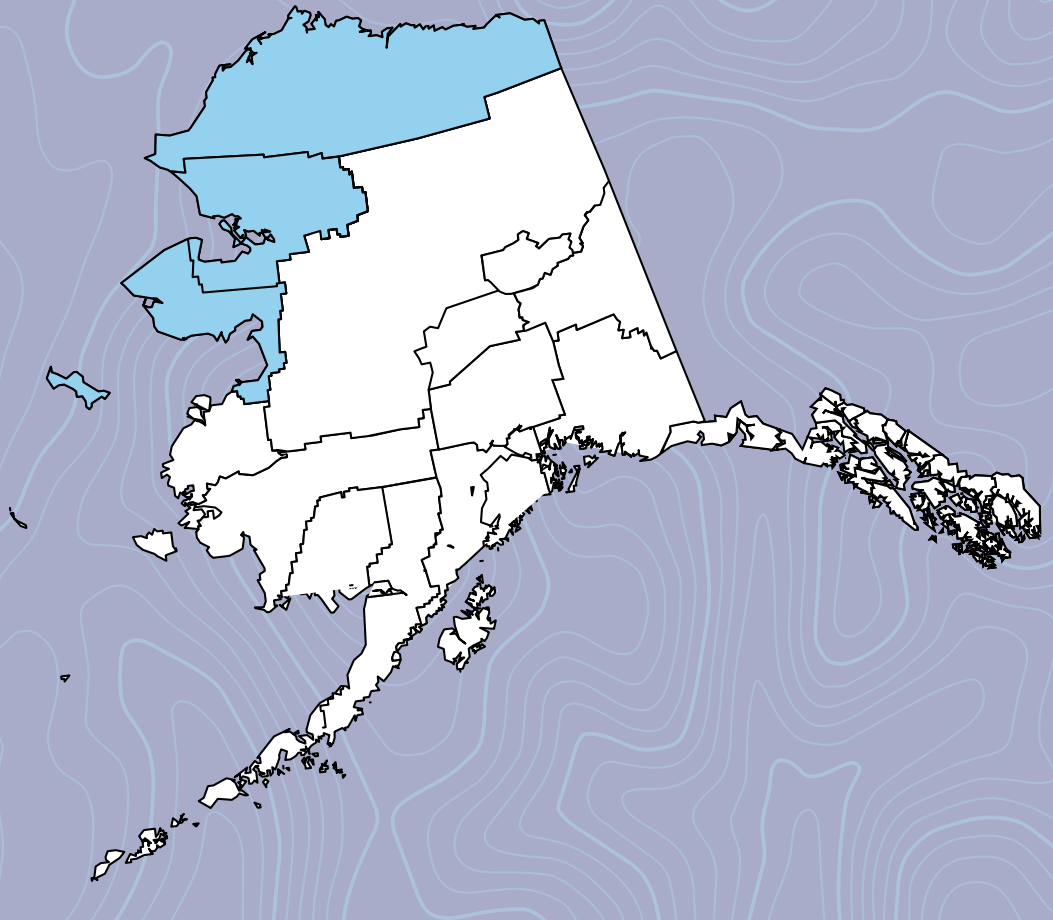


ALASKA TOBACCO PREVENTION AND CONTROL REGIONAL PROFILE: **NORTHERN**



FY2022

Tobacco Prevention and Control Regional Profile: Northern Region

December 2022

Produced by the Section of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Tobacco Prevention and Control Program through a contract with Program Design and Evaluation Services, Multnomah County Health Department and Oregon Public Health Division.

Major contributors include:

Alaska DOH: Andrea Fenaughty, PhD, Deputy Section Chief; Matthew Dungan, MPH, Tobacco Prevention and Control Program Evaluator.

Program Design and Evaluation Services: Julia Dilley, PhD; Kathryn Pickle, MPH; Chris Bushore, MPH; Erik Everson, MPH; Susan Richardson, MPH.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following for their contribution to this report:

Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Section of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Jodi Barnett, BRFSS Coordinator

Tazlina Mannix, YRBS Data Manager

Abigail Newby-Kew, Public Health Data Analyst

Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

David Howell, State Demographer

Suggested Citation

Alaska Department of Health, Division of Public Health, Section of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. *Tobacco Prevention and Control Regional Profile: Northern Region, FY2022 update*. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Health; 2022.

Copyright Information

All material in this document is in the public domain and may be reproduced or copied without permission; however, citation as to source is appreciated.

Table of Contents

Purpose.....	2
Methods	4
Data sources	4
Analytic approaches.....	5
Limitations	5
Section 1. Region Overview	7
Section 2. Tobacco Use	12
Adult Tobacco Use	12
Current use of any tobacco products.....	12
Youth Tobacco Use	20
Section 3. Preventing Youth Tobacco Use.....	29
Risk and Protective Factors.....	29
Youth Lifetime Tobacco Use.....	30
Tobacco Taxes.....	30
School Policies.....	31
Section 4. Helping People Quit.....	33
Quitting Indicators	33
Quitting Resources.....	34
Section 5. Eliminating Exposure to Secondhand Smoke.....	35
Secondhand Smoke Exposure	35
Secondhand Smoke Rules	36
Secondhand Smoke Attitudes	37
Secondhand Smoke Norms	39
Secondhand Smoke Policies.....	41

Purpose

Why tobacco prevention and control matters

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified reducing tobacco use as one of the most important “winnable battles” in public health. A winnable battle is a priority with large impacts on health and known, effective strategies to address the priority.¹
- Tobacco use can lead to death earlier than expected, as well as millions of dollars in avoidable medical care costs.
- Quitting the use of all tobacco products is the best thing that Alaska tobacco users can do to improve their health and the health of those around them.

How tobacco prevention and control works

The CDC offers guidance to states about how to reduce tobacco use and related health concerns through tobacco prevention and control programs, described in *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs, 2014*.² These best practices include comprehensive, sustained statewide tobacco control interventions that have been shown to reduce smoking rates, tobacco-related deaths, and diseases caused by smoking.

The State of Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control (TPC) Program is designed as recommended in CDC’s best practices, with the following program components:³ state and community interventions; mass-reach health communication interventions; cessation interventions; surveillance and evaluation; and infrastructure, administration, and management. Within this structure, the program uses multiple interventions shown to work: a free telephone line to help people quit tobacco use with coaching and nicotine replacement therapy; a marketing campaign designed to prevent and reduce tobacco use; and grants that promote tobacco-free policies in communities, schools, and health care organizations. These program elements combine to address the goals of the TPC Program:

1. prevent youth from starting tobacco use
2. protect the public from exposure to secondhand smoke
3. promote quitting for tobacco users
4. identify and eliminate differences in tobacco use and related health problems between groups of people (sometimes called “inequities”)

¹ U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) *Winnable Battles*
https://www.cdc.gov/about/resources/pdf/WBGeneralFAQs_102010.pdf

² U.S. CDC *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs – 2014*.
https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/best_practices/index.htm

³ Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control (TPC) Program, *FY2019 Annual Report*
<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Pages/Tobacco/publications.aspx>

How to use this report

TPC compiles regional profiles because tobacco use, and factors related to tobacco use may vary considerably by region. Programs that are planned based on good information about community settings and the people who live there may be more effective than programs planned based on statewide information alone. Program planners should use data from this report in combination with other sources, including the knowledge of people from communities they are seeking to serve.

This report summarizes available information that is meaningful for planning tobacco prevention and control efforts for individuals, communities, and the systems that serve them. Sections 3, 4, and 5 of this report specifically align with goals of the TPC Program.

- **Section 1. Region Overview:** Describes the region, including the communities, schools and people who live there.
- **Section 2. Measures of Tobacco Use:** Describes the current use of different tobacco or nicotine products (cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, vaping products) among adults and youth.
- **Section 3. Preventing Youth Use:** Shows that different groups of young people face higher or lower chances of using tobacco, and possible reasons for those differences; describes what policies are in place to prevent youth from starting to use.
- **Section 4. Helping People Quit:** Describes the percentage of adult tobacco users who are trying to quit and who have successfully quit.
- **Section 5. Eliminating Exposure to Secondhand Smoke:** Shows the percentage of adults and youth who are exposed to secondhand smoke and describes what policies are in place that protect people from exposure.
- **Appendices:** Technical documentation is provided to give additional detail about the information provided in this report. Information for all Alaska regions is included. Appendices are available as a separate report alongside the regional reports posted on the TPC Program website. Appendix A includes tables of data for all regions and the state, with specific language from survey questions. Appendix B describes some of the analytical methods in detail (including how race and other variables are determined). Appendix C provides more detail about the data sources.

Methods

Data sources

This report includes information from three primary Alaska public health data sources. These sources are summarized in Table 1, and more information is included in the Appendix.

Table 1: Summary of key data sources used for this report

Data Source (Abbreviation for report)	Description
Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey (AK YRBS)	<p>YRBS data are collected from students in grades 9-12 using anonymous and voluntary school-based questionnaires. The survey is conducted in the spring of odd-numbered years and participation requires parental consent. The YRBS includes questions about tobacco use and related factors. Statewide estimates are from a sample of traditional high schools across the state; regional estimates are based on all participating traditional high schools in the region. Data from alternative schools and correctional schools are not included in this report. The 2021 Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) was canceled due to the challenges Alaska school districts and schools faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason, the most recent YRBS data is from 2019. The next Alaska YRBS is scheduled for the 2022-2023 school year.</p> <p>Regional YRBS data are reported from the most recent AK YRBS only. In 2019, two of the Northern Region’s four school districts participated: North Slope Borough Schools and Northwest Arctic Borough Schools.</p>
Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (AK BRFSS)	<p>BRFSS data are collected from adults ages 18 and older through an anonymous telephone survey. It is coordinated and sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and implemented in all states. BRFSS provides annual representative data in Alaska about adult health behaviors, preventative health practices, and chronic conditions.</p> <p>Alaska has historically added multiple questions about tobacco use to the state’s survey. Data on tobacco product use are from related questions, which were asked of all respondents; estimates are reported for each available year between 2011-2020. Data on secondhand smoke and some quitting variables are from questions that were asked of a subset of respondents who received the dedicated tobacco questionnaire, some questions were asked on alternating or limited years; generally, the 3 most recent years of available data are combined (for example, 2018-2020) to provide enough data for regional-level reporting.</p>
Alaska Database for Policies on Tobacco (ADAPT)	<p>The Alaska TPC Program collects and maintains information on tobacco-related policies using the ADAPT database. Policies monitored include smokefree tribal resolutions, community ordinances, multi-unit housing policies, healthcare policies, K-12 school district policies, secondary education policies, and taxes. Policies are evaluated and scored in comparison to a model policy, by policy type.</p> <p>K-12 policies were systematically updated outside of ADAPT in June 2022. Other local policy information in this report was current in ADAPT as of June 2022.</p>

In addition to the primary data sources listed in Table 1, which appear in multiple sections of this report, other data sources that are referenced only once are cited as they appear in the text (for example, population data and Alaska’s Tobacco Quit Line data). For all data sources in this report, people who report being American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN) are described using the term “Alaska Native” because this reflects the majority

of that population; further detail about how race is collected and reported for each dataset is available in the Appendix.

Analytic approaches

Survey estimates. A great deal of this report relies on data collected through surveys. These data are referred to as “estimates” because we have responses from only a sample of the population and not the whole population. We match respondent characteristics such as age, gender, and race to known characteristics of the state population, and statistically adjust the estimates to represent the true population. Sometimes this is called “weighting” the data. For example, more women than men usually participate in surveys, so more survey respondents are women although the actual populations of women and men are about equal in size. Since women often report different information on surveys than men, statistical processes are used to create estimates that balance the answers from women and men equally when reporting on the whole population.

Confidence intervals. Our report uses 95% confidence intervals, especially when describing results from survey data. Confidence intervals show a range that is likely to contain the true value for the population; we can be 95% sure (95 out of 100 times) that the range of the interval contains the “true value” of the indicator being measured. Confidence intervals also help to compare whether results from one group are significantly different from another group: when confidence intervals for two estimates in the same data system do not overlap, those two estimates are “significantly” different from one another – meaning we can be reasonably sure there is a true difference. In this report, confidence intervals are shown visually in different ways: as shaded areas around lines in trend graphs, as “whiskers” around the estimates in bar graphs, and as a numeric range in tables. Although they look different, they mean the same thing.

Larger samples typically have smaller, more precise confidence intervals. Figures in this report that show trends in tobacco product use for the state and region show confidence intervals for state-level data only, in order to make the figures easier to view; regional confidence intervals will always be wider or larger. The confidence intervals for regional data are included in the technical appendix tables for this report. Whenever regional estimates are statistically different from the state based on formal statistical comparisons, that is noted in the text describing the data or figure. Although differences between the state and region may look large, they are not statistically significant unless noted in the text – in other words, they may be just chance differences.

