Tobacco 21

WHY TOBACCO 21?

- Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death in the United States, killing more than 480,000 people each year.[1]
- Almost all (95%) adults who smoke had their first cigarette before the age of 21, and most before the age of 18.[2]
- The tobacco industry has a long history of targeting youth to recruit replacement tobacco users.
- Although Montana is seeing a record low prevalence of cigarette smoking among high school students, over 20% are still currently using tobacco products, with e-cigarettes being the most popular.[4]
- Nicotine exposure during adolescence is harmful to brain development.[5]

CONTACT

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TOBACCO 21 IS THE FEDERAL LAW

On December 20, 2019, the President signed legislation raising the federal minimum age of sale of tobacco products from 18 to 21 years. It is illegal to sell tobacco products (including e-cigarettes) to anyone under the age of 21. All retailers must comply with the new federal law. Federal law sets a nationwide minimum age, meaning no state or local government is permitted to lower the legal age below 21.

Retailers suspected of selling tobacco products to individuals under the age of 21 can be reported to the FDA:

- Through their online form
- By calling 1-877-CTP-1373
- By emailing CTPCompliance@FDA.hhs.gov

BENEFITS OF TOBACCO 21

Keeps tobacco out of schools

- Three-quarters of 15- to 17-year-old current smokers obtain cigarettes from social sources. Smokers aged 18 and 19 years old are often a supplier for younger kids who rely on friends, classmates, and peers to buy tobacco products.[2]
- Having the sale age at 21 makes social source acquisition more difficult for underage youth.

Delays the age of initiation to prevent a lifetime of addiction

- Virtually all (95%) of adult smokers had their first cigarette before turning 21. Individuals who start smoking at younger ages are more likely to smoke as adults, and are also among the heaviest users.[2]
- In Montana, 93% of adults who smoke became regular smokers before they turned 21.[3]

Reduces tobacco use

- Localities with early adoption of Tobacco 21 have seen decreases in youth tobacco use. For example:
  - In the year after implementation, Chicago found a 36% decrease in 18- to 20-year-olds that reported currently smoking cigarettes or e-cigarettes.[7]
  - U.S. 18- to 20-year-olds who had tried a cigarette or e-cigarette but lived in places with a Tobacco 21 law were 39% less likely to have recently smoked or regularly smoked than 21- to 22-year-olds.[8]

PublicHealth IN THE 406

Tobacco 21

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BUSTING THE MYTHS

Tobacco 21 has little financial impact on tobacco retailers.

- According to a study published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, the economic impact of Tobacco 21 is minimal. Only **two percent** of U.S. cigarette sales go to those under the age of 21.[9]

The minimum age of military service does not equal readiness to enlist in a lifetime of nicotine addiction.

- Tobacco use is not a rite of passage or sign of adulthood. It is an addiction. The tobacco industry targets youth with their product to addict a new generation and replace smokers dying of tobacco-related diseases.
- The military recognizes the toll tobacco takes on troops. Service members who use tobacco have reduced endurance and are more likely to drop out of basic training.[10]
- One out of four military members smoke and about 36 percent started smoking after enlisting.[10]

"If a man has never smoked by age 18, the odds are three-to-one he never will."

\- R.J. Reynolds Researcher

NEED HELP QUITTING?

- **Quit Now Montana**: For help quitting tobacco, including e-cigarettes, visit quitnowmontana.com or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.
- **Montana American Indian Commercial Tobacco Program**: Visit MTAmericanIndianQuitLine.com or call 1-855-372-0055.
- **My Life, My Quit™**: Youth (anyone under the age of 18) who need help quitting tobacco, including e-cigarettes, can text "start my quit" to 36072 or visit mylifemyquit.com.

MONTANA DPHHS