

Image: ANSR Health POWER Year 2 Map

ASSOCIATION FOR NONSMOKERS-MN

2021 REPORT



The Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota

www.ansrmn.org

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ASSOCIATION FOR NONSMOKERS-MN

Mission Statement

The Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota (ANSR) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing the human and economic costs of commercial tobacco use in Minnesota. Our core commitments are to reduce the number of young smokers and to continuously advocate for the rights and health of nonsmokers. In 1975, ANSR helped pass the nation's first comprehensive state clean indoor air legislation.

Contact Information

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Land Acknowledgement

The Association for Nonsmokers-MN (ANSR) is located in Saint Paul, MN, the traditional homeland of the Dakota people. We acknowledge that the land we currently occupy comes from a legacy of genocide, ethnic cleansing, and forced removal caused by U.S. law and policy applied to Indigenous communities.

When referring to tobacco in this report, we are referring to commercial tobacco products and not tobacco used for sacred purposes by Indigenous communities.

2021 BOARD MEMBERS



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Ph.D.



Gene Nichols

Our Partners

ANSR partners are key stakeholders in advocating for policy change. The pandemic posed many challenges for ANSR partners to regularly meet (whether in person or virtually), engage community members, conduct compliance checks, and participate in learning opportunities offered by other entities. ANSR recognized the importance of meeting each partner where they're at and provided assistance and time extensions where it was needed. We continue to check in regularly with partners to see how we can support them.



"Thank you all for being such phenomenal colleagues and partners over time, and particularly during the pandemic as we navigated new and innovative ways of working together! It has been such an honor to learn from all of you about how to work in more collaborative, just, equitable and intentional ways...Thank you for being such an extraordinary leader in the field of health for young people and communities that literally change outcomes every day!"

Christine VeLure Roholt
Former Interim Director of the Leadership Minor
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

COVID-19 & WORK DURING A PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to affected the normal, day-to-day operations at the Association for Nonsmokers-MN (ANSR) in 2021. While many tobacco prevention policies and projects were shifted or put on hold, ANSR staff and partners tapped into creative community organizing and engagement efforts to continue policy change at the local, state and federal level.

Due to the nature of ANSR's work, ANSR requires that all employees, board members, and contractors who have in-person interactions with ANSR staff or the public on behalf of ANSR receive all recommended vaccine doses, including a booster.

LIVE SMOKE FREE

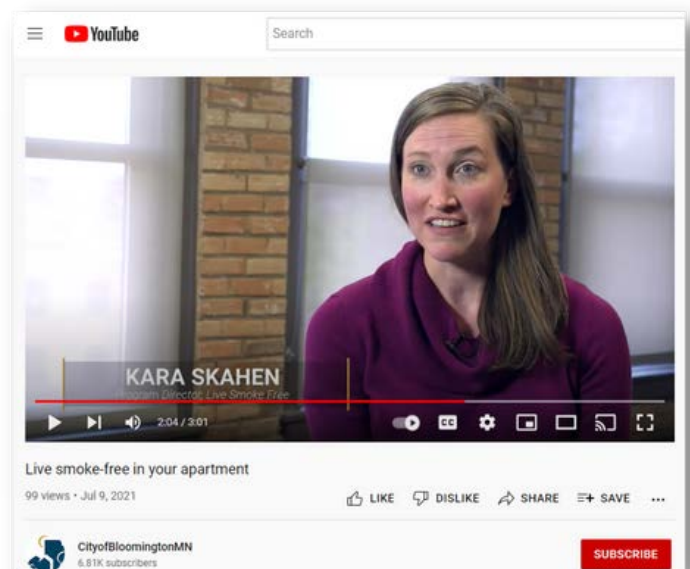
For more than 15 years, Live Smoke Free (LSF) has advocated for smoke-free living opportunities at the local, state, and national levels. It has supported thousands of building owners, managers, residents, and tobacco control professionals to successfully implement and maintain smoke-free policies in their communities. Twenty twenty-one was a milestone year for smoke-free housing in Minnesota. We reached over 5,000 smoke-free housing properties across the state, which translates to approximately 380,554 Minnesotans now protected from secondhand smoke in their homes and 174,566 housing units protected from secondhand smoke damage and fire.

