



City of Taunton

Board of Health

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Regulation of the Taunton Board of Health Restricting the Sale of Tobacco Products And Nicotine Delivery Products

A. Statement of Purpose:

Whereas there exists conclusive evidence that tobacco smoking causes cancer, respiratory and cardiac diseases, negative birth outcomes, irritations to the eyes, nose and throat;

Whereas amount the 15.7% of students nationwide who currently smoke cigarettes and were less than 18 years old, 14.1% usually obtained them by buying them in a store (i.e. convenience store, supermarket, or discount store) or gas station;

Whereas nationally in 2009, 72% of high school smokers and 66% of middle school smokers were not asked to show proof of age when purchasing cigarettes;

Whereas in Massachusetts, youth use of all other tobacco products, including cigars, rose from 13.3% in 2003 to 17.6% in 2009, and was higher than the rate of current cigarette use (16%) for the first time in history;

Whereas despite state laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to minors, access by minors to tobacco products is a major public health problem;

Whereas, there exists conclusive evidence that: the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has concluded that nicotine is as addictive as cocaine or heroin; the appeal created by Nicotine Delivery Products or e-cigarettes which contain addictive nicotine, can lead minors into a nicotine addiction that may result in their daily use of tobacco; the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has conducted laboratory tests finding e-cigarettes contain toxic chemicals and carcinogens; e-cigarettes seriously compromise current laws governing indoor smoking bans including, but not limited to, the Smoke-Free Workplace Law (M.G.L. Ch. 270, §22) and the Education Reform Act (M.G.L. Ch. 71, §§2A, 37H); and the city of Taunton aims to protect its youth against the use of Nicotine Delivery Products and its residents against the involuntary exposure to vapors from Nicotine Delivery Products such as e-cigarettes;

Now, therefore it is the intention of the Taunton Board of Health to regulate the sale of tobacco products and nicotine delivery products.

B. Authority:

This regulation is promulgated pursuant to the authority granted to the Taunton Board of Health by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 111, Section 31 that "Boards of Health may make reasonable health regulations".

C. Definitions:

For the purpose of this regulation, the following words shall have the following meanings:

Blunt Wrap: Any tobacco product manufactured or packaged as a wrap or as a hollow tube made wholly or in part from tobacco that is designed or intended to be filled by the consumer with loose tobacco or other fillers.

Business Agent: An individual who has been designated by the owner or operator of any establishment to be the manager or otherwise in charge of said establishment.

E-Cigarette: Any electronic nicotine delivery product composed of a mouthpiece, heating element, battery and/or electronic circuits that provides a vapor of liquid nicotine to the user, or relies on vaporization of solid nicotine or any liquid. This term shall include such devices whether they are manufactured as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes or under any other product name.

Employee: Any individual who performs services for an employer.

Employer: Any individual, partnership, association, corporation, trust or other organized group of individuals that uses the services of one (1) or more employees.

Minor: Any individual who is under the age of eighteen (18).

Nicotine Delivery Product: Any manufactured article or product made wholly or in part of a tobacco substitute or containing nicotine that is expected or intended for human consumption, but not including a product approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for sale as a tobacco use cessation or harm reduction product or for other medical purposes and which is being marketed and sold solely for that approved purpose. Nicotine delivery products include, but are not limited to, e-cigarettes.

Permit Holder: Any person engaged in the sale or distribution of tobacco or nicotine delivery products directly to consumers who applies for and receives a tobacco and nicotine delivery product sales permit or any person who is required to apply for a Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit pursuant to these regulations, or his or her business agent.

Self-Service Display: Any display from which customers may select a tobacco product or a nicotine delivery product without assistance from an employee or store personnel.

Tobacco Product: Cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, bidis, snuff or tobacco in any of its forms.

Vending Machine: Any automated or mechanical self-service device, which upon insertion of money, tokens or any other form of payment, dispenses or makes cigarettes, any other tobacco product or nicotine delivery product.

D. Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales to Minors Prohibited:

1. No person shall sell tobacco or nicotine delivery products or permit tobacco or nicotine delivery products to be sold to a minor; or not being the minor's parent or legal guardian, give tobacco or nicotine delivery products to a minor.

