



# County of Monterey

**Item No.**

## Board Report

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

**Legistar File Number: 26-203**

**March 24, 2026**

**Introduced:** 3/3/2026

**Current Status:** Agenda Ready

**Version:** 1

**Matter Type:** General Agenda Item

- a. Receive a joint presentation from the County of Monterey Health Department, Environmental Health Bureau, District Attorney's office, and Sheriff's Office regarding Tobacco Retail License program updates, enforcement actions, grant activities, and next steps; and
- b. Provide further direction, as appropriate.

### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors:

- a. Receive a joint presentation from the County of Monterey Health Department, Environmental Health Bureau, District Attorney's office, and Sheriff's Office regarding Tobacco Retail License program updates, enforcement actions, grant activities, and next steps; and
- b. Provide further direction, as appropriate.

### SUMMARY:

The Environmental Health Bureau (EHB) will provide an update on the Tobacco Retail License (TRL) program, including routine compliance checks, implementation of the administrative citation process with increased fines, ordinance and policy considerations, and strengthened coordination with partner agencies. The District Attorney's Office will provide an update on enforcement collaboration with EHB, including the review of violations and development of potential civil enforcement actions. The Sheriff's Office will provide an update on youth decoy operations and an interdepartmental agreement with the Health Department regarding the use of JUUL settlement funds for Tobacco Retail Enforcement.

### DISCUSSION:

In 2012, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance No. 5200, adding Chapter 7.80 to the County Code to establish licensing requirements for tobacco retailers in the unincorporated area. The purpose of this ordinance is to reduce illegal tobacco sales to youth through proactive education, compliance checks, and enforcement.

On May 6, 2025, the Health Department, Sheriff's Office, and District Attorney's Office provided an update on the tobacco retail license statute enforcement and alignment with the new Department of Justice grants to support compliance efforts. Staff return today to share program maturation from implementation to enforcement and interagency coordination with the Board of Supervisors on the TRL program.

## Environmental Health Bureau (EHB) - TRL Program Implementation

EHB continues to implement the TRL program with a focus on monitoring compliance, strengthening enforcement, and coordinating with partner agencies.

### Compliance Checks:

EHB has continued routine compliance inspections to ensure retailers adhere to TRL requirements. Facilities with violations, such as the sale of flavored tobacco, are documented by EHB and referred to the District Attorney's Office for further review. There are currently 298 permitted tobacco retail facilities countywide. The highest concentration is in Salinas.

### Enforcement and Administrative Citations:

EHB has finalized and will implement the Administrative Citation process. The citation tool has been approved for use and incorporates Health & Safety Code §104559.5, Business & Professions Code §22958, and Monterey County Code Chapter 7.80.

### Key components:

Administrative fines ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000, increasing for repeat violations.

Violations for flavored tobacco sales, operating without a valid TRL, underage sales, and other prohibited practices.

Suspension or revocation of the Tobacco Retail License at fourth offense within a 5-year period.

Hearing rights and due process procedures, including notice of intended decision, advance fine deposit, and financial hardship waivers.

EHB plans to begin issuing administrative citations following the board update and recommendations.

EHB has been actively collaborating with the District Attorney's Office and has referred multiple facilities for potential civil enforcement or prosecution of repeat offenders.

### Ordinance and Policy Updates:

EHB is reviewing the TRL ordinance for potential amendments to improve enforcement efficiency, clarify authority, and align with evolving state law and best practices. This may include updates to citation authority, penalty schedules, and interdepartmental coordination procedures.

### DOJ Grant Updates:

The Sheriff's Office and District Attorney's Office were previously awarded DOJ enforcement grants; however, no new updates or deliverables have been received for this cycle. Coordination between the Sheriff's Office and District Attorney's Office is anticipated for future DOJ grant renewal discussions to enhance enforcement efforts countywide.

### Youth Decoy Operation:

The Sheriff's Office continues to support youth tobacco compliance efforts through coordination with the County of Monterey Health Department for tobacco retail licensing and enforcement. In February 2026, the Monterey County Sheriff's Office assigned one Deputy Sheriff to support tobacco enforcement activities. In March 2026, the Deputy will commence training for community volunteers who will assist with tobacco enforcement operations. Beginning in mid-March 2026, the Deputy will

begin coordinated enforcement and education efforts and resume Youth Decoy Operations.

**Program Evaluation and Enforcement:**

EHB has strengthened enforcement efforts by issuing administrative citations for violations and working with the District Attorney's Office on cases involving repeat offenders. Increased fines through administrative citations are being pursued to encourage compliance and ensure accountability.

The continued collaboration between EHB, Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office, and Public Health remains essential to maintaining a strong local TRL program. The Health Department will continue to facilitate interagency communication and coordinate a joint update when additional partner input becomes available.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/COMMITTEE ACTIONS:**

The Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office, and Public Health Bureau participated in the initial TRL implementation and first Board update. Environmental Health Bureau continues to coordinate communication, enforcement activities, and program reporting across partner agencies.

**FINANCING:**

There is no financial impact associated with receipt of this report. Any future fiscal actions, including ordinance revisions, fee updates, or new grant activities, will be brought to the Board.

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:**

Through enforcement and education, the TRL program helps protect youth from tobacco exposure, supports responsible retail practices, and ensures compliance with local and state tobacco control laws.

**Mark a check to the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Plan Goals:**

- Well-Being and Quality of Life
- Sustainable Infrastructure for the Present and Future
- Safe and Resilient Communities
- Diverse and Thriving Economy

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**Attachments:**

Board Report

Presentation

Board Order No. 25-233

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