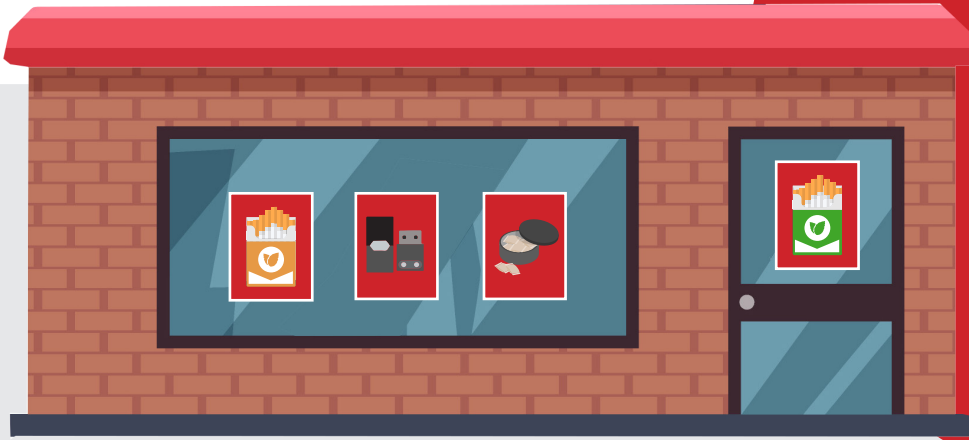




American Heart Association.



# THE NEED FOR TOBACCO RETAIL LICENSING

We need to know where harmful tobacco products are being sold and that retailers are following tobacco laws. Tobacco retail licensing policies will help.

## THE PROBLEM



### PREVALENCE:

Tobacco products are sold all over - grocery stores, gas stations, pharmacies, convenience stores - from big cities to rural communities.

### YOUTH USE:

Nearly 25% of high school students report current use of any tobacco product

(cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, hookah, pipe tobacco, and/or bidis).

### YOUTH ACCESS:

3 out of 4 kids who try to buy tobacco products are not refused sale even though they are under the legal sales age.



### MARKETING/

**TARGETING:** Tobacco companies advertise where kids regularly gather and shop.

For example, menthol cigarettes, which are less harsh to smoke and more addictive, are intentionally sold at discounted prices near schools that Black students attend. To reach rural kids, smokeless tobacco brands sponsor rodeos, where up to 1/3 of the audience are children and teens.



**EQUITY:** Tobacco companies have targeted specific racial and ethnic group with their products for decades.

Research shows that there are more tobacco retailers in communities with predominantly Black and Hispanic residents. More stores selling tobacco products = more exposure to ads and products = higher tobacco use among individuals belonging to these population groups.

# THE BENEFITS

**Tobacco retail licensure (TRL):** An effective tobacco control tool that requires every store that sells tobacco products to apply for a license.



## Track and Limit the Sale of Tobacco Products:

Licensing enables communities to know where tobacco products are being sold, and it can allow officials to set limits on the location, number and types of stores that sell tobacco products.



## Enforce Tobacco Laws:

Fees from licensing can be used to fund compliance checks, giving officials the resources needed to enforce tobacco laws and consequently reduce illegal sales to youth.



## Curb Youth Use:

With tobacco retail licensure, we can monitor where tobacco products are being sold and who they're being sold to. Tobacco retail licensure holds retailers accountable to refuse sale of harmful and addictive products to youth.

# THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION RECOMMENDS



## Eliminate Youth Penalties:

Kids should not be penalized for purchase, use or possession of harmful products that have been aggressively marketed and illegally sold to them. Tobacco retailers should be held accountable.



## Fine the License Holder:

Penalties for failing to follow tobacco control laws should be levied on the business owner rather than store employees who are likely low-wage earners and unable to afford financial penalties. By holding the retailer accountable for fees and fines, proper training on tobacco control laws is more likely to take place.



## Allocate Funding for Compliance Checks:

Fees collected from retail licensing should be used to fund compliance checks to ensure retailers are not selling dangerous tobacco products to kids.

We have the tools to make tobacco retail licensing standard in our community. Join the American Heart Association's work to make it happen.