

# Flavored Tobacco Ban

Health & Safety Committee  
January 14, 2026

**Protect, Improve, and Promote the Health & Environment of  
Denver**

# Flavor Bans: Evidence-based Strategy

Flavors mask harsh tobacco taste →  
easier to start, harder to quit

Menthol increases addiction and reduces  
quit success

Flavored products target youth &  
marginalized groups

## Public Health Impact:

- Reduces youth initiation & nicotine dependence
- Addresses health disparities among Black, Latino & LGBTQ+ communities

## Evidence of Effectiveness:

- Comprehensive bans (incl. menthol) lower tobacco use & improve quit rates
- Successful implementation in Massachusetts & other localities

# Policy Journey

Dec. 2021

Dec.  
2024

March  
2025

Nov. 4,  
2025

Jan. 1,  
2026

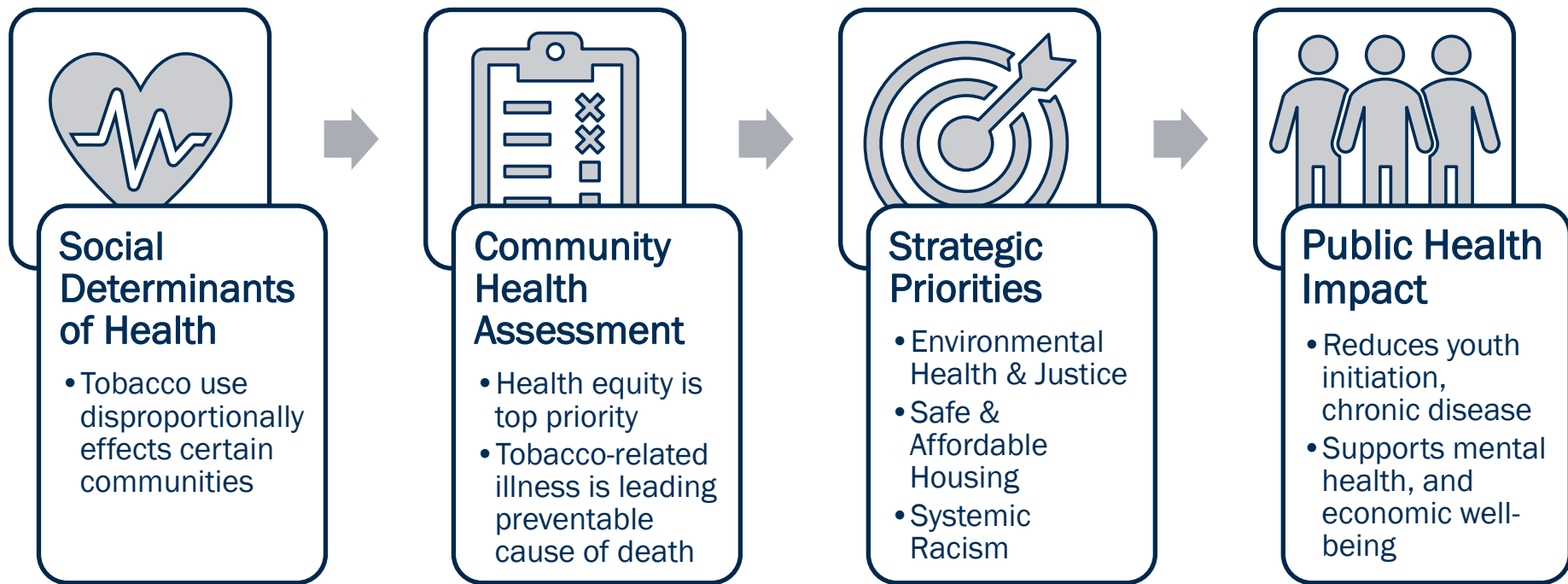
- 2021: Initial ban vetoed → prompted deeper community engagement
- 2024: Ordinance passed by City Council
- 2025: Voter affirmation via Referendum 310 (70.5% YES)

# Public Mandate

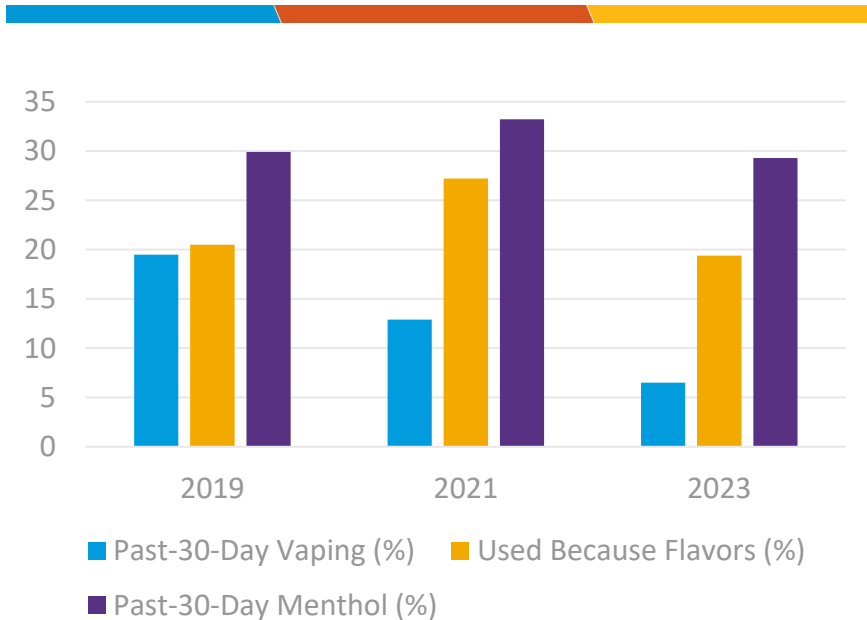
- Nov 2025: Voters upheld ban with 70.5% YES
- Strong public mandate for flavored tobacco restrictions



