



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 the 2025 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 for calendar year 2025?

- 2532 Permitted Retailers were inspected.*
- 199 Permitted Retailers sold to the underage inspector.
- The compliance rate for 2025 was:

92.14%

Stay Vigilant!

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

Consistency Counts: Inspection Season Is Underway

Consistency Is the Key to Passing Inspections

Now that inspections are actively underway across Idaho, this is the time to focus on one thing: **consistency**.

Most failed inspections are not caused by confusion about the law — they're caused by inconsistency. A clerk skips an ID check during a rush. A regular customer isn't carded. Someone checks the ID but skips using the scanner, age calendar, or the "Under 21 Until" indicator printed on the license. These small lapses may seem minor in the moment, but they are often what lead to violations.

Idaho law is clear: no sales to anyone under 21.

Passing inspections depends on daily habits that are followed every time — without exception. Consistency means applying the same standard during slow mornings and busy evenings. It means treating every transaction as if it could be reviewed. It means building a routine that becomes automatic, so staff don't have to second-guess their decisions under pressure.

What consistent stores do differently:

- They check ID every time for anyone who appears under 30.
- They carefully verify the exact birthdate — not just the year.
- They treat every transaction the same, whether it's a regular customer or a first-time visitor.
- They don't let long lines, familiar faces, or busy shifts change their standards.
- They encourage staff to pause and double-check if there's any uncertainty.

Inspections are unannounced. That means your store is either ready — or it isn't — and readiness comes from daily practice, not last-minute preparation. Consistency protects your permit, protects your team from costly violations, and protects Idaho youth from illegal access. Make it your store's standard — every sale, every shift, every day — because steady habits are what lead to strong compliance results.

Don't Let "Regular Customers" Be Your Weak Spot

One of the most common compliance errors?

- Failing to check ID because "I know them."

Even familiar faces must show valid ID if they appear under 30. Inspections don't make exceptions for repeat customers — and neither should your store. Regular customers may feel known and trusted, but age-restricted sales laws apply equally to everyone. A moment of assumption can quickly turn into a violation. Familiarity should never override policy, and consistent ID checks protect both your business and the community you serve.

What Happens After a Failed Sale?

If a sale is made to an underage inspector:

- The adult inspector will identify themselves.
- A violation notice may be issued.
- Civil penalties can apply.
- Repeat violations can lead to escalating consequences.

One missed ID check can have lasting impact. Prevention is always easier than correction.

This Month's Health Highlight: Tobacco Use and Heart Health

February is National Heart Month — a reminder that tobacco use affects more than just the lungs.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), smoking damages blood vessels, raises blood pressure, and increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. Even secondhand smoke can harm the cardiovascular system.

Preventing early access to tobacco and nicotine products helps reduce these risks before they begin. Retailers play a key role in protecting Idaho youth from long-term heart health consequences.

Source: [CDC — Smoking and Heart Disease, Stroke, and Peripheral Artery Disease](#)

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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