Is Your Customer Old Enough to Buy Tobacco Products or Electronic Cigarettes?

1 Ask for ID

Before selling tobacco products or electronic cigarettes to a customer, always ask for a valid picture ID from anyone who looks under 30 years old.

There are only three acceptable forms of ID:

- A valid driver's license or other photo ID issued by a state or by the U.S. or Canadian government
- A valid passport from any country, but foreign IDs are not acceptable
- A photo ID issued by the U.S. Armed Forces

NO ID → NO SALE

ID cards issued by colleges without a date of birth are not acceptable.

2 Check the ID

a. **Check the picture first.** See that it matches the person making the purchase.

b. **Check the date of birth (DOB).** Make sure the customer is at least 21 years old.

c. **Check the expiration date.** Make sure the ID has not expired.

21 or Older

Under 21

3 Refuse the Sale if Necessary

If the customer cannot produce an ID, or the ID is invalid, refuse the sale.

Here are some tips for avoiding conflict with customers:

- Be polite and stay calm. You can say, "If I sell to you, I may have to pay a fine or lose my lottery license."
- Show the customer your required sign that says you cannot sell tobacco or electronic cigarettes to anyone under 21 years old.
- If the customer takes the product, leaves the money and runs away, do not ring up the sale. Treat it as a theft and report the incident to the police.

NYC Health

If you have any questions about the New York City or New York State tobacco laws, please call 311.

GOT ID?