

# **Attorney General Raoul Files Lawsuit Against E-Cigarette Manufacturer Juice Man**

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CHICAGO – Attorney General Kwame Raoul today filed a lawsuit against Juice Man, LLC, (Juice Man) over allegations the company allegedly developed and marketed its products to attract minors. Juice Man manufactures and sells electronic cigarettes and accessories through its website.

The lawsuit filed today by Raoul in Cook County Circuit Court against California-based Juice Man alleges the company intentionally developed nicotine products that appeal to minors and has marketed its harmful nicotine products to minors. Raoul also is asserting that Juice Man misrepresented the potency of nicotine in its products.

“The Stanford University School of Medicine recently released data showing that teens and young adults who vape are at a significantly higher risk of COVID-19, a virus that attacks the lungs. The need to prevent youth e-cigarette use has never been more urgent,” Raoul said. “Juice Man combined its marketing that relied heavily on cartoon characters and social media hashtags with a product that contained higher concentrations of addictive nicotine masked by fruity and candy flavors – all in an effort to appeal to youths. I filed this lawsuit because I am absolutely committed to holding accountable e-cigarette manufacturers that blatantly develop and market their products to teens and young adults.”

In the lawsuit, Raoul is alleging that Juice Man intentionally directed its products toward minors by combining a less-harsh nicotine solution, an offering of sweet and fruity flavors, and marketing designed to attract minors. According to the lawsuit, Juice Man developed an e-cigarette formula containing a much higher concentration of nicotine than traditional combustible cigarettes and many e-cigarettes, which makes Juice Man’s e-cigarettes more addictive, particularly for inexperienced smokers and minors. While Juice Man’s formula contains higher levels of nicotine, Raoul alleges the nicotine flavor is less harsh and masked by other flavors.

In addition to developing a formula that is more addictive and usable for inexperienced smokers, Raoul is alleging that Juice Man offers its products in a variety of flavors that are appealing to youths. Raoul’s lawsuit argues that flavors such as pink lemonade, cotton candy, unicorn frappe and cherry blue cola are clearly developed and marketed to youth smokers. For example, unicorn frappe is described as an “explosion of tarts, fruits, and creams.” The 2019 National Youth Tobacco Survey identified top flavor categories chosen by youth as being fruit; candy, desserts, or other sweets; and mint and menthol. Raoul notes that nearly all of Juice Man’s flavored nicotine solutions fall into one of those flavor categories.

Additionally, Raoul's lawsuit alleges that Juice Man unfairly and deceptively markets its products to minors. The company relies heavily on social media to advertise its products, using hashtags such as "#vapebabes," "#vapeporn" and "#vapelyfe." Raoul says that prior to 2016 social media advertising featured images of Juice Man's products in front of a neutral background. More recently, Juice Man's advertisements use bright colors, cartoon characters and children's cereal. A number of flavored products distributed under Juice Man's "Zonk!" line have packaging that features graphics similar to those in comic books. Juice Man also markets variety packs of flavors including watermelon-strawberry and mixed berry as "Lunch Box" assortments. Furthermore, Raoul argues that Juice Man's age-verification system allows the company to easily interact with and promote products to minors.

Attorney General Raoul's lawsuit against Juice Man is the latest action the Attorney General's office has taken to hold e-cigarette manufacturers accountable for epidemic usage levels among youth and teens. In 2019, Raoul's office filed a lawsuit against the nation's largest e-cigarette manufacturer, JUUL Labs, and the litigation is ongoing. The Attorney General's office is continuing to investigate other e-cigarette manufacturers as part of an ongoing investigation into the e-cigarette industry. Additionally, Raoul has urged the FDA to ban flavored tobacco products and to strengthen e-cigarette guidance by prioritizing enforcement actions against flavored e-cigarettes.

In the lawsuit, Raoul is seeking to permanently enjoin Juice Man from engaging in unfair and deceptive practices and hold the company accountable for its role in the youth e-cigarette epidemic. Raoul is also seeking a civil penalty of \$50,000 per deceptive or unfair act or practice and an additional \$50,000 for each act or practice committed with the intent to defraud.

For more information and free resources to help quit tobacco, please visit the Illinois Tobacco Quitline website or call 1-866-QUIT-YES.