In 2021 LSF continued to provide direct technical assistance to Minnesota property owners, managers, and local health departments through Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) subcontracts with Dakota, Hennepin, and Saint Paul-Ramsey counties, as well as the cities of Minneapolis and Bloomington (including Edina and Richfield). Through this work LSF led innovative projects including community surveys in Brooklyn Park, Minneapolis, and West Saint Paul, smoke-free housing ordinance policy development and community engagement work, compliance and cessation workshops for property managers, and smoke-free housing educational videos (<https://www.youtube.com/user/CityofBloomingtonMN>.)

Beyond direct assistance to properties, LSF provided technical assistance to SHIP grantees working on smoke-free housing strategies throughout the Twin Cities metro area. As part of this technical assistance, LSF hosted virtual, bi-monthly "Smoke-Free Housing Sharing Meetings" for grantees statewide working on smoke-free housing efforts.

Twenty twenty-one also saw the conclusion of LSF's three year "Clean Air for All (CAFA): The Smoke-Free Public Housing Project" funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This project had a substantial impact on technical assistance resources available to public housing agencies nationwide to effectively implement and maintain a smoke-free policy and engaged thousands through in person workshops, virtual trainings, resource distribution, and technical assistance resource development.

For more information about CAFA's work, visit smokefreepublichousingproject.org.



Live Smoke Free worked with Bloomington Public Health to create smoke-free housing educational videos featuring Bloomington community members. All three videos can be found on the Bloomington YouTube page here: <https://www.youtube.com/user/CityofBloomingtonMN>

MINNESOTA LEGISLATIVE OUTREACH

Minnesota Congressional Delegation

New to ANSR this year is engagement with federal lawmakers. Thanks to funding from the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, we were able to engage several members of Congress, including Rep. Angie Craig, Rep. Betty McCollum, Rep. Ilham Omar, Rep. Dean Phillips and Senators Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith. ANSR staff along with constituents met with members and their staff to discuss the importance of clearing the market of flavored tobacco, ending the youth e-cigarette epidemic, and properly funding tobacco cessation programs. After meeting with our advocates, Representatives Omar, Craig and Phillips all signed on as co-sponsors of the Quit Because of COVID-19 Act, a bill which provides coverage, without cost-sharing, for tobacco cessation services and medication to Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) enrollees.

State Outreach

ANSR also engaged Minnesota lawmakers to further the tobacco prevention agenda of the statewide coalition, Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation. We conducted numerous lawmaker meetings in 2021, including with many newly elected members, to discuss our priorities of ending the sale of all flavored tobacco and properly funding tobacco prevention programming. We also participated in the virtual Week of Action, engaging many advocates, including youth advocates, to contact their legislators and make their voices heard via social media. As

a result of our efforts, Rep. Cedrick Frazier and Sen. Bobby Joe Champion signed on as chief authors of a bill to clear the market of all flavored tobacco in Minnesota. While the bills did not move forward in either the Senate or the House, ANSR and other tobacco prevention advocates continued to remind lawmakers of the importance of this effort.

In 2021, Minnesota legislators did include an additional \$4 million a year for tobacco prevention in the omnibus Health and Human Services (HHS) policy and finance bill. Rep. Kelly Morrison and Sen. Jeremy Miller were lead authors on the bill, which will allow Minnesota to more aggressively prevent tobacco addiction before it starts. The additional funding is especially important with the sunset of ClearWay Minnesota at the end of 2021. The loss of ClearWay left a hole in prevention resources, which this additional state funding will help address.



ANSR advocates meeting with Representative Kelly Moller during Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation's Week of Action.

Menthol Coalition

ANSR and NorthPoint Health and Wellness also continued to co-chair the Menthol Coalition in 2021. The group's aim is to be influential in state-level work to end the sale of all flavored tobacco, including menthol, throughout Minnesota.

The coalition is composed of health and community organizations in Minnesota committed to reducing the harm caused by menthol-flavored cigarettes and other tobacco products. Members include churches, youth-serving organizations, health groups, and advocacy organizations serving Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities.



