

Eliminating the Toll of Tobacco Products in South Carolina



2021-2026 State Plan

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About this Plan

Smokefree SC

Smokefree SC (SFSC) is a statewide 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to support and amplify the work of tobacco prevention and control stakeholders throughout South Carolina. Smokefree SC was contracted by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control to lead the development and implementation of this plan.

Plan Development Process

This plan was developed through a collaborative process involving a variety of tobacco prevention and control stakeholders throughout South Carolina. The objectives and recommended activities for each of the four goal areas were derived from a combination of recommendations in the Evaluation Report for the 2015-2020 Plan for a Tobacco-Free South Carolina, an online stakeholder survey, and discussions from a virtual stakeholder forum.

The intention of the author group was to create a plan that mixed achievable and aspirational objectives and included components to ensure adaptability to the ever-changing tobacco environment.

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2021-2026 Goals and Objectives

Objectives	Baseline	Target June 30, 2026
Goal 1: Protect Youth from Tobacco Products		
1.1 Pass a state Tobacco Retailer Licensing law	No Law	Law Passed
1.2 Increase tax on e-cigarettes and other tobacco products to achieve parity with the cigarette tax	Not Parity	Parity Achieved
1.3 Reduce high school student use of any tobacco product	27.5% ¹	14%
1.3a Reduce high school student use of cigarettes	4.9% ¹	2%
1.3b Reduce high school student use of other combustible products	14.3% ^{1,7}	7%
1.3c Reduce high school student use of e-cigarettes	22.1% ¹	11%
1.3d Reduce high school student use of smokeless tobacco	4.1% ¹	2%
1.4 Reduce middle school student use of any tobacco product	10.1% ²	5%
1.4a Reduce middle school student use of cigarettes	3.2% ²	1%
1.4b Reduce middle school student use of other combustible products	4.6% ^{2,7}	2%
1.4c Reduce middle school student use of e-cigarettes	5.7% ²	3%
1.4d Reduce middle school student use of smokeless tobacco	2.5% ²	1%
1.5 Increase e-cigarette cessation attempts by high school students in the last 12 months	Unknown ³	50%
Goal 2: Increase Protections Against Secondhand Smoke		
2.1 Increase the percentage of SC residents protected by smokefree municipal policies	42% ⁴	51%
2.2 Increase the number of counties that adopt comprehensive smokefree laws	8 ⁵	16
2.3 Increase the percentage of college, university, and technical school campuses with comprehensive smokefree policies	80%	90%
Goal 3: Reduce Adult Use of Tobacco Products		
3.1 Increase current tax on cigarettes	\$0.57	\$2.07
3.1a Increase tax on e-cigarettes and other tobacco products to achieve parity with the cigarette tax	Not Parity	Parity Achieved
3.2 Reduce adult use of tobacco products	28.8% ⁶	15%
3.2a Reduce adult use of cigarettes	18% ⁶	9%
3.2b Reduce adult use of other combustible products	6.7% ^{6,7}	3%
3.2c Reduce adult use of smokeless tobacco	3.9% ⁶	2%
3.3 Reduce tobacco product use among adults with low socioeconomic status	37.4% ⁶	19%
3.4 Increase the percentage of adult smokers advised to quit by healthcare professionals	53.8% ⁶	77%
3.5 Increase cigarette cessation attempts of adult smokers	55.9% ⁶	78%
3.6 Reduce young adult (18-24) use of tobacco products	26.4% ^{6,7}	13%
3.6a Reduce young adult (18-24) use of cigarettes	11.1% ⁶	6%
3.6b Reduce young adult (18-24) use of other combustible products	12.4% ^{6,7}	6%
3.6c Reduce young adult (18-24) use of e-cigarettes	17.4% ⁶	8%
3.6d Reduce young adult (18-24) use of smokeless tobacco	7.7% ⁶	4%
Goal 4: Strengthen Statewide Infrastructure		
4.1 Achieve incremental increases in state funding for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs to reach CDC-recommended funding level	\$5 million	\$51 million ⁸
4.2 Expand statewide surveillance capacity	Current	Upgraded
4.3 Create a formal, active, and well-trained advocacy team of statewide stakeholders	Does Not Exist	Established
4.4 Implement this plan as a living document to ensure ongoing stakeholder awareness of state goals, objectives, and recommended activities	n/a	Implemented