2. Required Signage

- a. In conformance with and in addition to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 270, Section 7, a copy of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 270, Section 6, shall be posted conspicuously by the owner or other person in charge thereof in the shop or other place used to sell tobacco products at retail. The notice shall be provided by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and made available from the Taunton Board of Health. The notice shall be at least 48 square inches and shall be posted conspicuously by the permit holder in the retail establishment or other place in such a manner so that it may be readily seen by a person standing at or approaching the cash register. The notice shall directly face the purchaser and shall not be obstructed from view or placed at a height of less than 4 feet or greater than 9 feet from the floor. The owner or other person in charge of a shop or other place used to sell tobacco products at retail shall conspicuously post any additional signs required by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.
- b. The owner or other person in charge of a shop or other place used to sell nicotine delivery products at retail shall conspicuously post a sign stating "The sale of nicotine delivery products to minors under 18 years of age is prohibited." The owner or other person in charge of a shop or other place used to sell e-cigarettes at retail shall conspicuously post a sign stating, "**The use of e-cigarettes anywhere smoking is prohibited in Taunton is also prohibited in Taunton.**" The notices shall be no smaller than 8.5" by 11" and shall be posted conspicuously in the retail establishment or other place in such a manner so that they may be readily seen by a person standing at, or approaching the cash register. These notices shall directly face the purchaser and shall not be obstructed from view or placed at a height of less than 4 or greater than 9 feet from the floor.

3. Identification: Each person selling or distributing tobacco or nicotine delivery products shall verify the age of the purchaser by means of a valid government-issued photographic identification containing the bearer's date of birth that the purchaser is 18 years old or older. Verification is required for any person under the age of 27.

4. All retail sales of tobacco or nicotine delivery products must be face-to-face between the seller and the buyer and occur at the permitted location.

E. Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit:

1. No person shall sell or otherwise distribute tobacco or nicotine delivery products at retail establishments within the city of Taunton without first obtaining a Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit issued annually by the Taunton Board of Health. Only owners of establishments with a permanent, non-mobile location in Taunton are eligible to apply for a permit and sell tobacco products or nicotine delivery products at the specified location in Taunton.

2. As part of the Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit application process, the applicant will be provided with the Taunton Board of Health regulation. Each applicant is required to sign a statement declaring that the applicant has read said regulation and that the applicant is responsible for instructing any and all employees who will be responsible for tobacco and nicotine delivery product sales regarding federal, state and local laws regarding the sale of tobacco and this regulation.
3. Each applicant who sells tobacco is required to provide proof of a current tobacco sales license issued by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue before a Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit can be issued.
4. The fee for a Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit shall be determined by the Taunton Board of Health annually.
5. A separate permit is required for each retail establishment selling tobacco and/or nicotine delivery products.
6. Each Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit shall be displayed at the retail establishment in a conspicuous place.
7. No Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit holder shall allow any employee to sell tobacco products or nicotine delivery products until such employee reads this regulation and federal and state laws regarding the sale of tobacco and signs a statement, a copy of which will be placed on file in the office of the employer, that he/she has read the regulation and applicable state and federal laws.
8. A Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit is non-transferable. A new owner of an establishment that sells tobacco or nicotine delivery products must apply for a new permit. No new permit will be issued unless and until all outstanding penalties incurred by the previous permit holder are satisfied in full.
9. Issuance of a Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit shall be conditioned on an applicant's consent to unannounced, periodic inspections of his/her retail establishment to ensure compliance with this regulation.
10. A Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit will not be renewed if the permit holder has failed to pay all fines issued and the time period to appeal the fines has expired and/or has not satisfied any outstanding permit suspension.

F. Prohibition of the Sale of Blunt Wraps:

No person or entity shall sell or distribute blunt wraps in Taunton.

G. Free Distribution and Coupon Redemption:

No person shall distribute, or cause to be distributed, any free samples of tobacco products or nicotine delivery products. No means, instruments or devices that allow for the redemption of all tobacco products or nicotine delivery products for free or cigarettes at a price below the minimum retail price determined by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue shall be accepted by any permit holder.

H. Out-of-Package Sales:

The sale or distribution of tobacco products in any form other than an original factory-wrapped package is prohibited. No person may sell or cause to be sold or distribute or cause to be distributed any cigarette package that contains fewer than twenty (20) cigarettes, including single cigarettes.

I. Self-Service Displays:

All self-service displays of tobacco products and/or nicotine delivery products are prohibited. All humidors including, but not limited to, walk-in humidors must be locked.

