

Tobacco & Vaping 101:

Maine 2023

Lawmakers are often bombarded with misinformation on the products used by adults in their state. This annual analysis provides up-to-date data on the adults who use cigarettes and e-cigarette products in Maine. This information also includes data on youth use, impacts of e-cigarettes and analyses of existing tobacco monies.

Key Points:

- In 2021, 15.6 percent of adults were currently smoking in Maine. This is a 5.5 percent decrease from 2020.
- In 2021 (among all Maine adults), 6.3 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds, 22.2 percent of 25–44-year-olds, 19.4 percent of 45–64-year-olds, and 7.8 percent of adults aged 65 years or older were currently smoking combustible cigarettes.
- Among all adults earning \$25,000 or less in 2021, 36.5 percent were currently smoking compared to only 9.5 percent of adults earning \$50,000 or more.
- Among all smoking adults in 2021 in Maine, 94 percent were White, 2.6 percent were Multiracial, 1.9 percent were Hispanic, and 1.8 percent were American Indian/Native Alaskan.
- Cigarette excise taxes in Maine disproportionately impact low-income persons and lower educated adults, while failing to significantly reduce smoking rates among that class.
- The percent of Maine adults earning \$25,000 or less that were smoking increased by 16.4 percent between 2005 and 2021, while the percent of adults earning \$50,000 or more that were smoking decreased by 26.9 percent during the same period.
- Among Mainers who did not graduate high school, smoking rates increased by 3.3 percent, yet rates among adults with a college degree decreased by 29.4 percent.
- In 2021, 5.8 percent of adults reported past-month e-cigarette use, which was a 41.5 percent increase from 2017.
- Youth vaping seems to have peaked in 2019 when 20 percent of youth reported current e-cigarette use. Between 2019 and 2022, current e-cigarette use declined by 53 percent.
- Traditional tobacco use among youth is at record lows. In 2022, only 1.9 percent of U.S. youth reported current cigar use, 1.6 percent reported current combustible cigarette use and, 1.3 percent reported using smokeless tobacco products.
- The introduction of e-cigarettes has not led to increases in cigarette smoking, but rather, correlates with significant declines in smoking rates among young adults.
- Between 2007 and 2018, smoking rates among Maine adults aged 18 to 24 years old declined by 49.8 percent. Since 2018, young adult smoking rates have decreased another 56.3 percent, with average annual declines of 21.3 percent.
- Maine woefully underfunds programs to prevent youth use of tobacco and/or vapor products and help adults quit smoking, while simultaneously receiving millions of dollars from the pockets of the adults who smoke. In 2021, for every \$1 the state received in tobacco monies, it spent only \$0.08 on tobacco control efforts.

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Adult Combustible Cigarette Use

In 2021, according to data from the annual Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey (BRFSS) conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 15.6 percent of Mainers were currently smoking, amounting to an estimated 174,772 adults. This is a 5.5 percent decrease from 2020. In 2021, 12.1 percent of Maine adults reported smoking every day.

