

BIG TOBACCO FOUND GUILTY & FORCED TO FINALLY TELL THE TRUTH.

TOBACCO STOPS WITH ME. POINT-OF-SALE CORRECTIVE STATEMENTS

OVERVIEW

In a landmark 2006 ruling, U.S. District Court Judge Gladys Kessler found tobacco companies guilty of breaking civil racketeering laws, engaging in ongoing fraud and lying to the public about the dangers of smoking.

Starting October 1, 2023, nearly 200,000 tobacco retailers across the country must display signs with corrective statements from the tobacco industry in their stores. This is the long-awaited result of an unprecedented landmark ruling from the Department of Justice. Examples of these point-of-sale corrective statements include:

- Smoking kills, on average, 1,200 Americans each day.
- Cigarette companies intentionally designed cigarettes with enough nicotine to create and sustain addiction.
- All cigarettes cause cancer, lung disease, heart attack and premature death – lights, low tar, ultra lights and naturals.
- Altria, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco, Lorillard and Philip Morris USA intentionally designed cigarettes to make them more addictive.
- When you smoke, the nicotine actually changes the brain – that’s why quitting is so hard.
- Children exposed to secondhand smoke are at an increased risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), acute respiratory infections, ear problems, severe asthma and reduced lung function.

The requirement to post these corrective statements at the point of sale follows requirements to publish the same statements in newspapers and on television (which ran from 2017–2018), on the tobacco companies websites (beginning in November 2018 and running in perpetuity) and on cigarette packs (beginning in November 2018 and running for two weeks at a time, three times a year over the course of two years).

RAMP-UP PERIOD: Prior to June 30, 2023	This is when the tobacco companies will modify their existing contracts with tobacco retailers to include requirements to post the corrective statements.
POSTING PERIOD: July 1–September 30, 2023	This is when the initial round of signs must be installed.
IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD: October 1–June 30, 2025	This is when the signs must be displayed.
ROTATION PERIOD: July 1, 2024–September 30, 2024	Signs will rotate between July 1, 2024–September 30, 2024.

IMPACT ON OKLAHOMANS

A recent survey of Oklahomans shows that Big Tobacco's deception has worked in the industry's favor. Their lies have fostered confusion about addiction and the adverse health effects of tobacco products. As a result, tobacco continues to be a problem in Oklahoma.

- **Smoking kills 7,500 Oklahoma adults each year.**

Source: Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (<https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/oklahoma>)

- **1 in 5 Oklahoma children is exposed to secondhand smoke at home.**

Source: Tobacco Stops With Me (<https://stopswithme.com/secondhand-smoke/>)

- **19,100 kids (under 18) try cigarettes for the first time each year in Oklahoma.**

Source: Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (<https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/oklahoma>)

- **Smoking is directly responsible for \$1.88 billion in annual healthcare costs in Oklahoma.**

Source: Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (<https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/oklahoma>)

- **A majority of Oklahomans (more than 60%) support stronger policies and believe that state lawmakers should maintain a healthy distance from tobacco lobbyists.**

Source: Oklahoma Tobacco Research Center

(<http://otrc.stephensoncancercenter.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=3B5au6MUOQQ%3D&tabid=10051&portalid=130>)

By implementing effective control and prevention policy for today's tobacco challenges, we can save generations of Oklahomans from deception and death.

- **Support a comprehensive statewide smokefree policy:** A comprehensive smokefree policy would prohibit smoking in worksites, restaurants and bars — the three primary sources of secondhand smoke exposure for nonsmokers. More than half of states have comprehensive smokefree policies on the books, but Oklahoma is not one of them. Currently, Oklahoma state law does not allow communities or counties to enact smokefree policies that go beyond what the state has regulated, which is commonly referred to as preemption.
- **Prohibit smoking in cars when children are present:** Smoking in cars generates highly concentrated levels of secondhand smoke. Exposure to these levels of secondhand smoke leaves infants and children at great risk for serious health issues such as lower respiratory illness, ear infections, asthma, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and cancer. It also makes kids more likely to experiment with smoking.
- **Prohibit smoking in clubs and bars:** Removing smoking from clubs and bars will help protect both employees and patrons from the harms of secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke contains thousands of toxic chemicals, including 70 that cause cancer. These contaminants accumulate in confined spaces, making it even more of a toxic environment.
- **Restrict the sale of flavored tobacco products:** Many flavored tobacco products appeal to and are marketed to kids.

TALKING POINTS

Big Tobacco is finally forced to tell the truth.

- After more than 20 years of litigation, a federal court is forcing tobacco companies to display corrective statements at 200,000 tobacco retailers highlighting information they long fought to keep from the public: the dangers of smoking and secondhand smoke and how they manipulate their products to create and sustain addiction.
- Lorillard Inc., Altria (owner of Philip Morris USA) and R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. (owner of Winston-Salem) were found to have committed civil fraud and to be in violation of the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act.
- The tobacco companies were ordered by the court to issue point-of-sale corrective statements to address this fraud and prevent future harm. The tobacco industry has been lying to Oklahomans for decades through deceitful marketing.
- Tobacco companies suppressed research and destroyed documents.
- Tobacco companies manipulated the amount of nicotine in their products to increase and perpetuate addiction.
- Tobacco companies distorted the truth about “low tar,” “light” and “natural” cigarettes to discourage smokers from quitting.
- According to Judge Gladys Kessler, tobacco companies “have marketed and sold their lethal products with zeal, with deception, with a single-minded focus on their financial success and without regard for the human tragedy or social costs that success exacted” and “abused the legal system to achieve their goal – to make money with little, if any, regard for individual illness and suffering, soaring health costs, or the integrity of the legal system.”

Tobacco use takes a terrible toll on Oklahomans.

- Tobacco continues to be the leading cause of preventable death and disease for Oklahomans.
- Each year in Oklahoma, tobacco use is responsible for 7,500 deaths.
- Smoking costs Oklahoma an estimated \$1.62 billion in excess health care costs and \$2.1 billion in lost productivity.

HOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Ready to make a positive change in your community? Take a stand — help clear the air for future generations.

Here are a few ways to help:

1. Become a social influencer. Post about the necessary policy changes on your social media to encourage friends and family to join the fight.
2. Ask for change. Contact your legislator, local TSET grantee or a prominent leader in your school or neighborhood to discuss health improvement opportunities in your community.
3. Stay up to date. Receive monthly newsletters from Tobacco Stops With Me by [signing up online](#).

Together, we can inspire change across Oklahoma!