

**NEWS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Media Contact:**

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**April 17, 2025*****Community Forum: Advancing Responsible Tobacco and Cannabis Policies in Ventura County  
Join Us for a Critical Town Hall on Tobacco, Vaping, and Cannabis Policy***

**Ventura County, CA** – Ventura County Public Health and its partners invites all community members, local leaders, educators, health professionals, law enforcement, and first responders to attend the upcoming forum, “Tobacco Old & New: A Community Health Conversation.” This event will focus on the critical need for responsible tobacco and cannabis policies to safeguard public health and reduce the harmful effects of these substances across Ventura County.

**Event Details****What:** “Tobacco Old & New” Community Forum**Where:** Ventura County Behavioral Health First Floor Conference Room  
1911 Williams Drive, Oxnard, CA 93036**When:** Wednesday, April 30, 2025**Resources & Networking:** 4:30 PM – 5:15 PM**Program:** 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Tobacco and cannabis use remain significant public health concerns in Ventura County. Despite progress in reducing traditional smoking rates, the rise of e-cigarettes and flavored tobacco products continues to pose challenges. Additionally, cannabis regulations require ongoing community engagement to ensure safe practices and prevent misuse.

- Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the U.S., causing over 480,000 deaths annually, including nearly 41,000 from secondhand smoke exposure.
- Ventura County has implemented policies to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke and limit youth access to flavored tobacco products.
- Cannabis cultivation is regulated within unincorporated areas of Ventura County under Measure O, but retail sales remain prohibited outside licensed distributors.

This forum will provide updates on local initiatives aimed at reducing tobacco-related illnesses and ensuring safe cannabis practices. Attendees will learn about policy efforts such as smoke-free environments, flavored tobacco bans, and cannabis zoning regulations.

Local subject matter experts will present actionable strategies for advancing responsible policies that promote healthier communities. Topics include:

- Reducing exposure to secondhand smoke through policy implementation.

- Addressing challenges in enforcing flavored tobacco bans.
- Ensuring compliance with cannabis cultivation regulations while maintaining public safety.

Vicky Gonzales, Program Director of Ventura County Public Health Tobacco Education and Prevention Program (TEPP), underscores the importance of community involvement:

"Policies are only as effective as the community that supports them. This forum is a chance for Ventura County residents to unite in creating healthier environments for all. Together, we can ensure that responsible tobacco and cannabis regulations remain a cornerstone of our public health efforts."

This forum is your opportunity to engage with local leaders and experts on shaping policies that protect public health. By attending, you can help build a safer and healthier Ventura County for everyone. Register for the forum at <https://bit.ly/tobaccoVC2025>

This event is sponsored by Ventura County Public Health, Ventura County Action on Smoking and Health (VC-ASH), Ventura County Behavioral Health, Ventura County Office of Education, Future Leaders of America, and BRITE.

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