

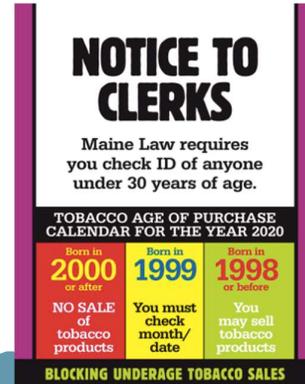
# Maine Tobacco Prevention Success Story

Addressing Youth Tobacco Use in Franklin County Through Retailer Engagement

## Summary

In the past year, Healthy Community Coalition (HCC) has focused on preventing youth tobacco use by engaging with tobacco retailers, learning about challenges and barriers faced enforcing Tobacco 21 and providing and promoting training and education.

According to 2019 MIYHS data 9.1% of Franklin county high school students reported using tobacco products in the past 30 days compared to 7.1% of high school students state wide. One aspect of preventing underage use of tobacco is preventing underage sales. The US CDC includes retailer education and enforcement of retailer sales laws as key elements of a comprehensive tobacco control program to restrict youth access to tobacco and prevent initiation of its use.



## Results/ Success

While conducting assessments HCC staff learned that many local tobacco retailers were completely unaware of the Federal Tobacco 21 Law and some retailers still had 18+ materials. One retailer reported learning of Tobacco 21 from another retailer, and having never learned about the original Maine Tobacco 21 law. Each retailer that HCC staff worked with was eager to receive updated materials and learn more about the "No Buts!" online training course for their staff. While these assessments revealed a significant gap in knowledge and capabilities to prevent underage tobacco purchases it initiated important conversations and educational opportunities that retailers were open to, creating immediate environmental changes and promoting long-term solutions through education and training.

## Intervention/ Program Description

As part of MaineHealth's Center for Tobacco Independence Tobacco Prevention initiative Healthy Community Coalition set a goal to complete 5 assessments with local tobacco retailers. This goal was set in order to engage retailers and learn about the understanding and readiness to enforce Tobacco 21. HCC initiated conversations with 14 tobacco retailers in Franklin County, completing assessments and follow up with education. This education included providing Tobacco 21 materials like posters and decals, and providing training resources like "No Buts!"

HCC Staff saw immediate results when engaging retailers reporting that a number of sites immediately replaced outdated signage and materials upon receiving them.

## For More Information Contact:

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