

Changes in US and State Cigarette Sales Following Flavored Tobacco Sales Restrictions (2018-2023)

What's the Bottom Line?

- Cigarette sales have declined substantially during the past 6 years. Cigarette sales have declined more in states with comprehensive laws that prohibit the sale of most flavored tobacco products, including flavored e-cigarettes and menthol cigarettes.
- Cigarette sales declined in states with laws prohibiting the sale of flavored e-cigarettes, but these declines were more modest than the declines in states with comprehensive flavored tobacco restrictions.

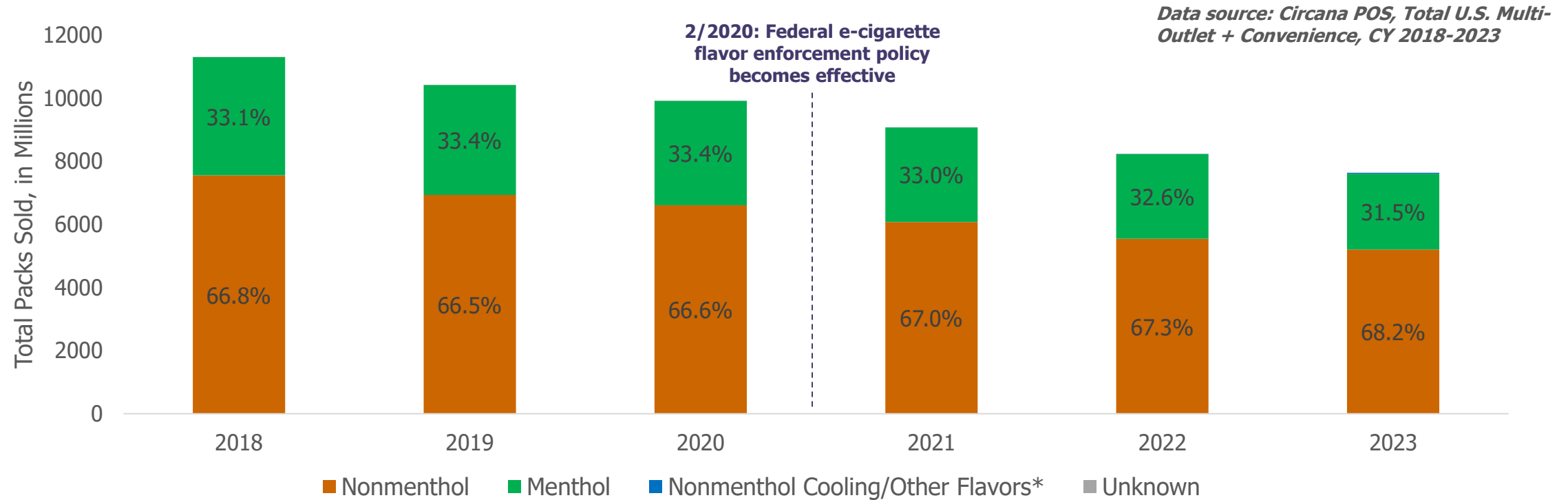
Background

- This brief describes cigarette sales trends in the total U.S. and in states with flavored tobacco sales restrictions during the period before and after policy implementation.
- California and Massachusetts prohibit the sale of most non-tobacco flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes and flavored e-cigarettes.
- Additional states, including New York and Rhode Island, have laws that prohibit the sale of flavored e-cigarettes, but do not prohibit the sale of other flavored tobacco products.
- Data based on custom research by CDC Foundation using Circana retail POS.

Key Findings

- Sales of cigarettes have consistently declined since 2018 in the U.S. overall, as well as in states with flavored tobacco sales restrictions.
- In Massachusetts and California, which have comprehensive flavor restrictions, cigarette sales declined more than in New York and Rhode Island, which only prohibit the sale of flavored e-cigarettes.
- States that only prohibited flavored e-cigarettes did not experience any long-term increases in cigarette sales. In New York, cigarette sales declines were even greater in the years following a law prohibiting flavored e-cigarette sales than the year before. In Rhode Island, menthol cigarette sales increased temporarily during the first year after the flavored e-cigarette restriction, but sales have since resumed historic declines.
- The tobacco industry continues to introduce new products that circumvent and undermine flavor restriction policies. Monitoring retail scanner data is therefore crucial to inform policy implementation.