Representative Cedrick Frazier (DFL) authored HF 904, a bill to end the sale of menthol and flavored tobacco products.

Communications

ANSR's work received both local and statewide news coverage in 2021. We used various methods to reach dozens of news outlets and hundreds of advocates and decision makers, including Letters to the Editor, press releases, and paid media campaigns. ANSR also relies on social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to keep our advocates engaged and to demonstrate support for our initiatives to decision makers. Media highlights from 2021 include a paid social media



Column: Time to ban flavored tobacco sales in Minnesota. You can read the column here:

https://www.hometownsource.com/abc_newspapers/free/column-time-to-ban-flavored-tobacco-sales-in-minnesota/article_336b6cf2-74ea-11ec-b31e-8bd169ef9d1f.html

campaign called "Don't Discount My Life" in Saint Paul. This campaign highlighted the ways the tobacco industry tries to drive down tobacco prices with coupons and price promotions and encouraged Saint Paul city leaders to enact an ordinance to put an end to this predatory process.

We also had several Letters to the Editor make it to print, including one from our very own Molly Schmidtke (pictured on the left) and one from long-time advocate Dr. Tom Kottke. . That article can be found here: <https://www.twincities.com/2021/10/07/letters-st-paul-tobacco-ordinance-will-save-lives/>

POINT OF SALE

Menthol and Other Flavors

Communities in the Metro also worked to protect youth and BIPOC neighbors by restricting the sale of flavored tobacco products, including menthol.

- Bloomington prohibited the sale of all flavored tobacco products and is in the process of sunsetting out all tobacco licenses in the city;
- Roseville restricted the sale of flavored tobacco products, including menthol to adult-only tobacco shops;
- Shoreview updated their tobacco ordinance to include menthol flavored tobacco products to their current flavor restriction;
- Prior Lake prohibited the sale of all flavored vape and e-liquid products; and
- Saint Paul strengthened its menthol and flavored tobacco ordinance.

Advocates gathered after the Shoreview City Council passed the ordinance to include menthol to their flavored tobacco restriction.



ANSR Advocate Wins Youth Advocate of the Year Award

Grace Plowman, an ANSR youth advocate, was named a 2021 Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids Youth Advocate of the Year Award recipient. Plowman has advocated for policy changes at the city and state level – including testifying in favor of Tobacco 21 and policies to end the sale of flavored tobacco products. In addition, Plowman organized her peers and created a tobacco prevention advocacy group at Mounds View High School, while encouraging teens to quit smoking and vaping.

“I know that I’m not the only teen that’s against tobacco, but I am one of the few that is speaking up and giving a voice to my peers,” Plowman said. Through speaking out, I hope that I have shown my friends and other people my age that it isn’t ‘lame’ or ‘uncool’ to speak up against tobacco and to advocate for ourselves. It is a great feeling knowing that I am making change and taking steps to become part of a smoke-free generation.”

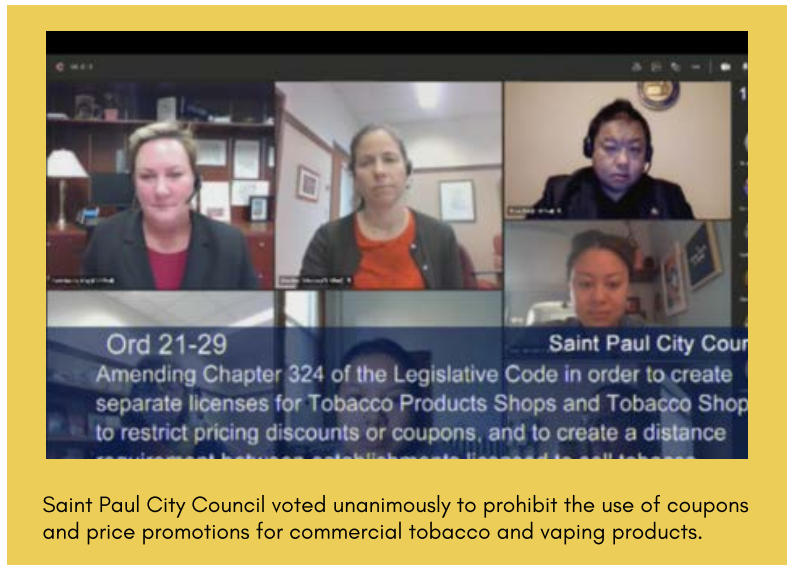
“Grace is a remarkable leader in her community and in our state,” said nominator Katie Engman, program director of policy and compliance at ANSR. “Grace doesn’t just talk the talk, she also helps educate, enforce and advance tobacco prevention policies. We are all better off because Grace discovered she has a powerful voice and is determined to use it to protect her fellow students. I have no doubt that Grace will represent Minnesota well as a national youth advocate.”



Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids' 2021 Youth Advocate of the Year Award recipient, Grace Plowman.

Price Discounting

On November 3, 2021 the Saint Paul City Council voted unanimously to prohibit the use of coupons and price promotions for commercial tobacco and vaping products. The measure was part of a comprehensive commercial tobacco ordinance that also set a \$10 minimum price for cigarette packs and standard-size cans of smokeless tobacco and increases penalties for retailers who sell commercial tobacco to people under age 21. The ordinance came after years of organizing and advocacy led by ANSR. ANSR engaged more than 40 diverse community partners, St. Paul neighborhood District Councils, the St. Paul Youth Commission and the St. Paul Human Rights Commission to support the effort. The ordinance took effect on December 11, 2021 and ANSR plans to evaluate the impact of the ordinance in 2022.



Saint Paul City Council voted unanimously to prohibit the use of coupons and price promotions for commercial tobacco and vaping products.



At the final hearing, Councilmember Rebecca Noecker said she was pleased that the Council is supporting young people and preparing them to be healthy adults.

Councilmember Nelsie Yang talked about the heartwarming letters the Council received from young people expressing how important this change is for them, their families, and their communities. Yang also encouraged other cities to follow St. Paul's lead.

Councilmember Jane Prince echoed her comments from the public hearing about the strong and diverse community coalition that asked the Council to lead on this issue.

Finally, Council President Amy Brendmoen thanked everyone who helped bring this ordinance across the finish line.

This first-of-its-kind ordinance will make commercial tobacco products less accessible and appealing to young people by keeping prices high. It will protect communities that have been targeted by tobacco industry marketing including youth, African American, Indigenous, LGBTQ, and other people of color. To learn more about how the tobacco industry uses price discounts visit www.dontdiscountmylife.org.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In 2021, ANSR staff responded to over 200 requests for assistance from MDH grantees for community education, policy, systems, and environmental change planning, strategizing, and implementation, and tobacco-free policies for housing, outdoor air, businesses, and county grounds.

What is ANSR's role in Technical Assistance?

With funding from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), ANSR staff provided technical assistance to MDH Tobacco-Free Communities and SHIP grantees, and city and school staff working to reduce tobacco industry influences and increase the number of tobacco-free spaces.



TOBACCO-FREE YOUTH RECREATION

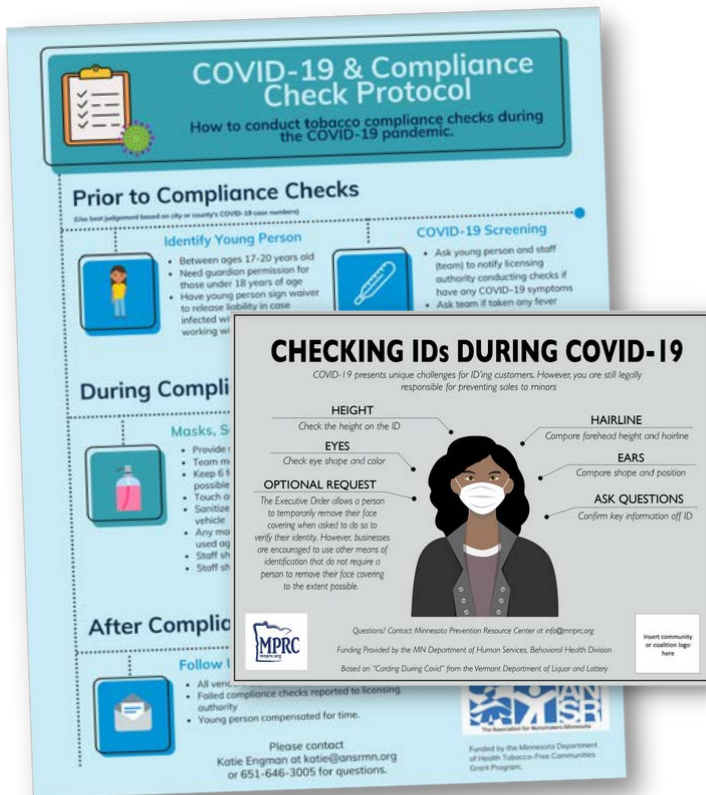
The Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation program continued to provide training materials for advocates and decision-makers by maintaining a database of all tobacco-free parks policies in 2021.