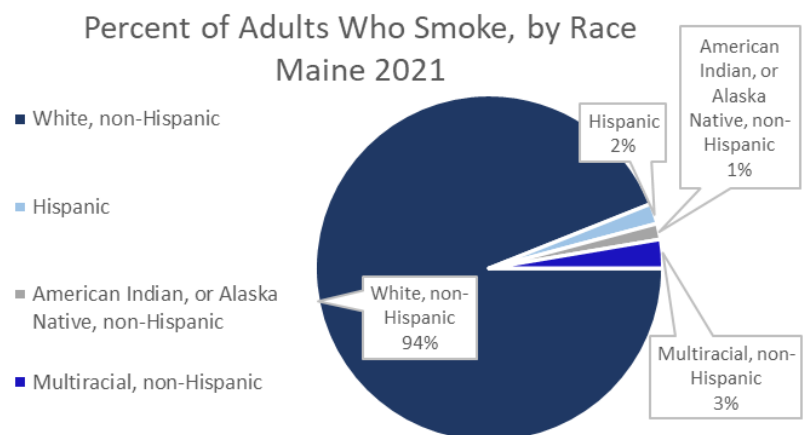
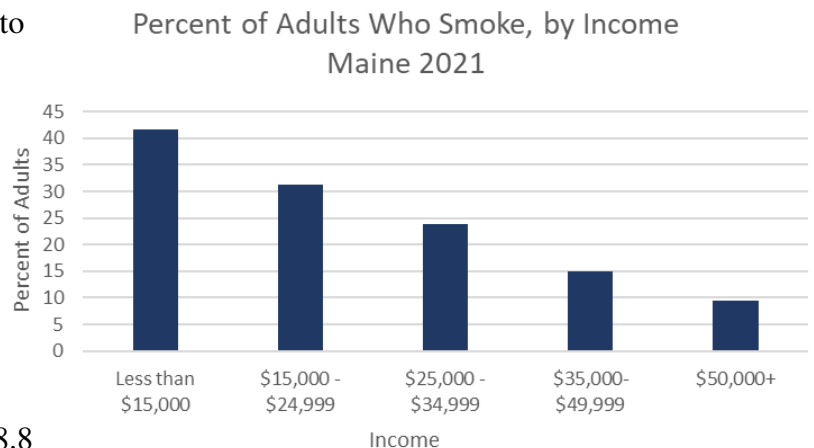
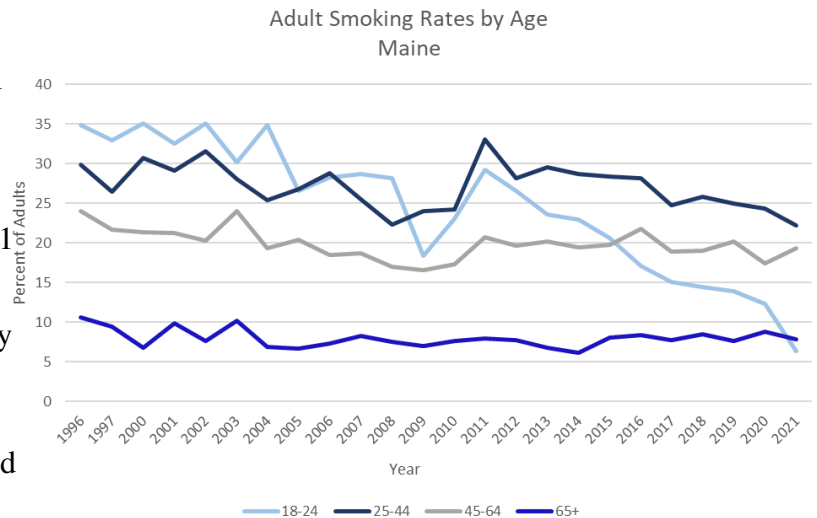
Smoking rates in the Pine Tree State have significantly declined since 1995 when the BRFSS first began reporting combustible cigarette use. That year, 25 percent of Maine adults were then-currently smoking. Between 1995 and 2021, smoking rates have decreased by 37.6 percent, with average annual decreases of 1.5 percent.

In 2021 (among all Maine adults), 6.3 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds, 22.2 percent of 25–44-year-olds, 19.4 percent of 45–64-year-olds, and 7.8 percent of adults aged 65 years or older were currently smoking combustible cigarettes.

Among all adults earning \$25,000 annually or less in 2021, more than one-third (36.5 percent) reported currently smoking, compared to only 9.5 percent of adults who earned \$50,000 or more per year.

In Maine, American Indian/Native Alaskan adults reported smoking at a greater percentage of their identified race at 29.7 percent. This is compared to 28.8 percent of Multiracial adults, 16 percent of Hispanic adults, and 15.3 percent of White adults.

Yet, White adults made up a significantly larger percentage of Maine's total adult smoking population. In 2021, White adults accounted for 94 percent of the state's current smoking population, compared to American Indian/Native Alaskan adults, who made up only 1.8 percent of the current adult smoking population. Multiracial adults made up 2.6 percent of the smoking population and Hispanic adults accounted for 1.9 percent of Maine's adult smoking population in 2021.



