



SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

DAVID GHILARDUCCI, MD, FACEP
INTERIM HEALTH OFFICER

TRACEY BELTON
AGENCY DIRECTOR

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Healthy People in Healthy Communities

PRESS RELEASE

Ban on Selling Flavored Tobacco products in California: goes into effect January 1, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 31, 2020

Contact:

Sam Perez, San Benito County PHS PIO
831-637-5367

San Benito County, CA.- California has become the third U.S. state to ban the sale of flavored tobacco products, in effort to slow the spread of the harmful habit among children.

The ban, which goes into effect January 1, 2021, does not make it a crime for people to possess flavored tobacco products, *but it bans retailers from selling them*. Violators will face a \$250 fine if they sale these illegal products.

Vaping products have long drawn scrutiny from federal regulators concerned about their attractiveness to children. These products are still too easy for teens to get, especially with enticing flavors such as “mango” and “tropical fusion. "I have been very, very expressive in terms of my absolute condemnation of this tobacco industry that continues to find ways to target our youth," stated California Governor Gavin Newsom. "And it will be a point of deep pride and personal privilege — as a father of four and as someone who's had many, many family members die at the hands of the tobacco industry — to sign that bill."

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says if smoking continues among children at the current rate, it projects 5.6 million people younger than 18 will die from a smoking-related illness.

This ban comes at a time when studies are showing how the use of tobacco products and having COVID-19 effects the respiratory system. The use of tobacco products only worsens COVID-19 symptoms. Young people who vape are five to seven times more likely to contract COVID-19 according to a recent press release from San Benito County Public Health Services.

The ban does not include all flavored tobacco products, with exemptions for loose leaf tobacco and “premium cigars.” It also exempts shisha tobacco products, which are smoked in a hookah, a type of water pipe. And it does not ban the sale of flavored marijuana products, which have been legal in California for recreational use since 2018.

For additional information on the banning of flavored tobacco products go to:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/CTCB/Pages/CaliforniaTobaccoControlBranch.aspx>.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
351 Tres Pinos Road, Suite A-202
Hollister CA 95023
831-637-5367

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
351 Tres Pinos Road, Suite C-1
Hollister CA 95023
831-636-4035

MEDICAL THERAPY UNIT
761 South Street
Hollister CA 95023
831-637-1989