

# Saying no, avoiding conflict age restricted treatments

## Trading Standards Information

[www.southwark.gov.uk](http://www.southwark.gov.uk)

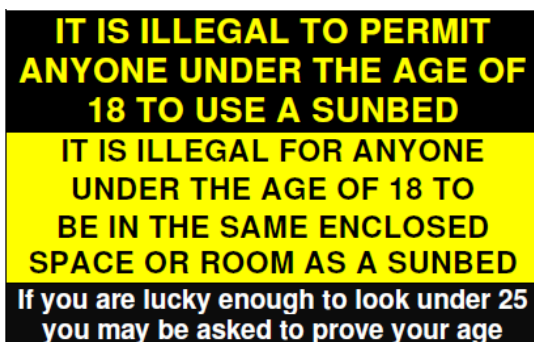
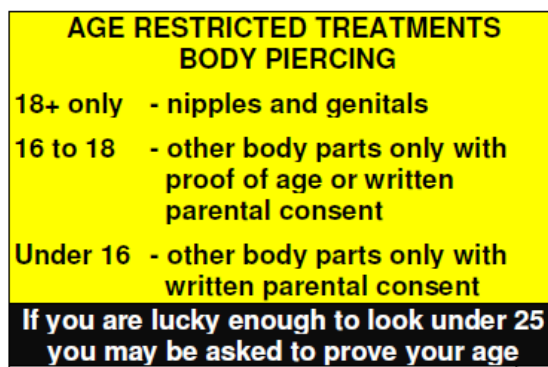
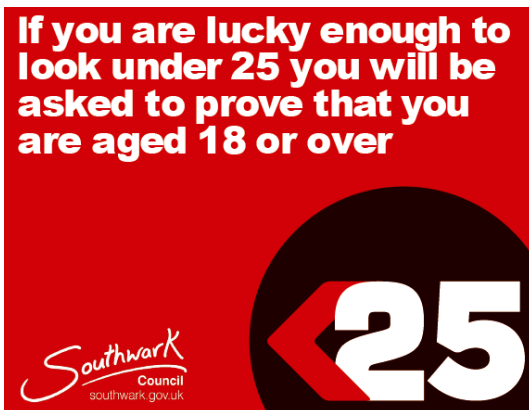
### 1. Introduction

When dealing with underage customers we know that saying no can sometimes lead to conflict and aggression. But saying yes to will mean they come back and your premises could become a target for other underage people trying to get age-restricted treatments.

The following is based on guidance issued by the Trading Standards Institute.

### 2. Display point of sale proof of age material

Displaying proof of age material, such as our free proof of age warning notices, will alert customers to your Challenge 25 policy and may make underage children think twice before asking for treatments. At the very least such material will prepare them for the fact that they will be asked for proof of age.



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### **3. Stand your ground**

Saying 'no' can embarrass a customer, so you need to be tactful. Always be professional, polite and calm, and don't antagonise by getting annoyed or aggressive. Say you are sorry but you cannot provide a treatment without proof of age. If you are faced with a group, try to move the person you're talking to away from the rest. This lessens the chance of them playing to the crowd.

- be polite but firm
- use tact, say you are sorry
- be calm, don't antagonise
- don't humiliate

### **4. Avoid blame**

When saying no, or asking for proof of age, try to divert blame away from yourself. Say it's nothing personal but your licence conditions require it or that the management at the business are insisting on it. Say that they check the CCTV if you have it. You can even say that licensing, trading standards or the Police have been round checking and that it is the law.

- de-personalise the situation
- explain your legal obligation
- say it is management policy
- don't get angry

### **5. Keep your distance**

If possible stay behind the counter - this provides a barrier should violence occur. Use relaxed body language and avoid prolonged eye contact. Use slow and deliberate body movements and try to keep something between you and a possible aggressor.

- avoid prolonged eye contact
- use relaxed body language
- say sorry
- keep a barrier between you

### **6. Further information**

If you require further assistance, or would like additional information leaflets or any warning notices / reminder stickers, please contact us at the address given. Our Health & Safety Team can also offer advice on dealing with conflict and aggression at work.