



**Department of Health
and Mental Hygiene**

Thomas Farley, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

Dear Fellow New Yorker,

Our country and our city are threatened by an epidemic of obesity. The majority of New York City adults are now overweight or obese, as are 4 in 10 elementary school children—and the health consequences are staggering. They range from hypertension to diabetes, a condition that often leads to blindness, amputations and kidney failure. The obesity epidemic has many causes, but the single biggest contributor is the sugar we consume in sweetened beverages.

Your organization can help fight obesity by cutting back on sugar-sweetened beverages and making sure your workers, customers, members or guests have access to healthier alternatives. Here are some steps I hope you'll consider:

- Take the Healthy Beverage Pledge. Serve water, seltzer or hot tea and coffee at gatherings. Cut out soda, sports drinks, sweetened teas and energy drinks.
- Review the beverages offered in your cafeteria and vending machines. By dropping products with more than 25 calories per 8-ounce serving, you can help people avoid weight gain.
- Ensure that water is easily available. New York City tap water is a safe and excellent choice.
- Educate staff, members and constituents about the health impact of sugary drinks. Call 311 to request additional copies of the materials included in this kit.

This kit can help you improve the health of your employees, members and visitors. I hope you find it useful. If you have any questions, please email dumpsugarydrinks@health.nyc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Farley".

Thomas Farley, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner