

# Compliance with the *Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA)*

## Results from 2012 and 2013: Kerala



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# COTPA Overview

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The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003, contains three important tobacco control provisions (see appendix for further description), which include:

- a prohibition on smoking in indoor public places.
- a prohibition on advertisement of tobacco products at all venues, with limited exceptions on the tobacco product itself and at the entrance or inside of shops where such products are sold (i.e., points-of-sale).
- a prohibition on tobacco sales within 100 yards of schools to stop children below 18 years of age from accessing tobacco products.

## Methods

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To assess compliance with key provisions of COTPA in Kerala, an observational study of compliance was conducted in Cochin, Kayamkulam, Kunjathur, Madavoor, Quilon and Trivandrum during July-August 2012 and again in November 2013. All visited venues were GPS coded in 2012 and revisited in 2013.

## Findings

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### No smoking in indoor public places

In Kerala, 202 public places across six cities were evaluated for compliance with indoor smoking bans. Public places included railway stations, cinema halls, government offices, restaurants, bars, cafes and hotels.

Percentage of public places in Kerala that complied with the following: Smoking Requirements	Total	
	2012	2013
No one was observed smoking indoors	85%	72%
No facilitators of indoor smoking (e.g., ashtrays, matches and lighters) were observed	61%	65%
No one was observed smoking indoors <b>and</b> no facilitators of indoor smoking were observed	58%	56%
Signage Requirements		
Had a No Smoking sign anywhere <sup>1</sup>	43%	43%

<sup>1</sup> 0% of public places in 2012 and 1% of public places in 2013 met the specific signage requirements of the law, including the required size and text.

## Outdoor advertising

In Kerala, 29 neighbourhoods were evaluated for compliance with the ban on outdoor tobacco advertising.

Percentage of neighbourhoods in Kerala that complied with the following:	Total	
	2012	2013
No outdoor advertisements of tobacco products	100%	100%

## Point-of-sale

In 29 neighbourhoods in Kerala, 175 shops where tobacco products are sold (i.e., points-of-sale) were evaluated for compliance with the point-of-sale provisions of COTPA.

Percentage of points-of-sale in Kerala that complied with the following:	Total	
	2012	2013
Did not display tobacco products in a manner that enabled easy access to minors (< 18 years old) <sup>1</sup>	38%	32%
No minor was observed selling tobacco products	100%	99%
Venues without any advertisements	70%	94%
<b>Signage Requirements</b>		
Had a sign stating that the sale of tobacco to minors is prohibited	2%	7%

<sup>1</sup> Compliance was defined as: (a) tobacco products were located behind the cashier's counter, and (b) tobacco products were not located within 6 inches of candy.

## No tobacco sales within 100 yards of schools

In Kerala, 69 public and private primary, secondary and college educational institutions—and the area within 100 yards of those institutions—were evaluated for compliance with the ban on selling tobacco products.

Percentage of educational institutions in Kerala that complied with the following:	Total	
	2012	2013
Did not have vendors selling tobacco within 100 yards	30%	50%
<b>Signage Requirements</b>		
Had a sign stating the ban on sales of tobacco products near schools	6%	18%

## Conclusions

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COTPA includes measures that are intended to protect residents from exposure to secondhand smoke, to significantly restrict tobacco advertising, and to eliminate easy access to tobacco products by youth.

Improvements were not observed in compliance with COTPA Section 4 provisions. However, outdoor advertisement bans remained at 100 percent of venues. Significant improvements were observed in points-of-sale in terms of absence of advertisements, but signage and youth-appealing displays need greater improvements. There were significant improvements in reducing the sale of tobacco near educational institutions.

Overall, although compliance with some of the provisions of COTPA has improved, more work clearly remains.

## Partners

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## Appendix – Key Provisions of COTPA and Notifications

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In 2003, the Indian parliament enacted the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act (COTPA). Among its many provisions, COTPA includes three sections which address: smoke-free environments; tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship; and sales of tobacco products to minors. The requirements of these sections have been elaborated in several notifications. Following is a brief summary of the regulations assessed in this study.

### **Indoor Smoking Ban:**

- Smoking is prohibited in most public places (such as workplaces, hospitals, and open auditoriums and stadiums) and on public transport.
- Smoking is prohibited inside all public places, except for hotels with 30+ rooms, restaurants and bars with a seating capacity of 30+ people, and airports, which are allowed to install separate designated smoking areas.
- Signs (minimum 60cm X 30cm size) with a white background must be displayed prominently at each entrance and conspicuous place(s) inside each public place. The sign must read: “No Smoking Area – Smoking Here is an Offense.” Further, the name of the person to whom a complaint may be made in case of violation shall be displayed prominently.
- No ashtrays, matches, lighters or any other items designed to facilitate smoking may be made available in the public place.

### **Outdoor Advertisement Ban:**

- Direct and indirect advertisement of tobacco products through many forms of mass media are prohibited, including outdoor advertisements.

### **Point-of-sale Regulations:**

- Tobacco products may not be sold by or to persons below 18 years of age.
- Persons under the age of 18 must be prohibited from having access to tobacco products. Tobacco products may not be displayed in a manner that enables easy access of tobacco products to persons below the age of 18 years.
- Shops that sell tobacco products must display a board (minimum 60cm X 30cm) warning, “Sale of tobacco products to a person below the age of 18 years is a punishable offense” and must include a pictorial depiction of the ill effects of tobacco use on health.
- The required board shall not have any advertisement, promotional messages or pictures or images of cigarettes or any other tobacco products.

### **Ban on Tobacco Sales near Educational Institutions:**

Tobacco products may not be sold within a 100-yard radius around educational institutions.

Educational institutions are required to display a board at a conspicuous place outside the educational institution premises warning that the sale of cigarettes and other tobacco products in an area within 100 yards of the educational institution is prohibited and is a punishable offense with a fine up to Rs 200.

Sources: Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003 (COTPA); G.S.R. 417(E), G.S.R. 561(E) and G.S.R. 619