



Contact IDHW's Idaho Tobacco Project at: 877-641-4468
ID Tobacco Project Website: <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/providers>*
*Scroll down to the topic "Retailers" then select "Idaho Tobacco Project."

Facts and Stats

What was the Compliance Grade for December 2025's state tobacco and electronic smoking device inspections?

Grade **A**

According to Idaho Code 39-5701, the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare must inspect each Permitted Retailer that sells tobacco and electronic smoking devices to ensure that it does not sell these products to customers under the age of 21.

How well did these Permitted Retailers comply with the law in December 2025?

- 242 Permitted Retailers were inspected.*
- 18 Permitted Retailers sold to the underage inspector.
- The compliance rate for December 2025 was:

92.56%

Stay Vigilant!

*Non-minor Exempt Inspections where purchase attempts were made.

New Year, New Compliance Goals

The start of the year is the perfect time to refresh your store's commitment to Idaho tobacco and vape compliance. Here are **five** key steps to strengthen your store's compliance as inspections get underway:

1. **Verify All Staff Are Trained**
Review your store's internal rules for selling tobacco and vape products. New employees must complete your store's training on age-restricted sales **before** working at the register. Free resources like PreventTheSale.com and [Idaho Health & Welfare's Tobacco Project](https://IdahoHealthandWelfare.com/IdahoTobaccoProject) offer great tools to reinforce the law.
2. **Check Your Age-of-Sale Tools**
Make sure your cash registers, signage, ID calendars, and ID scanners are up to date. Idaho law prohibits sales to anyone under 21 — no exceptions.
3. **Repost Required Signage**
All stores must clearly display signs about the minimum age to purchase tobacco products. Be sure these are posted where both the customer and clerk can see them.
4. **Review Permit Status**
By now, you should have received your 2026 tobacco permit. Double-check that it includes the correct business name and location. If anything looks wrong, contact the Idaho Tobacco Project immediately.
5. **Set the Tone**
Remind staff that your store values compliance — not just to avoid penalties, but to protect youth and uphold community trust. A strong, visible commitment to these values helps prepare your team for a successful inspection and sets the tone for the year ahead.

As inspections begin across the state, now is the time to lead with vigilance and consistency. Taking a few proactive steps this month can prevent costly mistakes, reinforce team accountability, and demonstrate your store's commitment to public health. Let's make 2026 a year of compliance excellence — starting today.

Top 3 Age-Check Errors to Avoid

Even well-meaning clerks can make costly mistakes. Here are the most common age-verification errors found during compliance checks:

- **Guessing Age by Appearance:** Never rely on looks. Always ask for ID.
- **Forgetting to Check Expiration Dates:** Expired IDs are invalid — no sale.
- **Not Doing the Math:** Don't just scan — confirm the birthdate shows the customer is **21 or older**.

Train your staff to stay alert, even with regular customers. Familiarity is not an excuse for non-compliance.

Who's New at the Register?

Turnover happens — but compliance doesn't take a break. If you've had any staffing changes lately, double-check that:

- All new clerks completed your store's tobacco/vape sales training.
- They've signed off on your internal age-check policy.
- They understand how to consistently verify ID, follow store rules, and avoid common mistakes.

A quick internal review now could prevent major issues later.

This Month's Health Highlight: Nicotine & Mental Health

Did you know nicotine can affect more than the lungs? Many teens use tobacco or vapes to manage stress or emotional swings — but the relief is short-lived. Nicotine withdrawal can worsen anxiety, irritability, and mood instability, creating a harmful cycle.

Why it matters: Understanding this link helps retailers and communities support cessation efforts, protect youth, and break the myth that tobacco use helps mental health. Prevention saves lives.

Source: [CDC Article on E-Cigarette Use and Mental Health](#)

Prevent-The-Sale!

Idaho Tobacco Retailers have two trusted resources to support compliance:

- **Idaho Tobacco Project Site:** healthandwelfare.idaho.gov
- **Interactive Training & Resources:** PreventTheSale.com/Idaho

There you'll find:

- Free training modules
- Sample ID examples
- Refresher resources
- Downloadable signage

Use these tools to support your staff — and stay ready for every sale and every inspection.



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