

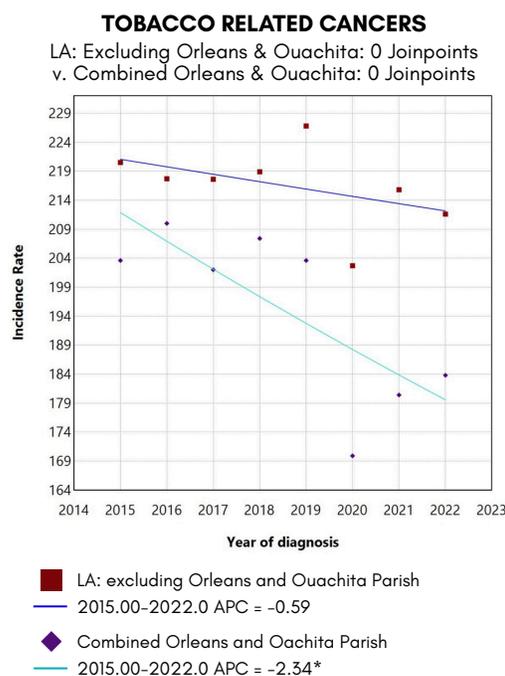
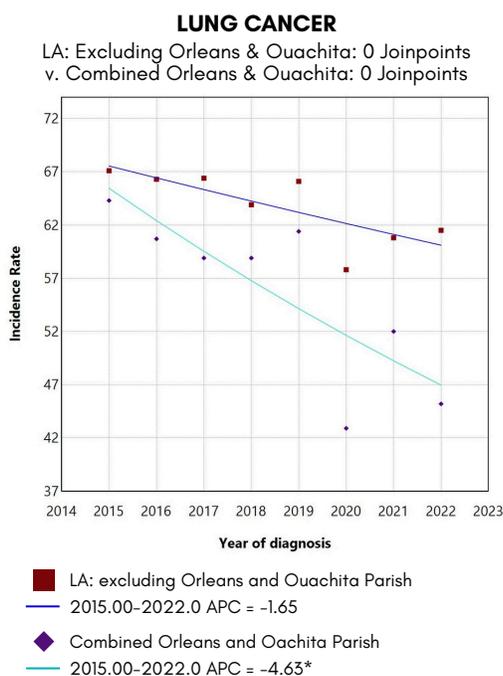
Louisiana Lung Cancer: Tobacco Metrics

Tobacco use remains a leading cause of preventable death in Louisiana, contributing significantly to the state's persistently high rates of lung cancer and other tobacco-related illnesses (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2023). Although the Louisiana Smoke-Free Air Act of 2007 banned smoking in most indoor public places and restaurants, it exempted bars and casinos, leaving many workers and patrons, particularly in the hospitality sector, vulnerable to ongoing secondhand smoke exposure (CDC, 2023).

In response, New Orleans (Orleans Parish) passed a comprehensive smoke-free ordinance in January 2015, which took effect on April 22, 2015. The policy extended smoking bans to bars, casinos, restaurants, hotels, workplaces, and performance venues, effectively closing the major exemptions left by the Louisiana Smoke-Free Air Act (nola.gov; tobaccofreeliving.org). This public health milestone was the result of strong advocacy by community coalitions, public health leaders, and hospitality workers, who organized educational campaigns, public hearings, and testimony to underscore the dangers of secondhand smoke, especially for vulnerable service industry employees (tobaccofreeliving.org; lphi.org). As a result, Orleans Parish became 100% smoke-free, setting a precedent for other jurisdictions in Louisiana and across the region.

Following this example, Ouachita Parish became the second locality in the state to enact comprehensive smoke-free ordinances, with Monroe's ordinance effective April 1, 2017, and West Monroe's taking effect on May 1, 2017. These ordinances created 100% smoke-free indoor environments in all workplaces, including bars and restaurants. Strong local coalitions and community advocates who emphasized the urgent need to protect public health drove the passage of these ordinances.

The long-term impact of these policies is now evident, particularly when examining cancer trends in parishes with and without comprehensive smoke-free laws.



*Indicates that the Annual Percent Change (APC) is significantly different from zero at the alpha = 0.05 level.
Final Selected Model: LA: excluding Orleans and Ouachita - 0 Joinpoints, Combined Orleans and Ouachita - 0 Joinpoints. Rejected Parallelism.

We analyzed cancer trends from 2015 to 2022. We observed statistically significant declines in tobacco-related cancer and lung cancer incidence rates in Orleans and Ouachita parishes after the implementation of smoke-free ordinances, compared to the rest of Louisiana. For tobacco-related cancers, the incidence rates for these two parishes declined by an average of 2.34% each year, while the rest of Louisiana saw a 0.59% yearly decline ($p = 0.008$). Lung cancer rates showed a similar trend, with Orleans and Ouachita Parishes showing a 4.63% average yearly decline, and the rest of Louisiana showed a 1.65% ($p = 0.017$).