¹SC Youth Tobacco Survey 2019 ²SC Youth Tobacco Survey 2017 ³Unknown ⁴SC Association of Counties 2020 ⁵SC DHEC County Profiles

⁶SC Adult Tobacco Survey 2018 ⁷Compilation Data ⁸CDC

GOAL 1: Protect Youth from Tobacco Products

While cigarette smoking is down to a record low of 4.9%¹ among South Carolina high school students, the use rate of e-cigarettes is up to 22.1%¹ among high schoolers. In addition to concerns about youth e-cigarette use, we also need to maintain attention on other harmful combustible products like little cigars, cigarillos, and smokeless tobacco that are popular in rural areas and among some disparate populations. All of the objectives outlined below aim to address fundamental steps that can protect SC youth from all tobacco products: increasing barriers for purchase, raising the price through taxation, and increasing youth and parent education. The objectives are important protective measures against today's youth becoming the next generation of adults facing nicotine addiction and other dire health consequences of tobacco products.



Objective 1.1 Pass a state Tobacco Retailer Licensing (TRL) law

Objective 1.2 Increase tax on e-cigarettes and other tobacco products to achieve parity with the cigarette tax

Recommended Activities:

- ◆ Cultivate and train advocates to become community educators about the benefits of TRL and increasing the price of tobacco products
- ◆ Educate communities, local policy makers, and state lawmakers on the benefits of TRL and increasing the price of tobacco products
- ◆ Advocate with state lawmakers for state-level TRL and a comprehensive tobacco tax
- ◆ Conduct advocacy campaigns using social and traditional media to build public support for TRL

Objective 1.3, 1.4 Reduce high school and middle school student use of any tobacco product

Objective 1.5 Increase e-cigarette cessation attempts by high school students in the last 12 months

Recommended Activities:

- ◆ Advocate for efforts to ban flavored nicotine products at local, state, and national levels
- ◆ Provide vaping prevention education programs to parents of teens and other youth influencers
- ◆ Coordinate youth tobacco prevention activities with anti-tobacco media campaigns and national awareness days
- ◆ Build youth advocacy capacity to educate other youth and communities on the dangers of tobacco product use and dependence, especially e-cigarettes
- ◆ Promote evidence-based youth tobacco education curriculums for in-school health programs
- ◆ Provide tobacco screening training and tobacco cessation resources to behavioral health professionals

GOAL 2: Increase Protections Against Secondhand Smoke

Everyone deserves to breathe tobacco-free and smokefree air where they live, work, and play. In 2006, the Surgeon General concluded that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Since 2008, local governments in South Carolina have taken steps to assure tobacco-free and smokefree workplaces, playgrounds, and public buildings, yet more than half of our citizens are still unprotected. Youth transitioning from high school to college education in our state are experiencing secondhand smoke potentially for the first time, and with 20% of our higher education campuses still lacking policies, this is an important public health protection.



Objective 2.1 Increase the percentage of SC residents protected by smokefree municipal policies

Objective 2.2 Increase the number of counties that adopt comprehensive smokefree laws

Recommended Activities:

- ◆ Identify counties and municipalities with greatest potential for passing comprehensive smokefree policy, especially those with a history of board/commission addressing community health issues and in rural areas
- ◆ Build, train, and strengthen local coalitions to advocate for comprehensive smokefree policies with a priority focus in rural communities and behavioral health settings
- ◆ Educate communities about benefits of comprehensive smokefree policies using an updated business case for having a 100% smokefree workplace

Objective 2.3 Increase the percentage of college, university, and technical school campuses with comprehensive smokefree policies

Recommended Activities:

- ◆ Educate campus policy makers, wellness staff, and school leaders on the positive impacts of tobacco-free and smokefree campus policies and the components of a comprehensive policy
- ◆ Disseminate model policy templates to key campus policy makers
- ◆ Cultivate and train students to become advocates for effective campus policies

GOAL 3: Reduce Adult Use of Tobacco Products

While adult cigarette smoking has steadily declined in South Carolina, our adult smoking rate of 18%⁷ still remains higher than the national rate of 14%. The rise of e-cigarette use in young adults age 18-24 is especially concerning because of the potent nicotine content they are consuming while their brain has not yet fully developed. This changing landscape of tobacco product use demands proven interventions to continue helping adults of all ages quit smoking and vaping. Improving access to cessation services is a fundamental step along with targeted strategies to help those who are poor, medically underserved, and who struggle to quit using tobacco products due to mental health comorbidities and/or high levels of addiction.



