

FOR IMMEDIATE REPORTING

**MULTI-AGENCY EFFORT TO STEP UP
VAPING ENFORCEMENT AND EDUCATION**

The Ministry of Health (MOH), together with other government agencies, is stepping up enforcement and education efforts against electronic vaporisers (e-vaporisers). This multi-agency approach is aimed at protecting our population from such harmful tobacco products and preventing vaping from being entrenched locally.

Harmful effects of vaping

2. E-vaporisers typically contain nicotine, a highly addictive substance, that can also harm the developing brains of youths. They also contain cancer-causing chemicals and other toxic substances such as metal nanoparticles and particulate matter (PM2.5) that increase the risk of heart and lung diseases. Vaping is also associated with lung injuries, known as e-vaporiser-use associated lung injury. The toxic substances found in the heated aerosol produced by e-vaporisers can harm users and others through second-hand exposure. In addition, there is evidence that e-vaporisers can be a gateway for non-smokers, particularly youths, to start using cigarettes.

3. Any person using e-vaporisers should seek advice from a healthcare professional and quit as soon as possible. Those who do not use such products should not initiate its use. More information about the harms of e-vaporisers can be found [here](#).

Current enforcement measures against vaping

4. E-vaporisers are illegal in Singapore. Under the Tobacco (Control of Advertisements and Sale) Act, the possession, use or purchase of e-vaporisers carries a maximum fine of \$2,000. It is also an offence to import, distribute, sell or offer for sale e-vaporisers and their components. Any person convicted of such offences is liable to a fine of up to \$10,000, or imprisonment of up to six months or both for the first offence, and a fine of up to \$20,000, or imprisonment of up to 12 months or both for the second or subsequent offence. All prohibited tobacco items will be seized and confiscated.

5. Currently, the Health Sciences Authority (HSA) monitors and targets illicit sales of e-vaporisers via social media and messaging platforms to curb online access of e-vaporisers. HSA works with the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) for the detection and enforcement of illegal imports of e-vaporisers. HSA also works with other agencies, such as the Ministry of Education (MOE) and National Environment

Agency (NEA), to conduct random checks or opportunistically enforce against illegal usage of e-vaporisers in the community.

6. Despite the ban, the authorities have observed that some users continue to purchase e-vaporisers online, from messaging applications such as Telegram, or when they go overseas. We are therefore taking measures to protect our population and prevent vapes from taking hold in our society.

7. Moving forward, the government will enhance enforcement measures, to disrupt the sales and supply of e-vaporisers. The enhanced enforcement measures include:

- a) Working with enforcement authorities to disrupt the sales and supply of e-vaporisers through our borders;
- b) Improving detection and removal of sales and advertisements of e-vaporisers online; and
- c) Enhancing enforcement in the community to curb the possession and use of e-vaporisers, including in schools.

Strengthening upstream measures to disrupt sales and supply of e-vaporisers

8. In the coming months, HSA and ICA will conduct inter-agency operations at air, land and sea checkpoints, starting with Changi Airport. Incoming passengers may be screened for e-vaporisers and their components at the arrival halls, and those found with e-vaporisers or their components will be fined.

9. Incoming passengers are reminded to pass through the Red Channel at the checkpoints and declare the possession of e-vaporisers to the checkpoint officers, so that they could dispose the e-vaporisers into the disposal bins. Travellers who declare and surrender these items at the Red Channel will avoid penalties. Anyone who is found with e-vaporisers in their possession without declaring to the ICA checkpoint officers may be liable to fines under the Tobacco (Control of Advertisements and Sale) Act. ICA will also continue to conduct security checks and work with relevant authorities to detect and deter smuggling attempts.

10. MOH and HSA are also working with the Ministry of Communications and Information and Infocomm Media Development Authority to step up enforcement to improve detection and removal of sales and advertisements of e-vaporisers online.

Enhancing enforcement in the community

11. MOH and HSA are working with agencies such as MOE, NEA, National Parks Board and the Singapore Police Force to step up enforcement against the possession and use of e-vaporisers locally. Since 1 December 2023, NEA's enforcement officers have been empowered to take action against individuals who use or possess e-vaporisers, and cases have been referred to HSA.

12. We will also step up checks at public hotspots, such as the central business district, shopping centres, parks and smoking areas, as well as public entertainment outlets (e.g. bars and clubs). Offenders will be issued with a fine on the spot by

enforcement officers.

13. MOE takes a firm stand against vaping. Schools and Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) will strengthen detection and enforcement efforts against vaping. When students are caught using or in possession of e-vaporisers, the prohibited product will be confiscated and their parents will be informed. The schools and IHLs will report the offender to HSA and continue to manage vaping-related offences through their existing disciplinary frameworks. These include taking school-based disciplinary actions, such as suspension or caning for boys. Students caught vaping will also be placed on cessation support programmes where counsellors will guide them through their cessation journey to effect long-term behavioural change.

Intensifying education efforts

14. In schools and IHLs, the Health Promotion Board (HPB) will continue to work with MOE to amplify anti-vaping messages in educational materials and preventive programmes, raise awareness of the harms of vaping, and provide vaping cessation support for students who are caught vaping.

15. Parents have an important part to play as well. There are resources and relevant information parents can access on Parent Hub. Parents are encouraged to have a serious conversation with their children about vaping to prevent it from becoming a life-long habit. More information about the harms of vaping is available on Parent Hub at <https://go.gov.sg/parent-hub-vaping>.

16. At the population level, HPB has rolled out a digital vape-free campaign in 2023 to raise awareness of the harms and illegality of vaping. HPB will also intensify public education efforts through campaigns and greater visibility of signages in public areas.

17. Information pertaining to prohibited tobacco products in Singapore is available on the [HSA website](#). Members of the public who have information on the illegal possession, use, purchase, import, distribution, sale or offer for sale of e-vaporisers can contact HSA's Tobacco Regulation Branch at Tel: 6684 2036 or 6684 2037 during office hours (9:00am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday).

**MINISTRY OF HEALTH
HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
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