



**TOWN OF LINCOLN**  
MIDDLESEX COUNTY MASSACHUSETTS

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TOWN OFFICES  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
16 Lincoln Road  
Lincoln, MA 01773  
Phone: 781-259-2613  
Fax: 781-259-8729  
carrolle@lincolntown.org

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Frederick L. Mansfield, M.D., Chairman  
Steven R. Kanner, M.D.  
Patricia E. Miller

October 16, 2019

The Board of Health supports Gov. Baker's temporary ban on vaping materials whether for nicotine or marijuana products. The specific cause of the lung toxicity is as yet unknown. Everyone should be cautioned about using any vaping products as well from street sellers, where there is even less information available about the chemicals involved in the vaping liquids.

Lincoln Board of Health  
Frederick L. Mansfield, M.D., Chairman  
Steven R. Kanner, M.D.  
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Dear Providers,

On September 24, 2019, Governor Charles D. Baker declared a public health emergency in the Commonwealth due to severe disease associated with the use of e-cigarettes and vaping products and the epidemic of e-cigarette use among youth. As of September 19, 2019, the CDC had confirmed 530 cases across 39 states and U.S. territories, including seven fatalities in six different states. The commonality in all reported cases is a history of vaping, and a history of using vaping products containing tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), nicotine, or a combination of both.

On September 11, 2019, I declared possible cases of unexplained vaping-associated pulmonary disease to be immediately reportable to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and further authorized DPH to conduct surveillance activities necessary for the investigation, monitoring, control and prevention of this disease. As a result of this declaration, 61 preliminary intake reports have been received by DPH to date.

There is still much to learn about the causes and associated dangers relating to vaping. With the goal of protecting the health of Massachusetts residents, and in accordance with Governor Baker's public health emergency declaration, I issued the following order:

The sale or display of all e-cigarettes and vaping products to consumers in retail establishments, online, and through any other means, including all non-flavored and flavored vaping products, including mint and menthol, including tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and any other cannabinoid, is prohibited in the Commonwealth. The following guidance details initial actions for residents of the Commonwealth to proceed with this order. DPH will continue to update the guidance as necessary.

Your patients—both youth and adults—will need your help adjusting to this change. This may be especially true for patients who have a behavioral health or substance use issue. People who vape with the goal of reducing the amount of cigarettes they smoke should be steered toward FDA-approved options for nicotine replacement therapy. Supporting them through the process of quitting vaping and smoking is crucial. As a healthcare provider, you already know the most effective way to quit tobacco and nicotine is to pair medication with counseling, and that this complementary management can triple the chances of successfully quitting. On the next page, we provide resources to help you guide your patients toward both of these options.

For those with pediatric and young adult patients, please pay particular attention to the recent resources related to vaping and youth, as we know that many of the nation's youth begin smoking before the age of 18. This early adoption of tobacco and

nicotine can harm the developing brain—potentially leading to negative physical and mental health outcomes.

In your continued efforts to help your patients lead healthier lives, including through quitting vaping products or combustible cigarettes, I would like to point you all to the resources from the Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Programs at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, which are provided on the next page.

Sincerely,

Dr. Monica Bharel, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health

**Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program**  
**Massachusetts Department of Public Health**  
**Clinical Provider Resources for**  
**Vaping Cessation and Smoking Cessation**