

Lowell Tobacco Control Report

December of 2020

Prepared by: Cesar Pungirum, M.M., J.D.
Program Director

Lowell

Inspections

I have completed 21 in-store inspections this month. Many retailers had questions about the new law requirements, but no violations were found. I took the opportunity to remind retailers to submit their renewal tobacco applications or fix pending issues related to them. Most of my time this month was spent processing tobacco permit renewal applications.

Pricing Surveys

No pricing surveys conducted this month.

Implementation of the new state law: An Act Modernizing Tobacco Control

Most establishments submitted the acknowledgements page I had added to the tobacco permit application. This page includes the major elements of the new law, which the applicant needs to acknowledge by initialing each statement.

Compliance Checks

Given the significant increase in the number of COVID-19 cases across the state, particularly in Lowell and Lawrence, it is uncertain when we will be resuming compliance checks.

Tobacco Permit Renewal

Out of the 118 establishments 105 submitted applications and their permits were issued and mailed out. Two establishments went out of business and were replaced by new stores. One of them has already submitted an application and the other contemplates that possibility in a near future. Four establishments decided to stop selling tobacco products. Among them is Mill City Tobacco. I plan to conduct follow up inspections to ensure they have removed all tobacco and vaping products from the premises. Five establishments have not submitted renewal applications yet. Of these, 3 have outstanding taxes that need to be paid before the permits may be issued. One establishment submitted an application, but it's still dealing with unpaid taxes. Finally, one application has been received but not processed yet.

Leading With Race

I attended an all-day virtual statewide quarterly meeting on December 9th and a significant portion of it was devoted to learning about structural racism.