

Tobacco Harm Reduction 101

Illinois 2025

Lawmakers are often bombarded with misinformation on the products used by adults in their state. This annual analysis provides up-to-date data on the adults who use cigarettes and e-cigarette products in the Prairie State. This information also includes data on youth use, impacts of e-cigarettes and analyses of existing tobacco monies

Key Points:

- In 2023, 1.06 million Illinois adults (10.8 percent) were currently smoking. This is a 12.9 percent decrease from 2022 and represents 155,809 fewer adults smoking.
- Among all smoking adults in Illinois in 2023, 6 percent were 18 to 24 years old, 34.6 percent were 25 to 44 years old, 42.7 percent were 45 to 64 years old, and 16.6 percent were 65 years or older.
- Among all adults earning \$25,000 or less in 2023, 19.1 percent were currently smoking compared to 6.9 percent of adults earning \$50,000 or more.
- Among all smoking adults in Illinois in 2023, 65.8 percent were White, 15.6 percent were Black, 14.7 percent were Hispanic, 2.1 percent were Multiracial, and 1.8 percent were Asian.
- In 2023, 610,338 Illinois adults (6.2 percent) were currently using e-cigarettes. This is a 19.2 percent increase from 2022 and represents 99,153 additional adults vaping.
- Among all vaping adults in Illinois in 2023, 35.1 percent were 18 to 24 years old, 47.4 percent were 25 to 44 years old, 14.9 percent were 45 to 64 years old, and 2.6 percent were 65 years or older.
- In 2023, for every one Illinois high school student who was smoking, more 49 adults were currently using cigarettes.
- In 2023, for every one Illinois high school student who was vaping, more than six adults were currently using e-cigarettes.
- The introduction of e-cigarettes has not led to increases in cigarette smoking, but rather, correlates with significant declines in smoking rates among young adults.
- Between 2007 and 2023, smoking rates among Illinois adults aged 18 to 24 years old decreased by 77 percent.
- E-cigarette use has remained stable among Illinois young adults. Between 2022 and 2023, e-cigarette use among 18- to 24-year-olds increased by 8.4 percent.
- Cigarette excise taxes in Illinois disproportionately impact low income and low education persons, while failing to significantly reduce smoking rates among that class.
- Among Illinois adults earning \$25,000 or less, smoking rates decreased on average by 0.7 percent annually between 2003 and 2023, while rates among adults earning \$50,000 or more decreased by 4.7 percent during the same period.
- In 2023, low-income adults were 2.8 times more likely to smoke than high income earners.
- In 2023, among Illinois adults who did not graduate high school, 16.8 percent were currently smoking, while only 3.9 percent of college graduates were smoking.
- In 2023, adults lacking a high school diploma were 4.3 times more likely to smoke than college graduates.
- Illinois woefully underfunds programs to prevent youth use of tobacco and/or vapor products and help adults quit smoking, while simultaneously receiving millions of dollars from the pockets of the adults who smoke. In 2023, for every \$1 the state received in tobacco monies, it spent only \$0.01 on tobacco control efforts.

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Adult Combustible & E-Cigarette Use

In 2023, according to data from the annual Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated 1.06 million adults (or 10.8 percent of Illinoisians) were currently smoking. This is a 12.9 percent decrease from 2022 when 12.4 percent reported current cigarette use. There were 155,809 fewer adults smoking in 2023 compared to 2022.

In 2023 (among all Illinois adults), 5.4 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds, 11.4 percent of 25–44-year-olds, 14.6 percent of 45–64-year-olds, and 7.9 percent of adults aged 65 years or older were currently smoking combustible cigarettes. Among all smoking adults in 2023, 6 percent were 18 to 24 years old, 34.6 percent were 25 to 44 years old, 42.7 percent were 45 to 64 years old, and 16.6 percent were 65 years or older.

Between 2022 and 2023, smoking rates among 18- to 24-year-olds decreased by 6.9 percent, among 25–44-year-olds by 24.8 percent, among 45–64-year-olds by 4.3 percent, and among adults aged 65 years or older by 3.7 percent.