Suppression of small numbers. Estimates from surveys with small numbers are suppressed based on guidelines from the State of Alaska. For BRFSS, a minimum denominator of 50 unweighted respondents is required for reporting; for YRBS, a minimum of 100 is required. Measures that do not meet these minimum denominator requirements are not included in this report. Estimates considered statistically unstable may be flagged when the relative standard error is >30% and flagged “very unstable” when the relative standard error is >50%. Estimates may be suppressed when the unweighted count in the numerator is <5.

Rounded estimates for subgroups. Survey data shown in figures or tables within the main body of this report are rounded to whole numbers. This is because survey estimates for smaller numbers of people in subgroups often have wider confidence intervals, so rounded estimates are one way of showing that subgroup estimates are less precise than estimates for the whole population. All estimates (including for subgroups) are reported to one decimal place, with confidence intervals, in the Appendix.

Limitations

Local area data. Stakeholders working in tobacco control within local communities would likely be interested in more specific data about borough or census areas, cities, and villages. Most surveys do not have enough

respondents to report local-level results. This report was designed to provide as much data as possible at the regional level, while maintaining high data quality. Some data may be available at a local level but not included in this report, because of concerns about confidentiality. For example, individual school data may be available and examined in partnership with school administrators, but it is not published in this report because it could contain identifiable information.

YRBS regional data. Official state estimates for YRBS data are based on a scientifically selected statewide sample of schools and students. Regional data include a combination of the scientific statewide sample, and schools in districts that volunteered to participate as part of a local sample. For this reason, regional estimates may not be generalizable to all students in the region.

Section 1. Region Overview

This report includes information about the Northern Public Health Region. This region is made up of the Nome Census Area, the North Slope Borough, and the Northwest Arctic Borough.

Figure 1: Alaska has seven Public Health Regions.

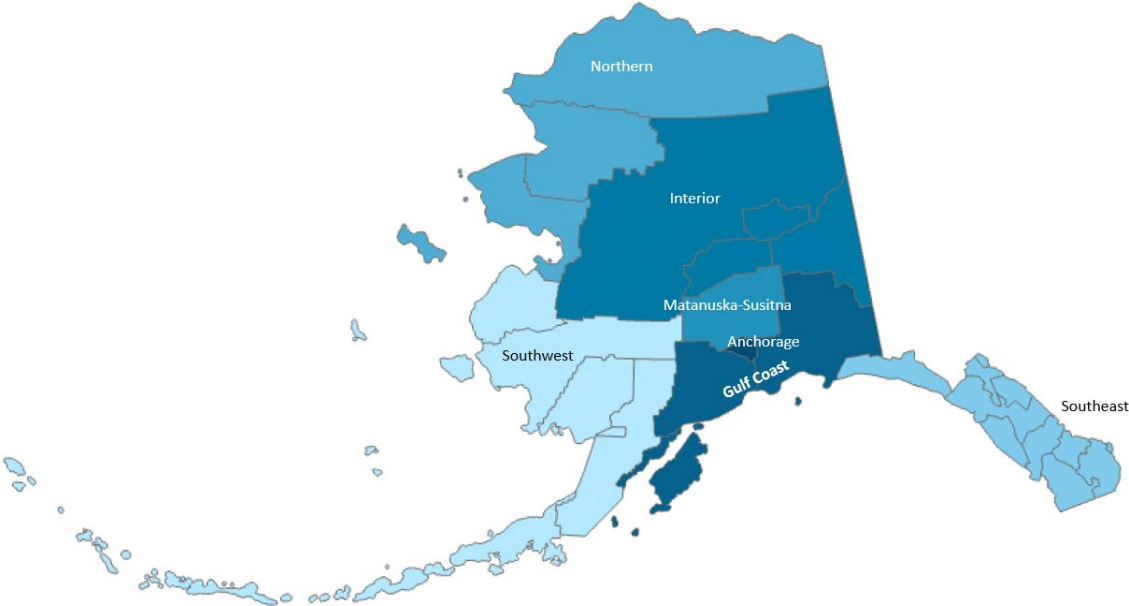


Figure 2: There are three Borough and Census Areas in the Northern Region.

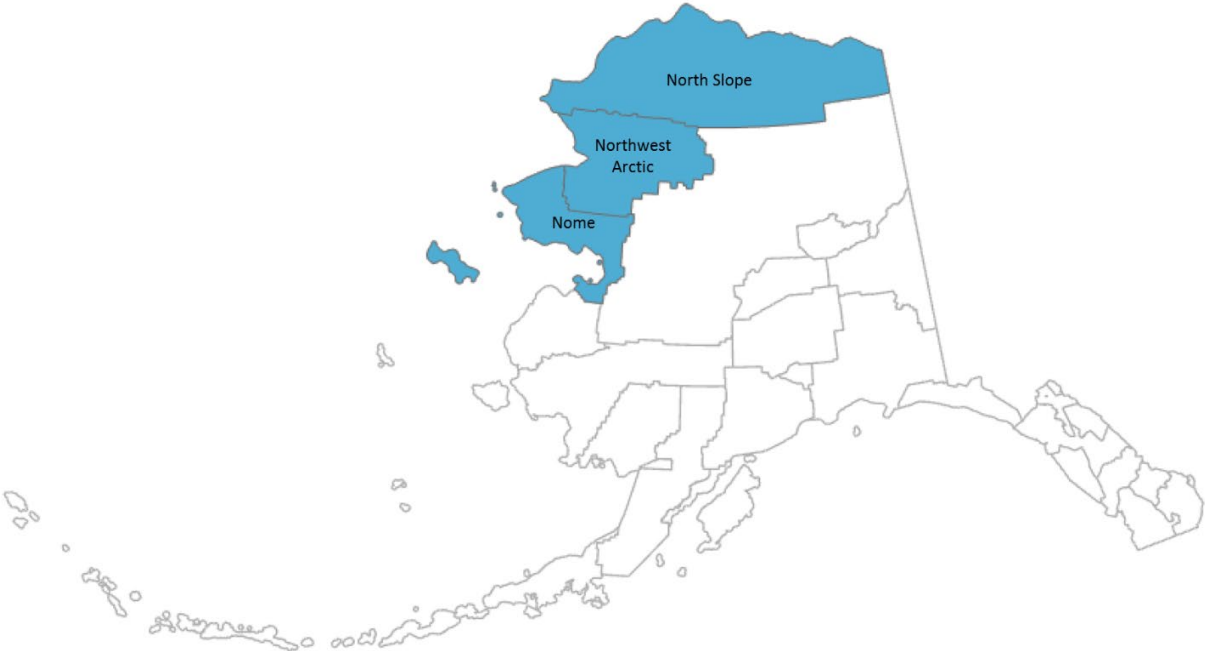


Table 2 series: There are some differences in populations by subregion in the Northern Region.

Table 2a: Total population size in State, Region, and Borough/Census Areas

Geographic area	Total number	Percentage per population	Number of households
State of Alaska	734,323		255,173
Northern Region	28,261	4% of state	6,563
Nome Census Area	9,691	34% of region	2,777
North Slope Borough	10,995	39% of region	1,991
Northwest Arctic Borough	7,575	27% of region	1,795

Table 2b: Characteristics of people in State, Region, and Borough/Census Areas

Geographic area	% Adult	Median age
State of Alaska	74%	36.0
Northern Region	68%	31.5
Nome Census Area	66%	29.7
North Slope Borough	73%	34.0
Northwest Arctic Borough	64%	29.7

Table 2c: Race/ethnicity of people in State, Region, and Borough/Census Areas

Geographic area	Alaska Native	Black	Asian	Pacific Islander	White	Hispanic*
State of Alaska	19%	5%	8%	2%	66%	7%
Northern Region	70%	2%	4%	1%	23%	3%
Nome Census Area	76%	1%	2%	0%	20%	2%
North Slope Borough	55%	3%	7%	2%	33%	4%
Northwest Arctic Borough	79%	2%	2%	0%	16%	2%

*Hispanic ethnicity can be any race

Table 2d: Economic factors affecting people in State, Region, and Borough/Census Areas

Geographic area	Unemployment March 2022	Poverty 2020
State of Alaska	5%	10%
Northern Region	9%	16%
Nome Census Area	10%	19%
North Slope Borough	6%	11%
Northwest Arctic Borough	11%	19%

Sources: Table 2a, 2b, 2c, and unemployment in 2d: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; Table 2d poverty from U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year estimates for 2016-2020, and 2020 federal poverty guidelines for Alaska. For more detail, see technical appendix for this report.

About 28,261 people lived in the Northern Region of Alaska in 2021, making up 4% of the state’s population.

- The number of the people and households in this region are fairly evenly split between the three boroughs and census areas, with somewhat fewer in the Northwest Arctic Borough (Table 2a).
- The median age in the region is younger than the statewide population; on average, people in the Nome and Northwest Arctic subregions are younger than those in the North Slope subregion (Table 2b).
- Between 55-79% of those in each of the region’s borough or census areas are Alaska Native people, greater than the statewide percentage. A majority (more than 75%) of people in Nome and Northwest Arctic subregions are Alaska Native race; North Slope Borough has more people who are Asian and White than the other Northern subregions (Table 2c).

- For the Northern Region, unemployment was higher than statewide; within the region, unemployment was greater in the Nome Census Area and Northwest Arctic Borough than in the North Slope Borough (Table 2d).
- For the Northern Region, poverty was higher than statewide; within the region, poverty was greater in the Nome and Northwest Arctic subregions and lowest in the North Slope Borough (Table 2d).

Alaska Native Communities

A variety of entities play a role in tobacco prevention and control in Alaska Native communities, establishing public policies, organizational rules, and practices for delivering services. There are 229 federally recognized tribes in Alaska,⁴ but unlike other tribes in the United States, Alaska Native tribes do not have a land base (e.g., reservations).⁵ Instead, Alaska Native land ownership and governance occur through separate entities.

Alaska Native Regional Corporations were established when the US Congress passed the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) in 1971. ANCSA provided for the establishment of 12 regional corporations, owned by Alaska Native shareholders, to manage their lands. Each of the 12 regions also has an Alaska Native regional non-profit organization that provides social services and health care for Alaska Native people. These tribal healthcare systems play an important role in tobacco prevention and helping people quit.

Alaska's Public Health Regions do not align with Alaska Native regional corporations, so some corporations span across multiple public health regions. The Northern Region overlaps with the following three ANCSA Alaska Native Regional Corporations and their related non-profit Alaska Native associations.⁶

- Arctic Slope Regional Corporation; Arctic Slope Native Association
- Bering Straits Native Corporation; Bering Straits Association
- NANA Regional Corporation (NANA); Maniilaq Association

Alaska Native village corporations are owned by Alaska Native Tribe shareholders from specific communities, managing those lands and passing community policies for the people in these areas. Actions can include tribal resolutions or local taxes. Tribal resolutions express the consensus positions of the tribe as an entity. Resolutions can be passed by tribal governments to implement policies within a tribe, or to indicate support for a broader political priority, such as the recent passage of Alaska's smokefree air law.

- There are about 40 federally recognized tribes in the Northern Region.

⁴ Federal Register Vol 85, No 20. January 30, 2020. Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior, 85 FR 5462. Document 2020-01707. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-01-30/pdf/2020-01707.pdf>

⁵ With one exception: Metlakatla Indian Community's Annette Island Reserve was established as the only Indian reservation in Alaska, as the community opted out of ANCSA.

⁶ Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, Division of Corporations, ANCSA Information. Retrieved from <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/cbpl/corporations/ancsainformation.aspx>

School Districts

Table 3. School district enrollment and student population varies within the Northern Region.

Geographic Area	Number students in grades K-12	% Alaska Native students (K-12)	Total high school students (grades 9-12)
State of Alaska	127,509	21%	48,652
Northern Region Schools	6,126	85%	2,199
Bering Strait Schools	1,708	98%	598
Nome Public Schools	686	55%	241
North Slope Borough Schools	1,874	77%	698
Northwest Arctic Borough Schools	1,858	92%	662

Source: Alaska Department of Education and Early Development: Assessment and Accountability, <http://education.alaska.gov/stats/> Enrollment is for October 1, 2021. Student race is based on self-identification according to five mutually exclusive categories, including American Indian/Alaska Native <https://education.alaska.gov/tls/Assessments/naep/orientation/l1s10006.htm>.

School systems play an important role in providing tobacco prevention education, establishing and enforcing policies that keep youth from using tobacco, implementing interventions for youth who experiment with tobacco, and limiting adults from modeling tobacco use behaviors and exposing others to secondhand smoke.

About 6,126 students were enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade in the four Northern Region school districts during October 2021, making up about 5% of Alaska’s student population.

- Three school districts comprise about 30% each of the region’s total student enrollment: Bering Strait Schools, North Slope Borough Schools, and Northwest Arctic Borough Schools. 11% of Northern Region students were enrolled in Nome Public Schools.
- The percentage of Alaska Native students varied by school district, ranging from 55% in Nome Public Schools to 98% in Bering Strait Schools.
- High school students, who are more likely to use tobacco or nicotine products than younger students, make up 35-37% of the total student population in the region.

