

# A Maine Tobacco Prevention Success Story, Understanding Tobacco Use Among New Mainers

In the spring and summer of 2022, four entities conducted assessments to learn the tobacco-related needs of immigrants living in the state of Maine. These efforts aim to inform and improve tobacco prevention and treatment in Maine by engaging stakeholders from the immigrant communities.

CTI's 2021 equity assessment concluded that an equity strategy for tobacco prevention must:

1. Center tobacco prevention through a racial equity lens (race-centered, not race-exclusive);
2. Aim to move interventions upstream to address root causes;
3. Focus on community building of resources, capacity and power sharing to adequately address tobacco inequities.



New Mainers from 23 different countries, speaking 9 different languages, participated in a mix of focus groups, interviews, and surveys.



The tobacco needs assessments were conducted by the following partners with CTI support; Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services, City of Portland, Healthy Communities of the Capital Area and Capital Area New Mainers Project, and AK Health and Social Services.

The assessments included a combination of stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and surveys, often employing the use of translators and working to meet people in the places they frequent.

**“There is no one reason New Mainers might try tobacco. However, the most common reason cited by respondents was to cope with the stress of moving to a new country.” – City of Portland Public Health**

## Results:

The assessments shed an important light on how the stress associated with relocating and adjusting to life in a new country can contribute to tobacco use. They also reinforced the importance of considering community, and cultural factors in reaching individuals with prevention and treatment services. The results of the data show that place, person and language-specific programming is essential to reaching people effectively.

## Impact:

The results may be used by tobacco prevention and treatment practitioners statewide to inform current and future programming and interventions. The information gathered by partnering with community led programs will be critical in advancing health equity to ensure that all people have a fair and just opportunity to be tobacco free.

The full reports can be found here: <https://ctimaine.org/facts/tobacco-reports/>

### For More Information Contact Us At:

Center for Tobacco Independence  
110 Free St, Portland, ME 04101  
[ctimaine.org](http://ctimaine.org) (207) 662-7154

MaineHealth  
**Center for Tobacco  
Independence**



Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention  
Department of Health and Human Services