



NATIONAL  
RESPONSE  
NETWORK

# National Response Network

## *Building Capacity to Respond to Local Tobacco Ordinances*

**Goal:** The National Response Network (“NRN”) will inform and educate state and national trade associations and business organizations on local tobacco ordinances to build the capacity to effectively respond to proposed local tobacco restrictions.

**Objective:** Develop a more sophisticated, educated, and engaged retail community that is better prepared to participate in the local government process in opposing tobacco product restrictions.

**Strategy:** Build participation of state and national trade associations and business organizations in the NRN to work together to share information, tactics, and outreach strategies to combat proposed tobacco restrictions that negatively impact the sale of legal tobacco products.

**Implementation:** The following steps will be undertaken to develop the NRN:

- Identifying key state and national associations and business organizations to be a part of the NRN.
- Conducting outreach to select associations and organizations to become participants in the NRN.
- Creating and maintaining a database of partnering associations and organizations by state.
- Encouraging NRN participating associations and organizations to educate their members about how to establish a relationship with local elected officials before any restrictive ordinance is proposed.
- Developing a new advocacy website under the name “National Local Advocacy Alliance” with information about local tobacco ordinances that participating organizations can use as a resource.
- Informing NRN participating organizations of proposed local tobacco ordinances by e-mail alerts.
- Requesting NRN participating organizations to forward the local tobacco ordinance alerts to their respective members that are located in affected cities, towns, or counties.
- Utilizing social media platforms to update NRN participating organizations on local ordinances.
- Updating NRN participating organizations on a regular basis about local tobacco ordinances and response efforts through an appropriate forum.

**Tools and Resources for Responding to Local Ordinances:** The NRN participating organizations will receive alerts, tools and resources via e-mail messages and the National Local Advocacy Alliance website including:

- Educational materials on establishing and building a relationship with local elected officials (e.g., store visits, meetings with elected officials, how to contact elected officials).
- Engagement Resources
  - Action alerts, local official contact information, and talking points.
  - Information on dates of ordinance public hearings.
  - Point-Counterpoint outlines listing advocate positions and responses.
  - Database of proposed, defeated, amended and adopted ordinances by state.

**NRN Participating Organization Engagement:** Participating organizations will be encouraged to engage with their respective members on local tobacco ordinance issues by:

- Contacting their members in the affected localities to educate them on the ordinance proposal.
- Forwarding NRN action alerts to their members and encouraging them to oppose a local ordinance.
- Encouraging members to use the information in the e-mail alerts including the talking points and other resources on the National Local Advocacy Alliance website to participate in the local government process.

**Benefits of NRN Participation:** The benefits for participating organizations include the following:

- Expanding knowledge about local tobacco issues that directly impact members.
- Gaining access to NATO's expertise and information on local tobacco ordinances.
- Enhancing value to members by providing alerts, updates, and tools to help oppose local ordinances.
- Protecting the right to sell legal tobacco products.
- Participating in the NRN is complimentary for state and national associations and business organizations.

**Contact Information:**

NATO Office Telephone: 866-869-8888

NATO Local Consultant Meghan Shea: [Meghanshea@natocentral.org](mailto:Meghanshea@natocentral.org)

NATO Executive Director Thomas Briant: [info@natorcentral.org](mailto:info@natorcentral.org)

## **Kinds of Local Tobacco Ordinance Restrictions**

- **Flavored Tobacco Product Restrictions**
  - Total bans on the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes, mint and wintergreen smokeless tobacco products, flavored cigars, and flavored e-cigarette products.
  - Partial restrictions on the sale of flavored tobacco products where sales are allowed only in age-restricted stores (i.e., tobacco stores and liquor stores).
- **Cigar Package Sizes and Minimum Cigar Prices**
  - Requirements for a minimum number of cigars in a package.
  - Minimum price per cigar whether sold individually or in a package.
- **Raising the Legal Age to Purchase Tobacco Products**
  - Usually proposed minimum age to purchase tobacco products is 21 years old.
  - Most of these proposed ordinances do not ban the possession and use of tobacco products by 18, 19 and 20-year old adults.
- **Local Cigarette and/or Other Tobacco Product Taxes**
- **Limits on the Number of Retail Tobacco Licenses Issued Annually**
- **Distance Restrictions Requiring Stores to be Located a Certain Number of Feet from Schools, Playgrounds, etc.**