

ID Guide

21

or none

As a tobacco retailer, you are required to check the identification of people under 30 years old before selling them tobacco products, including e-cigarettes/vapes. You must refuse to sell tobacco to those who are under 21.

Accept only a government-issued photo ID as proof of age for tobacco product sales. The ID should include a photo of the person, a physical description, and a date of birth showing that the person is at least 21 years old. To be valid, the ID must be current and not expired.

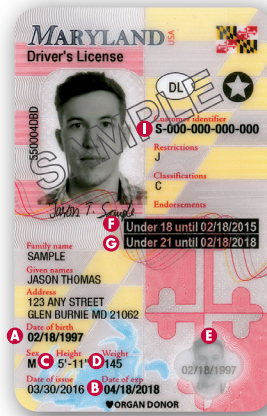
Any of the following forms of identification are considered acceptable:

- State-Issued Driver's License
- State-Issued ID Card (issued to non-drivers)
- Passport
- Immigration Card
- Military ID* Card

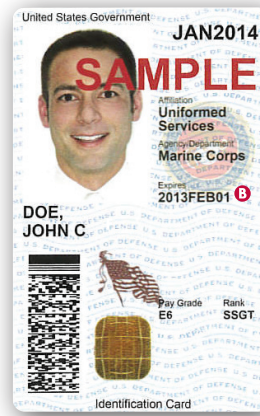
UNDER 21 DRIVER'S
LICENSE (VER. 1)



UNDER 21 DRIVER'S
LICENSE (VER. 2)



MILITARY (FRONT)

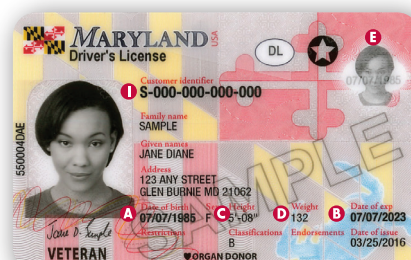


- A Birthdate
- B Expiration Date
- C Height
- D Weight
- E Ghost/Laser Image
- F Under 18 Until
- G Under 21 Until
- H Red Box for Under 21 (Version 1 only)
- I Tactile (Raised) Text (Version 2 only)

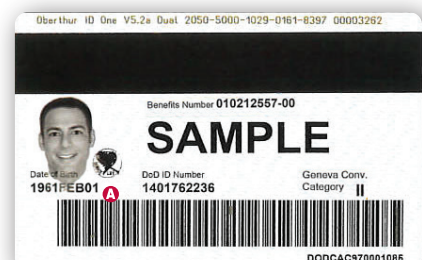
OVER 21 DRIVER'S
LICENSE (VER. 1)



OVER 21 DRIVER'S
LICENSE (VER. 2)



MILITARY (BACK)



* The Federal Tobacco 21 Law supersedes Maryland state laws and exemptions.
All members of the military must be 21 years or older to purchase tobacco products.



How to check an ID

Follow these simple steps:

- ✓ **Check first.**
Always ask for and check ID before getting the tobacco product off the shelf. Do not give or sell the product until you verify the customer is at least 21.
- ✓ **Make it a habit.**
Follow the same steps each time you check an ID. This will prevent you from getting sidetracked by conversation.
- ✓ **Remove the ID.**
Always have customers remove IDs from their wallets.
- ✓ **Check license expiration.**
If the expiration date has passed, the card is not valid.
- ✓ **Look for the birthdate.**
The ID must show that the person is at least 21 years old. Compare the birthdate on the ID to a calendar to determine when the customer can legally purchase tobacco.
- ✓ **Check photo and stats.**
Does the person look like the photo on the ID? Also check height and weight to make sure there is a reasonable match.
- ✓ **Doubts? Ask for another.**
If you have any doubts about the ID, ask for a second one. If a customer can't provide a second ID, refuse the sale.

Calculating their age

With the Tobacco 21 law, it is illegal to sell tobacco products to people under 21. So once you have an ID in your hand, how do you verify age?

It's easy with a Maryland license.

If the ID is vertical, the customer is under 21. There will also be an "Under 21 Until" (date) on the license. Compare this with the current date to determine if a sale is allowed.

Other ID

A customer hands you another form of ID or a driver's license that is not from Maryland. Do not assume a horizontal license from another state indicates the customer is over 21. Use the following method to calculate their age.

Add 20 to the year they were born, then add one.

Birthdate on ID: 08-11-2003

Today's date is: 10-01-2020

Birth year on ID= 2003	2003
Add 20= 2023	+20
Add 1 = 2024	+1
	<hr/>
	2024

The customer will not be 21 until Aug. 11, 2024. Comparing today's date (10-01-2020) to the date the customer turns 21 (08-11-2024), you see that selling tobacco to this customer is illegal. You must refuse the sale.

How to refuse a tobacco sale

Be polite but firm. Once you've determined an underaged person is trying to purchase tobacco products, address the customer with a firm yet polite response.

Explain why. Tell the person why you can't sell the tobacco product.

Resist customer pressure. The customer might try to make you feel bad about not selling to them or provide excuses and reasons as to why you should sell them the product. Stand your ground and don't waiver – you are not required to sell any tobacco products, especially if you have any doubts.

Keep going. Continue checking out their other items. If they have nothing else to purchase, shift your attention to the next customer in line.

Get help. Don't be afraid to call your supervisor or manager if it becomes necessary.

What to say:

"I'm sorry, I can't sell tobacco products to anyone under 21. It's nothing personal – it's the law. I could lose my job or be fined a lot of money."

Valid reasons to decline a tobacco sale

- The ID photo does not match the customer.
- The ID doesn't have a date of birth (examples: school or employer-issued ID).
- The ID doesn't appear to be authentic.
- The ID shows the customer is underage.
- The ID has expired.

How to spot a fake ID

Here are some things to look for:

- 🔍 **Date tampering.** The most altered areas on an ID include the birthdate, expiration date, and “Under 18 Until” or “Under 21 Until” [date]. Make sure these dates have not been changed or altered in any way.
- 🔍 **Look for imperfections.** Feel for raised or bumpy surfaces. Look for erasure marks, incorrect thickness, peeling lamination, smudged print, fuzzy numbers, and letters or numbers that have different fonts – especially the birthdate and expiration date.
- 🔍 **Glue lines or pin holes.** Examine the ID under bright light to reveal glue lines or pin holes where bleach may have been injected.
- 🔍 **Numbers match.** Check the front and back to make sure all ID numbers match.
- 🔍 **Check watermarks.** Examine the ID to make sure any required watermarks or state seals are present.
- 🔍 **Numbers out of line.** Turn the card 90 degrees to make sure important numbers are not out of line.
- 🔍 **Photo plus physical stats.** Make sure the person looks like the photo on the ID. Check the height and weight to make sure there’s a reasonable match.

REMEMBER: When in doubt, don’t make the sale. You are NOT obligated to sell any tobacco product.