For more information, visit:
tobaccofreeparks.org

NORTH SUBURBAN TOBACCO COMPLIANCE PROJECT (NSTCP)

North Suburban Tobacco Compliance Project (NSTCP) offers law enforcement, decision-makers, retailers, and communities a proven and comprehensive method to ensure youth don't have access to tobacco at the point of sale. NSTCP recruits, trains and maintains youth buyers for participating communities. All youth are trained and follow a specific protocol. Each student receives compensation for their time.

Compliance checks are conducted face-to-face, as young people attempt to purchase in real-time. This year, we returned to conducting in-person checks in all participating cities. In 2021, 88% of retailers in participating cities passed their compliance checks, compared to 95.5% in 2019. Due to the COVID pandemic, we had insufficient data for 2020. Some factors that contributed to lower compliance check rates include the pandemic, an interruption in conducting tobacco compliance checks, rapid change in staff working in the service industry, and youth using at a higher rate due to mental health issues.

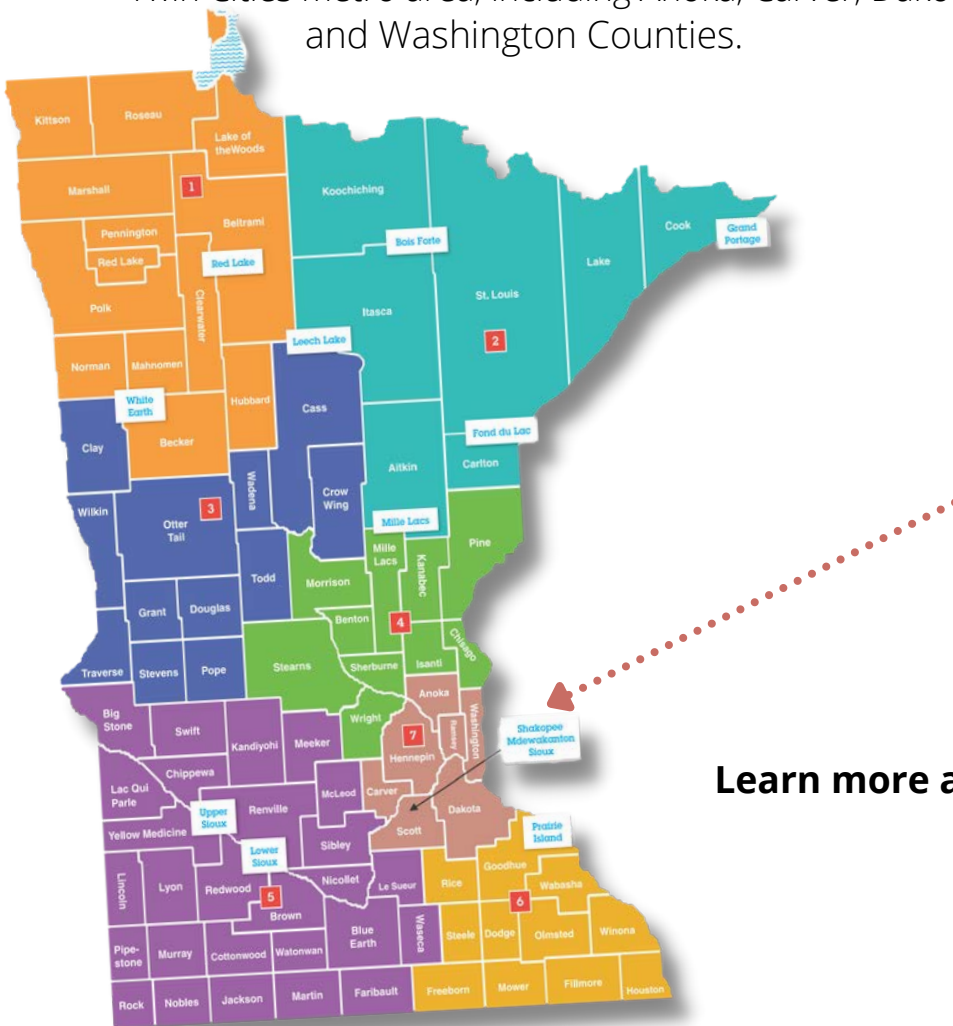


"Checking IDs during COVID-19" was created by ANSR and distributed to all Ramsey County tobacco retailers and across the state. "COVID-19 and Compliance Checks Protocol" is another ANSR resource that sets a baseline protocol to determine the safest way possible to conduct compliance checks.

REGIONAL PREVENTION COORDINATOR (RPC)

Regional Prevention Coordinators (RPCs) provide resources, consultation, training and technical assistance to local community coalitions, agencies and other community members to support the prevention of alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse (ATOD). The program is funded by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Division.

The metro-based RPC is actively working with seventeen coalitions and communities on one or more of the following: organizational development, data collection, and community assessment, member engagement and outreach, strategic planning, strategy selection, and implementation, evaluation, and sustainability planning. The RPC fulfilled 103 technical assistance requests and facilitated nineteen professional development training in 2021. ANSR is host to the Region 7 RPC, which serves the Twin Cities metro area, including Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington Counties.