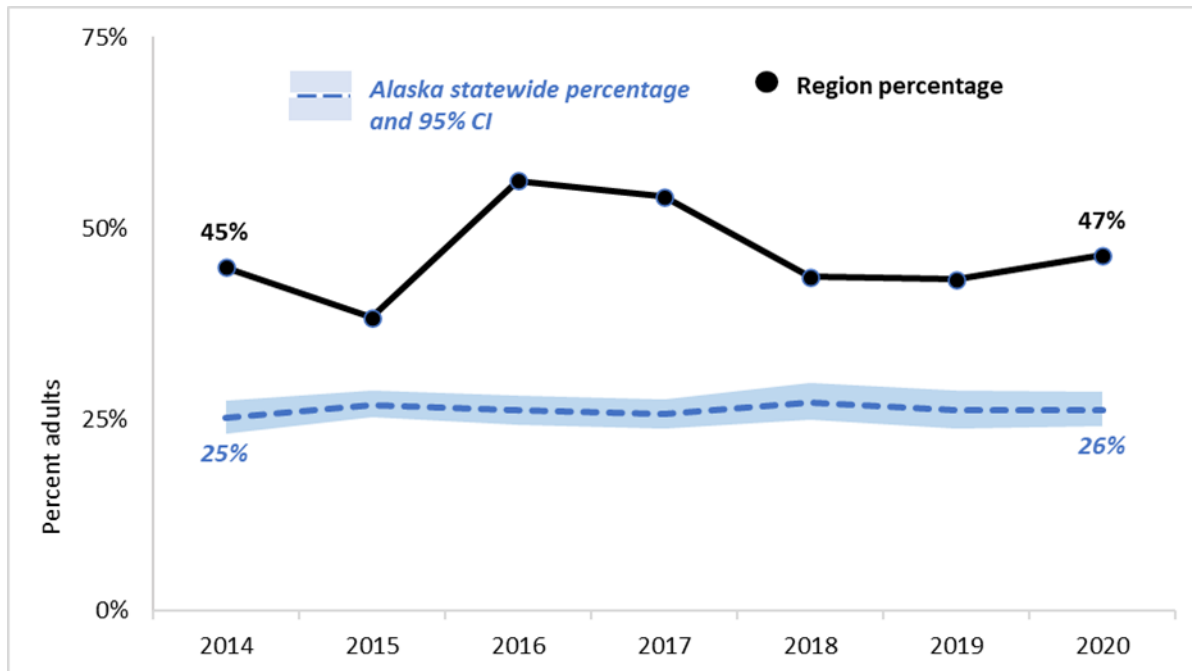
Section 2. Tobacco Use

This section of the report describes tobacco and nicotine product use among adults and youth in the Northern Region and statewide.

Adult Tobacco Use

Current use of any tobacco products

Figure 3. The percentage of adults who use any tobacco or nicotine product did not significantly change during the last 7 years in the Northern Region. The percentage of adults who use any tobacco or nicotine product in the Northern Region is higher than statewide.



Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Alaska statewide	25%	27%	26%	26%	28%	26%	26%
Northern Region	45%	38%	56%	54%	49%	43%	47%

Source: AK BRFSS. Includes the percentage of adults who used cigarettes, smokeless tobacco (including iqmik), or electronic vapor products in the past 30 days.

Reducing the use of any tobacco or nicotine product among adults is an important priority in the State of Alaska. The specific *Healthy Alaskans 2030*⁷ priority indicator that is monitored to assess progress is: *Reduce the percentage of adults who currently smoke cigarettes or use electronic vapor products or smokeless tobacco.*

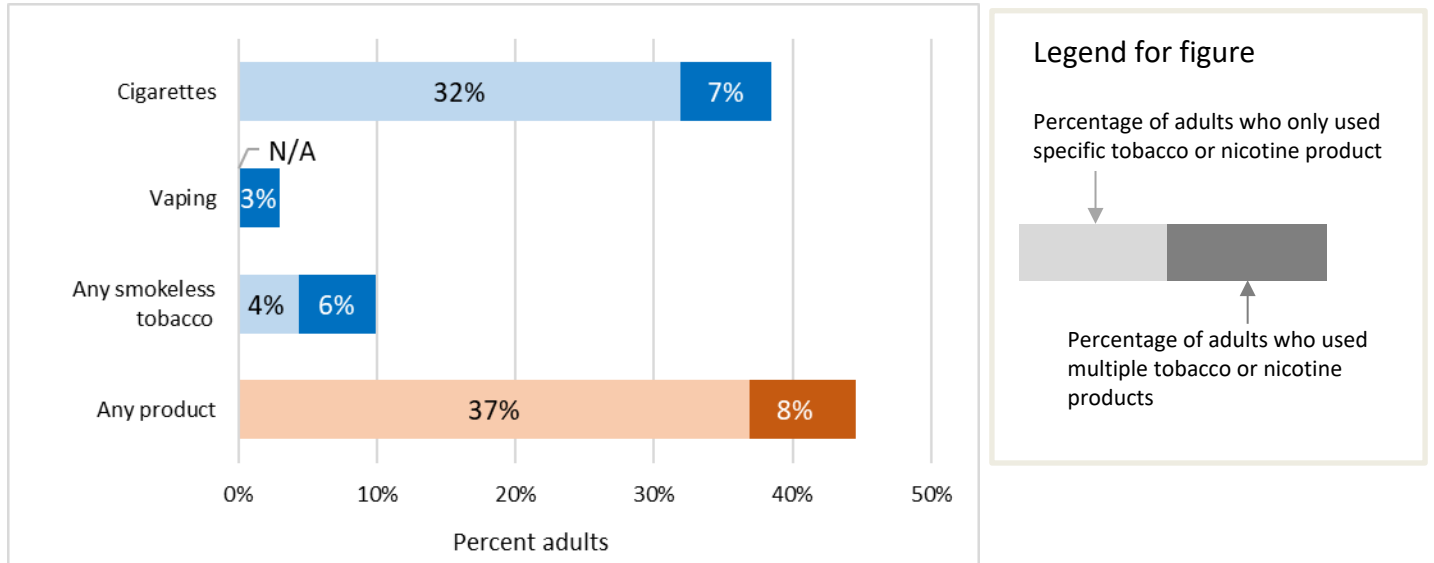
- Between 2014 and 2020, the percentage of adults statewide who currently use any tobacco or nicotine product remained stable. In 2020, 26% of adults statewide currently used some form of tobacco or nicotine.
- Between 2014 and 2020 the percentage of adults who use tobacco or nicotine in the Northern Region statewide varied, but the change over time is non-significant. In 2020, 47% of adults in the Northern Region used tobacco or nicotine, significantly higher than the statewide percentage (26%).

⁷ For more information about Healthy Alaskans 2030, see <https://www.healthyalaskans.org/>

- Based on the most recent three-year average of adults who use tobacco or nicotine, there are more than 8,600 adults in the Northern Region who are at risk for poor health outcomes due to using these products.

Current use of specific tobacco products

Figure 4. Cigarettes remain the most commonly used tobacco product among adults in the Northern Region. Adults who smoke cigarettes are most likely to use those tobacco products exclusively.



Product type	Only one product used	Used multiple products	Used alone or in combination*	% who used every day in past 30 days, among adults (not shown in figure above)
Cigarettes	32%	7%	38%	30%
Vaping products	N/A	3%	4%	N/A
Any smokeless tobacco	4%	6%	10%	6%
Any tobacco product	37%	8%	45%	—

Source: AK BRFSS, 2018-2020. Everyday use for any tobacco product was not calculated.

*numbers may not match sum of “one product” and “multiple product” values due to rounding

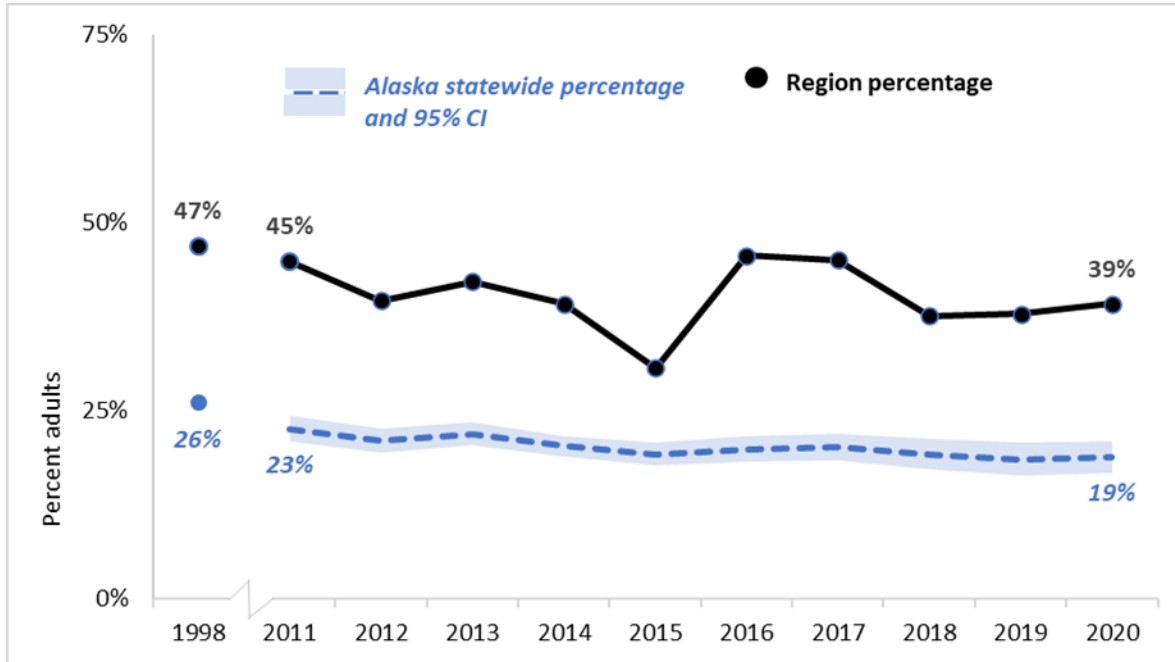
N/A: Not available due to small numbers

In the Northern Region, 45% of adults currently used some form of tobacco or nicotine product in 2018-2020.

- Cigarettes are the most commonly used product. 38% of Northern Region adults smoked cigarettes. Fewer adults used electronic vaping products like e-cigarettes (4%) and smokeless tobacco (10%).
- Most Northern Region adults who smoked cigarettes did not use other tobacco or nicotine products. About half of adults who use smokeless tobacco were also using other tobacco products.
- Most Northern Region adults who smoked cigarettes did so every day. About half of those who used smokeless tobacco used those products every day.

Cigarette smoking

Figure 5. The percentage of adults who smoke cigarettes decreased statewide during the past 10 years but did not significantly change in the Northern Region during that time. The percentage of adults who smoke in the Northern Region is higher than statewide.

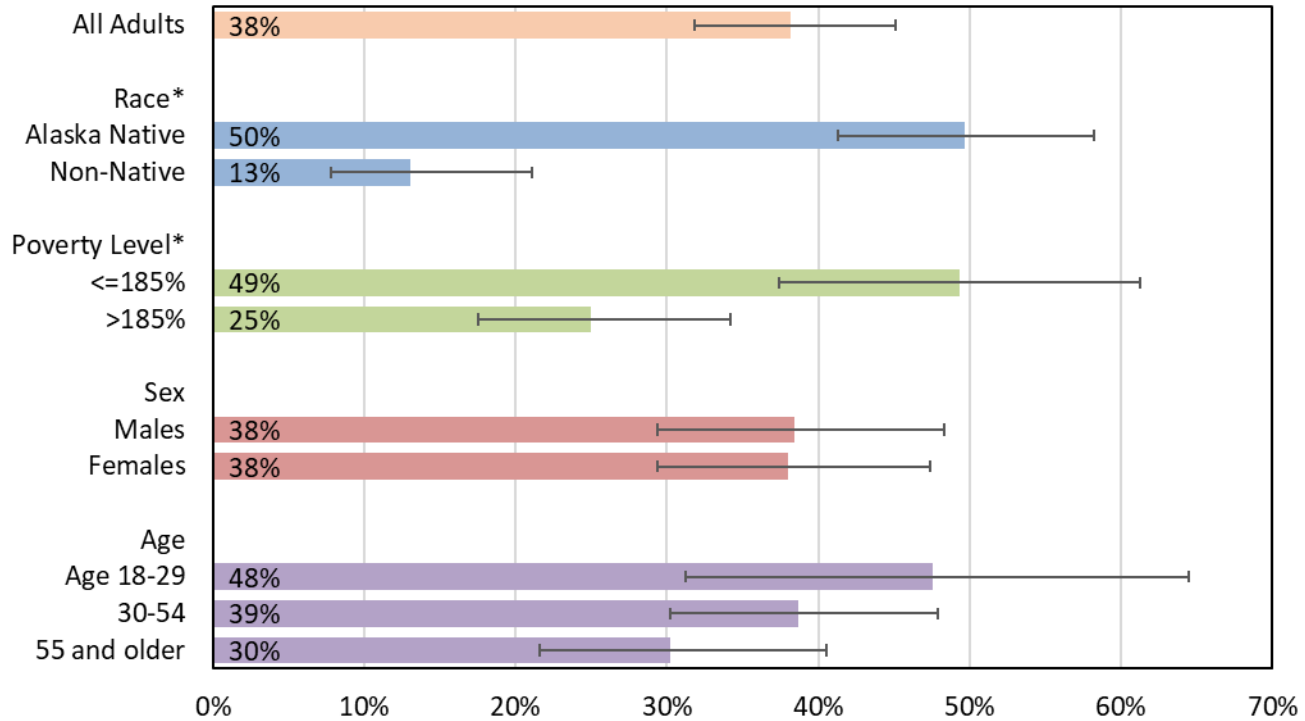


Year	1998	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Alaska Statewide	26%	23%	21%	22%	20%	19%	20%	20%	20%	19%	19%
Northern Region	47%	45%	40%	42%	39%	31%	46%	45%	43%	38%	39%

Source: AK BRFSS

- Adult smoking declined significantly since the start of Alaska’s tobacco prevention and control efforts. Statewide, adult smoking declined from 26% in 1998 to 19% in 2020.
- In the Northern Region, 47% of adults were smoking in 1998 and 39% were smoking in 2020. Adult smoking in the Northern Region did not change significantly during the past 10 years.
- Northern Region smoking estimates are consistently higher than statewide estimates. In 2020, 39% of adults in the Northern Region smoked cigarettes, significantly higher than statewide percentage of 19%.
- Based on the most recent three-year average of adults who smoke, there are more than 7,400 adults in the Northern Region who are at risk for poor health outcomes due to smoking cigarettes.

Figure 6. In the Northern Region, the percentage of adults who currently smoke cigarettes varies by race and poverty level.



Source: AK BRFSS, 2018-2020

* Significant difference between or among subgroups

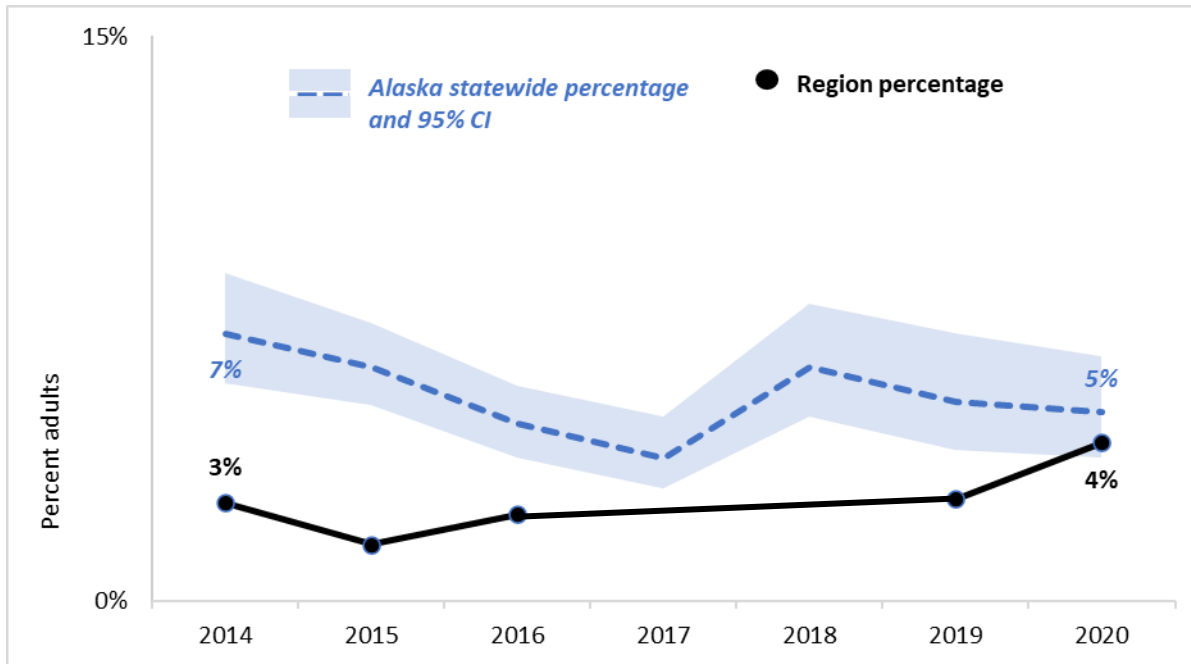
Within the Northern Region during 2018-2020, cigarette smoking was:

- Higher among Alaska Native people than among non-Native people (50% vs. 13%)
- Higher among people earning less than 185% of the poverty level than those earning more than 185% of the poverty level (49% vs. 25%)
- Similar among males and females (38% for both)
- Not significantly different between adults 18-29 and among adults 30-54 (48% and 39%), and not significantly different between adults 18-29 and among adults 55 and older (48% and 30%)
- Not significantly different between adults 30-54 and adults 55 and older (39% and 30%)

Electronic vapor product use

Electronic vapor products include e-cigarettes, vapes, vape pens, e-cigars, e-hookahs, hookah pens, and mods. These products are battery-powered, and usually contain nicotine and flavors such as fruit, mint, or candy.

Figure 7: The percentage of adults who use electronic vapor products has not changed significantly during the past 7 years statewide; use did not change significantly in the Northern Region.



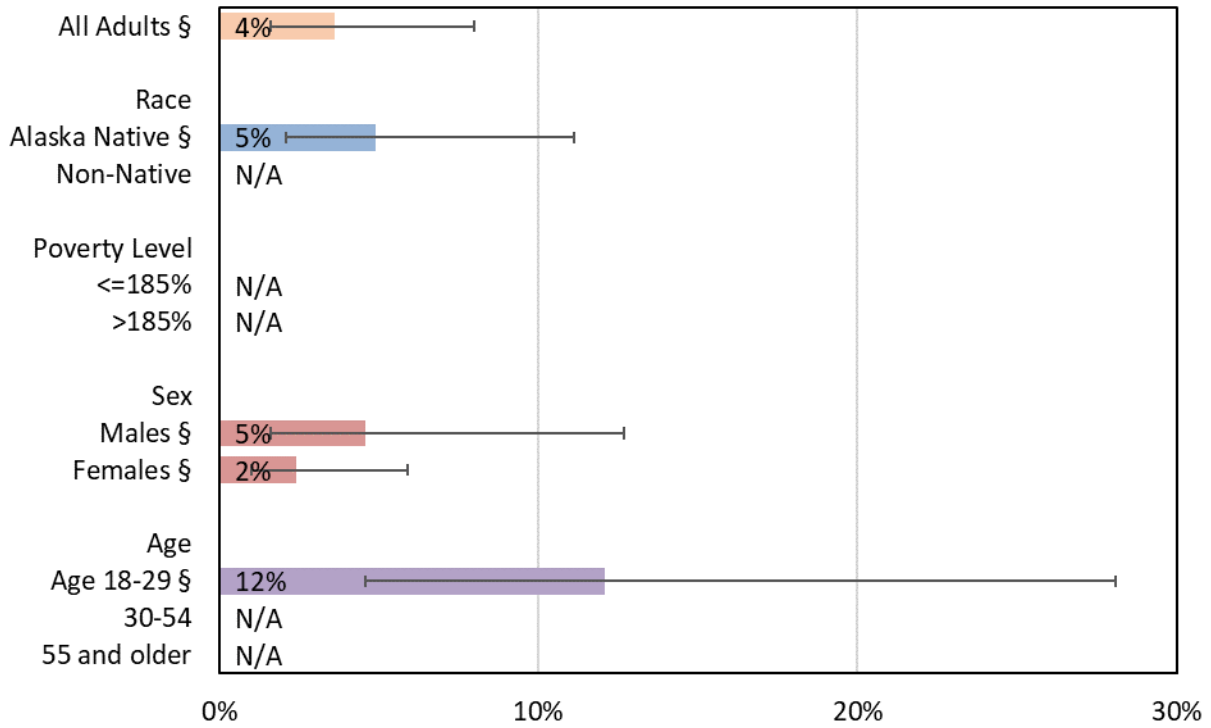
Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Alaska statewide	7%	6%	5%	4%	6%	5%	5%
Northern Region	3%*	2%	2%	3%*			4%

Source: AK BRFSS. Electronic vapor product use was asked consistently on the BRFSS beginning in 2014.

* The Northern Region did not have enough surveys to report estimates for some years alone. To provide enough data to report, 2014-2015 and 2017-2018-2019 were combined and a single value is reported for those years.

- Use of electronic vapor products (such as e-cigarettes) has not changed significantly during the past seven years statewide, from 7% in 2014 to 5% in 2020.
- In the Northern Region, the percentage of adults using e-cigarettes was 3% in 2014-2015 combined and 4% in 2020, with no significant change over this time period.
- The percentage of adults who use electronic vapor products in the Northern Region has been lower than the state, although the difference between region and state estimates each year is not statistically significant.
- Based on the most recent three-year average of adults who use e-cigarettes, there are more than 800 adults in the Northern Region who are at risk for poor health outcomes due to vaping.

Figure 8: In the Northern Region, the percentage of adults who currently use e-cigarettes is not available for most subgroups.



Source: AK BRFSS, 2018-2020

§ Interpret this estimate with caution. See Appendix for additional detail.

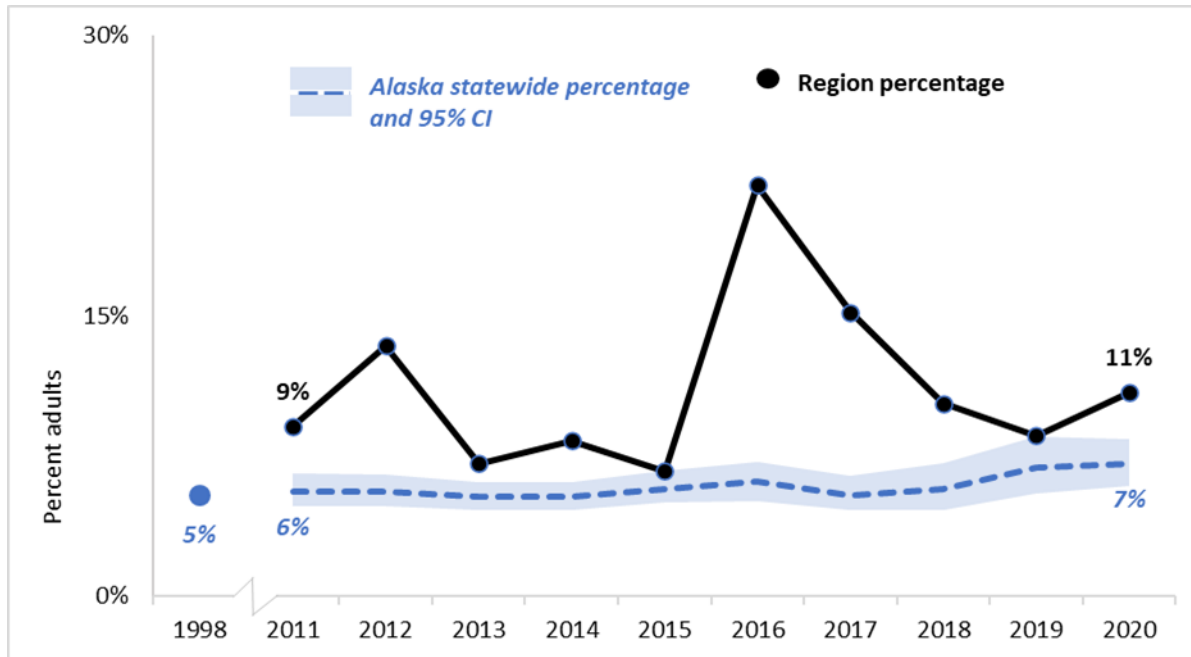
N/A: Not available due to small numbers

Within the Northern Region during 2018-2020, e-cigarette use was similar among males and females (5% and 2%).

Smokeless tobacco use

Smokeless tobacco includes commercial products like chew, dip, snus, snuff, and dissolvable tobacco products. People in some regions of Alaska also use a unique traditional smokeless tobacco form called “iqmik” or “blackbull”, which is a mixture of tobacco leaf and punk ash.

Figure 9: The percentage of adults who use smokeless tobacco increased statewide during the past 10 years but did not significantly change in the Northern Region during that time.