Figure 1. Cigarette Pack Sales by Flavor, United States, 2018-2023



Data source: Circana POS, Total U.S. Multi-Outlet + Convenience, CY 2018-2023

2/2020: Federal e-cigarette flavor enforcement policy becomes effective

*Nonmenthol Cooling/Other Flavors include products confirmed by chemical testing to contain synthetic cooling ingredients, such as WS-3 or WS-23, and/or other flavorants, such as ethylvanillin.
 **Change in units is presented for Nonmenthol Cooling/Other Flavors sales instead of annual percentage change as sales were zero or almost zero in years prior to 2023.

Year (% change YOY)	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Total Sales	-7.8%	-4.8%	-8.6%	-9.2%	-7.3%
• Menthol sales	-6.8%	-4.9%	-9.7%	-10.2%	-10.6%
• Nonmenthol sales	-8.2%	-4.7%	-8.0%	-8.8%	-6.2%
• Nonmenthol Cooling/Other Flavors* sales	--	--	--	--	+26.4 million packs**

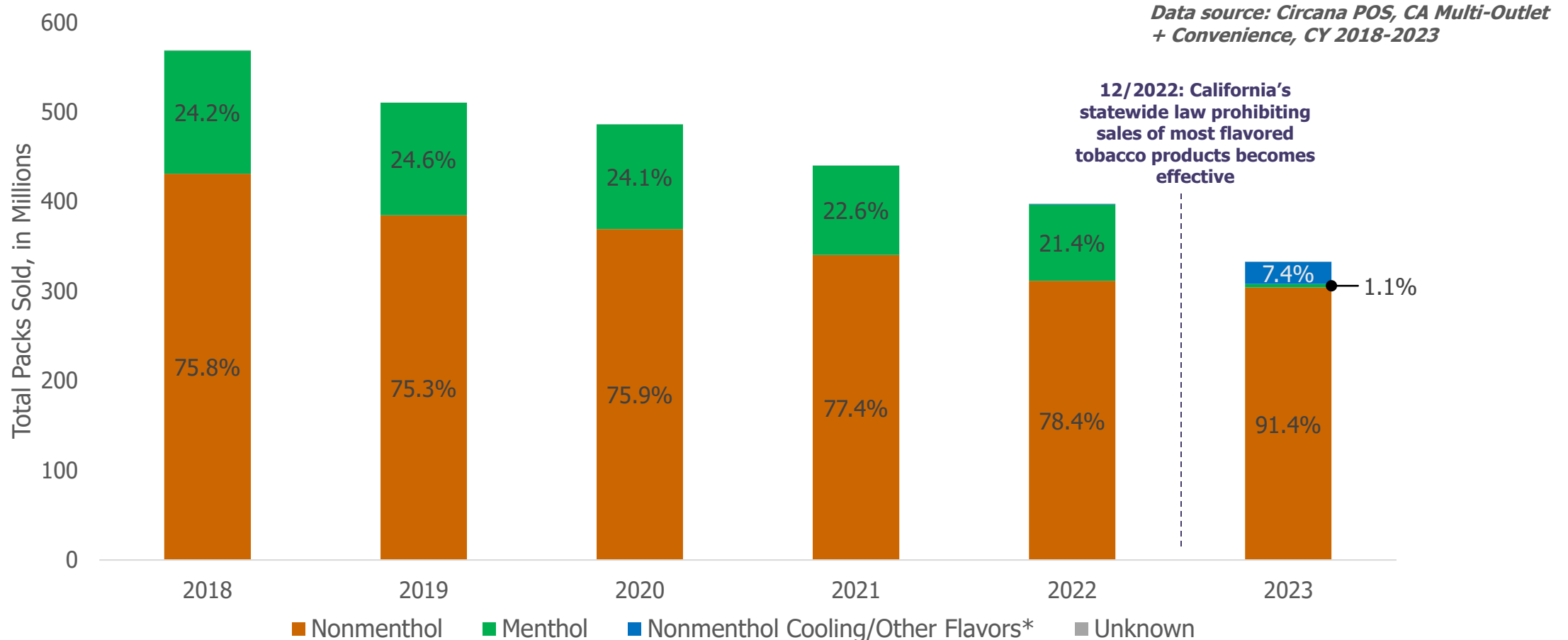
Year over Year (YOY) Percentage Changes in Cigarette Pack Sales During 2018-2023

