



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH County of Riverside

INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN NO. 70-11-DES

DISTRICT ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIVISION

RETAIL TOBACCO PERMITTING PROGRAM

Tobacco retailers are required to be permitted, inspected, and regulated by the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health (DEH).

- Applies to any retailers selling or distributing tobacco products or tobacco paraphernalia
- Applies to all unincorporated areas as well as most incorporated cities throughout the county
- Retailers must first obtain a permit from the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) to sell tobacco

DEH staff will inspect the retail store periodically to promote compliance with Riverside County Ordinance (RCO) 838 in areas such as:

- Tobacco products are not sold to individuals younger than 21 years of age. (The age requirement increased from 18 to 21 in 2016)
- Employees should be trained to verify a valid identification for all tobacco transactions to ensure minors are not sold tobacco or tobacco paraphernalia
- The minimum age for an employee or clerk selling tobacco is 18 years of age
- No self-service of tobacco, including vending machines (See RCO 838 for exemptions)
- Mobile sales are not allowed. All sales must be from the fixed location listed on the CDTFA permit and the DEH Retail Tobacco Permit

There will also be unannounced decoy compliance checks at each retail site to prevent the selling of tobacco and tobacco paraphernalia to individuals under the age of 21.

- The decoys will act as normal customers asking to buy tobacco products and will be between 15 and 19 years of age
- The decoys are allowed to lie about their age but are not allowed to show false identification
- Failing a decoy compliance check may result in the following penalties in addition to administrative citation(s) and permit revocation:
 - **1st violation:** one (1)-day suspension of tobacco and paraphernalia sales
 - **2nd violation within a 60-month period:** 30-day suspension of tobacco and paraphernalia sales
 - **3rd violation within a 60-month period:** 90-day suspension of tobacco and paraphernalia sales
 - **4th or greater violation within a 60-month period:** five (5)-year suspension of tobacco and paraphernalia sales

For more detail regarding DEH Retail Tobacco Permit requirements, including definitions of tobacco products and tobacco paraphernalia, see RCO 838 at rivcoeh.org/AboutUs/Ordinances

For more information on the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration visit: www.cdtfa.ca.gov

For more information regarding Riverside County Department of Environmental Health visit: www.rivcoeh.org

*Document available in an alternate format upon request

OFFICES IN: RIVERSIDE, BLYTHE, CORONA, HEMET, INDIO, MURRIETA AND PALM SPRINGS

For more information call (888) 722-4234

Department Web Site – www.rivcoeh.org