Objective 3.1 Increase current tax on cigarettes, and increase tax on e-cigarettes and other tobacco products to achieve parity with the cigarette tax

Recommended Activities:

- ◆ Educate state lawmakers about the benefits of increasing the price of tobacco products
- ◆ Advocate with state lawmakers for a comprehensive tobacco tax

Objective 3.2 Reduce adult use of tobacco products

Objective 3.3 Reduce tobacco product use among adults with low socioeconomic status

Objective 3.4 Increase the percentage of adult smokers advised to quit by healthcare professionals

Objective 3.5 Increase cigarette cessation attempts of adult smokers

Recommended Activities:

- ◆ Ensure Medicaid providers are aware that cessation services are free to clients
- ◆ Support advocacy efforts to ban menthol and other flavored cigarettes, small cigars, and cigarillos
- ◆ Promote evidence-based workplace cessation programs
- ◆ Train healthcare providers in cancer centers, rural health clinics, and federally qualified health centers on best practices for delivering tobacco cessation services
- ◆ Implement in-patient tobacco cessation services in cancer centers, rural health clinics, primary care practices, and federally qualified health centers
- ◆ Establish an e-referral system in healthcare facilities to the SC Tobacco Quitline
- ◆ Develop media campaigns to promote the SC Tobacco Quitline services to low SES communities
- ◆ Offer tobacco screening trainings and cessation resources to behavioral health professionals

Objective 3.6 Reduce young adult (18-24) use of tobacco products

Recommended Activities:

- ◆ Collaborate with college, university, and technical school student health centers to offer and promote evidence-based cessation services
- ◆ Develop student engagement opportunities to promote vaping cessation at colleges, universities, and technical schools

GOAL 4: Strengthen Statewide Infrastructure

Achieving tobacco prevention and control goals requires a strong statewide infrastructure consisting of adequate funding, updated tools, and coordinated advocacy efforts. While we know that achieving full funding at the CDC recommended level is unattainable, we still strive to seek more funding. Enhancing current surveillance systems will ensure the collection of meaningful and nuanced data to help direct program decisions and support funding requests and



advocacy efforts. Developing a thriving advocacy team will be vital for seeking policy change at the local and state level. All activities that strengthen our statewide infrastructure will increase our capacity as a state to reduce preventable disease, disability, and death due to tobacco and nicotine product use in South Carolina.

Objective 4.1 Achieve incremental increases in state funding for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs to reach CDC-recommended funding level

Recommended Activities:

- ◆ Advocate for increased state funding to SC DHEC Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control through tobacco product taxes and Master Settlement Agreement allocations

Objective 4.2 Expand statewide surveillance capacity

Recommended Activities:

- ◆ Update SC DHEC's surveillance models and assumptions and develop new survey techniques
- ◆ Update measures for tracking population level data
- ◆ Track data to determine health and economic burdens caused by secondhand smoke
- ◆ Increase school participation in the SC YTS by working with SC Department of Education and educate school personnel on law SC Code of Laws 44-128-20 requiring the state to collect SC YTS data

Objective 4.3 Create a formal, structured, and well-trained advocacy team of statewide stakeholders

Recommended Activities:

- ◆ Develop a statewide Advocacy Team of diverse stakeholders to engage in grassroots advocacy
- ◆ Conduct advocacy training sessions for the statewide Advocacy Team
- ◆ Plan education sessions with community members, local policy makers, and state lawmakers

Objective 4.4 Implement this plan as a living document to ensure ongoing stakeholder awareness of state goals, objectives, and recommended activities

