



Philadelphia Department of Public Health
Environmental Health Services
Tobacco Control Program
321 University Avenue, 2nd Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19104
215-685-7340

Tobacco Retailer Permit Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the Tobacco Retailer Permit law?

- Effective January 1, 2012, Chapter 9-600 of the Philadelphia Code, entitled “Service and Other Businesses,” requires all tobacco retailers to obtain permits for the retail sale of tobacco products (cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, dip tobacco, hookah, snuff, snus, bidis and e-cigarettes).

Q: Who is required to have a permit?

- Retailers that sell cigarettes and/or little cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff and other tobacco products for chewing, ingesting or smoking which includes hookah along with electronic cigarettes which includes the liquid products and the delivery devices are required to have both the Philadelphia Tobacco Retailer Permit and the Cigarette Dealer License/Tobacco Products License from the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue.
- Retailers that sell cigars only need the Philadelphia Tobacco Retailer Permit.
- Owners of establishments in which cigarette vending machines are located are also responsible for obtaining a permit.

Q: How much does the permit cost?

- The permit fee as of January 1, 2017 is \$300. The annual renewal fee is \$300.
- The permit is valid for the licensee and address to which it was issued.
- If you own more than one location, or are a corporate chain, a permit application and fee must be submitted for each individual location.

Q: How long is the permit valid?

- The Tobacco Retailer Permit is valid for one calendar year effective January 1st and will expire on December 31st of the same year. Retailers must prominently display the Philadelphia Tobacco Retailer Permit at each location where they engage in tobacco sales.

Q: What are the new laws that started January 1, 2017 that was approved by the Board of Health in December 2016?

- **Retailers that are not properly permitted and grandfathered in to the law will no longer be able to sell tobacco within 500 feet (approximately 2 blocks) of any K-12 school.**
- **There is now a cap on the number of tobacco retailers that can sell tobacco in the city. There is 18 planning districts in the city and the cap is 1 tobacco retailer per 1,000 residents. If the district is at or above the cap no permits will be approved. If the district is below the cap permits can be approved based on the number of available slots.**
- **Retailers have up to 3 times to sale tobacco to a minor within two years and then their Tobacco Retailer Permit will be suspended for a year.**

Q: How do I find out if I am eligible for a permit?

- Go to <http://www.phila.gov/health/environment/retailerPermits.html> Go to Resources and click the ONLINE Application and set up an account and you can put your business address in and you will be told if you are in a school zone and if you are in a capped district or not.
- You can also put your address in the Tobacco Retailer Density and School Zone Maps on the site just click on those sections.

Q: What is the penalty for not having a permit?

- Any retailer that is selling tobacco without a valid Tobacco Retailer Permit will be fined \$75 per day.