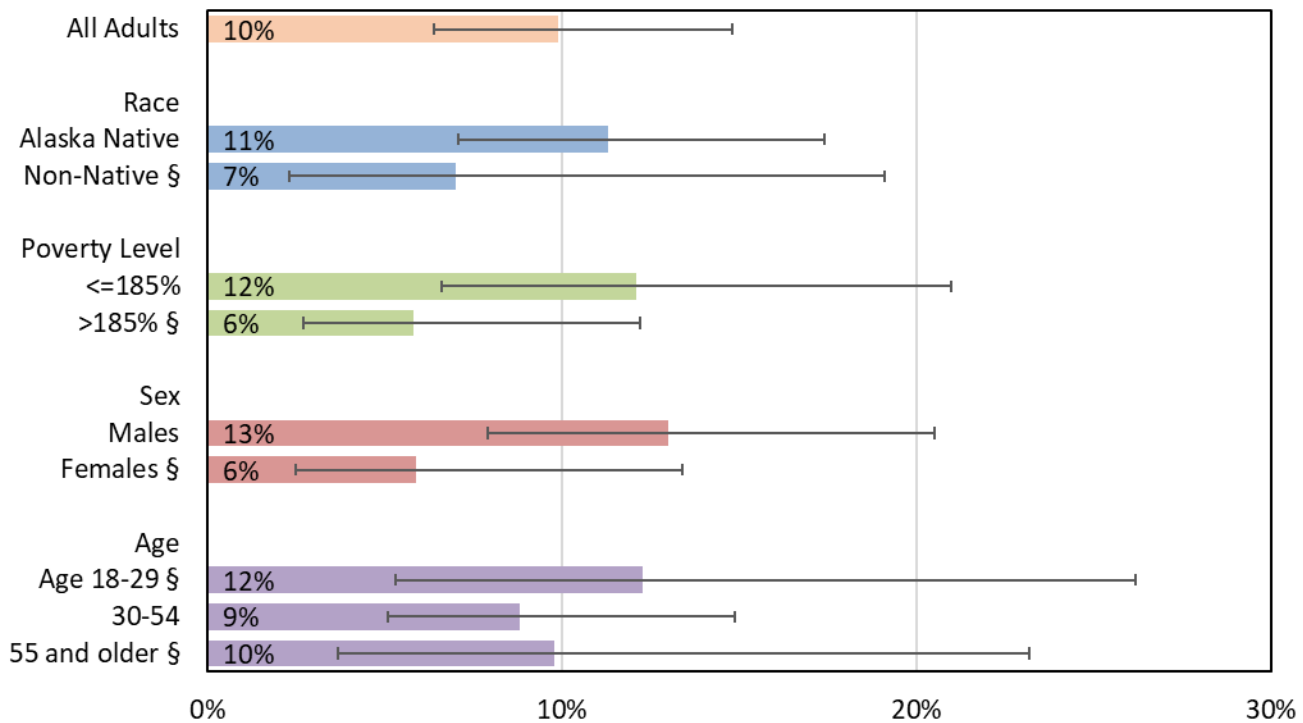


Year	1998	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Alaska statewide	5%	6%	6%	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%	6%	7%	7%
Northern Region	--	9%	13%	7%	8%	7%	22%	15%	5%	9%	11%

Source: AK BRFSS. Regional estimates are reported from 2011 because small numbers of surveys during early years do not allow for regional estimates.

- Statewide, smokeless tobacco use (including chew, dip, snus, snuff, and iqmik) among Alaska adults has increased in the past ten years, from 6% in 2011 to 7% in 2020.
- The percentage of adults who used smokeless tobacco has not changed greatly over time in the Northern Region 9% used in 2011 and 11% used in 2020.
- For 2011-2020, the percentage of adults who use smokeless tobacco in the Northern Region has been similar to the state; differences between the region and state are not statistically significant.
- Based on the most recent three-year average of adults who use smokeless tobacco, there are more than 1,900 adults in the Northern Region who are at risk for poor health outcomes due to using smokeless tobacco.

Figure 10: In the Northern Region, the percentage of adults who currently use smokeless tobacco does not vary by subgroup.



Source: AK BRFSS, 2018-2020

§ Interpret this estimate with caution. See Appendix for additional detail.

Within the Northern Region during 2018-2020, smokeless tobacco use was:

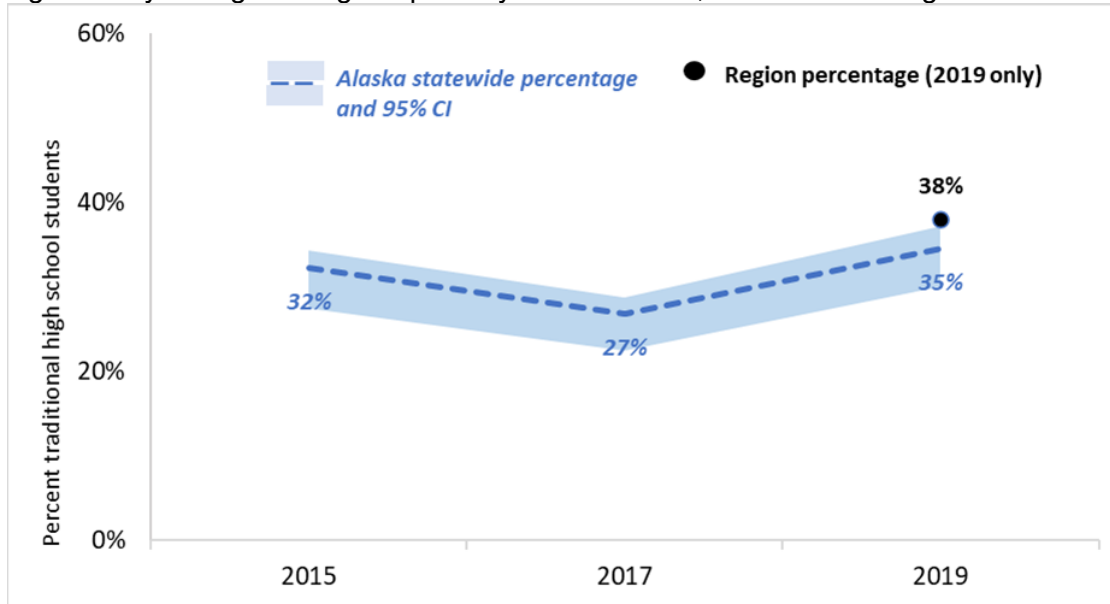
- Not significantly different between Alaska Native people and non-Native people (11% and 7%)
- Similar among people earning less than 185% of the poverty level and those earning more than 185% of the poverty level (12% and 6%)
- Not significantly different between males and females (13% and 6%)
- Not significantly different among adults 18-29 and adults 30-54 (12% and 9%), and similar among adults 18-29 adults and adults 55 and older (12% and 10%)
- Similar among adults 30-54 and adults 55 and older (9% and 10%)

Youth Tobacco Use

In the following charts, statewide YRBS data are reported for all available years and regional data are only reported for 2019. Statewide data are based on a sample designed to represent traditional high school students across the state, while regional data are limited to schools that voluntarily participate in the YRBS. Due to variations in school district, school, and student participation over time, differences in regional data from year to year may be driven more by changes in survey participation than by real changes in tobacco use among students. For this reason, data trends are presented for statewide but not regional estimates.

Current use of any tobacco products

Figure 11. The percentage of high school students who currently use any tobacco or nicotine product did not significantly change during the past 5 years in Alaska; the Northern Region was similar to the state in 2019.



Year	2015	2017	2019
Alaska statewide	32%	27%	35%
Northern Region	--	--	38%

Source: AK YRBS. Includes the percentage of students who used cigarettes, smokeless tobacco (including iqmik), electronic vapor products, or cigars in the past 30 days. Questions about electronic vapor product use were added to the Alaska YRBS in 2015. JUUL was added to these questions in 2019.

Reducing the use of any tobacco or nicotine product among youth is an important priority in the State of Alaska. The *Healthy Alaskans 2030*⁸ priority indicator that is monitored to assess progress is: *Reduce the percentage of adolescents who have used electronic vapor products, cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, or other tobacco products in the last 30 days.*

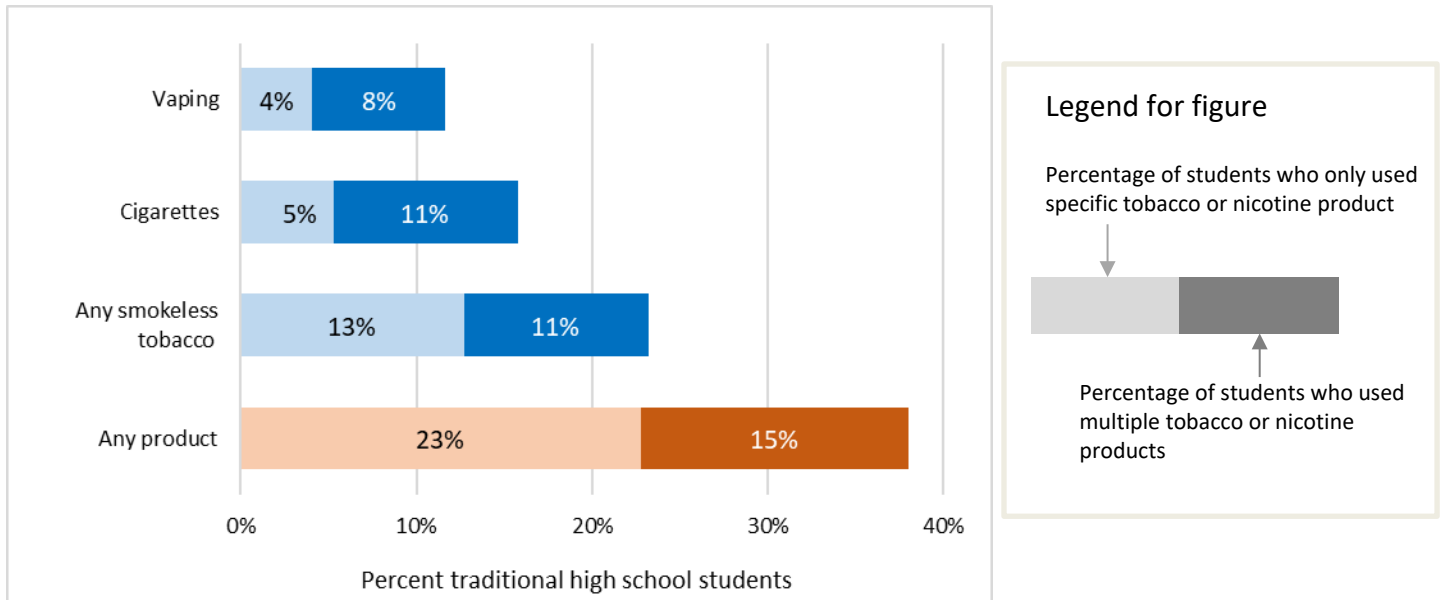
- This measure is reported beginning in 2015, the first year that questions about e-cigarettes were added to the Alaska YRBS.
- Between 2015 and 2019, the percentage of students who currently used any tobacco or nicotine product statewide varied, but the change over time is non-significant.
- In the Northern Region, 38% of students currently used a tobacco or nicotine product in 2019, which is similar to the statewide percentage of 35%.

⁸ For more information about Healthy Alaskans 2030, see <https://www.healthyalaskans.org/>

- Based on the most recent percentage of students who use tobacco or nicotine products, there are more than 600 students in the Northern Region who are at risk for poor health outcomes due to using these products.

Current use of specific tobacco products

Figure 12. Smokeless tobacco was the most commonly used tobacco product among high school students in the Northern Region in 2019. Use of multiple products was common across all tobacco and nicotine products.



Product type	Only one product used	Used multiple products	Used alone or in combination*	% who used 20+ of past 30 days, among high school students (not shown in figure above)
Vaping products	4%	8%	12%	2%
Cigarettes	5%	11%	16%	5%
Any smokeless tobacco	13%	11%	23%	7%
Any tobacco product	23%	15%	38%	--

Source: AK YRBS 2019, all participating traditional high schools from the region. 20-day use for any tobacco product was not calculated.

*numbers may not match sum of “one product” and “multiple product” values due to rounding

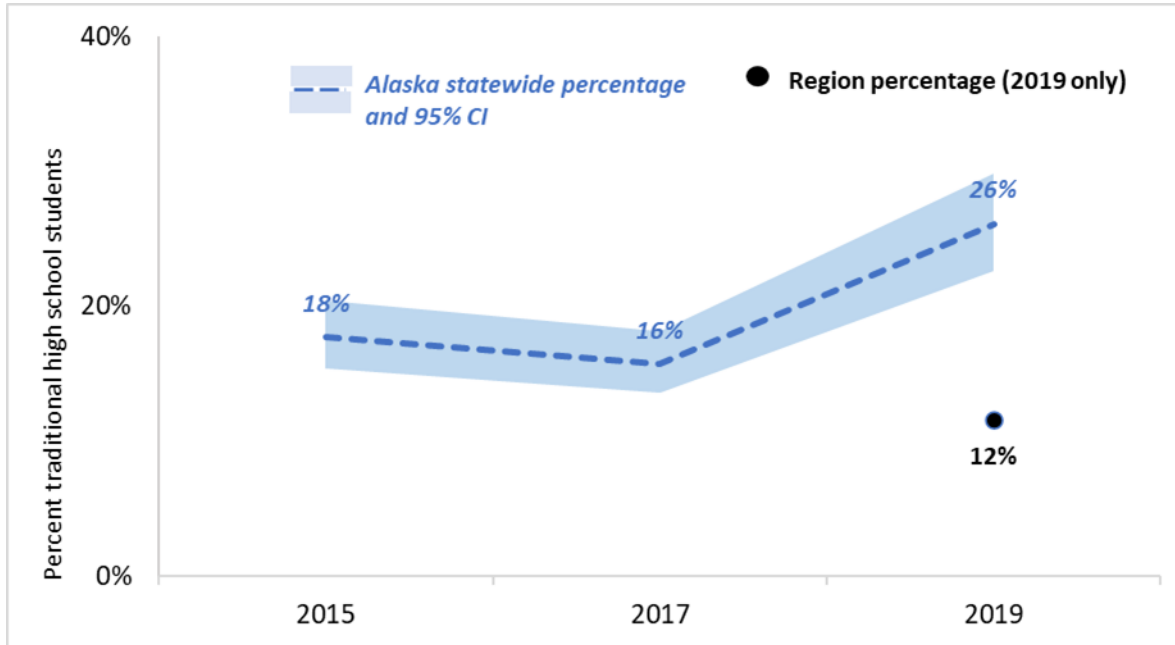
In the Northern Region, 38% of high students currently used some form of tobacco or nicotine product in 2019.

