

Refusing Sales of Tobacco Products to Customers

Refusing to sell tobacco to a customer can be very difficult. Please see the following tips on how to deal with these types of situations:

Practical Guidance for When You Must Refuse a Sale:

- Decline purchase attempts by a minor made with written parental permission.
- Decline to sell cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, and covered tobacco products to underage persons who are friends and acquaintances.
- Decline a sale when the customer has no photographic identification (photo ID).
- Decline a sale when the customer's photo ID contains no date of birth.
- Decline a sale when the customer's photo ID has expired.
- Decline a sale when the customer's photo ID does not appear to be authentic or appears to be tampered with.
- Decline a sale when the customer's photo ID shows the customer to be under the age of 21 years.
- Decline a sale when the customer has no photo ID.

After informing a customer that you cannot proceed with the sale:

- Resist customer pressure.
- Do your best to stand your ground and stay in control.
- If needed, you may state to the customer:

"I apologize for the inconvenience, but the NEW Tobacco 21 Law states that I cannot sell any tobacco products without verifying a customer's age with a government issued photo ID."

- Seek management assistance, when necessary. If a customer acts in any way inappropriately, find your manager or supervisor on duty, to resolve the situation.

More options for responding to a customer:

- Let the customer know you need to ask your manager for assistance with the transaction, or another employee to assist.
- Simply state you cannot make the sale (with or without a reason).
- Ask the customer for a different government issued identification showing their date of birth.

The Right to Refuse a Sale when Acting in Good Faith:

- Employees are not required to make a cigarette, smokeless tobacco, or other tobacco product sale if there is any question that doing so would violate the law.

- If at any time a store employee does not feel confident in their choice to sell a tobacco product to a customer, the best option would be to not conduct the sale.

-

Role-Playing: Refuse a Sale with Confidence

To gain confidence in your ability to refuse a sale to a customer, practice Role-playing.

- Role-playing is a learning technique in business training. It is a confidence builder, it helps develop good listening skills, and it provides opportunities to strengthen problem-solving skills.
- Role-playing allows a learner to assume the role or tasks of a job by practicing or simulating real working conditions. The objective of role playing is to learn, improve or develop upon the skills or competencies necessary for a specific position.
- Role-playing takes place between two or more people, who act out roles to explore a particular scenario. It's most useful to help you or your team prepare for unfamiliar or difficult situations.

Learning how to refuse a sale to a customer is difficult and challenging.

Role-playing different scenarios will make a difference in your ability, confidence, and success.

**See "Role-playing" under "Tools & Resources" in the drop-down menu for "Employee Resources" at www.responsibletoabacco.com