- Sales of cigarette packs consistently declined in total U.S. during 2018-2023.
- In 2020, FDA prioritized regulatory enforcement on prefilled e-cigarette pods/cartridges in flavors other than tobacco and menthol. Additionally, states began restricting the sale of flavored e-cigarettes. These actions did not stop the historical downward trend in cigarette sales. Total cigarette sales decreased by between 4.8%-9.2% during 2018-2023.
- In 2023, unit share of Nonmenthol Cooling/Other Flavors cigarette sales was 0.3%.

Trends in Cigarette Pack Sales During 2022-2023

- In 2023, 7.6 billion cigarette packs were sold in total U.S., a 7.3% decline from the same period in 2022.
 - The percentage decrease in menthol sales was greater than nonmenthol sales (10.6% vs. 6.2%).
- Unit share of menthol cigarettes was 32.6% in 2022 and 31.5% in 2023.

Figure 2. Cigarette Pack Sales by Flavor, California, 2018-2023



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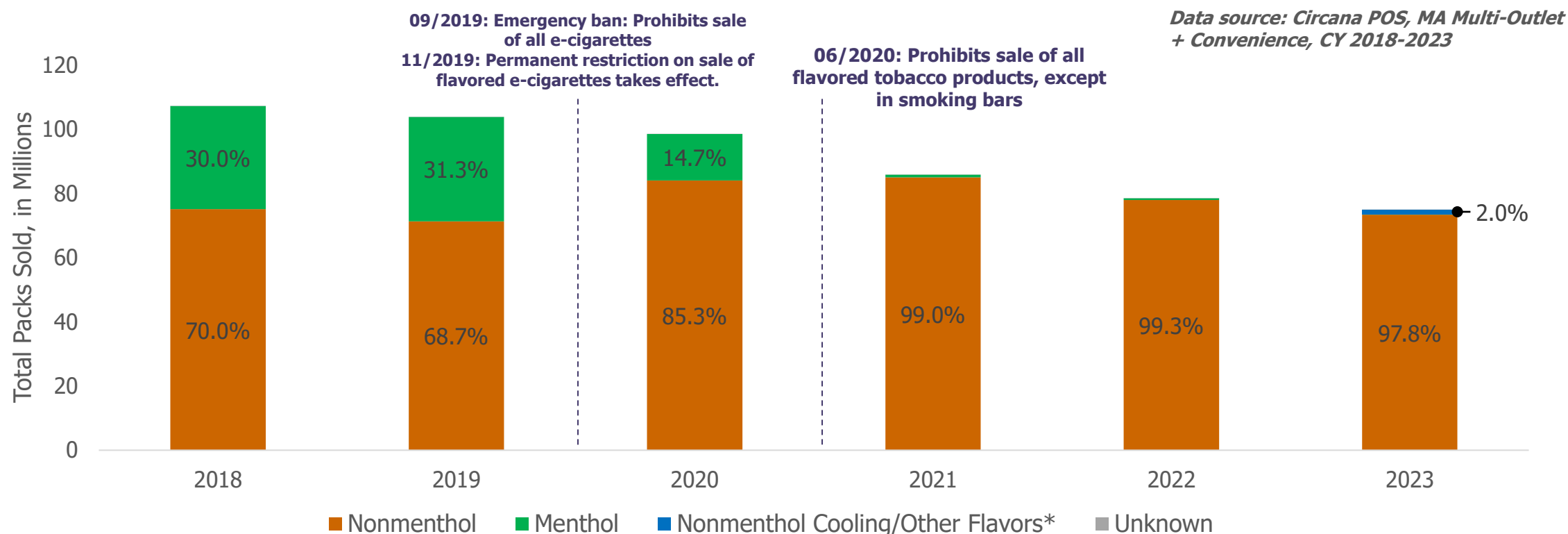
**Change in units is presented for Nonmenthol Cooling/Other Flavors sales instead of annual percentage change as sales were zero or almost zero in years prior to 2023.