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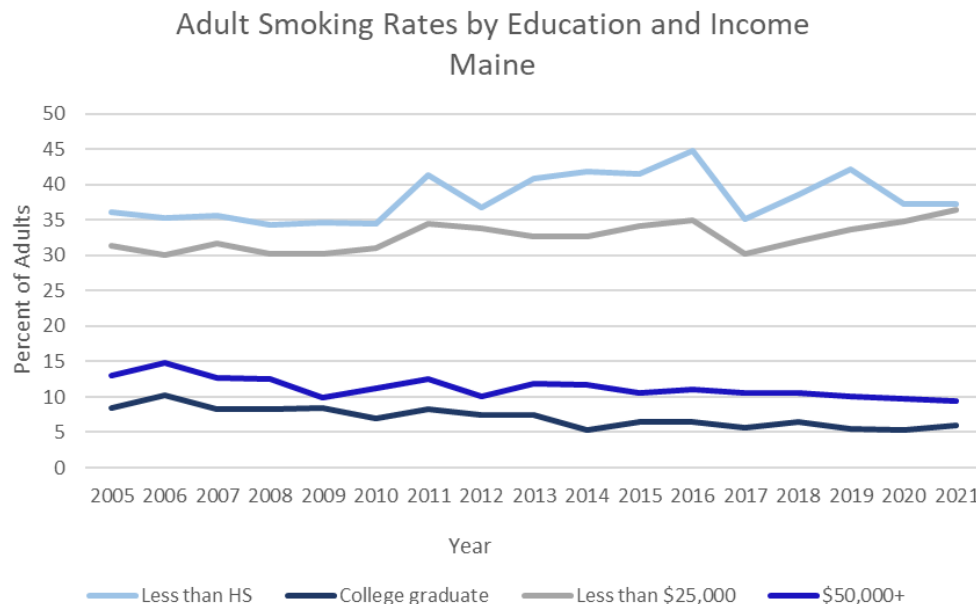
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Effects of Cigarette Taxes

Maine last increased its state cigarette excise tax in 2005 from \$1.98 to \$2.98-per-pack. Lawmakers often justify excise taxes on cigarettes to deter persons from using combustible cigarettes. These taxes not only disproportionately harm lower income and lower educated adults, the taxes also fail to significantly reduce smoking rates among those persons.

The percent of Maine adults earning \$25,000 or less that were smoking increased by 16.4 percent between 2005 and 2021, while the percent of adults earning \$50,000 or more that were smoking decreased by 26.9 percent during the same period. Among Mainers who did not graduate high school, smoking rates increased by 3.3 percent, yet rates among adults with a college degree decreased by 29.4 percent.

Lawmakers should refrain from enacting further increases in cigarette taxes given their disproportionate effect on low-income and low-educated persons, while failing to reduce smoking rates.



Adult E-Cigarette Use

The CDC provides data on adult e-cigarette use for only 2016, 2017, and 2021.

In 2021 (among all Maine adults), 5.8 percent were currently using e-cigarettes. This is a 41.5 percent increase from 2017 when 4.4 percent of Maine adults were current e-cigarette users.

In 2021 (among all Maine adults), 20 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds, 9.3 percent of 25–44-year-olds, 2.8 percent of 55–64-year-olds, and one percent of adults aged 65 years or older were currently using e-cigarettes.

Among adults earning \$25,000 or less, 7.9 percent reported current e-cigarette use, compared to 5.1 percent who reported earning \$50,000 or more.

In Maine, 5.7 percent of White adults were currently vaping in 2021. There is no data for other races.