Recommended Activities:

- ◆ Offer presentations to stakeholder groups throughout South Carolina to introduce the plan and to seek and achieve stakeholder buy-in
- ◆ Conduct an annual stakeholder survey to ascertain stakeholder activities aligned with the plan
- ◆ Upon completion of Year 2 (June 30, 2023), conduct a plan review and revise as needed to adapt to the changing tobacco environment with specific consideration of emerging tobacco products

Glossary

Advocate: to educate the public, policy makers, and lawmakers about proven and effective approaches that bring about a desired change (e.g. reduction in use of tobacco products)

CDC: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Combustible Products: tobacco products that require burning of the product for consumption such as cigarettes, cigars, or pipes

Comprehensive Smokefree Policy: 100% smokefree indoor and/or outdoor environment as defined in a sustainable formal document

E-cigarette: a device that has the shape of a cigarette, cigar, or pen and does not contain tobacco. It uses a battery and contains a solution of nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals*

Emerging Tobacco Products: New products introduced to the tobacco product landscape such as new types of e-cigarettes, heated tobacco products (creates nicotine aerosol by heating instead of burning), dissolvable nicotine-containing products, and others

Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC): a community-based health care provider that receives funds from the Health Resources & Services Administration Health Center Program to provide primary care services in underserved areas

Living Document: a document that can be updated as necessary

Low Socioeconomic Status (Low SES): refers to individuals with low educational attainment and household income below 100% of the federal poverty level (FPL)

Other Combustible Products: Refers to cigars, cigarillos, and pipes

Other Tobacco Products (OTP): South Carolina Department of Revenue defines this as “cigars, cheroots, stogies, perique, granulated, plug cut, crimp cut, ready rubbed, and other smoking tobacco, snuff, snuff flour, cavendish, plug and twist tobacco, fine-cut, and other chewing tobacco, shorts, refuse scraps, clippings, cuttings and sweepings of tobacco, and other kinds and forms of tobacco, prepared in a manner to be suitable for chewing or smoking in a pipe or otherwise, or both for chewing or smoking.”*

Partners Supporting Implementation: organizations, groups, and other entities supporting the Goals and Objectives in this plan

SC ATS: South Carolina Adult Tobacco Survey

SC DHEC: South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

SC YTS: South Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey

Secondhand Smoke (SHS): smoke that comes from the burning of a tobacco product and smoke that is exhaled by smokers

Smokefree Municipal Policies: local ordinances passed in SC municipalities to protect the public from exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke and vapor in indoor and/or outdoor settings

Smokeless Tobacco: chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip

Tobacco Product(s): broad term that is inclusive of cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and “Other Tobacco Products” and “Emerging Tobacco Products” as defined above*

Tobacco Retail Licensing (TRL): a policy that requires retail outlets to obtain a license to sell tobacco products

*See page 11 for model definitions for SC Code of Laws

Model Definitions of Tobacco Products for SC Code of Laws

The following model definitions for SC Code of Laws were developed and endorsed in 2020 by the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, and Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids:

Electronic Smoking Device (referenced in this plan as e-cigarette): any device that may be used to deliver any aerosolized or vaporized substance to the person inhaling from the device, including, but not limited to, an e-cigarette, e-cigar, e-pipe, vape pen or e-hookah. Electronic smoking device includes any component, part, or accessory of the device, and also includes any substance intended to be aerosolized or vaporized during the use of the device, whether or not the substance contains nicotine. Electronic smoking device does not include drugs, devices, or combination products authorized for sale by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, as those terms are defined in the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

Other Tobacco Products (OTP): all other tobacco products not included in the cigarette or e-cigarette tax, including, but not limited to snuff, chewing and smoking tobacco, and cigars.