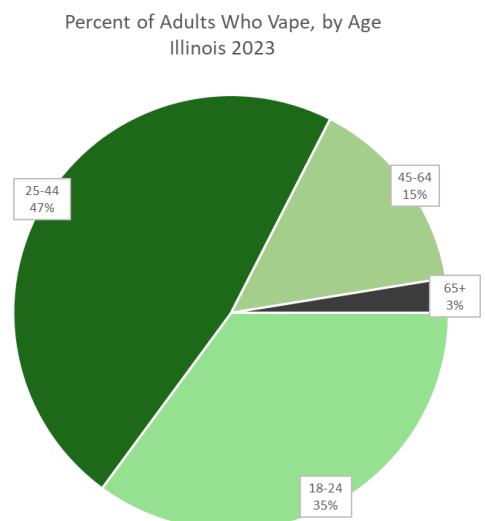
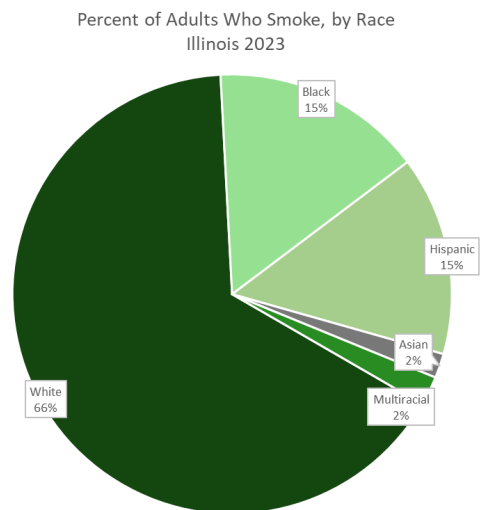
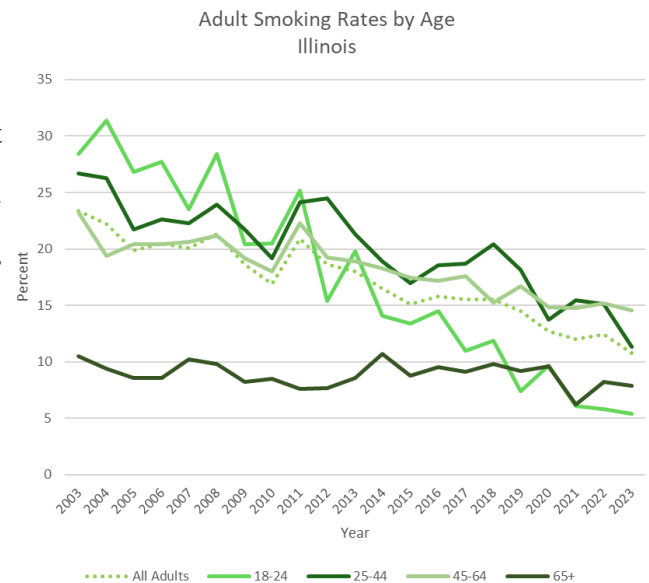
Among all adults earning \$25,000 annually or less in 2023, 19.1 percent reported currently smoking, compared to 6.9 percent of adults who earned \$50,000 or more per year. Low-income adults were 2.8 times more likely to smoke

In Illinois, Multiracial adults reported smoking at a greater percentage of their identified race at 12.6 percent. This is compared to 12 percent of Black adults, 11.7 percent of White adults, 8.8 percent of Hispanic adults, and 3.1 percent of Asian adults.

Yet, White adults made up a significant percentage of Illinois' total adults smoking population. In 2023, White adults accounted for 65.8 percent of Illinois' current smoking population, compared to Multiracial adults, who made up 2.1 percent. Black adults accounted for 15.6 percent, Hispanic adults made up 14.7 percent, and Asian adults accounted for 1.8 percent of Illinois' adult smoking population in 2023.

In 2023, an estimated 610,338 Illinois adults (or 6.2 percent) were currently using e-cigarettes. This is a 19.2 percent increase from 2022 when 5.2 percent reported current e-cigarette use. There were an estimated 99,153 additional adults vaping in 2023 compared to 2022. There has been a 44.2 percent increase in adults vaping between 2016 and 2023. There were an additional 185,055 Illinois adults vaping in 2023 compared to 2016.

Among Illinois adults currently using e-cigarettes in 2023, 35.1 percent were 18 to 24 years old, 47.4 percent were 25 to 44 years old, 14.9 percent were 45 to 64 years old, and 2.6 percent of current e-cigarette users in Illinois in 2023 were 65 years or older. Among adult e-cigarette users in Illinois in 2023, 64.9 percent were 25 years or older.



