

Age verification policy sales of alcohol

Trading Standards information

www.southwark.gov.uk

1. Introduction

Mandatory licence conditions require every premises licence holder, or club premises certificate holder, to ensure that an age verification policy applies to the premises in relation to the sale or supply of alcohol. This leaflet explains what this means and details the guidance we have available.

2. What is an age verification policy?

This means procedures should be drawn up and followed so that when any young looking customer attempts to buy alcohol they are always asked to show suitable proof of age. The proof of age should be checked so that you actually verify that they are old enough to buy the product.

The results of these checks should be recorded so you can prove you are complying with the conditions.

Such policies well established by alcohol and tobacco retailers and usually known as 'Challenge 25' because if a customer looks under 25 they will be asked to prove their age or the sale will be refused.

3. How can I achieve what is required?

The law does not say in detail what you must or must not do, so there is flexibility as to how you may achieve the requirements. For example the policy adopted in an independent convenience store may be very different to that applied in a nightclub or a major supermarket.

Our guidance has been developed with local retailers in mind and suggests what we consider to be best practice. You may choose to do things differently but you will need to be able to demonstrate that your policy satisfies the mandatory condition. Always bear in mind that the ultimate objective of the policy is to prevent anyone under 18 being illegally supplied with alcohol.

4. Best practice guidance

Southwark Trading Standards have enforced the laws concerning age restricted goods for over 20 years. We have a range of guidance and materials to help businesses comply with the law and it is available free to Southwark businesses.

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We support the PASS approved proof of age card scheme to help local retailers avoid making illegal underage sales and previously issued a Proof of Age London (PAL) card. Recognising and asking for approved proof of age is the best way of preventing underage sales because fake ID cards are widely available. Check the [PASS website](http://www.pass-scheme.org.uk/) for current card issuers (www.pass-scheme.org.uk/)

5. Guidance and signage materials

The key guidance to help you establish a policy is contained in our leaflet;

- Best practice guidance – age restricted sales

If you adopt a policy of following this guidance, and train your staff accordingly, you should satisfy the mandatory licence condition. The guidance can be downloaded from the Council's website or you can request a copy. You will also need the following age restricted sales leaflets or downloads that compliment this guidance;

- Proof of age cards
- Saying no, avoiding conflict

The following signage material is available for you to display

- Challenge 25 posters
- RU18 fridge cabinet door /shelf edge stickers
- Till staff reminder stickers



You may also wish to download Challenge 25 material from PASS website - www.pass-scheme.org.uk/downloads/

6. Product guidance

Most retailers don't just sell alcohol so you may wish to know about these additional leaflets/downloads. They detail the controls on different types of age restricted products (further product specific signage material is also available);

- Alcohol products
- Tobacco products
- DVDs and videos
- Aerosol spray paints
- Knives blades and axes
- National Lottery tickets
- Fireworks
- Acidic and corrosive substances
- Nicotine inhaling products (e-cigarettes etc.)
- Petrol

7. Further information

Comprehensive trading standards guidance can be found on the [Business Companion website](http://www.businesscompanion.org.uk) www.businesscompanion.org.uk but if you require further assistance on these requirements, or would like additional information or any point of sale material please contact us at the address given or visit our underage sales pages at www.southwark.gov.uk/tradingstandards.

Members of our Licensing or Trading Standards teams can also visit your premises to discuss things further if you prefer.