days of the decision. The Council then has thirty (30) days to consider and rule on the appeal.
2. If the Council denies the appeal, the party may file an appeal with the state district court of record where the final opioid judgment or Master Settlement Agreement is filed. The Texas Rules of Civil Procedure and Rules of Evidence will govern these proceedings. The Council may request representation from the Attorney General in these proceedings.

In making its determination, the state district court shall apply the same clear error standards contained herein that the Council must follow when rendering its decision.

3. The state district court will make the final decision and the decision is not appealable.
4. Challenges will be limited and subject to penalty if abused.
5. Attorneys' fees and costs are not recoverable in these appeals.

F. Education

The Council may determine that a percentage of the funds in the Abatement Fund from the targeted funds be used to develop an education and outreach program to provide materials on the consequences of opioid drug use, prevention and interventions. Any material developed will include online resources and toolkits for communities.