J. Vending Machines:

All tobacco and/or nicotine delivery product vending machines are prohibited.

K. Use of E-Cigarettes

The use of e-cigarettes is hereby prohibited in Taunton in locations and establishments covered by M.G.L. Ch. 270, §22 (commonly known as the "Smoke-free Workplace Law") and in additional locations and establishments covered by any regulation or ordinance pertaining to the use of tobacco products in Taunton.

L. Violations of this Regulation with the exception of Section K:

1. It shall be the responsibility of the establishment, permit holder and/or his or her business agent to ensure compliance with all sections of this regulation pertaining to his or her distribution of tobacco and/or nicotine delivery products. The violator shall receive:

- a. In the case of a first violation, a fine of one hundred dollars (\$100.00).
- b. In the case of a second violation within 24 months of the date of the current violation, a fine of two hundred dollars (\$200.00) and the Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit may be suspended for up to seven (7) consecutive business days.
- c. In the case of three violations within a 24 month period, a fine of three hundred dollars (\$300.00) and the Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit may be suspended for up to thirty (30) consecutive business days.
- d. In the case of four violations within a 24 month period, a fine of four hundred (\$500.00) and the Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit may be suspended for up to thirty (30) consecutive business days.
- e. In the case of five or more violations within a 24 month period, a fine of five hundred (\$500.00) and the Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit may be suspended for up to ninety (90) consecutive business days.

2. Refusal to cooperate with inspections pursuant to this regulation shall result in the suspension of the Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit for thirty (30) consecutive business days.

3. In addition to the monetary fines set above, any permit holder who engages in the sale or distribution of tobacco or nicotine delivery products directly to a consumer while his or her permit is suspended shall be subject to the suspension of all Board of Health issued permits for thirty (30) consecutive business days.

4. The Taunton Board of Health shall provide notice of the intent to suspend a Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit, which notice shall contain the reasons therefor and establish a time and date for a hearing which date shall be no earlier than seven (7) days after the date of said notice. The permit holder or its business agent shall have an opportunity to be heard at such hearing and shall be notified of the Board of Health's decision and the reasons therefore in writing. After a hearing, the Taunton Board of Health may suspend the Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit if the Board of Health finds that a violation of this regulation occurred. For purposes of such suspensions, the Board shall make the determination notwithstanding any separate criminal or non-criminal proceedings brought in court hereunder or under the Massachusetts General Laws for the same offense. All tobacco products and nicotine delivery products shall be removed from the retail establishment upon suspension of the Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit. Failure to remove all tobacco and nicotine delivery products shall constitute a separate violation of this regulation.

M. Violations of Section K:

1. It shall be the responsibility of the owner, manager, or other person in control of a building, vehicle or vessel to ensure compliance with Section G or this regulations pertaining to the use of e-cigarettes. The violator shall receive:

- a. One hundred dollars (\$100.00) for the first violation;
- b. Two hundred dollars (\$200.00) for the second violation occurring within 24 months of the first offense.
- c. Three hundred dollars (\$300.00) for a third or subsequent violation a 24 month period.

N. Non-Criminal Disposition:

Whoever violates any provision of this regulation may be penalized by the non-criminal method of disposition as provided in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 21D where the specific fine for the violation is not more than \$300, by a Health Order if the fine is for more than \$300, or by filing a criminal complaint at the appropriate venue.

Each day any violation exists shall be deemed to be a separate offense.

O. Enforcement:

Enforcement of this regulation shall be by the Taunton Board of Health or its designated agent(s), including, but not limited to, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioned Officers with a current commission under the FDA Tobacco Enforcement Contract with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Any resident who desires to register a complaint pursuant to the regulation may do so by contacting the Taunton Board of Health or its designated agent(s) and the Board shall investigate.

P. Severability:

If any provision of these regulations is declared invalid or unenforceable, the other provisions shall not be affected thereby but shall continue in full force and effect.

Q. Effective Date:

Voted the 5th day of January, 2016

This regulation shall take effect immediately.

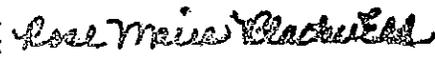


Thaddeus A. Figlock, M.D., Chairman



Bruce E. Bodner, M.D.

Joseph F. Nates, M.D.

A true copy.
Attest: 

City Clerk