

New Vermont Tobacco Legislation Bans E-Cigarette Sales to Minors and Extends Display Restrictions

On May 16, 2012, Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin signed Act No. 166, “An act relating to cigarette manufacturers,” into law. This legislation prohibits the sale of electronic cigarettes (“e-cigarettes”) to persons under the age of 18 years old, strengthens restrictions on the display of e-cigarettes, requires that some little cigars be sold in packages of 20 or more, and prohibits the possession of commercial cigarette rolling machines for commercial purposes.

Act No. 166 added the definition of “tobacco substitute” to Vermont statute, which clearly includes e-cigarettes and similar devices not approved by the FDA for tobacco cessation, and the definition of “tobacco paraphernalia,” which likely includes e-cigarettes also. This legislation amended the definition of “tobacco product” to likely include e-cigarettes as well. With these changes, the sale and display of e-cigarettes in Vermont are restricted in the same way as traditional cigarettes: Sales of e-cigarettes to minors are prohibited, and self-service displays are prohibited in retail stores that are accessible to minors.

Act No. 166 also enacted several other positive changes. The legislation prohibits the sale of “little cigars” weighing more than three pounds per 1,000 units individually or in packages of fewer than 20. This change should help reduce the attractiveness of “little cigars” to youth. In addition, the legislation amended the tobacco retailer signage requirement so that the Vermont Liquor Control Board can now require all licensed tobacco retailers to post a sign with a health warning about tobacco and information about cessation services, in addition to a reminder that sales to minors are prohibited. Another significant change in Act No. 166 is that commercial cigarette rolling machines are prohibited in the state of Vermont and can be seized as contraband.

Overall, these changes should reduce the accessibility and social acceptability of tobacco products to minors, including emerging products such as e-cigarettes. Click [here](#) to read Act 166.

For more information about these policy changes, please [contact the Vermont Department of Health](#).