

## CONSORTIUM FOR A HEALTHIER MIAMI-DADE

### Tobacco-Free Workgroup Meeting

#### Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 9:30am

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION NEEDED
Members Present	<p>Dr Zinzi Bailey, Chair, University of Minnesota</p> <p>Julio Esplugas, Vice Chair, City of Hialeah</p> <p>Bill Amodeo, All Star Media</p> <p>Alan Benoit, SWAT advisor, Hope for Miami</p> <p>Nicole Harris, Hope for Miami</p> <p>Natalie Gray, Research Fellow, Pharmacy School at Larkin</p> <p>Jason Dahn, Miami VA</p> <p>Dr. Asma Aftab, AHEC Tobacco Program, University of Miami</p> <p>Erin Brolley, Clinician, Jewish Community Services</p> <p>Jose Gonzalez, Century Risk Advisors</p> <p>Natouchka Murray, Health Service Representative, Florida Department of Health</p> <p>Zadymon Moore, Senior Health Educator, Florida Department of Health</p> <p>Laurie Varona, Senior Health Educator, Florida Department of Health</p> <p>Candace Williams, Program Manager, Florida Department of Health</p>	
Welcome and Introductions	<p>The Tobacco-Free Workgroup Meeting was called to order by Bill Amodeo at 9:40 AM, with all members welcomed and introduced. New members were invited to introduce themselves, and the group welcomed Diamond Moore and Erin Brolley as the latest additions to the workgroup.</p>	
Review and Approval of Minutes	<p>The minutes from the Tobacco-Free Workgroup meeting held on November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024, were reviewed. No changes to the minutes were noted. Candace Williams made the motion to approve the minutes. Alan Benoit motioned to approve the minutes and Julio Esplugas seconded the motion. Members of the Tobacco-Free Workgroup unanimously approved the minutes from November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024.</p>	
Partner Updates	<p>During the partner updates, it was announced the newly elected leadership for the Miami-Dade Tobacco-Free Workgroup, with Dr. Zinzi Bailey as Chair and Julio Esplugas as Vice Chair. They took a moment to thank Bill Amodeo for his dedication and leadership in his previous roles. Updates included ongoing efforts to finalize approval for the smoke-free drink coaster initiative, which aims to promote the workgroup and smoke-free environments across Miami-Dade County. Additionally, Alan Benoit successfully submitted an op-ed advocating for stronger tobacco-free policies in Miami-Dade schools, which was published in the <i>Miami Times Online</i> on December 24th. The link to the article will be shared with members for reference.</p>	

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Executive Board Updates	<p>The Executive Board met virtually on January 13, 2025, to finalize the Consortium’s nomination and election process for the Committee Chair and Vice Chair roles for the 2025-2026 term, with leadership now announced. The Board will next proceed with Co-Chair nominations and elections. Discussions have begun to form a Planning Taskforce for the Consortium Annual Event, which will be merged with the Worksite Wellness Awards Ceremony in 2025, and committee members are encouraged to join. The Board is also developing a digital brochure featuring an elevator speech and health agenda message to engage potential partners. Ongoing discussions focus on optimal health and addressing health drivers, with updates shared on food insecurity and the Mayor’s Initiative on Food and Nutrition For All Collaborative.</p>	
Previous Action Items	<p><b>Drink Coasters for Smoke-free Bars</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Tobacco-Free Work Group is in the process of developing drink coasters for smoke-free bars as part of a broader initiative to promote smoke-free environments and increase awareness of the consortium’s efforts. The initiative, which was discussed during a recent meeting, aims to achieve multiple objectives: promoting the work group, raising awareness about smoke-free environments, and directing individuals to resources via a QR code on the coaster that links to the Tobacco-Free Work Group’s website. Bill Amodeo provided an update, noting that while the banners for smoke-free initiatives in schools and play areas have been approved, the drink coaster design is still pending approval. Candace confirmed that the approval process is ongoing and may take some time, but once finalized, the coasters will be showcased at an upcoming meeting. This initiative represents a strategic effort to engage the community and reinforce the importance of maintaining smoke-free public spaces.</li> </ul> <p><b>SWAT Updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SWAT is actively resuming its initiatives following the winter break, with a strong lineup of activities planned for the remainder of the school year. The youth played a key role in completing 64 store surveillances focused on point-of-sale tobacco marketing, with further discussion on this topic to follow. The program continues to thrive with 16 active clubs and over 400 members across</li> </ul>	

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Miami-Dade County. Due to growing interest, Miami-Dade County Public Schools is exploring the possibility of establishing SWAT clubs in every school, with ongoing discussions about budgeting and funding requirements. Additionally, SWAT is working on advancing tobacco-free school policies, supporting youth-led advocacy efforts, and promoting tobacco education courses. The youth remain instrumental in raising awareness and ensuring access to cessation resources.

#### **POS Task Force**

- The discussion highlighted growing concerns over the oversaturation of tobacco retailers in Miami-Dade County, with approximately 6,500 stores—three times more than the next largest county. The Zoning Task Force is actively working to address this issue by meeting with decision-makers to explore strategies for limiting new tobacco retailer openings. Additionally, mobile tobacco vendors and on-demand delivery services have become a pressing problem, operating with minimal oversight and potentially bypassing ID verification. Companies like Miami Vice and Vapor Shak 305 use neon-lit vehicles and app-based ordering systems to distribute tobacco products, raising concerns about youth access. Vending machines selling tobacco products have also been identified in bowling alleys, often concealed during school field trips and uncovered in the evening. Street vendors are now selling vaping devices in public spaces, further exacerbating accessibility issues. The task force aims to engage zoning departments to assess how these businesses are obtaining licenses and ensure stricter enforcement of regulations, particularly near schools, parks, and youth organizations. Plans are underway for a Zoning Task Force meeting next month to coordinate efforts and push for meaningful policy changes.

