

From "Jason Belmonte" <jbelmonte@doverma.gov>
To "Steve Kruskall" <skruskall@gmail.com>
Date 2026-01-09 12:39:26+00:00
Subject Re: Greetings and Tobacco Public Health Policy Idea for Dover

Thanks Steve. I will create a folder so we can start adding to it.

Jason Belmonte, R.S, CHO, CP-FS
Health Director
Town of Dover, MA
603-285-2915

On Fri, Jan 9, 2026 at 5:06 AM Steve Kruskall <skruskall@gmail.com> wrote:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Anthony Ishak** <aishakpharmd@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun, Jan 12, 2025 at 7:43 PM
Subject: Greetings and Tobacco Public Health Policy Idea for Dover
To: jbelmonte@doverma.gov <jbelmonte@doverma.gov>, kpetersen@doverma.gov <kpetersen@doverma.gov>

Hi Dr. Petersen (Kay) ,

I hope you are enjoying your retirement and time away from me pestering you with knocks on the door of your office :). As you recall from my time on Brookline's Town Meeting, I worked on a couple of policies to decrease tobacco use in our town. One of these is the Nicotine Free Generation concept. This is a by-law to phase out tobacco sales by freezing the age of purchase to anyone born before a particular age (1/1/2000 in our case). This essentially prevents new people from getting addicted without taking away the rights of those already of age. It also minimizes impact to retailers since it slowly phases it out allowing them to adjust their business models over years. It was originally proposed in Singapore (more info: [The tobacco-free generation proposal](#)) and there is information attached in a NEJM article and FAQ sheet. We were the first municipality/country/state to implement it. Since the State Judicial Court upheld it 9-0 in spring of 2024 ([Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Upholds Tobacco-Free Generation Law](#)), we have added 11 communities. Newton will be voting on it 1/21 and Somerville is in the process of scheduling a public hearing to implement it. Pellham has also passed it by resolution (they do not have a retailer) and the Statehouse is in the process of filing a bill for statewide policy. I am reaching out to you to encourage this momentum by expanding our geographic reach and to see if Dover will join our growing list. In order for statewide implementation to occur there needs to be significant uptake by municipalities and geographic diversity. Dover appears to have only 2 retailers, but the tobacco use rate is ~20% higher vs the state average (16.53 vs 13.8) . This policy *prevents new users and thus does not impact current users*. It would help to reduce the disparity in addiction between Dover and the rest of the state.

I am a member of a volunteer group that includes a pediatrician, public health officials, tobacco control and attorneys (Kate Silbaugh, my co-petitioner and author on the NEJM article, and Mark Gotlieb of PHAI that defended Brookline before the SJC).

I have bcc'd the other Board of Health members to avoid OML violations and would like to request if we can provide information at one of your upcoming meetings so that Dover can join us in the fight to end nicotine addiction.

Thanks and Happy Belated New Year,
Anthony

Anthony Ishak Pharm.D. BCPS
he/his/him