Year (% change YOY)	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Total Sales	-10.3%	-4.7%	-9.5%	-9.7%	-16.2%
• Menthol sales	-8.6%	-6.8%	-14.9%	-14.5%	-95.5%
• Nonmenthol sales	-10.7%	-4.0%	-7.8%	-8.5%	-2.3%
• Nonmenthol Cooling/Other Flavors* sales	--	--	--	--	+24.8 million packs**

Year over Year (YOY) Percentage Changes in Cigarette Pack Sales During 2018-2023

- Sales of cigarette packs consistently declined in California during 2018-2023. The percentage decrease ranged from -4.7% in 2019-2020 to -16.2% in 2022-2023.
- During the 12-month period (January 2023-December 2023) following the menthol cigarette sales restriction, total cigarette sales decreased by 16.2% (64.5 million packs) compared to the previous 12-month period; menthol cigarette sales decreased by 95.5% (81.3 million packs) while nonmenthol cigarette sales decreased by 2.3% (7.2 million packs).
- In 2023, 24.8 million packs of cigarettes marketed as nonmenthol but which contain nonmenthol coolants or other flavorants were sold, comprising a unit share of 7.4% by year-end. These sales offset 30.5% of the decline in menthol cigarettes (81.3 million units).

Figure 3. Cigarette Pack Sales by Flavor, Massachusetts, 2018-2023



Circana Massachusetts Multi-Outlet + Convenience

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**Change in units is presented for Nonmenthol Cooling/Other Flavors sales instead of annual percentage change as sales were zero or almost zero in years prior to 2023.

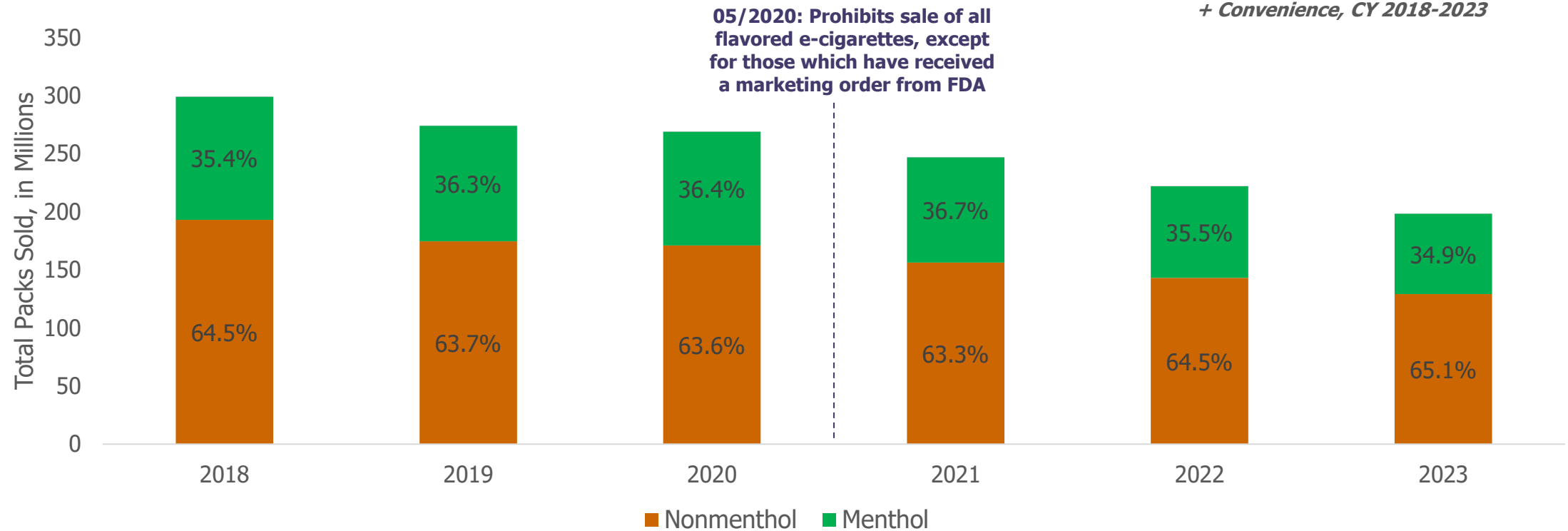
Year (% change YOY)	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Total Sales	-3.2%	-5.1%	-12.9%	-8.5%	-4.5%
• Menthol sales	1.2%	-55.5%	-94.3%	-32.0%	-72.8%
• Nonmenthol sales	-5.0%	17.8%	1.2%	-8.3%	-5.9%
• Nonmenthol Cooling/Other Flavors* sales	--	--	--	--	+1.5 million units**