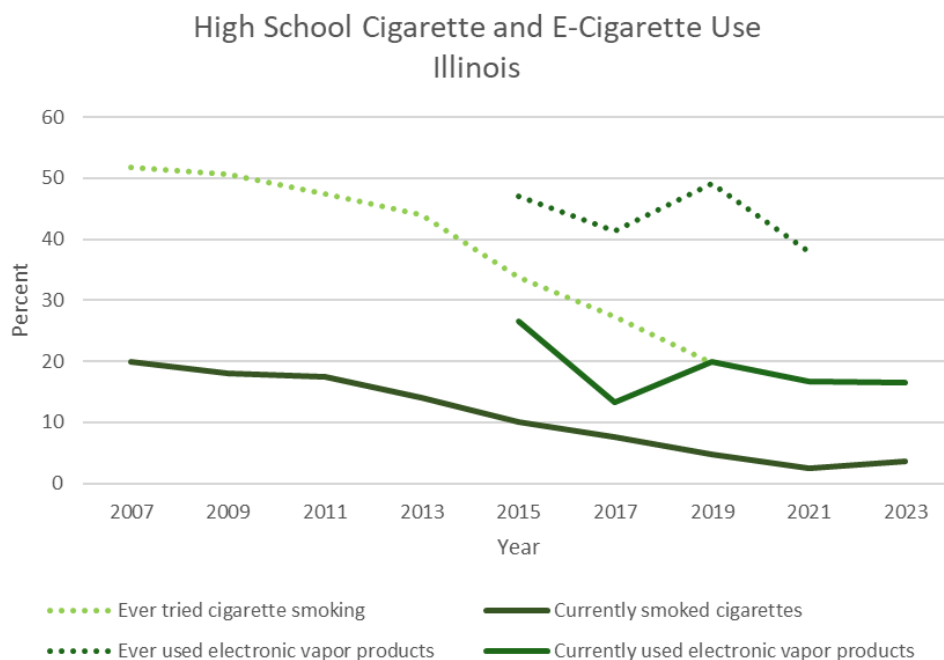
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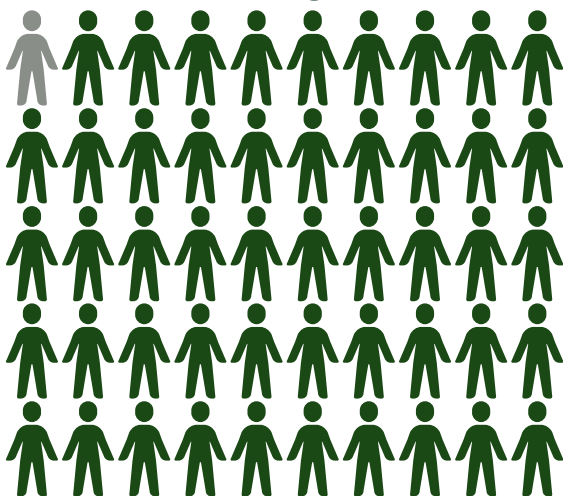
Youth Combustible Cigarette and E-Cigarette Use

Youth smoking rates are at historic lows in the Prairie State. In 2023, 3.6 percent of high school students reported currently smoking, or having used the product on at least one occasion in the 30 days prior. In 2023, approximately 21,506 Illinois high school students were smoking, compared to an estimated 1.1 million Illinois adults aged 18 and over who were currently smoking. For every one high schooler student smoking in 2023 in Illinois, more than 49 adults were currently smoking.

Youth vaping continues to decline in the Prairie State. In 2023, 16.6 percent of Illinois high school students reported currently using e-cigarettes. Between 2019 and 2023, current use of e-cigarettes declined by 16.6 percent. In 2023, approximately 99,168 Illinois high school students were vaping, compared to 610,338 Illinois adults aged 18 and over who were currently vaping. For every one highschooler vaping in 2023 in Illinois, more than six adults were using e-cigarettes.



