



# HEALTH EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE PRIORITIES 2023-2024

01

## Menthol Cigarettes

**Eliminating Menthol Cigarettes:** The tobacco industry has strategically and aggressively targeted the Black community for decades, especially with menthol cigarettes. Today, nearly 9 out of 10 African American smokers use menthol cigarettes. Black smokers have a harder time quitting and die at higher rates from tobacco-related diseases such as cancer, heart disease, and stroke. The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) proposal to end the manufacturing and sale of menthol cigarettes in the United States has the potential to save thousands of Black lives. We will continue to educate, advocate and mobilize to raise awareness on the harmful health effects of mentholated tobacco products.

02

## Tobacco Retailer Density

**Reducing Tobacco Retailer Density:** Research conducted by UW-Zilber School of Public Health in Milwaukee County and suburban Milwaukee shows there are significantly higher rates of tobacco retailers in low-income neighborhoods in Milwaukee and they are 3x more likely to be located within 500 feet of a school. Nationwide, there are approximately 300,000 tobacco retailers— 31 times more than McDonald's restaurants and 16 times more than Starbucks. A disproportionate number of these retailers are in low-income neighborhoods. The WAATPN and WTPPN will continue to support the new City of Milwaukee Tobacco Retailer Zoning Ordinance that we helped pass and work with our advocacy partners to address tobacco retailer density and other health equity and social justice issues.

03

## Tobacco Retail Environment

**Changing the Tobacco Retail Environment:** Tobacco marketing influences the initiation of smoking by minors and makes it difficult for adults to quit. The retail environment is the primary channel for tobacco marketing. The tobacco industry spends \$1 million an hour to market its products in retail shops. The WAATPN and WTPPN will continue to work with retailers to place counter tobacco marketing campaigns in their shops. We will also educate retailers on the required court-ordered tobacco industry's corrective statement signage. Finally, we will work with retailers to help them identify alternatives to selling tobacco products so they can join the ranks of commercial businesses, such as CVS, Target and Sherman Park Grocery Store that don't sell tobacco products.

04

## Tobacco Cessation Equity

**Increasing Tobacco Cessation Equity:** An estimated 73% on Black adults who smoke report that they want to quit. Each year more than half of them try to do so. Unfortunately, Black smokers have a harder time quitting and die at higher rates from tobacco-related diseases such as cancer, heart disease, and stroke. Proven treatments, such as FDA-approved medicines and behavioral counseling, make it more likely that people will quit smoking successfully. Black smokers encounter barriers when trying to find and use these proven treatments. The WAATPN and WTPPN will work with our cessation partners to ensure that marginalized populations have access to culturally appropriate and effective smoking cessation services.

05

## Decrease teen and young adult tobacco use

**Decreasing the Use of Tobacco, Hookah, and E-cigarette/vaping among teens, and young adults:** Vape/E-cigarette use among teens and young adults in Wisconsin has increased dramatically in recent years, largely a result of targeted marketing to those populations by the tobacco industry. In addition, hookah use has also increased substantially among this population, exposing users to the same health risks as cigarettes and other harmful toxins. The WAATPN and WTPPN will continue working with students, young adults, parents, school administrators and others to reduce vaping/e-cigarette and hookah use among Milwaukee's teens and young adults.