

Amendments to Tobacco and Vaping-related Statutes

Additional Background Information

Public Health Background

- The widespread use of tobacco products and their adverse health impacts has been a longstanding public health concern.
- Newfoundland and Labrador has made significant progress in reducing rates of smoking, but vaping products have introduced new issues, especially to youth.
- According to the Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drugs Survey (CSTADS), many youth perceive e-cigarettes as safer than traditional cigarettes. Approximately [60% of Canadian students felt there were great risks to smoking cigarettes on a regular basis, whereas 48% felt this way about e-cigarettes.](#)

Public Health Background (continued)

- [Emerging research](#) has shown that people who start smoking/vaping at a younger age are more likely to develop a severe addiction and find it difficult to quit.
- Individuals exposed to nicotine through cigarettes and/or vaping during adolescence are at a greater risk for experiencing negative effects on the parts of the brain that control attention, learning, working memory, motor coordination, mood, and impulse control. Once an addictive substance activates the reward circuit in an adolescent, there is an increased risk for continued engagement and future addiction to other drugs.
- Vaping products have [not been approved in Canada as smoking cessation aids](#), as there is limited research to show their effectiveness. [While vaping products contain less harmful chemicals than a traditional cigarette](#), the long-term effects of vaping are currently unknown.

Public Health Statistics

- The rates of smoking, and diseases associated with smoking, remain higher in Newfoundland and Labrador than any other province.
- [Statistics Canada, in 2021](#): 13.4% of residents aged 12 and older in Newfoundland and Labrador smoked daily or occasionally, compared to 11.8% for all Canadians.
- [2021-22 CSTADS Report](#): 9% of NL students in grades 10-12 indicated having used a cigarette in the past 30 days, compared to 7% for Canada.
- [2021-22 CSTADS Report](#): 40% of grades 10-12 NL students reported using an e-cigarette in the past 30 days, compared to 24% for Canada.

Public Health Statistics (continued)

- In 2012, [75% of Inuit men and 74% of Inuit women aged 18 or older in Inuit Nunangat](#) (which includes parts of Northern coastal Labrador, Northern Quebec, the territory of Nunavut and the western edge of the Northwest Territories) reported that they smoked. Most were daily smokers—the daily/occasional breakdown was 64% / 11% for men, and 64% / 9% for women.
- Out of all ten provinces, [NL has the highest age-standardized mortality rates per 100,000](#) for cancers, diseases of the heart, cerebrovascular diseases, and diabetes. The risk of developing these diseases and suffering a poor prognosis are both heightened by using tobacco products.

Prior Legislative Action

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has made a number of advancements and changes to reduce the number of people smoking and the associated health impacts:

- 2005 - creation of the [Smoke-Free Environment Act, 2005](#), which included a ban on smoking in bars and bingo halls.
- 2011 - amendments to the [Smoke-Free Environment Act, 2005](#), banning smoking in any vehicle "while a person under 16 years of age is present."
- 2022 - [In April 2022, the Provincial Smoking Cessation Program was enhanced](#) by extending the length of treatment available and reducing client co-pays from \$75 to \$18 per 12 weeks of treatment. This program supports individuals living with low income to quit smoking and vaping by improving access to smoking cessation medications and nicotine replacement therapies. The program is administered through NLPDP Access, Foundation or 65Plus Plans.
- 2023 - changes to the [Smoke-Free Workplace Policy](#) prohibiting smoking/vaping on all government property, including buildings, grounds, vehicles, and parking lots.