Youth to Adult Smoking Ratio Illinois 2023



Youth to Adult Vaping Ratio Illinois 2023



Key



= High School Student

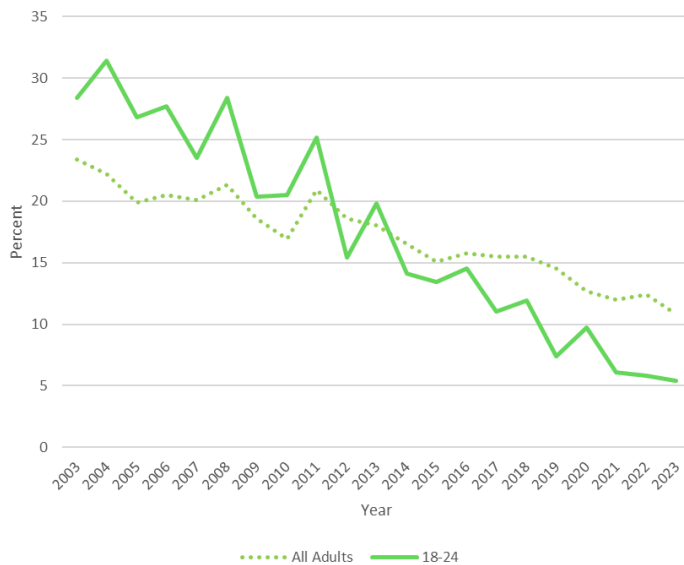


= Adult

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Young Adult Smoking Rates
Illinois



Young Adult Cigarette Use

The introduction of e-cigarettes has not led to increases in young adult cigarette smoking, but rather, correlates with significant declines.

E-cigarettes first entered the U.S. market in 2007, when 23.5 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds were currently smoking. Between 2007 and 2023, smoking rates among young adults in the Prairie State decreased by 77 percent. Comparatively, among all Illinois adults, smoking rates decreased by 46.3 percent during the same period.

E-cigarette use has remained stable among Illinois young adults. In 2023, 18 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds were currently using e-cigarettes, which was an 8.4 percent increase from 2022.

Given the epic lows in young adult smoking rates, lawmakers must refrain from policies that restrict access to alternatives to smoking.

Effects of Cigarette Excise Taxes

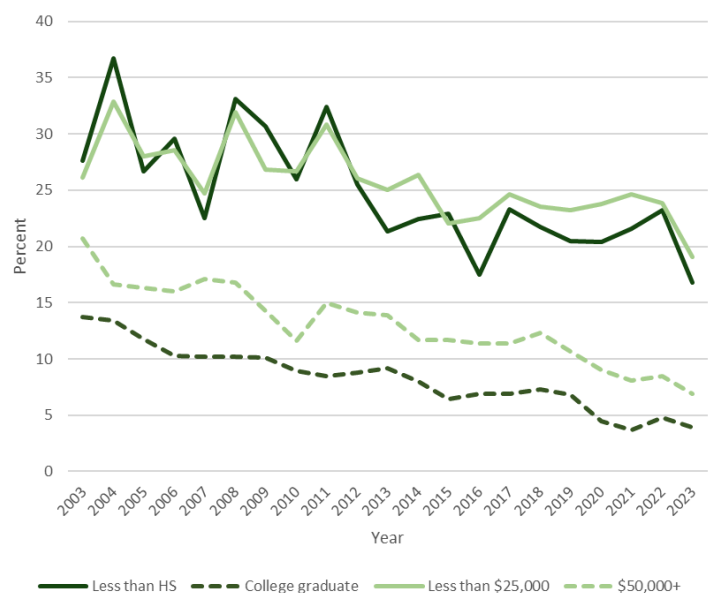
Illinois currently imposes a \$2.98-per-pack state cigarette excise tax. Lawmakers often justify excise taxes on cigarettes to deter persons from using combustible cigarettes. These taxes not only disproportionately harm lower income and lower educated adults; the taxes also fail to significantly reduce smoking rates among those persons.

Among Illinois adults earning \$25,000 or less, smoking rates decreased on average by 0.7 percent annually between 2003 and 2023, while rates among adults earning \$50,000 or more decreased by 4.7 percent during the same period. In 2023, low-income adults were 2.8 times more likely to smoke than high income earners.

Among Illinoisians who did not graduate high school, 16.8 percent were currently smoking in 2023, compared to 3.9 percent of college graduates who were smoking. In 2023, adults lacking a high school diploma were 4.3 times more likely to smoke than college graduates.

Lawmakers should refrain from enacting further increases in cigarette taxes given their disproportionate effect on low-income persons, while failing to reduce smoking rates.