# Advancing Health Equity & Outcomes



# Youth Use & Flavor Impact



## Past 30-Day Vaping Use

2019: 19.5% → 2021: 12.9% → 2023: 6.5%

## Used Because of Flavor

2019: 20.5% → 2021: 27.2% → 2023: 19.4%

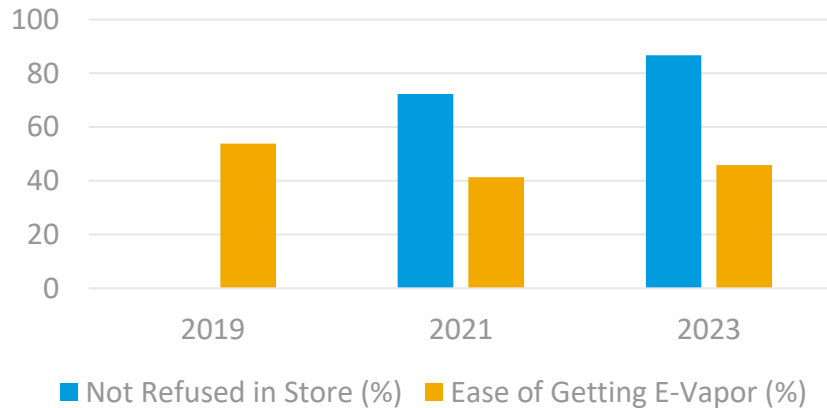
## Why It Matters:

Indicates progress toward reducing initiation and flavor appeal.

# Access Barriers & Retail Compliance



Underage Access & Retail Compliance (2019 – 2023)



Not Refused When Buying in Store:

2021: 72.3% → 2023: 86.7%

Perceived Ease of Getting E-Vapor Products:

2019: 53.8% → 2021: 41.4% →  
2023: 45.9%

Why It Matters:

Enforcement and retailer compliance  
are critical to reducing youth access

# Tobacco Enforcement Program

- DDPHE enforces tobacco laws (sales to minors, signage, licensing)
- Implements a fine schedule (revised April 2025)
- Utilizes a database to track inspections; system updated for flavored tobacco compliance

# Updated Fine Schedule

Violation Types	1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	3 <sup>rd</sup> Violation	4 <sup>th</sup> Violation
Underage Sale(s) to a person(s) under twenty-one (21)	\$1,000 Fine	\$2,000 Fine  30-day Suspension Order**	\$3,000 Fine  60-day Suspension Order**	\$5,000 Fine  1-year Suspension Order**
Improper signage				
Self-service display				
Vending machine				
Offer to sell a flavored tobacco product				
Violation of a Suspension Order				

Fines are assessed over 36 months- Multiple violations can be assessed during an inspection.

## \*\*Suspensions

- Through 12/31/2026, suspensions are assessed over 12 months
- Beginning 1/1/2027, suspensions will be assessed over 24 months
- Beginning 1/1/2028, suspensions will be assessed over 36 months

# Approach to Enforcement



Ensure compliance  
across all retailers



Minimize youth  
access to flavored  
tobacco



Maintain  
transparency and  
fairness

✓ Community-Centered & Collaborative

# Retailer Education – Flavor Ban

- Goal: Support retailers with resources and education first
- Ordinance passed Dec 2024; enforcement began Jan 2026
- Year-long window allowed for education, outreach, and system updates



## Denver Retail Tobacco Stores Informational Bulletin



**The sale of flavored tobacco is prohibited in Denver and includes ALL flavored tobacco and nicotine products.**

**Flavored Tobacco Ban Enforcement Begins Today**

January 1, 2026

Dear retailers,

# Retailer Support – Flavor Ban

- Direct mail
- Email bulletins through licensing

Targeted Outreach



- Signage
- FAQs
- Videos (coming soon)

Education Materials



- Publicly available compliance matrix
- SOPs

Compliance



# Example Retailer Resources

## Window Cling



## Point of Sale Decal



## Postcard

### ATTENTION RETAILER

Sale of flavored tobacco products is not permitted in Denver. The City and County of Denver passed an ordinance banning the sale of flavored tobacco products in 2024. Following a recent YES vote on Ballot Question 310, the ban was upheld and includes all flavored tobacco and nicotine products, including menthol cigarettes, flavored e-cigarettes (also known as vapes), and any other flavored tobacco or nicotine delivery products.

Enforcement of this ban begins Jan. 1, 2026.

For more information about the ordinance and to request customer education signage, visit [Denvergov.org/tobacco](https://denvergov.org/tobacco)



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# Next Steps

Enforcement began January 1, 2026

Retailer education will continue for all D.R.M.C tobacco laws

Annual evaluation reporting to City Council in 2026



**Prevention, Education,  
and Cessation**



**Compliance and  
Enforcement**



**Policy Systems  
Change**



# Questions?

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