

16A.151 PROCEEDS OF LITIGATION OR SETTLEMENT.

Subdivision 1. **State funds; general fund.** (a) This subdivision applies, notwithstanding any law to the contrary, except as provided in subdivision 2.

(b) A state official may not commence, pursue, or settle litigation, or settle a matter that could have resulted in litigation, in a manner that would result in money being distributed to a person or entity other than the state.

(c) Money recovered by a state official in litigation or in settlement of a matter that could have resulted in litigation is state money and must be deposited in the general fund.

Subd. 2. **Exceptions.** (a) If a state official litigates or settles a matter on behalf of specific injured persons or entities, this section does not prohibit distribution of money to the specific injured persons or entities on whose behalf the litigation or settlement efforts were initiated. If money recovered on behalf of injured persons or entities cannot reasonably be distributed to those persons or entities because they cannot readily be located or identified or because the cost of distributing the money would outweigh the benefit to the persons or entities, the money must be paid into the general fund.

(b) Money recovered on behalf of a fund in the state treasury other than the general fund may be deposited in that fund.

(c) This section does not prohibit a state official from distributing money to a person or entity other than the state in litigation or potential litigation in which the state is a defendant or potential defendant.

(d) State agencies may accept funds as directed by a federal court for any restitution or monetary penalty under United States Code, title 18, section 3663(a)(3), or United States Code, title 18, section 3663A(a)(3). Funds received must be deposited in a special revenue account and are appropriated to the commissioner of the agency for the purpose as directed by the federal court.

(e) Tobacco settlement revenues as defined in section 16A.98, subdivision 1, paragraph (t), may be deposited as provided in section 16A.98, subdivision 12.

(f) Any money received by the state resulting from a settlement agreement or an assurance of discontinuance entered into by the attorney general of the state, or a court order in litigation brought by the attorney general of the state, on behalf of the state or a state agency, related to alleged violations of consumer fraud laws in the marketing, sale, or distribution of opioids in this state or other alleged illegal actions that contributed to the excessive use of opioids, must be deposited in the settlement account established in the opiate epidemic response fund under section 256.043, subdivision 1. This paragraph does not apply to attorney fees and costs awarded to the state or the Attorney General's Office, to contract attorneys hired by the state or Attorney General's Office, or to other state agency attorneys.

(g) Notwithstanding paragraph (f), if money is received from a settlement agreement or an assurance of discontinuance entered into by the attorney general of the state or a court order in litigation brought by the attorney general of the state on behalf of the state or a state agency against a consulting firm working for an opioid manufacturer or opioid wholesale drug distributor, the commissioner shall deposit any money received into the settlement account established within the opiate epidemic response fund under section 256.042, subdivision 1. Notwithstanding section 256.043, subdivision 3a, paragraph (a), any amount deposited into the settlement account in accordance with this paragraph shall be appropriated to the commissioner of human services to award as grants as specified by the opiate epidemic response advisory council in accordance with section 256.043, subdivision 3a, paragraph (d).

Subd. 3. **Definitions.** For purposes of this section:

(1) "litigation" includes civil, criminal, and administrative actions;

(2) "money recovered" includes actual damages, punitive or exemplary damages, statutory damages, and civil and criminal penalties; and

(3) "state official" means the attorney general, another constitutional officer, an agency, or an agency employee, acting in official capacity.

Subd. 4. **Supersede.** This section supersedes section 8.31, subdivision 2c.

Subd. 5. [Repealed, 2005 c 156 art 2 s 52]

History: *1Sp2001 c 10 art 2 s 23; 2002 c 379 art 1 s 7,8; 1Sp2003 c 1 art 2 s 34; 1Sp2003 c 2 art 8 s 1; 2005 c 156 art 2 s 15; 2009 c 101 art 2 s 48; 1Sp2011 c 7 art 11 s 1; 2019 c 63 art 1 s 1; 2020 c 115 art 3 s 1; 1Sp2021 c 7 art 5 s 1; 2022 c 53 s 2*