

Tobacco Retail Licensing: Frequently Asked Questions



Tobacco Retail Licensing requires all businesses in the county, including large retailers, convenience stores, and gas stations, to purchase an annual license to sell tobacco and nicotine products, including E-cigarettes.

Tobacco Retail Licensing is part of Tillamook County's comprehensive strategy to prevent youth from using nicotine products and end the burden of tobacco-related disease and death.

What does Tobacco Retail Licensing propose to do?

Tobacco Retail Licensing is a tool used to improve enforcement of federal, state, and local tobacco laws. It enables local jurisdictions to identify tobacco retailers, monitor their compliance with laws and enforce penalties if tobacco is sold to people under the age of 21. It provides a platform for retailer education and consequences if tobacco is sold illegally. Penalties, such as fines or suspending retailers' ability to sell tobacco, deter retailers from selling tobacco to youth.

What is the economic impact of Tobacco Retail Licensing?

Licensing fees and fines would be used to fund the implementation and enforcement of a tobacco retail licensing system. The rate for Tillamook County has not yet been determined. Similar ordinances in Oregon have fees ranging from \$125 in Benton County to \$683 in Multnomah County. A \$125 – \$683 fee amounts to \$0.34 – \$1.87 per day to sell tobacco and nicotine products. The impact on store revenue would be minimal, as retailers are able to raise tobacco prices to offset the cost of the license.

What does Tobacco Retail Licensing mean for Tillamook County?

Tobacco remains the number one cause of preventable death and disease in Oregon. Tobacco Retail Licensing will reduce youth access and initiation to tobacco and nicotine products, protecting them from a lifetime of addiction and tobacco-related disease. This will ultimately improve quality of life, health care savings and lead to a healthier and more productive workforce.

For more information, visit Tillamookchc.org or Smokefreeoregon.com

How effective is Tobacco Retail Licensing in reducing youth access to tobacco?

Tobacco Retail Licensing reduces illegal sales to minors through retailer education and enforcement of laws. Oregon is 1 of only 9 states that does not have a state tobacco retail licensing system in place. Communities across the country, including four counties and a number of cities within Oregon, are implementing Tobacco Retail Licensing to prevent youth from illegally purchasing nicotine products. While it is too soon to see the results in Oregon, a recent assessment of 33 communities in California that implemented a tobacco retail license, showed dramatically decreased rates of illegal youth sales.

"A private employer may pay over \$5,816 annually to employ an individual who smokes tobacco compared to a non-smoking employee."

Why focus on tobacco regulation in the retail environment?

Youth who have more opportunities to obtain tobacco and see more tobacco advertising are more likely to use tobacco and nicotine products due to their susceptibility to marketing. Studies show that density of tobacco retailers and proximity of retailers to schools impacts youth tobacco rates. Local retailers play an important role in the health of the communities in which they serve.

Why are electronic cigarettes and other vaping products included in this licensing?

Many youth today are being introduced to nicotine through e-cigarettes rather than conventional cigarettes and tobacco products. According to the Oregon Health Authority's 2019 Oregon Healthy Teen Survey, 82% of Tillamook 8th graders who have used tobacco products started with e-cigarettes or other vaping products.

57 McCarthy, W. J., Mistry, R., Lu, Y., Patel, M., Zheng, H., & Dietsch, B. (2009). Density of Tobacco Retailers Near Schools: Effects on Tobacco Use Among Students. *American Journal of Public Health*, 99, 2006-2013. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2008.145128

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E-Cigarette Fact Sheet, Oregon Health Authority, 2019. https://smokefreeoregon.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/OHA-Tillamook-TobaccoFactSheet_FINAL.pdf

MMWR via Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/index.htm

See "Table of youth sales rates before and after the adoption of a strong tobacco retailer licensing ordinance". The American Lung Association in California, 2013. <http://center4tobaccopolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Tobacco-Retailer-Licensing-is-Effective-September-2013.pdf>

vi Berman, M. et al; "Estimating the Cost of a Smoking Employee", *Tobacco Control*, 2013. <https://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/23/5/428>



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