WHAT TYPES OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS ARE FLAVORED?
Flavored tobacco products include cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, blunt wraps, electronic cigarettes and shisha, the tobacco used in hookah. These products help the tobacco industry get around the FDA’s 2009 ban of cigarettes with flavors other than menthol. Menthol is the only flavor allowed in cigarettes.

E-cigarettes also come in a variety of youth-friendly flavors. JUUL, the most popular e-cigarette on the market, resembles a USB flash drive. These devices deliver a high dose of nicotine with a modern design that is easy to conceal.

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON FLAVORS USED IN TOBACCO PRODUCTS?
Cigars, chewing tobacco, blunt wraps, electronic cigarettes and shisha are sold in fruit, candy, dessert and novelty flavors. Popular flavors include chocolate, piña colada, apple, grape, berry, cotton candy, bubble gum, mango, mint/wintergreen and menthol. The same flavorings used in tobacco products are also used in candy and Kool-Aid drink mixes.

Menthol flavored tobacco is easier to start and harder to quit. Tobacco companies add menthol to tobacco products to cool the throat and make them taste better.

WHO USES FLAVORED TOBACCO PRODUCTS?
The tobacco industry uses flavored tobacco to attract the next generation of smokers. Young people are much more likely to use flavored tobacco products than adults. In fact, 80 percent of youth who use tobacco use fruit, candy or menthol flavored tobacco. Studies show that young people perceive flavored tobacco products as tasting better and being safer than unflavored products, even though they are just as dangerous and addictive.
WHY DO CERTAIN POPULATIONS USE MENTHOL TOBACCO AT A HIGHER RATE?

The tobacco industry has a long history of targeting the African American community, women, LGBTQ and youth with menthol tobacco marketing. Tobacco industry documents show targeted efforts to market menthol products to African Americans, LGBTQ communities and youth. 9, 10 Menthol makes tobacco easier to start smoking and harder to quit. 4

HOW DOES THIS IMPACT COMMUNITIES?

As a result of industry targeting, African Americans smoke menthol cigarettes at higher rates and are more likely to suffer from tobacco related diseases. In fact, 88 percent of African American adults who smoke use menthol, compared to 25 percent of adult smokers overall. 11 Menthol smoking significantly reduces quitting success among African American smokers. 12

In Minnesota, 34 percent of teen smokers smoke menthol. 13 Nationally, 70 percent of LGBTQ youth smokers smoke menthol. 14

WHAT CAN COMMUNITIES DO ABOUT FLAVORED PRODUCTS?

While the FDA banned flavored cigarettes other than menthol in 2009, the ban does not affect other tobacco products. Because the FDA ruling does not prevent local communities from addressing other types of flavored tobacco products, state and local governments can adopt laws that restrict the sale of flavored tobacco products within their jurisdiction. Limiting the sale of products, setting a minimum price or creating a minimum pack size are some of the ways communities can protect their youth by making flavored tobacco products less accessible and less appealing.

In Minnesota, Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Shoreview, St. Louis Park, Robbinsdale, Duluth, Falcon Heights, Mendota Heights, Lauderdale, Arden Hills, Lilydale, Golden Valley, Rushford, New Hope and Hennepin County restrict the sale of flavored tobacco products. Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Duluth, Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Mendota Heights, Arden Hills, Lilydale, Golden Valley and Hennepin County also restrict the sale of menthol products.