



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Heather Forshey, MS, REHS
Director

Environmental Health Services
San Mateo County Health
2000 Alameda de las Pulgas
Suite 100
San Mateo, CA 94403
smchealth.org

April 28, 2023

Dear Tobacco Retail Owner,

This letter is to inform you that the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors is considering updating the **Tobacco Retailer Permit Ordinance** to include several changes, including, but not limited to:

- Definition of “Tobacco Product” explicitly includes synthetic nicotine
- Definition of “Flavored Tobacco Product” and “Characterizing Flavor” to include tobacco products with a distinguishable taste and/or aroma
- Definition of “Tobacco Product” expanded to include “Electronic Smoking Device” and substances that may be used in such devices, including non-nicotine products
- No new tobacco retailers within 1,000 feet of youth-populated areas
- No new tobacco retailers within 500 feet of another tobacco retailer
- Mandatory fines up to \$1,000 for violating the Ordinance
- Mandatory permit suspension for tobacco sales to people under 21
- Two annual inspections of each tobacco retailer to ensure compliance with terms of the permit
- Proposed annual permit fee increase from \$174 to \$672 to cover the cost of two annual inspections, reinspections, hearings, and complaints

One of the major purposes of the proposed ordinance is to decrease youth access to tobacco products. Between April 2021 and June 2022, the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office coordinated undercover enforcement operations and found that among 74 retailers, 11 tobacco sales to underage decoys occurred. More undercover operations are underway.

The Board of Supervisors will discuss the proposed ordinance at their board meeting on Tuesday, May 9, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

The meeting will be held virtually (smcgov.org/bos) as well as in-person at the Board Chambers at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063.

If you have questions about the Ordinance, please email EnvHealth@smcgov.org or call Serena Tavassoli at (650) 578-7197. For more information about tobacco retail permit fees, visit smchealth.org/ehfees.

Sincerely,

Heather Forshey
Director of Environmental Health Services



**SAN MATEO
COUNTY HEALTH**