

NEW YORK CITY THE LATEST TO BAN FLAVORED E-CIGARETTES: HERE'S HOW STATES AND CITIES ARE FIGHTING BACK AGAINST THE EPIDEMIC

BY [BLAKE DODGE](#) ON 12/17/19 AT 11:43 AM EST

HEALTH VAPING E-CIGARETTES JUUL

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio signed a law to ban flavored e-cigarettes on Monday, the latest in a series of local efforts to combat the U.S. "vaping epidemic." The crisis has claimed 52 lives and led to 2,409 vaping-related lung injuries, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), while federal moves to regulate the devices have stalled.

Though the CDC has identified specific injury-inducing culprits—like the use of vitamin E solution or THC-containing pods—it has also recommended that people stop vaping altogether. That's proved difficult for the 5 million young people already hooked on e-cigarettes.

"Big tobacco, take note: New York City will not stand for your cynical attempts to hook children on a potentially lethal, lifelong nicotine addiction," de Blasio said in a statement Monday.

Multiple studies have reported that young people using flavors like fruit, bubble gum, mint and candy vape more frequently than their peers who don't.

The ban in New York, which applies to nearly every available flavor, including mint and menthol, goes into effect this summer and joins a growing list of states that have tried to take the matter into their own hands: California, Utah, Rhode Island, New York, Oregon, Montana, Michigan, Massachusetts and Washington.



Vaping products, including flavored vape liquids and pods, are displayed at Gotham Vape in the New York City borough of Queens on September 17. SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES

Michigan, for instance, was the first state to act on flavored nicotine products. In September, Governor Gretchen Whitmer ordered the state health department to pass emergency rules to ban them, as well as their misleading advertisements, in retail and online stores.

California has yet to finalize its statewide ban. In Utah, a judge recently overturned the state health department's partial ban on flavored e-cigarette liquid, but the Legislature has more ideas on limiting vaping in schools. In September, Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo took executive action in banning the sale of flavored products in and into the state.

Last June, San Francisco became the first U.S. city to implement a blanket ban on e-cigarettes. Four months later, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

voted unanimously for a ban on flavored tobacco products, which took effect in November.

Before the supervisors' vote in L.A., one industry representative, Jared Kiloh of the United Cannabis Business Association, voiced a concern that many public health experts actually agree with.

"Prohibition has historically not given the U.S. the intended goals of bringing safety to its citizens.... Banning only emboldens the unregulated market to have the only options for cannabis vaping," Kiloh said at the time.

Indeed, young people, possibly wary of impending federal regulations, have been flocking to YouTube to learn how to make their favorite flavors, according to several reports. In the process, they deal with toxic chemicals like nicotine directly and without any training.

While the health effects of vaping are still being investigated, a recent study published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* linked the practice to long-term risk of respiratory disease. Meanwhile, today's e-cigarette devices deliver significantly more nicotine than traditional cigarettes, using heated aerosol, not vaporized water, to do so.

Scott Schlesinger, a Florida lawyer representing hundreds of children caught in the throes of nicotine addiction through Juul Labs products, said that while more research is needed, one thing is already clear: Flavors [marketed to teenagers](#) since the early days of the vaping industry have been markedly successful.

"Half of these kids didn't even know there was nicotine in it," he said in a previous interview with *Newsweek*, referring to the millions of youths hooked on vaping. "They thought they were sucking on mango."