- Smokeless tobacco was the most commonly used product (23% of all students); fewer students used cigarettes (16%) or e-cigarettes (12%).
- About half of students who used smokeless tobacco used only those products (13% of students used smokeless tobacco only). Most students who used cigarettes or e-cigarettes were using more than one tobacco product.
- 4% of students currently used cigars (data available in Appendix). All of the students surveyed who used cigars also used other tobacco or nicotine products.
- A minority of students who used cigarettes or vaping products did so on most days. Almost one-third of students who used smokeless tobacco products used them on most days.

Electronic vapor product use

Electronic vapor products include e-cigarettes, vapes, vape pens, e-cigars, e-hookahs, hookah pens, and mods. These products are battery-powered, and usually contain nicotine and flavors such as fruit, mint, or candy.

Figure 13: The percentage of high school students who currently use any e-cigarette product increased during the past 5 years in Alaska; the Northern Region was lower than the statewide percentage in 2019.

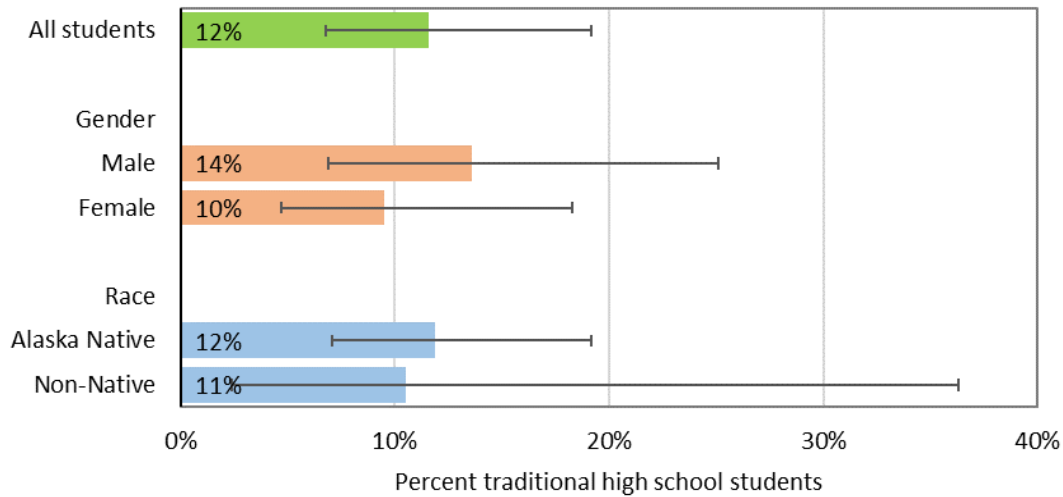


Year	2015	2017	2019
Alaska statewide	18%	16%	26%
Northern Region	--	--	12%

Source: AK YRBS, Alaska state sample of traditional high schools; all participating traditional high schools from the region. These questions were added to the Alaska YRBS in 2015. JUUL was added to questions about electronic vapor product use in 2019.

- The percentage of high school students who currently vape increased statewide, from 18% in 2015 to 26% in 2019.
- In the Northern Region, 12% of students currently used an e-cigarette in 2019, which is significantly lower than the state percentage of 26%.
- Based on the most recent percentage of students who use e-cigarettes, there are more than 200 students in the Northern Region who are at risk for poor health outcomes due to vaping.

Figure 14: In the Northern Region, the percentage of high school students currently using e-cigarettes is similar among subgroups.



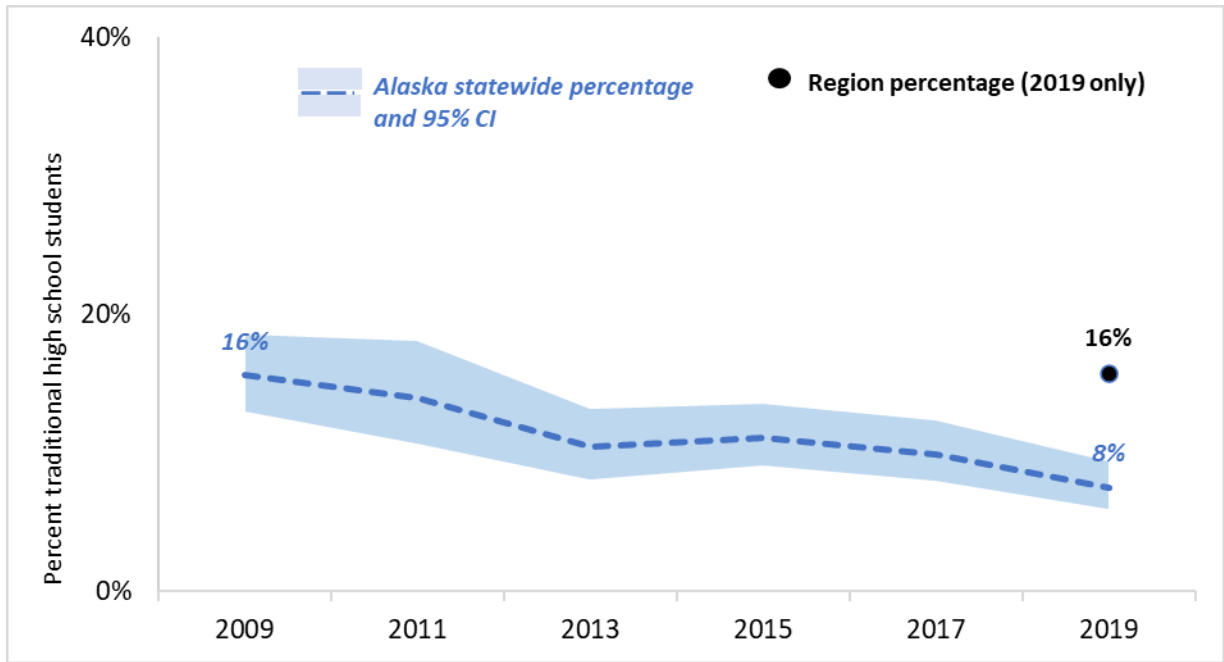
Source: AK YRBS 2019, all participating traditional high schools from the region

Within the Northern Region in 2019, e-cigarette use was not significantly different between groups of high school students:

- 14% among male students and 10% among female students
- 12% among Alaska Native students and 11% among non-Native students

Cigarette smoking

Figure 15: The percentage of high school students who currently smoke cigarettes declined during the past 10 years in Alaska; the Northern Region was higher than the statewide percentage in 2019.

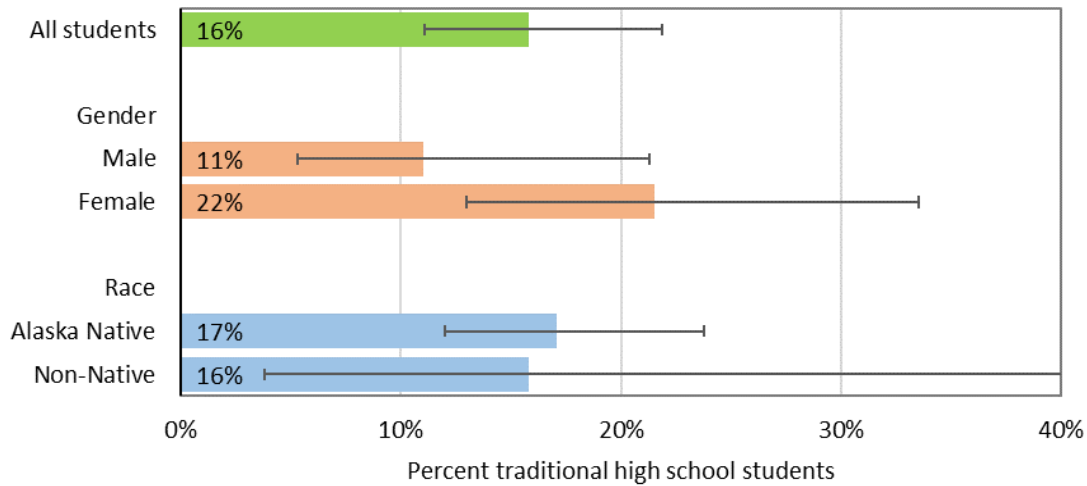


Year	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Alaska statewide	16%	14%	10%	11%	10%	8%
Northern Region	--	--	--	--	--	16%

Source: AK YRBS, Alaska state sample of traditional high schools; all participating traditional high schools from the region

- The percentage of high school students who smoke cigarettes statewide was cut in half during the past ten years, from 16% in 2009 to 8% in 2019.
- In the Northern Region, 16% of students smoked cigarettes in 2019, which is significantly higher than the state percentage of 8%.
- Based on the most recent percentage of students who smoke cigarettes, there are more than 300 students in the Northern Region who are at risk for poor health outcomes due to smoking.

Figure 16: In the Northern Region, the percentage of high school students who currently smoke cigarettes is similar among subgroups.



Source: AK YRBS 2019, all participating traditional high schools from the region

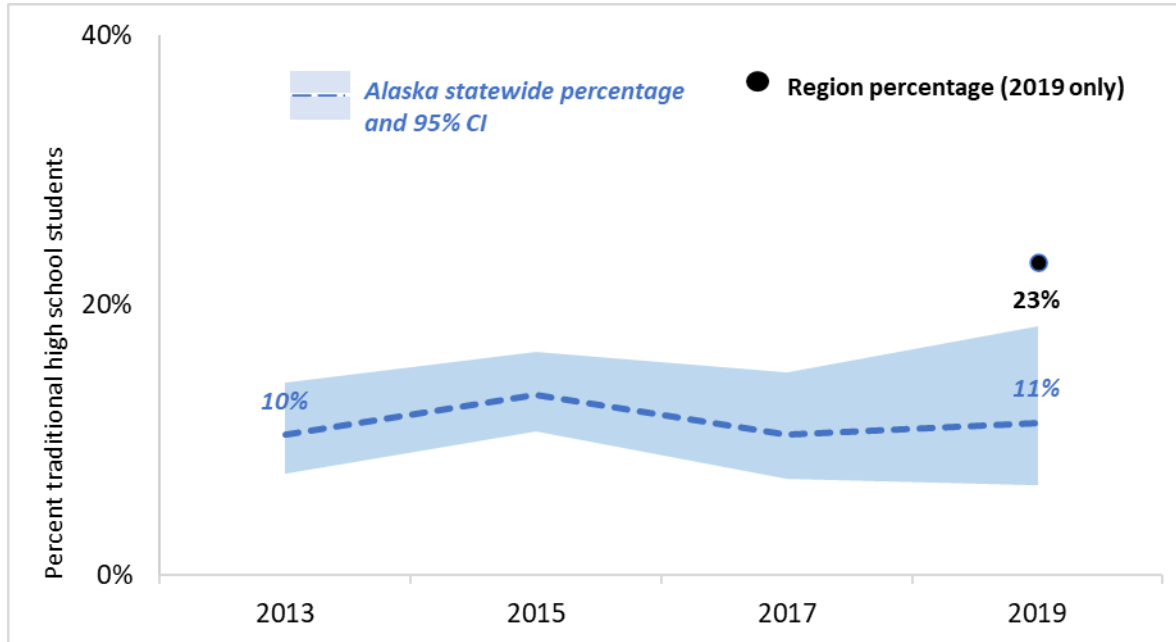
Within the Northern Region in 2019, the percentage of high school students who currently smoke cigarettes was not significantly different between groups of students:

- 11% among male students and 22% among female students
- 17% among Alaska Native students and 16% among non-Native students

Smokeless tobacco use

Smokeless tobacco includes commercial products like chew, dip, snus, snuff, and dissolvable tobacco products. People in some regions of Alaska also use a unique form of traditional smokeless tobacco called “iqmik” or “blackbull”, which is a mixture of tobacco leaf and punk ash.

Figure 17: The percentage of high school students who currently use smokeless tobacco remained stable during the past 7 years in Alaska; the Northern Region was higher than the statewide percentage in 2019.