Tobacco Product: (1) any product containing, made of, or derived from tobacco or nicotine that is intended for human consumption or is likely to be consumed, whether inhaled, absorbed, or ingested by any other means, including, but not limited to, a cigarette, a cigar, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or snus; (2) any electronic smoking device as defined in this section and any substances that may be aerosolized or vaporized by such device, whether or not the substance contains nicotine; or (3) any component, part, or accessory of (1) or (2), whether or not any of these contains tobacco or nicotine, including but not limited to filters, rolling papers, blunt or hemp wraps, and pipes. Tobacco Product does not include drugs, devices, or combination products authorized for sale by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, as those terms are defined in the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

South Carolina Tobacco Prevention and Control Stakeholders

Partners Supporting Implementation

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network	SC DHEC Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control
American Heart Association	Smoke Free Lowcountry Coalition*
American Lung Association	Smokefree SC
Just Say Something*	Tobacco Free York County Coalition*
SC Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics	

Proposed Partners for Recommended Activities

Behavioral Health Services Organizations	SC Association of School Nurses
Chambers of Commerce	SC Cancer Centers
City/Town/County Councils	SC Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services and county commissions
Colleges, Universities, & Technical Schools	SC Health Associations
Federally Qualified Health Centers	SC Health Insurers
Leadership of faith-based organizations (state, regional, district)	SC Medical Associations
Local Coalitions	SC PTOs and PTAs
Municipal and Small Business Associations	SC School Board Association
Parents of Teens & Other Youth Influencers	SC School Improvement Councils
Primary Care, Pediatric, & Rural Health Practices	Workplace policy decision-makers
Regional Councils of Government	
SC Association of Counties	

Participants in the January 2021 Stakeholder Forum

Sharon Biggers, SC DHEC Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control
Kathleen Cartmell, Clemson University Department of Public Health Sciences
Alexandra Greenwalt, Keystone Substance Abuse Services
Dr. Pam Imm, LRADAC Community Services
Beth Johnson, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
Dr. David Keely, Tobacco-Free York County Coalition
Irin Guda McCarthy, Upper Midlands Rural Health Network
Karen Nichols, Upper Midlands Rural Health Network
Chris Rollinson, Dorchester County Alcohol and Drug Commission
Kankana Sengupta, SC DHEC Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control
Brandi Shepherd, Rubicon Family Counseling Services
Onjewel Smith, American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation
Jim Thrasher, University of South Carolina Arnold School of Public Health
Christian Barnes-Young, SC Department of Mental Health

*2021 Smokefree SC Point of Sale IMPACT grantee working to educate local communities about the benefits of TRL and develop local TRL ordinances

Key Resources

2015-2020 Plan for a Tobacco-Free South Carolina Final Evaluation Report, www.smokefreesc.org/ourwork

American Lung Association, www.lung.org

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, www.fightcancer.org

American Heart Association, www.heart.org

Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights, www.nonsmokersrights.org

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, www.tobaccofreekids.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/tobacco

Public Health Law Center, www.publichealthlawcenter.org

South Carolina Tobacco Quitline, www.quitnowsc.org

Truth Initiative, www.truthinitiative.org

Data Sources

- 1 “South Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey Results.” South Carolina Department of Health and Environment Control Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control. 2019. https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2019-SC-YTS-Detailed-Tables_7.14.2020.pdf
- 2 “2017 South Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey Results.” South Carolina Department of Health and Environment Control Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control. 2017. https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/docs/Health/docs/Tobacco/2017%20SC%20YTS%20Detailed%20Tables_final.pdf
NOTE: the 2019 SC YTS did not have statistically significant data from middle school students, thus the 2017 SC YTS is used for the middle school student baseline
- 3 Unknown - data will be collected for the first time in 2021
- 4 “County Profiles.” South Carolina Association of Counties. 2020. <https://www.sccounties.org/research-information/county-profiles>
- 5 “SC Smoke-free Workplace Ordinances.” South Carolina Department of Health and Environment Control Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control. 2020. <https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/smokefreeworkplace.pdf>
- 6 “2017-2018 South Carolina Adult Tobacco Survey.” South Carolina Department of Health and Environment Control Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control. 2018. https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2017-2018-SC-ATS_Detailed%20Tables_FINAL.pdf
- 7 Compilation Data - these numbers were derived from the compilation of multiple data points
- 8 “Recommended Funding Levels, by State: South Carolina.” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Office on Smoking and Health. 2014. https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/best_practices/pdfs/2014/states/southcarolina.pdf