Adult Smoking Rates by Education and Income
Illinois



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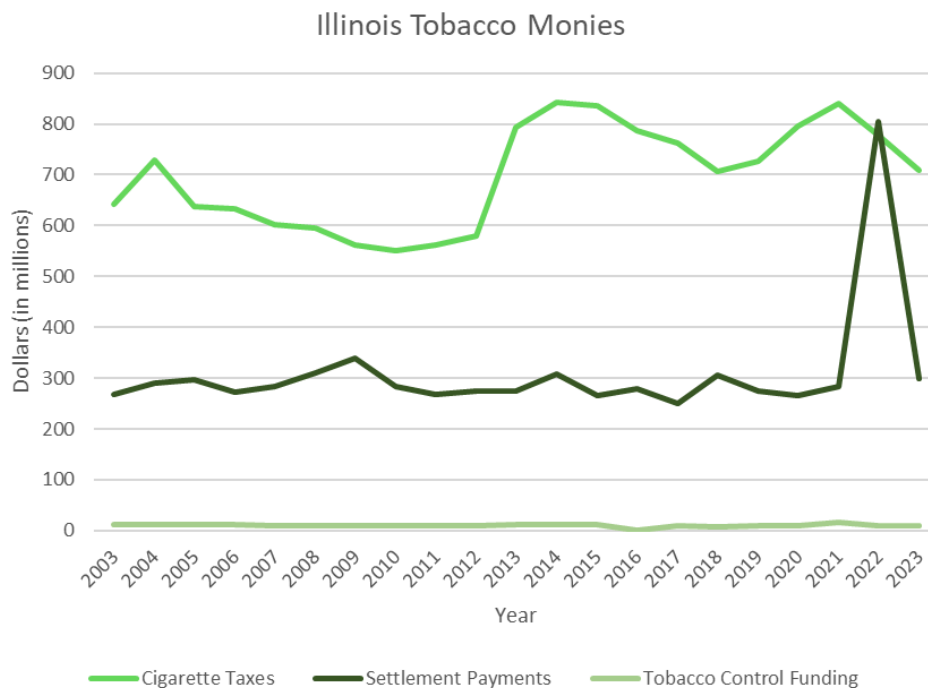
Tobacco Monies

Each year, states receive billions of dollars borne out of the lungs of persons who smoke. This revenue includes excise cigarette taxes and settlement payments. Yet, each year, states spend miniscule amounts of tobacco-related monies on programs to help adults quit smoking and prevent youth use.

In 2023, the Prairie State collected \$708.8 million in state excise tax revenue from combustible cigarettes. This was an 8.9 percent decrease from 2022's \$778.4 million, or \$69.6 million less. Between 2003 and 2023, Illinois collected more than \$14.6 billion in cigarette taxes.

Since the 2000s, Illinois collected annual payments from tobacco manufacturers based on the percentage of cigarettes and tobacco products sold in the state in that year. Illinois collected \$299.3 million in settlement payments in 2023, a 62.8 percent decrease from 2022's \$805 million, or \$505.7 million less. Since 2003, the Prairie State collected more than \$6.4 billion in tobacco settlement payments.

While Illinois collected \$1 billion in tobacco-related monies in 2023, the state allocated only \$10.2 million in state funding towards tobacco control programs, including cessation, education, and youth prevention efforts, which was a 0 percent change in funding from 2022. This amounts to 1. percent of taxes and 3.3 percent of settlement payments. In 2023, for every \$1 the state received in tobacco monies, it spent only \$0.01 on tobacco control efforts. Between 2003 and 2023, Illinois collected more than \$21.1 billion tobacco monies, yet spent only \$203.2 million (or 0.9 percent) on tobacco control efforts during the same period.



References

1. Data on adult smoking rates comes from the Centers for Disease Control's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey including sections on "Demographics - Race," Tobacco Use - All Categories," and "E-Cigarette Use." Accessed August, 2024. <https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/brfssprevalence/>.
2. Data on race and age was compiled using population data from the Annie E. Casey Foundation (<https://datacenter.kidscount.org/>) and Demographic data from the CDC to cross reference the racial population. Then, data from Smoking and Race, and E-Cigaretts and Age, was used to determine the percent of adults who were smoking in 2023.
3. Data on youth tobacco and vapor product use comes from the Florida Department of Health's Florida Youth Survey, accessed December, 2024, <https://tobaccofreeflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/FYTS-State-Tables-2024.pdf>.
4. Data on tax information comes from Orzechowski and Walker, "The Tax Burden on Tobacco Historical Compilation Volume 59, 2024, Print.
5. Data on tobacco settlement payments is from Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, "Actual Annual Tobacco Settlement Payments Received by the States, 1998-2024. Accessed December, 2024. <https://assets.tobaccofreekids.org/factsheets/0365.pdf>.
6. Data on tobacco control funding is from Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, "Appendix A: A History of Spending for State Tobacco." Accessed December, 2024, <https://assets.tobaccofreekids.org/factsheets/0209.pdf>.