Year over Year (YOY) Percentage Changes in Cigarette Pack Sales During 2018-2023

- Sales of cigarette packs consistently declined in Massachusetts during 2018-2023. This decline was greater after Massachusetts restricted the sale of flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarette sales in June 2020.
- During the 12-month period (July 2020-June 2021) following the flavored tobacco sales restriction, total cigarette sales decreased by 17.2% (18.5 million packs) compared to the previous 12-month period; menthol cigarette sales decreased by 97.1% (31.6 million packs) while nonmenthol cigarette sales increased by 17.5% (13.1 million packs) (data not shown).
- Unit share of menthol cigarettes was 0.2% in 2023. However, newly marketed cigarettes containing nonmenthol coolants or other flavorants sold 1.49 million packs with a unit share of 2.0% by year-end.

Figure 4. Cigarette Pack by Flavor, New York, 2018-2023

Data source: Circana POS, NY Multi-Outlet + Convenience, CY 2018-2023



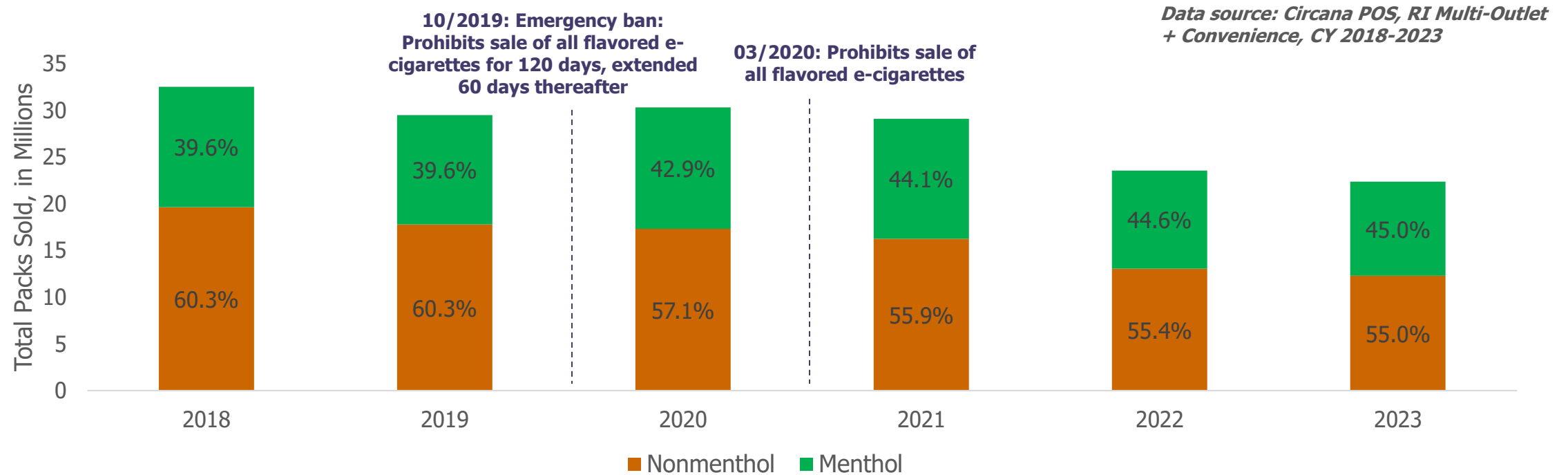
Year (% change YOY)	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Total Sales	-8.4%	-1.9%	-8.2%	-10.1%	-10.7%
• Menthol sales	-6.1%	-1.6%	-7.6%	-12.8%	-12.3%
• Nonmenthol sales	-9.6%	-2.0%	-8.6%	-8.4%	-9.8%
• Nonmenthol Cooling/Other Flavors* sales	--	--	--	--	--