#### **Essay Contest**

- The youth essay contest, initiated years ago, aims to engage SWAT (Students Working Against Tobacco) members in thinking critically about tobacco-related issues. Participants are encouraged to write and publish letters in newspapers across Florida, raising awareness about tobacco concerns. To incentivize participation, a \$100 gift card from the Quick Doc Foundation, led by Dr. Humble, is awarded. The program's goal is to inspire youth involvement

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	and advocacy on tobacco issues. Efforts to promote the contest will continue, and anyone working with youth is encouraged to share this opportunity with them.	
Performance Measures in Need of Improvement	The committee revisited key performance measures from its strategic work plan, identifying areas for improvement and prioritizing initiatives for the coming year. A primary focus is collaborating with Miami-Dade County Public Schools to educate students and expecting mothers on the risks of nicotine and tobacco use. Previous discussions with school representatives led to the development of the <i>Live Tobacco-Free</i> banners, which will be further addressed in upcoming meetings. Additionally, the committee is working to ensure that QR codes used in tobacco prevention materials comply with strict marketing guidelines, with follow-ups planned with the media department for approval. Efforts are also underway to enhance the Consortium's website by adding a dedicated resource section for tobacco-free initiatives. Plans are in motion to reconvene the Youth and Young Adult Subcommittee, adjusting meeting schedules to accommodate participants and involving Miami-Dade County Public Schools staff to strengthen collaboration. Further updates will be shared in the next meeting scheduled for March.	
New Action Items	<p><b>New Meeting Day and Time</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The committee discussed updates to its meeting schedule, confirming that future meetings will now be held on the last Tuesday of every other month at 9:30 AM. Invitations and meeting links will be sent out in preparation for the March meeting. Additionally, there was a brief discussion about possibly extending meeting durations beyond an hour to ensure all agenda items are adequately covered, with leadership planning to revisit this in a future meeting. Bill Amodeo also mentioned redistributing old palm cards used for outreach to provide historical context for past initiatives. The discussion concluded with words of encouragement and enthusiasm for the group's ongoing efforts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Live Tobacco-Free banners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The committee reviewed the finalized <i>Live Tobacco-Free</i> banners, which will be distributed to schools with SWAT clubs. These banners feature a QR code that links to the Tobacco-Free Workgroup's landing page on the Consortium's website, encouraging community engagement in the fight against tobacco. The</li> </ul>	

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goal is to increase recruitment by attracting parents, students, and passersby who can scan the QR code for more information and sign up to participate. Approval for the design has been secured, and Bill Amodeo has assisted with printing. Once the banners are received, they will be displayed at participating schools, with photos taken to showcase their placement and impact.

#### Point of Sale

- The Point-of-Sale Store Surveillance initiative was successful in its second quarter, with 62 stores surveyed to ensure compliance with the corrective signage mandate from November 2020. Despite the requirement originally stemming from a 2006 lawsuit, implementation was significantly delayed. SWAT youth, in collaboration with Hope for Miami and the City of Hialeah's EPI program, conducted the surveys, focusing on stores in Hialeah and the 33125 and 33126 zip codes. While most stores complied, eight were found in violation and reported through the Counter Tools system for further enforcement action by state authorities. A key concern identified was the lack of bilingual signage, particularly in predominantly Hispanic communities, where most warnings were only in English. Although Walgreens demonstrated strong compliance, many retailers failed to provide signs in both English and Spanish. Additionally, no signage was found in Haitian Creole, highlighting another language disparity. The committee emphasized the need for multilingual signage to ensure the message reaches all communities effectively. Efforts are ongoing to work with media teams to improve accessibility and to explore how youth can further assess signage presence around schools and community areas.

#### Be There! 5K

- The Tobacco-Free Work Group will participate in the *Be There 5K Run* on March 15th, marking the first time the group is formally involved in the event. The race, which serves as the kickoff to the youth fair season, is expected to draw over 1,000 participants. A table will be set up to provide information on tobacco cessation resources, secondhand smoke, and other health-related topics, as well as to recruit new members for the work group. Promotional materials will feature the group's logo, and volunteers are encouraged to assist with

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	<p>outreach efforts. Those interested in running can register online for a fee, which includes a T-shirt and a free pass to the fair. Further logistical details will be shared as the event approaches.</p>	
Upcoming Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• POS Surveillance – throughout the quarter</li> <li>• POS Task Force meeting – To be announced</li> <li>• Youth and Young Adult Subcommittee – To be announced</li> <li>• Tobacco Free Environment Subcommittee – To be announced</li> <li>• Be There! 5K – March 15, 2025</li> </ul>	
Adjourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The next Tobacco-Free Workgroup meeting is scheduled for March 25, 2025. Members were encouraged to share any ideas for future initiatives and to continue collaborating within the subcommittees, including the Youth and Young Adult Subcommittee and the Zoning Task Force. Plans for upcoming efforts will be discussed in future meetings, and members were reminded to stay engaged. The meeting concluded with appreciation for everyone's contributions and enthusiasm for the work ahead. The meeting was adjourned by chair, Dr. Zinzi Bailey, at 10:30am.</li> </ul>	