

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH DISTRICT ATTORNEYS, CITY ATTORNEYS AND COUNTY COUNSELS

Now as never before, Local Lead Agencies, Ethnic Networks and Competitive Grantees find themselves building bridges with law enforcement and legal partners. New statewide and local tobacco control laws addressing *secondhand smoke in workplaces, playgrounds, entryways and other indoor and outdoor public spaces* and renewed efforts to halt *illegal sales of tobacco to minors* have brought us to the table with prosecutors and municipal legal advisors. Here are some tips from the field to turn these encounters into effective partnerships:

Contact your district attorney, city attorney or county counsel prior to starting implementation efforts.

Make an appointment to meet with the enforcement attorney before the enforcement process begins. Seek their support early in the process and assist them to understand tobacco control laws, recognizing that *most tobacco control laws are low penalty but high visibility* infractions or misdemeanors.

Keep educational and background materials concise and to the point.

Use fact sheets to simplify complicated or lengthy amounts of information. Include data on public support for tobacco control laws.

Respect their time.

They have very little of it to spare. Make yourself available according to their schedule.

Don't guess at answers.

New questions often arise during meetings or in follow-up phone calls that you had not anticipated. Let your legal partners know you will research the question and respond with answers as quickly as possible. *They appreciate candor and value reliable data.*

Become fully educated on the law by making use of readily available resources.

When preparing to meet with district attorneys, city attorneys or county counsels, be armed with current case law, a realistic enforcement plan and specific needs you have of them.

Leave behind a concise packet of materials.

BREATH provides free fact sheets, tip sheets, summaries, samples, models and data on all facets of **secondhand smoke** in indoor and outdoor public places and on **illegal sales of tobacco to minors**. You can use it or customize it for local legal advisors and partners. Contact *BREATH* to help you prepare for the meeting 1-800-622-2829.

"Our close partnership with county and state public health programs and with tobacco control advocates has significantly raised compliance with the smoke-free workplace laws. As a result, our quality of life in San Diego has been enhanced in ways we never fully expected, but very much appreciate". — Joan N. McNamara, Deputy City Attorney, City of San Diego

BREATH –The California Smoke-free Bars, Workplaces and Communities Program, A Statewide Project of the American Lung Association of the East Bay made possible by the Tobacco Tax Health Protection Act of 1988 – Proposition 99, under Grant #00-90279 with the CA Department of Health Services, Tobacco Control Section. Phone: (916) 739-8925; E-mail: breath@jps.net.