Kayla Baker, Region 7 RPC

Learn more about RPCs at rpcmn.org.

MINNESOTA PREVENTION RESOURCE CENTER (MPRC)

Minnesota Prevention Resource Center is funded by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Division. It connects substance abuse prevention professionals and community partners to quality information and training they need to effectively prevent alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse.

Project staff also assist community partners in accessing research, interpreting findings for practical application, and identifying resources.

Prevention Program Sharing Conference

In October 2021, MPRC hosted Minnesota's 47th Annual Prevention Program Sharing Conference. The two-day virtual conference offered three keynote speakers, workshop sessions, and webinars on a variety of substance use prevention and coalition-building topics for prevention professionals across the state.

Event Details:

210

**People attended
the conference**

32

Workshops offered

7

Webinars offered

The 2022 Prevention Program Sharing Conference will be held in-person in Duluth, MN on October 20-21. To learn more about the conference, visit www.mnprc.org.



Minnesota Prevention
PROGRAM SHARING
CONFERENCE

PROJECT WATCH

Project WATCH, a research program of ANSR, works to expose tobacco industry marketing tactics across the state. The program is funded through a grant Blue Cross Blue Shield Center for Prevention starting in July 2020 through December 2022. Efforts of this program focus on identifying and tracking marketing tactics by the tobacco industry and informing policy campaigns.

The findings from this program were regularly used to create social media campaigns for the Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation (MSFG) statewide coalition, publish articles in peer-reviewed journals, and presented at national conferences, as well as educate decision-makers on what is coming to people's doorsteps.



Findings from Project WATCH were used to inform partners of current industry tactics. These are examples of the tobacco industry using environmental issues (below) or identifying with the subscriber (right) to make their products more appealing to youth.



