Best practice guidance
age restricted sales

Trading Standards Information **www.southwark.gov.uk**

This is an advisory document to help retailers comply with laws designed to protect children and alcohol licence conditions regarding age verification. We strongly urge you to follow this guidance.

It is illegal to sell certain goods and services to children under a specific age including;

18	▪ **Alcohol** ▪ **Butane lighter fuel** ▪ **Cigarettes, tobacco** ▪ **Fireworks (category F2/F3)** ▪ **Knives, blades and axes** ▪ **Nicotine inhaling products** ▪ **Solvents (if abuse suspected)**	**16**	▪ **Aerosol paints** ▪ **Lottery tickets** ▪ **Petrol**
		12, 15, or 18	▪ **DVDs, videos, games as marked**

It is difficult to judge how old teenagers are so it is vital that you and your staff are sufficiently trained to prevent illegal underage sales. Just telling them ***'do not sell to anyone underage'*** will not be enough;

- **Make sure your staff understand how difficult it is to accurately judge young peoples ages.**
- **Adopt a 'Challenge 25' policy, to ensure your staff always ask for proof of age when dealing with young people wanting to buy age restricted products, and display relevant signage.**
- **Make sure your staff know what acceptable proof of age cards or documents look like.**
- **Use our free point of sale, fridge, door and till stickers to act as a permanent reminder for your customers and staff about proof of age requirements.**
- **Train and keep records of training given to all staff. Include guidance on how to say 'no' to underage customers without conflict. Make sure they sign to confirm they have understood the training. You can copy the form on the back of this leaflet for this purpose.**
- **Keep a logbook detailing refused sales and instruct staff to complete it when sales have been refused - regularly review these records and sign that you have done so.**
- **In premises where goods are scanned at the till use the bar codes of age restricted goods to activate a till prompt to alert staff that they need to check the age of the purchaser.**
- **Regularly monitor your staff to check they how they are selling age restricted products.**

The proof of age cards or documents that we recommend you accept are detailed in our information leaflet *Proof of age cards*. Please contact us for a free copy if you don't have one.

Trading Standards – Regulatory Services, Hub 2, 3rd Floor, PO Box 64529, SE1P 5LX
Contact centre - 020 7525 2000 **Website** - www.southwark.gov.uk/tradingstandards
Strategic Director of Environment & Leisure – Deborah Collins

Age restricted sales – guidance for sales staff

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Trading Standards will use underage volunteers to check how traders are selling age-restricted goods. Both you and your employer could be prosecuted or face other action if you sell to underage persons.

It is difficult to judge how old teenagers are so here are some do's and don'ts concerning sales;

× Don't rely on looks alone - children can often look a lot older than they really are.

× Don't sell to a child even if they say the products are for a parent or other adult.

× Don't ask 'how old are you', 'are you 18' or 'when were you born' – underage persons may just lie.

✓ Do follow a 'Challenge 25' policy so that you always ask for proof of age when selling age restricted products to anyone appearing to be under 25. Check that the proof is valid.

✓ Do make sure you know what forms of proof of age are acceptable e.g. passport, driving licence, or a PASS approved proof of age card (e.g. SPA or PAL card, CitizenCard, Validate UK)

✓ Do read our free guidance leaflets 'proof of age cards' and 'saying no, avoiding conflict'.

✓ Do exercise your right not to sell if you suspect an adult is buying age restricted products for someone underage.

✓ Do make sure warning notices about age restricted sales and proof of age are clearly displayed where customers can see them.

✓ Do maintain a log of refused sales so that you can demonstrate that you are careful in how you are selling age restricted goods.

✓ Do sign the declaration below. If you would like any further information on age restricted sales please contact Southwark Trading Standards on 020 7525 2000 or visit www.southwark.gov.uk

Declaration: I have read and understood this leaflet. I am aware of the laws prohibiting the sale of age restricted goods to underage persons and what forms of proof of age are acceptable.			
Full name	**Position held**	**Signature**	**Date**

PLEASE NOTE: Only the Courts can interpret statutory legislation with authority and this leaflet may be revised or amended without notice. (Ref: BPG/1.5 June 2016)