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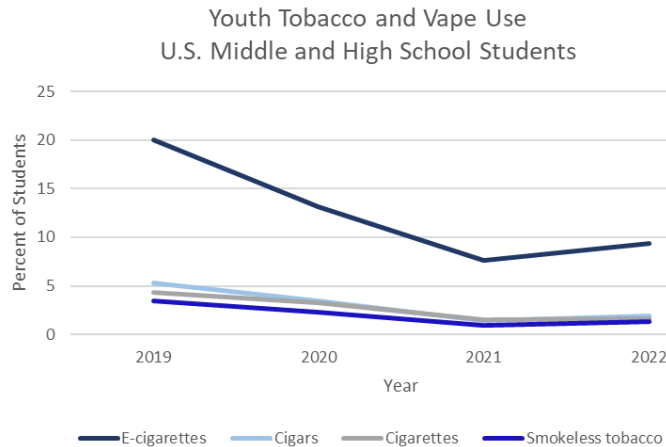
Youth Smoking and Vaping Rates

The CDC continues to delay publishing the 2021 results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey resulting in state-specific data being unavailable at the time of this publication. Nonetheless, youth use of vapor products has declined significantly in recent years and youth use of traditional tobacco products is at record lows.

In 2022 (according to the National Youth Tobacco Survey), only 9.4 percent of middle and high school students reported current use of e-cigarette products, defined as having used a product on at least one occasion in the 30 days prior to the survey. Youth vaping seems to have peaked in 2019, when 20 percent of youth reported current e-cigarette use. Between 2019 and 2022, current e-cigarette use declined by 53 percent.

In 2022 (regarding traditional tobacco products), only 1.9 percent of U.S. youth reported current cigar use, 1.6 percent reported current combustible cigarette use and 1.3 percent reported using smokeless tobacco products. Between 2019 and 2022, current cigar use declined by 64.2 percent, current cigarette use by 62.8 percent and smokeless tobacco use by 62.9 percent.

Given the record lows in youth tobacco use and continued declines in youth vapor product use, policymakers must refrain from prohibitionist policies that would hinder adult access to harm reduction products.



Young Adult Smoking Rates

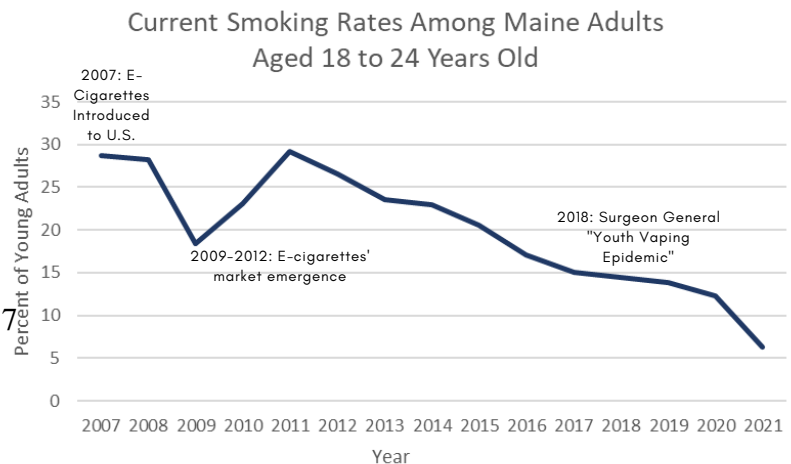
As e-cigarettes have disrupted the traditional tobacco market, policymakers have shifted their attention towards youth use and subsequent smoking initiation. Despite the rhetoric, the introduction of e-cigarettes has not led to increases in young adult cigarette smoking, but rather, correlates with significant declines.

E-cigarettes first came to U.S. market in 2007 when 28.7 percent of Mainers aged 18 to 24 years old were currently smoking. In 2018, public health purported to a so-called “youth vaping epidemic” when 14.4 percent of young adults in the Pine Tree State were smoking. Between 2007 and 2018, young adult smoking rates declined by 49.8 percent. Further, since 2018, young adult smoking rates have decreased another 56.3 percent, with average annual declines of 21.3 percent.

Though data is limited to only three years, increases in vaping correlate with decreases in smoking.

In 2017 (among 18- to 24-year-olds), 15.1 percent and 9.7 percent were currently using combustible cigarettes and e-cigarettes, respectively. Between 2017 and 2021, current cigarette use among young adults decreased by 58.3 percent while vapor product use increased by 106 percent.

Given the epic lows in young adult smoking rates, lawmakers must refrain from policies that restrict access to alternatives to smoking.



