



PRESS RELEASE

City of Long Beach
Public Information Office
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Subject:

City Announces Permanent Prohibition and Enforcement of Flavored Tobacco Products Begins August 15

Resources to quit smoking are available for adults and youth

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Long Beach, CA - Beginning August 15, the City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services will implement and enforce prohibition of the sale or distribution of certain flavored tobacco products, to further protect public health. Resources are available for those who want to quit smoking.

"The City is committed to protecting young people and promoting public health," said Mayor Robert Garcia. "These tobacco products have been directly linked to serious health concerns by doctors and health experts."

Originally brought to the Long Beach City Council for consideration in 2019 by Councilmember Suzie Price, the City Council approved an expanded ordinance on April 13, 2021, which permanently prohibits the sale or distribution of certain flavored tobacco products to protect the public from health risks associated with flavored tobacco products. While the ordinance became effective on May 16, there is a 90-day moratorium to allow retailers to come into compliance, therefore the Health Department's Environmental Health Bureau will begin enforcement of the ordinance on August 15.

Business owners are responsible for ensuring adherence to the ordinance within their establishments. Non-compliance may result in legal action including citations, and/or denial, suspension or revocation of any permit. Businesses can call the Tobacco Retail Enforcement Program at 562.570.7905 for assistance.

"I am so glad to lead this effort at the City Council and for this policy moving forward," said Councilmember Price. "When we see flavored tobacco products targeted toward children and teens leading to rising youth addiction rates, it is important to protect the health of the whole community with a common sense approach."

Help is available for those who want to quit smoking or vaping. Adults and youth who want to quit smoking, and parents of youth who smoke or vape, can contact the Tobacco Education and Prevention Program at 562.570.7950 for resources and referrals.

Studies released by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have shown a rapid increase in the use of electronic smoking devices by youth, with one in five youth using electronic smoking devices in 2019. Flavored tobacco products are routinely marketed to youth and minorities. According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, 81% of youth who have ever used tobacco products initiated with a flavored product.

The City's Youth Tobacco Diversion Program is designed for youth who smoke or vape. Youth can participate in a 3-session class that offers tips for quitting, refusal skills and information on associated health risks. The Tobacco Education and Prevention Program also facilitates a 7-week summer leadership program for high-school aged students which focuses on how they can make their community healthier, the risks of smoking and vaping and training on communication and leadership.

For more information about the City's Tobacco Education and Prevention Program, visit www.longbeach.gov/TREP or call 562.570.7950.

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