

The Washington State Liquor Control Board (WSLCB) Enforcement and Education Division's youth access compliance check program will be beginning in May 2015. The purpose of this letter is to share with you some basics of our compliance check program so that you understand how it works and will be successful in preventing youth access.

Investigative Aides

Our underage compliance checks are conducted using 18-21 year old men and women. These underage people are considered investigative aides (IA), and are employees of the WSLCB. We do not allow IAs to be deceptively mature, and they appear similar to others in their respective age group. The easiest way to pass a compliance check is to check the identification (ID) of anyone appearing youthful. A common regulated industry standard is to check the ID of anyone appear 30 years of age or younger.

If you ask for ID, the investigative aide will either tell you he/she does not have ID with them, or will present their true state issued ID. This will show the store employee the IA is under the legal age to frequent your business, or purchase marijuana. It is very important to check and verify ID. If you ask our IAs how old they are, he/she will respond they are 21 years old. Simply asking for someone's age is not ensuring compliance, so ID must be checked to verify legal age.

Checking Identification

The best practice for youth access compliance is to always ask for ID, and have the customer take the ID out of the wallet and hand it to you. Next, inspect and verify the picture to ensure the ID belongs to the person presenting it for proof of age. Keep in mind it is common for vertical format ID to be issued to a cardholder before they turn 21 years of age. Any vertical format ID should be closely scrutinized. Also, be sure the ID is not expired, as expired IDs are not valid for proof of age. Last, be sure the ID is one of the acceptable forms of ID. Please visit www.lcb.wa.gov for additional information on acceptable ID.

Penalties

Be sure to check ID at the point of sale, even if someone is checking ID upon entry into the business. Multiple people checking ID at different locations (ex: main entrance and counter) increases success rates for compliance. If the counter clerk relies on the door person to check ID, and an illegal sale occurs, both employees are liable for the violation. The door person could be charged with allowing a minor to frequent, and the employee who made the sale could be charged with furnishing marijuana to the minor, which is classified as a felony criminal offense. Remember that ultimately the licensee is responsible for the acts of their employees, and administrative penalties can also be assessed for non-compliance.

Youth access compliance in retail marijuana stores cannot be successful without your active interest in safe and responsible business practices. Please reach out to your area officer with any questions about checking IDs, acceptable forms of ID, or any general compliance related questions.

Thank you in advance for your interest in compliance and safe communities.

<http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?A2=LCB-I502;54b9a295.1505>