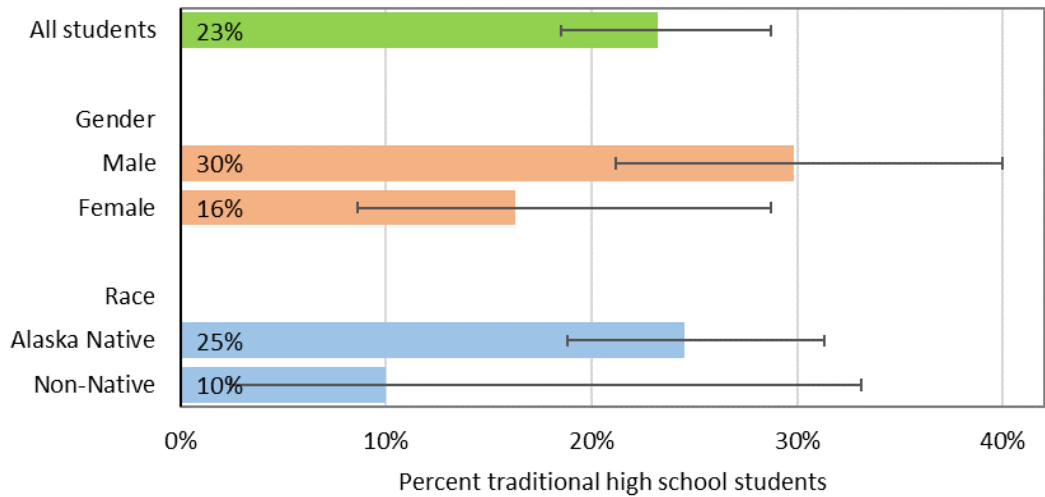


Year	2013	2015	2017	2019
Alaska statewide	10%	13%	10%	11%
Northern Region	--	--	--	23%

Source: AK YRBS, Alaska state sample of traditional high schools; all participating traditional high schools from the region

- Smokeless tobacco products include chew, dip, snus, snuff, and iqmik. Data are shown from 2013 because this was the year iqmik was added to the questions about smokeless tobacco use.
- The percentage of high school students who used smokeless tobacco products remained stable statewide during the past seven years, from 10% in 2013 to 11% in 2019.
- In the Northern Region, 23% of students used smokeless tobacco in 2019, which is significantly higher than the statewide percentage of 11%.
- Iqmik is a specific type of smokeless tobacco product that is unique to Alaska. In the Northern Region, 8% of students currently used iqmik in 2019, which is not significantly different than the 7% of students who currently used iqmik statewide.
- Based on the most recent percentage of students using smokeless tobacco, there are more than 400 students in the Northern Region who are at risk for poor health outcomes due to using smokeless tobacco.

Figure 18: In the Northern Region, the percentage of high school students who currently use smokeless tobacco is not significantly different between subgroups.



Source: AK YRBS 2019, all participating traditional high schools from the region

Within the Northern Region in 2019, the percentage of high school students who used smokeless tobacco was not significantly different between groups:

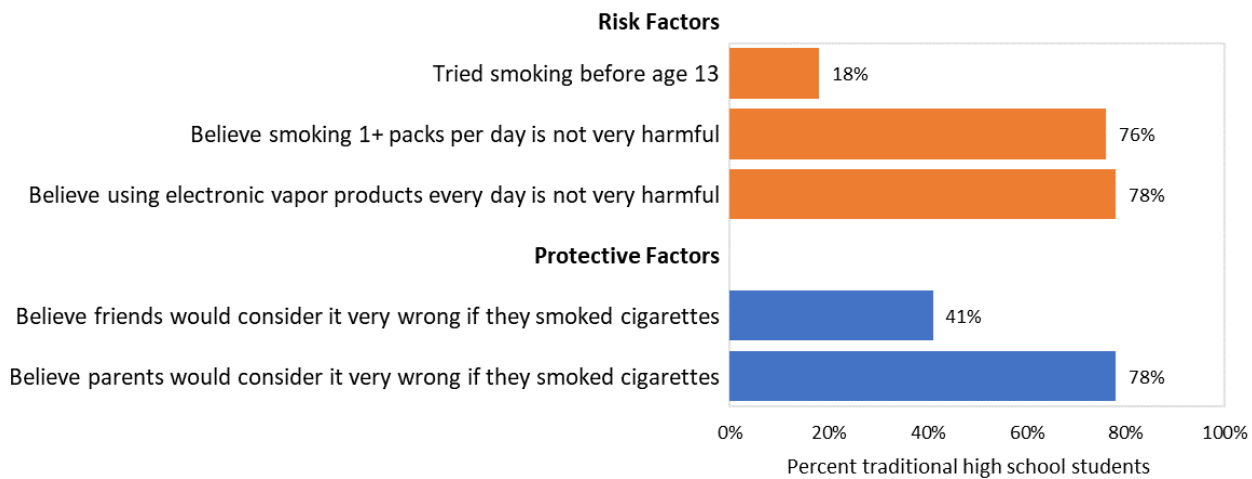
- 30% among male students and 16% among female students
- 25% among Alaska Native students and 10% among non-Native students

Section 3. Preventing Youth Tobacco Use

Risk and Protective Factors

Risk factors are measures associated with increased chances that youth will use tobacco. *Protective factors* are measures associated with reduced chances that youth will use tobacco. Prevention programs are often designed to decrease risk factors and enhance protective factors.⁹

Figure 19: In the Northern Region, both risk and protective factors for tobacco use are relatively common among high school students.



Source: AK YRBS 2019, all participating traditional high schools from the region

Risk factors among Northern Region high school students include:

- 18% of Northern Region students first tried smoking a cigarette before age 13. This is significantly higher than the statewide percentage of 7%.
- 76% of the region's students think that smoking one or more packs of cigarettes per day poses no risk or only slight risk to their health. This is significantly higher than the statewide percentage of 43%.
- Most students think that using e-cigarettes every day is not very harmful (78%). This is not significantly different from the statewide percentage of 73%.

Protective factors among Northern Region high school students include:

- Less than half of Northern Region students think their friends would consider it very wrong for them to smoke cigarettes (41%). This is not significantly different from the statewide percentage of 46%.
- Most of the region's students (78%) reported that their parents would consider it very wrong for them to smoke cigarettes. This is similar to the statewide percentage of 77%.

⁹ For more on risk and protective factors, see this U.S. interagency website on youth prevention <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/youth-mental-health/risk-and-protective-factors-youth>

Youth Lifetime Tobacco Use

Table 4: Many high school students in the Northern Region have tried using tobacco products.

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Northern Region</i>	<i>State of Alaska</i>
Ever tried vaping products	31%	46%
Ever tried cigarette smoking	49%	28%

Source: AK YRBS 2019, Alaska state sample of traditional high schools; all participating traditional high schools from the region

Many high school students in the Northern Region have tried vaping, and about half have tried smoking cigarettes.

- 31% of Northern Region students have tried using e-cigarettes at least once, which is lower than the statewide percentage of 46%.
- 49% of the region’s students have tried smoking cigarettes at least once, which is higher than the statewide percentage of 28%.

Tobacco Taxes

Tobacco price increases, including taxes, are proven to reduce both adult and underage smoking; increasing the price of tobacco products is especially effective in preventing youth from starting to use them.¹⁰

Alaska’s statewide tobacco tax includes:

- \$2.00 for a pack of 20 cigarettes
- 75% of wholesale price of other tobacco products, including cigars and chewing tobacco

There is currently no statewide tax on e-cigarettes products.

Municipalities and boroughs are also allowed to apply local taxes on cigarettes and other tobacco or nicotine products. Based on information available in May 2020:

- The City of Utqiagvik (formerly Barrow) taxes cigarettes at \$1.00/pack and other tobacco products at 12% of wholesale value. These taxes do not include e-cigarette products.
- The City of Kotzebue taxes cigarettes at \$2.20/pack and other tobacco products at 55% of wholesale value. These taxes do not include e-cigarette products.
- The Northwest Arctic Borough taxes cigarettes at \$2.00/pack and other tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, at 45% of wholesale value.

¹⁰ Community Guide to Preventive Services Task Force Tobacco Use: Interventions to Increase the Unit Price for Tobacco Products. Recommended (strong evidence), November 2012. <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/tobacco-use-interventions-increase-unit-price-tobacco>

School Policies

Policies that restrict tobacco use on school properties have multiple benefits: they protect people from being exposed to secondhand smoke, limit student access to tobacco products and opportunities to use them and restrict adult modeling and normalization of tobacco use.

Model policies restrict use of all types of tobacco or nicotine products, by all types of people – including students, staff, and visitors – on school grounds, and at school events held in other locations. Policies should be visibly promoted through signs and communications and should outline supportive interventions for anyone who breaks the rules. Finally, resources should be in place to ensure the rules are enforced.

Definitions of school policy ratings:

- **Comprehensive policy** contains at least 90% of the model policy elements.
- **Strong policy** contains at least 80% of the model policy elements.
- **Fair policy** contains at least 70% of the model policy elements.
- **Incomplete policy** contains fewer than 70% of the model policy elements.

K-12 School district policies

Note: related information on adult attitudes about smoking and tobacco use on school property is included in Section 5 of this report, Table 11 and Table 12.

Table 5. School districts in the Northern Region has established a comprehensive tobacco policy.

School district	Current policy status	K-12 enrollment
North Slope Borough Schools	Comprehensive	1,944
Bering Strait Schools	Comprehensive	1,717
Nome Public Schools	Comprehensive	712
Northwest Arctic Borough Schools	Strong	1,951

Source: ADAPT, May 2020.

Among the Northern Region’s four school districts, all four have adopted policies:

- Two have policies rated as comprehensive, closely mirroring the model policy.
- Two have strong policies, with many elements of the model policy in place.

In the Northern Region, few high school students use tobacco on school property.

Table 6: High school students who used tobacco on school property in past 30 days

Indicator	Northern Region	State of Alaska
Cigarettes	5%	2%
Smokeless tobacco (excluding iqmik)	14%	3%
Iqmik	5%	5%
Any: cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, or iqmik	17%	8%

Source: AK YRBS 2019, all participating traditional high schools from the region
Percentages shown are among all traditional high school students.

Few high school students in the Northern Region said they used tobacco products on school property during the past 30 days. These results are not significantly different from the statewide estimate.

- 5% of Northern Region students smoked cigarettes on school property.
- 14% of the region’s students used smokeless tobacco (excluding iqmik) on school property.
- 5% of students used iqmik on school property.
- 17% of students used either cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, or iqmik on school property.
- No information is currently available about student use of e-cigarettes on school property.

Colleges, technical and vocational training schools

In the Northern Region, no information was available about any post-secondary institutions that have adopted policies to restrict tobacco use on campus.

Section 4. Helping People Quit

Quitting Indicators

In the Northern Region, many adults are trying to quit smoking.

Table 7a: Quit attempts, *among people who smoke*

Indicator	Northern Region	State of Alaska
Tried to quit in the past year	57%	58%

Table 7b: Successful recent quitting, *among people who smoked within the past year*

Indicator	Northern Region	State of Alaska
Quit for 3+ months in the past year, at time of survey	3%	9%

Table 7c: Successful long-term quitting, *among people ages 25+ who were ever smokers*

Indicator	Northern Region	State of Alaska
“Quit Ratio” – lifetime smokers who are now non-smokers	38%	59%

Source: AK BRFSS 2018-2020

About one-third of adults in the Northern Region who ever started smoking have already quit, and most of those who still smoke are trying to quit.

- More than half of Northern Region adults who currently smoke cigarettes tried to quit in the past year, similar to the statewide estimate (57% and 58%).
- Among the region’s adults who smoked cigarettes within the past year, about 3% have quit successfully, similar to the statewide estimate (9%).
- Among adults who have ever smoked, fewer than half have quit successfully for the long-term, significantly lower than the statewide estimate (38% and 59%).

Quitting Resources

Alaska’s Tobacco Quit Line provides quitting support including counseling and medication. All Alaska adults can get services all day, every day, by calling 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669) or enrolling online at alaskaquitline.com. Some communities and health systems also have programs to support quitting. For more information about regional resources, visit <http://alaskaquitline.com/resources-and-quit-materials/>.

In the Northern Region, many adults have received advice and support to quit using tobacco.

Table 8a: Alaska’s Tobacco Quit Line (ATQL), *among adult smokers*

Indicator	Northern Region	State of Alaska
<i>People who smoke who are aware of the ATQL</i>	80%	85%
Number of people who received help from the ATQL in the past year	42	2,086
Estimated percentage of current adult smokers who called the ATQL in the past year**	<1%	2%

Table 8b: Healthcare Provider Support

Indicator	Northern Region	State of Alaska
<i>Advised to quit by a healthcare provider, among adults who smoke</i>	26%	41%
<i>Advised to quit by a healthcare provider, among adults who smoke <u>and</u> who had a healthcare visit in past year</i>	56%	69%

Source: Quitline awareness and advice are from AK BRFSS 2018-2020; quitline utilization and percent who called are from Alaska’s Tobacco Quit Line annual report, FY2021 (July 2020-June 2021).

