

PRESS STATEMENT
Friday December 8, 2023



PRESS CONTACT
Dr. NFN Scout
E: scout@cancer-network.org | C: 401-267-8337

Statement of National LGBT Cancer Network on FDA's Delay of Menthol Ban

The following statement can be attributed to the Policy Team of the National LGBT Cancer Network.

The National LGBT Cancer Network is profoundly disappointed to learn that the Biden administration [plans to delay](#) its much-needed rules prohibiting menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars. The disparities in menthol and flavored tobacco use among LGBTQIA+ communities, young people, and communities of color are stark and urgent. These rules are the culmination of decades of research and advancement of public health, and the first opportunity for public comment occurred back in 2013. The new March 2024 date places the rules in very real danger of never being finalized.

Menthol and other flavored nicotine products disproportionately impact our LGBTQIA+ communities, which is why we and over 100 additional LGBTQIA+ and allied organizations urged the FDA to complete this rule over a year ago. Studies show that LGBTQIA+ people are [more likely to try their first cigarette](#) before age 13; [menthol is a key initiating product](#) for LGBTQIA+ people and makes cessation harder. In short, menthol makes it easier for LGBTQIA+ and communities of color to start smoking and harder for us all to quit. In fact, studies suggest that the ban could reduce smoking by 15% in a 40-year period and prevent around [650,000 smoking-related deaths](#). To help end tobacco disparities and help our communities live healthy and happy lives, access to menthol products must end.

We join the many organizations and tobacco control leaders across the country that have led efforts to bring about this policy. We have all taken up this charge because of the direct impacts that menthol has had on our communities; to ignore our calls for this policy would represent a failure to protect the health of both communities of color and the overlapping LGBTQIA+ communities. It is imperative that they continue forward without delay.

This statement is available online [here](#).

The National LGBT Cancer Network works to improve the lives of LGBTQ+ cancer survivors and those at risk by educating the LGBTQ+ communities about our increased cancer risks; training health care providers; and advocating for LGBTQ+ engagement in mainstream cancer organizations. Learn more at cancer-network.org.