

What New Yorkers Need To Know about Tobacco, E-Cigarette and Cannabis Stores in NYC

The NYC Health Department shares residents' concerns about tobacco, e-cigarette (vape) and cannabis (marijuana) stores in NYC, including the number of stores that are unlicensed or illegally selling products, especially to youth. This document describes some laws related to tobacco, e-cigarette and cannabis product sales and what to do if you see an issue.

What are the NYC and New York State (NYS) laws about selling tobacco and e-cigarette products?

- Stores need a license to sell tobacco or e-cigarette products.
- Among other restrictions, stores are **not** allowed to:
 - Sell any flavored vaping products **or** sell tobacco products in flavors other than mint or menthol.
 - Sell loose cigarettes ("loosies").
 - Sell to people younger than age 21.
- Tobacco and e-cigarette stores within 500 feet (approximately two short blocks) of a school are not allowed to display tobacco or e-cigarette ads, products or paraphernalia in their windows or on their doors.
- For more information about tobacco and e-cigarette laws, visit nyc.gov/health and search for [tobacco laws](#).

What are the NYS laws about selling cannabis?

- Dispensaries need an NYS license to sell cannabis products. Licensed dispensaries sell products that have been tested in a lab.
- Licensed dispensaries should have a teal Dispensary Verification Tool in their window with a QR code on it that directs to a list of all licensed dispensaries, which you can also find at cannabis.ny.gov/dispensary-location-verification.
- Dispensaries are not allowed to display cannabis products or images of cannabis products in their windows.
- Cannabis is only legal for adults age 21 and older to have and use.
- Licensed dispensaries are not allowed to be located within 500 feet of a school or 200 feet of a place of worship.
- For more information about cannabis laws, visit cannabis.ny.gov.



What can I do about tobacco, e-cigarette or cannabis sales issues in my neighborhood?

- City agencies inspect thousands of stores each year. Complaints help agencies respond and plan activities that might include enforcement, education or policy changes.
- To submit a complaint about tobacco or e-cigarette sales, call **311** or visit nyc.gov/311 and search for [tobacco sale complaint](#) or [e-cigarette sale complaint](#).
 - Sharing photos in your complaint can help inspectors find the store and the issues.
 - If you share your contact information, you will receive updates about your complaint.

- You can submit a new complaint each month if the issue has not been resolved. However, note that if a notice of violation is issued, it may be some time before a hearing takes place and, if found guilty, that a retailer (store) receives fines or other penalties.
- To submit a complaint about cannabis sales, email smokeshopcomplaints@sheriff.nyc.gov or call **311**.

Where can I find more information about tobacco, e-cigarette and cannabis risks?

- E-cigarettes can expose New Yorkers to large amounts of addictive nicotine as well as cancer-causing and harmful chemicals. Both nicotine and cannabis can also affect a young person’s developing brain, including their memory, concentration, learning ability and mental health.
- For more information, including resources on how to talk to young people about these products, visit:
 - nyc.gov/health and search for [e-cigarettes](#)
 - nyc.gov/health/cannabis
- If you need help with cannabis or other substance use, call or text 988 or chat at nyc.gov/988. Text and chat services are available in English and Spanish, and counselors are available by phone 24/7 in more than 200 languages.
- For help with smoking or vaping, visit nyc.gov/nycquits.

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