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Year over Year (YOY) Percentage Changes in Cigarette Pack Sales During 2018-2023

- Sales of cigarette packs consistently declined in New York during 2018-2023.
- During the 12-month period (June 2020-May 2021) following New York’s restriction on the sale of flavored e-cigarettes, total cigarette sales decreased by 3.5% (9.6 million packs) compared to the previous 12-month period; menthol cigarette sales decreased by 3.2% (3.2 million packs) and nonmenthol cigarette sales decreased by 3.7% (6.4 million packs) (data not shown).
- Greater decreases in both menthol and nonmenthol cigarette sales were observed in years after the e-cigarette flavor restriction (2021 and onward).
- During 2018-2023, the proportion of cigarette sales that were menthol flavored ranged from a high of 36.7% in 2021 to a low of 34.9% in 2023.

Figure 5. Cigarette Pack Sales by Flavor, Rhode Island, 2018-2023



Year (% change YOY)	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Total Sales (% change YOY)	-9.4%	2.8%	-4.0%	-19.0%	-5.0%
• Menthol sales	-9.4%	11.1%	-1.2%	-18.2%	-4.2%
• Nonmenthol sales	-9.4%	-2.7%	-6.2%	-19.7%	-5.7%
• Nonmenthol Cooling/Other Flavors* sales	--	--	--	--	--

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Year over Year (YOY) Percentage Changes in Cigarette Pack Sales During 2018-2023

- Overall, during 2018-2023, total cigarette sales decreased by 31.3% (10.2 million packs).
- During the 12-month period (November 2019-October 2020) following the prohibition of flavored e-cigarette sales in Rhode Island, total cigarette sales increased by 1.2% (360.9 thousand packs) compared to the previous 12-month period; menthol cigarette sales increased by 6.6% (778.7 thousand packs) while nonmenthol cigarette sales decreased by 2.3% (417.2 thousand packs) (data not shown).
 - During November 2019-May 2020, total cigarette sales decreased by 2.2% (400.2 thousand packs); menthol cigarette sales decreased by 2.2% (157.6 thousand packs); and nonmenthol cigarette sales decreased by 2.2% (241.8 thousand packs).
 - During June 2020-October 2020, following the prohibition of menthol cigarette sales in Massachusetts, total cigarette sales in Rhode Island increased by 6.6% (761.1 thousand packs); menthol cigarette sales increased by 20.7% (936.3 thousand packs); while nonmenthol cigarette sales decreased by 2.5% (175.4 thousand packs).
 - While this temporary increase may reflect cross-border sales from Massachusetts, the decline in menthol cigarette sales in Massachusetts during the same period (12.3 million packs) was 13 times larger than the increase in Rhode Island (936.3 thousand packs).
- Since 2021, both menthol and nonmenthol cigarette sales have been decreasing in Rhode Island. From 2021 to 2022, total sales decreased by 19.0%, and, from 2022 to 2023, total sales decreased by 5.0%.