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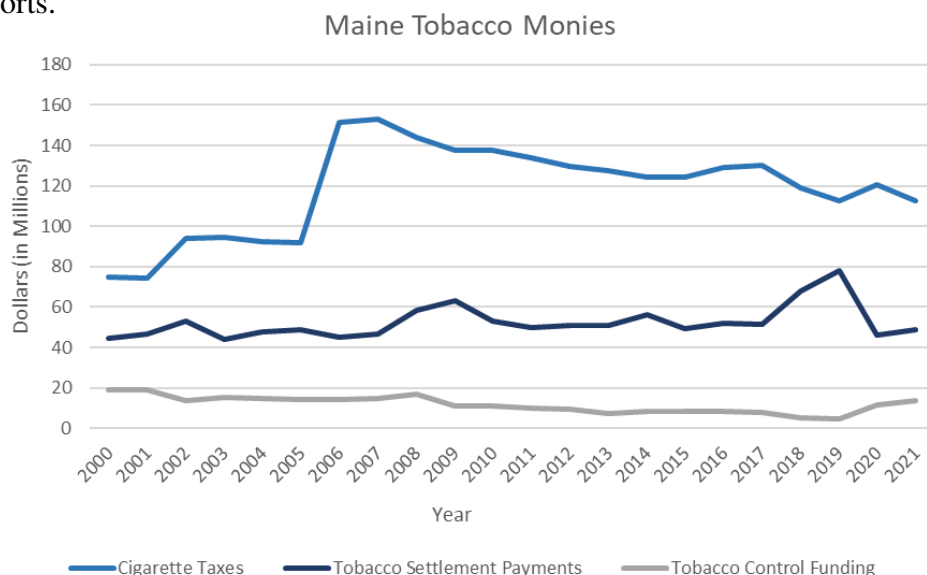
Tobacco Monies

Each year, states receive billions of dollars borne out of the lungs of persons who smoke. This revenue includes excise cigarette taxes and settlement payments. Yet, each year, states spend miniscule amounts of tobacco-related monies on programs to help adults quit smoking and prevent youth use.

In 2021, the Pine Tree State collected an estimated \$112.8 million in state excise tax revenue from combustible cigarettes. This was a 6.5 percent decrease from 2020's \$120.6 million. Between 2000 and 2021, Maine collected more than \$2.6 billion in cigarette taxes.

Since 2000 Maine has collected annual payments from tobacco manufacturers based on the percentage of cigarettes and tobacco products sold in the state in that year. Maine collected \$48.6 million in settlement payments in 2021, a 5.2 percent increase from 2020's \$46.2 million. Since 2000 the Pine Tree State collected over \$1.1 billion in tobacco settlement payments.

While Maine collected an estimated \$161.4 million in tobacco-related monies in 2021, the state allocated only \$13.9 million in state funding towards tobacco control programs, including cessation, education, and youth prevention efforts, which was a 17.8 percent increase in funding from 2020 levels. This amounts to 12.3 percent of taxes and 28.6 percent of settlement payments. In 2021, for every \$1 the state received in tobacco monies, it spent only \$0.08 on tobacco control efforts.



References

1. Data on adult smoking rates comes from the Centers for Disease Control's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey including sections on "Demographics - Race," Tobacco Use - All Categories," and "E-Cigarette Use." Accessed December, 2022. <https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/brfssprevalence/>
2. Data on race was compiled using population data from the Annie E. Casey Foundation (<https://datacenter.kidscount.org/>) and Demographic data from the CDC to cross reference the racial population. Then, data from Smoking and Race was used to determine the percent of adults who were smoking in 2021.
3. Data on youth tobacco and vapor product use comes from the National Youth Tobacco Survey, accessed in December, 2022. https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/surveys/nyts/index.htm.
4. Data on tax information comes from Orzechowski and Walker, "The Tax Burden on Tobacco Historical Compilation Volume 56, 2021. Print.
5. Data on tobacco settlement payments is from Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, "Actual Annual Tobacco Settlement Payments Received by the States, 1998-2022." Accessed December, 2022. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0365.pdf>.
6. Data on tobacco control funding is from Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, "Appendix A: A History of Spending for State Tobacco Prevention Programs," Accessed December, 2022. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0209.pdf>.