

Merchant Interview Guide

Chicago Flavored Tobacco Ban Study

Spring 2015

In each sampling strata we will randomly sample 30 retail store owners/managers to participate in a telephone-based semi-structured interview. The interviews will provide detailed information on barriers to complying with the ban for those retailers' located within 500 feet of a school, as well as how the Flavored Tobacco Ban has affected all retailers' tobacco business. Interview guides will be modified accordingly for each stratification level.

Hello my name is _____ from the University of Illinois at Chicago. I am calling to ask if you would be willing to participate in a short interview funded by the Federal Drug Administration. The interview is part of a study looking at how the ban on the sale of tobacco products within 500 feet of schools in the City of Chicago affects the retail environment. You are one of approximately 100 tobacco retailers in the City of Chicago that we will be interviewing for this study. Without your participation we will not have a complete understanding of the effect of this ban on tobacco retailers.

*The questions we will ask are about the flavored tobacco products ban and whether this ban had an effect on your retail location and sales. This interview should not take more than 10 to 15 minutes. **Your answers to the interview questions will be kept confidential.** We will be recording your responses to the questions for analysis purposes only. We will not be sharing these recordings or the transcripts with any other parties except the UIC evaluation team, and will be destroyed upon conclusion of the study.*

Your participation is completely voluntary and you can skip any questions that you do not want to answer. Your name will be replaced with a number and your individual responses will not be made publically available--they will be combined with the responses from other retailers.

There are no perceived risks or benefits for your participation in this study. However, the information you provide will be used to better understand this policy. If you have questions about the study you can call the Principal Investigator, Sandy Slater, at 312-413-0475 or email her at sslater@uic.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, you can call the Office of the Protection of Research Subjects at UIC. They can be reached at 312-996-1711.

For your participation in today's interview, we would like to send you a \$40 check. At the end of the interview we will take your contact information so we can send you the check by mail.

Do you agree to participate in this interview?

If no: Okay, thank you for your time and have a nice day.

If yes: Thank you for agreeing to participate in the interview. Your participation is much appreciated. Does this time work or would you like to schedule a more convenient time to talk?

➔ To start, could you please tell me your name, where your store is located, and, if you know, which, if any, schools are within 500 feet of your retail location.

Ban Implementation

➔ How did you find out about the flavored tobacco ban?

- Did you receive communications from the Chicago Department of Public Health? Did you get updates from the tobacco industry, such as information from your tobacco company sales rep? If so, what did they say?
- Did you get any updates from any retail/business/merchant associations? If so, what did they say?

➔ What is your opinion about the flavored tobacco ban?

- How do you feel about the flavored tobacco ban?
- Do you have concerns about the flavored tobacco ban?
- Did you follow the issue in the news? To what extent has the news coverage to date represented your point of view?

➔ Is your store affected by the flavored tobacco ban? (If yes, continue below. If no, skip the next two sets of questions)

- When did you receive a notice from the City of Chicago about the 90 day implementation period?
- What kinds of things have you done in order to comply with the ban?
- When did you stop ordering/selling flavored products? Probe on the number of days before the ban.
- How did you communicate with employees/clerks about the flavored tobacco ban?
- Has it been difficult to comply with the ban in your store? Why/why not?
- Did you have any trouble determining which products are covered by the ban and which are not?
- Have you made use of the Chicago Department of Public Health's website? If yes, how useful has this site been in determining which products are covered by the ban?
- How did customers react to the ban? Probe if negative reaction, age/gender of customers
- Did you lose customers?
- Have you changed which tobacco products you market or where you market these tobacco products ---for example, at the point of sale, since the ban was implemented?
- Has the ban affected sales of other items? (Other tobacco products, alcohol, etc.)

➔ What have you heard about enforcement of the ban on flavored tobacco products?

- What is your understanding of consequences or penalties for selling flavored tobacco products?

- *From what you have heard, will the City of Chicago be conducting compliance checks to monitor the sale of flavored products in stores?*
- *Has your store ever been checked for compliance with the ban on flavored tobacco products? If yes, were you in compliance? If no, how did you handle this?*

➔ *If store is not affected by the flavored tobacco ban, continue below.*

- *Have you changed the types of tobacco products offered through your store since the ban went into effect?*
- *Has your store voluntarily implemented the flavored tobacco product ban? (for stores unaffected by the ban)*
- *Has there been a change in your customers since the ban? Did you lose customers? Did you get new customers? Customer base unchanged?*
- *Have you changed which tobacco products you market or where you market these tobacco products ---for example, at the point of sale, since the ban was implemented?*
- *Has the ban affected sales of other items? (Other tobacco products, alcohol, etc.)*

➔ *Have you received training, educational materials, or information regarding compliance with the flavored tobacco ban? If so:*

- *What type of training, educational materials, or information have you received?*
- *Who provided the training, educational materials, or information?*
- *How helpful/clear was the training, educational materials, or information?*
- *What additional training, materials, or information would you like to receive, or do you think retailers in general would benefit from receiving?*

Tobacco Industry Reactions

The next set of questions is related to your interactions with tobacco companies.

- ➔ *Are you aware of any tobacco industry response related to the ban? [Interviewer note: e.g., introduction of new tobacco products, special promotions on existing tobacco products, etc.]*
- *Have tobacco companies offered substitute products to sell in place of flavored products? Which companies? What are the substitute products?*
 - *What guidance did the tobacco companies provide on how to interact with customers regarding the ban? Was any of the guidance directed at how to avoid losing customers?*
 - *Were any changes made to your contracts with the tobacco companies? If so, please describe.*

City-wide Issues

- *Are you aware or involved in any of the City of Chicago's earned and/or social media efforts to publicize this ban?*
- *Have you followed or been a part of any legal proceedings with the City of Chicago?*
- *Any other effects on your store?*

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the interview. Your participation today will be very helpful in helping us understand the effects this ban has had on retailers in the city.

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