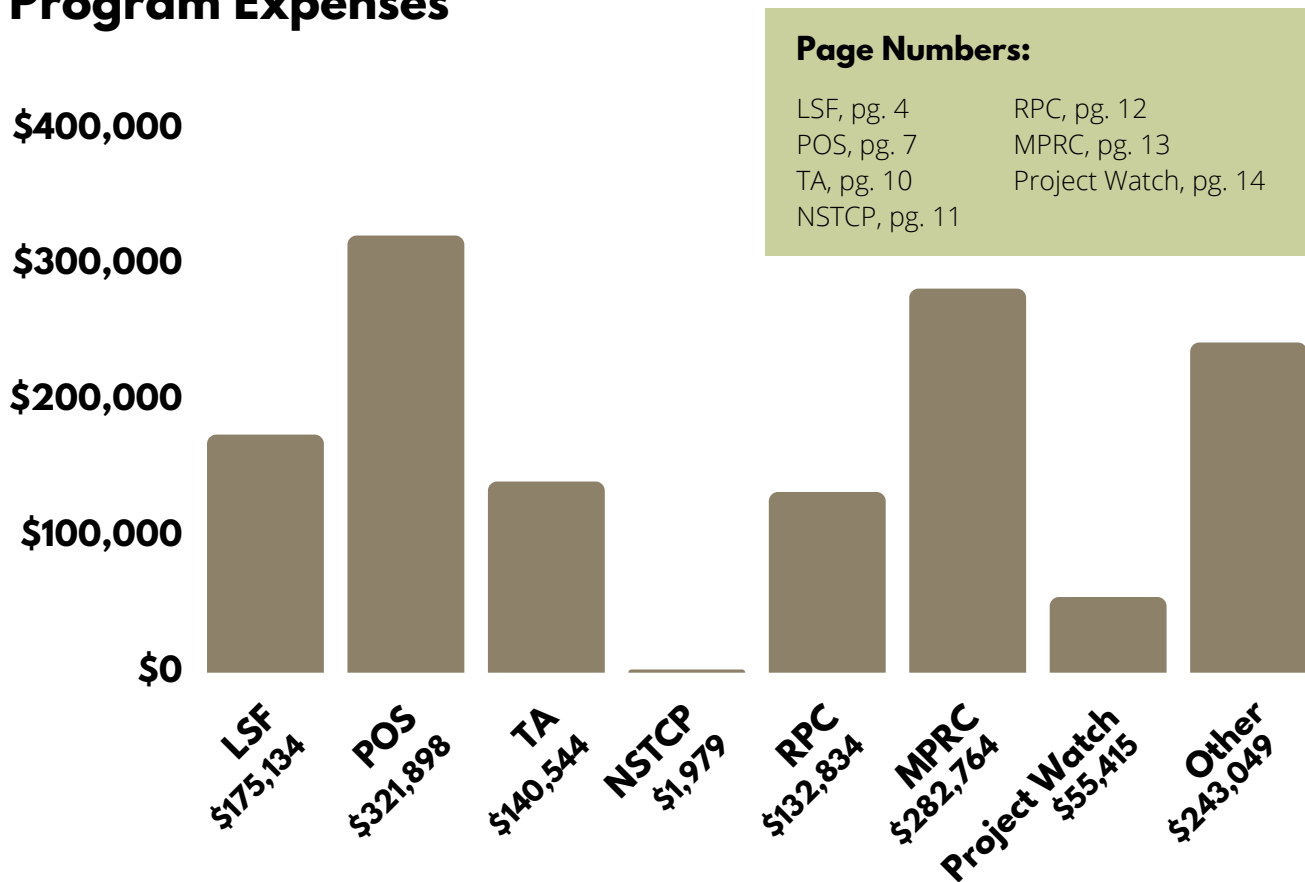
FINANCIAL HEALTH

The accounting firm Harrington, Langer and Associates audited ANSR's 2021 financials. The result of the audit was an unqualified opinion.

Expenses for 2021

Fundraising Expenses \$13,697	Management Expenses \$177,024	Program Expenses \$1,353,617
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Program Expenses



A complete set of 2021 financial statements can be found on the [ANSR website](#).

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS

Bloomington Public Health
 Blue Cross Blue Shield
 Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
 ClearWay MN
 Dakota County SHIP
 Hardenbergh Foundation
 Hennepin County SHIP
 Minneapolis SHIP
 Minnesota Department of Health
 Minnesota Department of Human Services
 Ramsey County SHIP
 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
 Tobacco-Free Alliance





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