

## **The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Encourages Connecticut Residents to Quit for a Day during the Great American Smokeout®**

**Hartford, CT** - The Department Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) invites all tobacco and electronic cigarette users to join people from around Connecticut and across the country by participating in the American Cancer Society's Great American Smoke-out® on Thursday, November 18, 2021. The Great American Smoke-out® encourages all tobacco and electronic cigarette users to take the first step towards quitting by stopping for at least one day, with the hope that they will decide to stay tobacco-, e-cigarette-, and nicotine-free forever.

"The best way to quit smoking is to never start. The younger a person is when they begin to smoke or vape, the more likely they are to become addicted to nicotine," said DMHAS Acting Commissioner Nancy Navarretta. "Restricting access to these products for teens and young adults is a proven way to prevent nicotine addiction. If you are a tobacco or electronic cigarette retailer, make sure you properly check the photo ID of anyone who appears under the **age of 30**, as required by state law. Parents and caregivers should talk to your children and loved ones about the dangers associated with tobacco and electronic cigarette use. Remember, what you do matters."

The Great American Smokeout is an annual intervention event on the third Thursday of November by the American Cancer Society. Approximately 40 million American adults still smoke, and tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the country. The event challenges people to quit on that day, or use the day to make a plan to quit.

To assist tobacco users, there are smoking cessation programs available free of charge to Connecticut residents: [The Connecticut Quitline at 1-800-QUIT NOW](#) (1-800-784-8669) has professionally trained Quit Coaches available to help participants prepare for their quit date by designing an individualized quit plan. Many Quit Coaches are former smokers themselves. Registration is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, along with a texting program to help stay on track. More information is available at [CommitToQuitCT.com](http://CommitToQuitCT.com).

Many insurance plans cover tobacco use cessation counseling services, and people are encouraged to check with their insurance provider to see what their options are. Additionally, there are smartphone apps available to help guide people through the quit process; see the options available at <https://www.smokefree.gov> to start.