**Calculated as the number of people who received services, divided by the estimated number of adults who smoke cigarettes (population age 18 or older multiplied by the regional or state prevalence of cigarette smoking).

Resources are available to help people in the Northern Region quit tobacco.

- Most Northern Region adults who smoke cigarettes are aware of Alaska’s Tobacco Quit Line, not significantly different from the statewide estimate (80% and 85%).
- 42 of the region’s adults got help from Alaska’s Tobacco Quit Line during the past year. This is less than 1% of the estimated number of adults who smoke in the region.
- About one-quarter of adults who smoke said that their healthcare provider advised them to quit, significantly lower than the statewide estimate (26% vs. 41%).
- More than half of adults who smoke and who had a healthcare visit in the past year said that their healthcare provider advised them to quit, not significantly different from the statewide estimate (56% and 69%).

Section 5. Eliminating Exposure to Secondhand Smoke

Secondhand Smoke Exposure

In the Northern Region, some students and adults are still exposed to smoke from other people's smoked tobacco products (secondhand smoke, or SHS).

Table 9a: Youth SHS exposure

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Northern Region</i>	<i>State of Alaska</i>
Students were in the same room with someone who was smoking in the past week	34%	27%

Table 9b: Adult SHS exposure at home

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Northern Region</i>	<i>State of Alaska</i>
One+ people who smoke in the home including self, <i>all adults</i>	59%	31%
Adult home SHS exposure, <i>all adults</i>	7%	7%
Adult home SHS exposure, <i>among those who rent their home</i>	3%	9%
Smoke drift into home, <i>among those in multi-unit housing</i>	30%	20%

Table 9c: Adult SHS exposure at work

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Northern Region</i>	<i>State of Alaska</i>
Adults exposed to SHS at work, <i>among adults who work**</i>	5%	6%
Exposed to SHS in work entryways, <i>among adults who work**</i>	23%	20%

Source: Youth measure from AK YRBS 2019; statewide percentages are from the state sample of traditional high schools, regional percentages are from all participating traditional high schools in the region. Adult measures from AK BRFSS 2017-2019.

**Alaska implemented a statewide clean indoor air law in 2018, and adult data reported here were collected prior to that law.

In the Northern Region, most adults reported no secondhand smoke exposure in homes and workplaces, however more youth reported exposure.

- 34% of Northern Region high school students were in the same room with someone who was smoking a tobacco product in the past week, not significantly different from the statewide estimate (27%).
- 59% of Northern Region adults live with one or more people who smokes including themselves, significantly higher than the statewide estimate (31%).
- 7% of the region's adults overall were exposed to secondhand smoke at home, the same as the statewide estimate (7%). Among those who rent their home, 3% of adults were exposed, significantly lower than the statewide estimate (9%).
- Among those in multi-unit housing, 30% of adults experienced smoke drifting into their home, not significantly different from the statewide estimate (20%).
- Among adults who work, 5% were exposed to secondhand smoke at work, similar to the statewide estimate (6%) and 23% were exposed to secondhand smoke in work entryways, similar to the statewide estimate (20%).

Secondhand Smoke Rules

In the Northern Region, most adults are protected by rules to prevent exposure to secondhand smoke at home and at work.

Table 10a: Home rules

Indicator	Northern Region	State of Alaska
Smoking is not allowed in the home	84%	91%
<i>Among those who rent</i> , landlord has rules about smoking on the property	34%	48%

Table 10b: Workplace rules

Indicator	Northern Region	State of Alaska
Smoking is not allowed in work areas, <i>among adults who work indoors</i>	83%	87%
Perception that smoking is allowed in indoor work areas, in their community	8%	3%

Source: AK BRFSS 2018-2020. Question about landlord rules not asked in 2018.

In the Northern Region, most private homes and workplaces have a smoking ban. These findings are not significantly different from statewide estimates, except for not allowing smoking inside the home.

- 84% of Northern Region adults said that smoking is not allowed inside their home, significantly lower than the statewide estimate (91%).
- Among the region's people who rent, about a third said that their landlord has rules about smoking on the property (34%).
- Most adults who work indoors said that smoking was not allowed in their workplace (83%). Alaska's statewide law protecting indoor workers from secondhand smoke was implemented during July 2018, and future survey reports should show closer to 100% of indoor workers reporting they are protected from secondhand smoke at work.
- 8% of adults perceive that smoking is allowed in indoor work areas in their community.

Secondhand Smoke Attitudes

In the Northern Region, most adults believe that secondhand smoke is harmful, and support rules that protect people from being exposed to secondhand smoke.

Table 11a: Attitudes about harm

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Northern Region</i>	<i>State of Alaska</i>
Agree secondhand smoke is very/somewhat harmful to people's health	92%	92%
Prefer to spend time where people are not smoking	85%	85%

Table 11b: Knowledge of harm

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Northern Region</i>	<i>State of Alaska</i>
Secondhand smoke causes lung cancer	82%	79%
Secondhand smoke causes heart disease	72%	70%
Secondhand smoke causes respiratory problems in children	92%	92%
Secondhand smoke causes Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)	54%	39%

Table 11c: Support rules that protect people from secondhand smoke

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Northern Region</i>	<i>State of Alaska</i>
Agree/strongly agree people should be protected from secondhand smoke	89%	91%

Table 11d: Agree tobacco use should not be allowed at schools

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Northern Region</i>	<i>State of Alaska</i>
On school grounds during school hours	95%	95%
On school grounds after school hours	90%	90%
At school-sponsored events, including those not on school grounds	88%	82%

Table 11e: Agree tobacco use should not be allowed in healthcare settings

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Northern Region</i>	<i>State of Alaska</i>
On hospital grounds, such as on walkways and outside building entrances	91%	86%
On health clinic grounds, such as on walkways and outside building entrances	91%	87%

Source: AK BRFSS 2018-2020.

In the Northern Region, most adults support rules that protect people from being exposed to secondhand smoke. Results are not significantly different from statewide results, except thinking that secondhand smoke causes Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

- Most adults in the Northern Region agree that secondhand smoke is harmful (92%). Most also prefer to spend time where people are not smoking (85%).
- 82% of the region's adults think secondhand smoke causes lung cancer, 72% think secondhand smoke causes heart disease, 92% think secondhand smoke causes respiratory problems in children. All three measures are similar to the statewide estimates (79%, 70%, and 92%, respectively). 54% think it causes Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), significantly higher than the statewide estimate (39%).
- A majority of adults agree that people should be protected from secondhand smoke in general (89%).

- Nearly all adults say that tobacco use should not be allowed on school grounds during school hours (95%). Most also agree that tobacco use should not be allowed after school hours (90%) or at school-sponsored events, including those not on school grounds (88%).
- Most adults support rules that do not allow tobacco use on hospital grounds and health clinic grounds (91% for both).

Secondhand Smoke Norms

“Norms” are values, beliefs, attitudes, and expectations for behavior that are shared by most people in a group, such as a community. The following are indicators of perceived pro- or anti-tobacco community norms.

In the Northern Region, some adults report seeing smoking in school settings, and more report seeing it in healthcare settings.

Table 12a: Report seeing tobacco use in school settings, *among adults who have visited them*

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Northern Region</i>	<i>State of Alaska</i>
Inside school but after school hours	5%	3%
Outside on school grounds during school hours	34%	17%
Outside on school grounds after school hours	55%	24%
At school-sponsored events, including those not on school grounds	30%	19%

Table 12b: Report seeing tobacco use in healthcare settings, *among adults who have visited them*

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Northern Region</i>	<i>State of Alaska</i>
On hospital grounds	56%	55%
On health clinic grounds	54%	40%

Table 12c: Report seeing tobacco use in community settings, *all adults*

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Northern Region</i>	<i>State of Alaska</i>
Saw smoking in indoor work areas	8%	4%
Saw smoking in bars	5%	6%

Table 12d: Aware of local tobacco prevention activities, *all adults*

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Northern Region</i>	<i>State of Alaska</i>
Aware of a local group doing tobacco prevention in their community	50%	45%

Source: AK BRFSS 2016-2018 for in school settings, 2017-2018 in healthcare settings, and 2019-2020 in community settings.

In the Northern Region, despite strong support for rules restricting smoking and protecting people from secondhand smoke (see prior section), many people still report seeing tobacco use in school and healthcare settings.

- Relatively few Northern Region adults have seen someone using tobacco inside schools (5%), similar to the statewide estimate (3%). About a third have seen tobacco use outside on school grounds during school hours (34%), over half have seen it on school grounds but after school hours (55%), and about one-third have seen it at school-sponsored events including those not on school grounds (30%). All three measures are significantly higher than the statewide estimates (17%, 24%, and 19%, respectively).
- 56% of the region’s adults who visited a hospital in the past year have seen someone using tobacco there, similar to the statewide estimate (55%). 54% who visited a hospital in the past year have seen tobacco use on health clinic grounds, significantly higher than the statewide estimate (40%).
- Relatively few adults have seen someone smoking in indoor work areas (8%) and in bars (5%), similar to the statewide estimates (4% and 6%, respectively).

- Almost half of adults said they know about a local group working on tobacco prevention in their community (50%), similar to the statewide estimate (45%).

Secondhand Smoke Policies

Alaska has a statewide law that bans smoking and use of electronic vaping products (“e-cigarettes”) in enclosed public places and workplaces, including buses and taxis, stores, bars, and restaurants (Alaska Statute 18.35.301¹¹, enacted July 17, 2018). Tribal governments, local municipalities, and organizations can pass policies that build on this statewide law but cannot remove or weaken the state law.

The Alaska TPC Program collects information on a variety of local smokefree policies, including tobacco free tribal resolutions, community ordinances, multi-unit housing policies, and healthcare policies.¹² Each of these policies are evaluated in comparison to a relevant model policy, scored based on how many model policy elements are included, and categorized as defined below.

Policy Strength Definitions:

- **Comprehensive policy** contains at least 90% of the model policy elements.
- **Strong policy** contains at least 80% of the model policy elements.
- **Fair policy** contains at least 70% of the model policy elements.
- **Incomplete policy** contains fewer than 70% of the model policy elements.

Tribal Resolutions

There are about 40 tribes in the Northern Region. As of May 2020, 23 tribes have tobacco-free or smokefree tribal resolutions on record. This is over half of the tribes in the region.

- 18 are tobacco-free policies.
- Five are smokefree policies.
- One of these policies includes e-cigarettes.

Multi-Unit Housing Policies

Policies that ban smoking in multi-unit housing, such as apartment buildings, duplexes, and public housing complexes, can protect families from secondhand smoke exposure within their homes, “drift” between units, and smoke residue left by former residents.

Model housing policies include:

- Prohibitions on all types of smoking and tobacco use, including e-cigarettes and marijuana, within indoor spaces and all outdoor spaces of the property
- Specific definition for “residents” that includes anyone living or staying in the property
- Statement that the policy applies to all current and new residents, guests, visitors, employees, contractors, volunteers, and vendors
- Requirement for posting “no smoking” signs, and for management to communicate the policy to employees and residents
- Inclusion of the policy within lease agreements
- Statement of penalties for violations

Based on information available in ADAPT (see ‘Methods’ section) during May 2020, two multi-unit housing properties in the Northern Region have smokefree addendums or policies in their leases:

- The Bering Straits Regional Housing Authority policy is rated as strong, containing most key elements of the model policy

¹¹ <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/statutes.asp#18.35.301>

¹² Information about tobacco-related policies can be shared by emailing tobacco@alaska.gov

- The Northwest Inupiat Housing Authority policy is rated as incomplete because it lacks definitions, specificity, “no smoking” signage, and/or enforcement

Healthcare Policies

Healthcare facilities exist to promote the health and wellbeing of the communities they serve. Policies that restrict smoking on healthcare campuses can protect people from exposure, including those who are vulnerable due to medical conditions.

Model healthcare policies include:

- Prohibiting all types of tobacco use, including e-cigarettes in all organization-controlled indoor and outdoor spaces, parking lots, vehicles, and sidewalks, by all employees, clients, patients, visitors, and vendors
- Prohibiting the sale, advertising, and transportation of tobacco products on organization-controlled properties and vehicles
- Requirements to post the policies
- Definitions of policy violations, clear penalties relevant to the individual (e.g., visitors, employees), and procedures for enforcement
- Identification of resources to help with quitting tobacco available to employees, patients, visitors, and vendors

Table 13: In the Northern Region, two healthcare facilities have policies to limit tobacco use on their campuses.

Healthcare Facility	Current Policy Status
Maniilaq Association (Maniilaq Health Center)	Comprehensive
Norton Sound Health	Incomplete

Source: ADAPT, May 2020.

In the Northern Region, two healthcare facilities have adopted policies.

- One is a comprehensive tobacco policy that includes e-cigarettes
- One facility has adopted an incomplete tobacco-free policy, meaning the policy lacks key elements that are considered essential for effective policies