



Dear Sir/Madam,

The Tennessee Department of Health joins partners from across the state in celebrating the third annual **Tennessee Quit Week**, February 4-8th 2019, renewing the call to each and every Tennessean to be part of our state's celebration of all Tennesseans who quit using tobacco products and inspire others to join them.

Tobacco use is still the number one preventable cause of death and disease in the United States and in Tennessee. Yet, 1 in 5 Americans still smoke. As a faith leader, we know you have several competing messages to present to your members. We hope the importance of quitting tobacco use could be one of them.

The faith community can be a powerful force in reducing the toll tobacco takes on the health of its members. Tobacco use is a risk factor for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, and other common chronic diseases. The good news is that the majority of tobacco users say they want to quit, and more than half try to quit each year.

Tennessee Quit Week raises awareness of the Tennessee Tobacco Quitline and other free resources that are available to help Tennesseans quit smoking and/or using other tobacco products. These effective services can double a tobacco user's chances of quitting successfully.

Quitting smoking greatly reduces the risk of developing smoking-related diseases. Tennesseans who smoke and are ready to quit can call the Tennessee Tobacco Quitline (1-800-QUIT NOW), access web-based services (www.tnquitline.com), enroll in a text-to-quit service (text QUIT to IQUIT) or attend in-person counseling services. They may also be eligible to receive free FDA-approved nicotine replacement therapy through some local health departments or through enrollment in the Quitline. The Tennessee Tobacco Quitline services are provided to Tennesseans at no cost.

We would appreciate the opportunity to provide information to your congregation by giving a presentation or distributing educational materials.

If you are interested in an opportunity to partner with us during the 3rd Annual **Tennessee Quit Week**, please contact liz.johnson@tn.gov. We look forward to partnering with you to create a smoke-free Tennessee!

Respectfully,

Liz Johnson, MPH, CPS I
Tennessee Department of Health
Program Director, Tobacco Prevention and Control