

REFUSING AN ILLEGAL SALE

It can be hard to refuse a sale when you suspect that an ID is invalid (or that a customer is underage).

Common reasons for refusing alcohol or tobacco sales are:

- Customer does not have valid ID
- Customer has an ID that appears to be counterfeit or belong to someone else
- Customer appears to be intoxicated
- Customer appears to be buying alcohol or tobacco for someone under 21

Refusing a sale can be intimidating. Below there are some tips that can make refusing an illegal sale easier.

General Guidelines

- Remain calm
- Remove the product from the counter
- Be polite, but firm
- Don't accuse or become confrontational
- Stick to the facts
- Don't offer your opinion - the law is non-negotiable
- Remind the customer about the law and that you could be fined
- Try using humor to lighten the situation
- Remember that refusing a sale is not your choice; it's the law

If the customer continues to refuse to show valid ID, call law enforcement.

Suggested Statements

- "Sorry, we don't sell alcohol or tobacco to people under 21."
- "I'm sorry, it's against the law."
- "I can be fined and even lose my job."
- "Don't take it personally. I get carded too."
- "Is there anything else I can get you?"
- "I'd be happy to hold this for you while you go get your ID."

Every situation is different. Use your best judgement to determine what refusal strategy will be most effective with your customer.

Remember: take the ID if you suspect it is fake.

You or the customer can call law enforcement to verify if it is a valid ID.

All retained IDs should be turned over to the police department.

Civil liability exemption for retaining proofs of age.

No person who holds a license or permit and no employee of such a person is civilly liable for retaining a document presented as proof of age for a reasonable length of time in a good faith effort to determine whether the person who presented the document is an underage person or to notify a law enforcement authority of a suspected violation.

WI Statute 125.039