

Evaluating the Impact of Flavor Policies on Commercial Tobacco Retailers in Ramsey County

60 tobacco retailers checked in 8 Ramsey County cities

30 in cities **with** a flavored commercial tobacco policy

Arden Hills, Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Roseville, Shoreview

30 in cities **without** a flavored commercial tobacco policy

Maplewood, New Brighton, Vadnais Heights

Flavored Product Accessibility

Cities **without** a flavor policy had more tobacco retailers

↑15%

Number of retailers that sold flavored products (out of 30):

Flavor policy: **11**

No flavor policy: **27**



Most retailers in cities **with** flavor policies = in compliance

Flavor Policy = Reduced Accessibility

More Retailer Education Needed

In cities **with** flavored tobacco policies, a few retailers were still selling flavored nicotine pouches. They are marketed as “tobacco-free nicotine,” which can lead retailers to believe they are not regulated like other tobacco products.



A tobacco shop was also selling nicotine-free flavored vape juice, which was against the city’s language prohibiting imitation tobacco products.

Lack of retailer knowledge:

If “tobacco-free” or “nicotine-free,” rules still apply

Age Verification Enforcement

45% of age-restricted tobacco shops had 21+ signage

83% of shops **without** signage were in cities without flavor policies



ANSR’s 20-year-old interns were only asked to verify their age at

1 out of **11**

21+ tobacco shops checked

Age-Restricted = All ages welcome

Conclusions:

- To reduce accessibility and protect youth most effectively, cities should adopt comprehensive policies that end the sale of all flavored commercial tobacco products
- Nicotine pouches and other “tobacco-free” or “nicotine-free” products pose challenges to compliance, and more retailer education is needed
- There is room for improvement on age verification in 21+ tobacco shops in Ramsey County