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**CITY TAKES STEPS TO EDUCATE AND ENSURE BUSINESSES BECOME COMPLIANT FOR
IMPLEMENTATION OF TOBACCO 21 LAW**

City Works to Educate Retailers on New Law to go into Effect July 1; Increased Enforcement to Ensure Safe and Lawful Business Practice across All Neighborhoods

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) today reminded retailers across the city about steps to be taken to become fully compliant with the new tobacco 21 law when it goes into effect. Beginning July 1, 2016, the sale of tobacco products and accessories to people under age 21 will be prohibited. These and other measures concerning the sale of tobacco products were approved by the City Council in March, and apply to all retailers across the city.

“Youth smoking is now at a record low in Chicago, thanks to a concerted effort and series of reforms to shield our children from the harmful effects of tobacco products,” said Mayor Emanuel. “With these latest reforms and the newly required purchase age of 21, we will discourage tobacco use among youth, and also reduce black market activity, so that our youth can grow up healthy.”

In addition to the change in purchase age from 18 to 21, next month stores that have a Retail Tobacco license must post a new warning sign reflecting the new age of 21.

To ensure that businesses become educated on these new requirements, the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) has been conducting outreach and educational events for tobacco retailers across the city. The department has hosted several workshops, and has posted one of the workshops on its [website](#) to educate business owners on all changes remotely. There will also be a joint BACP and Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) Tobacco 21 informational table at the Small Business Expo later this month.

“By raising the age of purchase to 21, we will keep more youth from lighting their first cigarette and help ensure they live a life free from addiction to a deadly habit,” said CDPH Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D. “This is good news for today’s youth and good news for our city’s future.”

To ensure that retailers citywide will uphold these new laws, the city’s Tobacco Unit—a joint partnership between the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) and the Chicago Police Department (CPD)—will investigate any suspected illegal sales and crack down on all illegal tobacco activity. The Mayor has also invested to double the size of enforcement staff, to deter illegal activity and to ensure products are not being sold to underage customers, with a new

unit. The expansion is being supported in part by revenue generated by the other tobacco products tax.

“In the next few weeks, we will be working vigorously to help all retailers come into compliance with the new Tobacco 21 law, to keep our communities safe from harms that illegal tobacco sales attract,” said BACP Commissioner Maria Guerra Lapacek. “In addition to our efforts to educate businesses on how to become compliant with the changes, all Tobacco Unit investigators will be out to monitor activity and intervene as necessary.”

The recently passed ordinance also imposes new penalties for illegal sales. For repeat offenders, investigators are able to revoke licensure, and/or impart a one-year tobacco sales ban on the location and business owner in violation. Since actions were taken to double down on enforcement this year, the Tobacco Unit has conducted 625 illegal tobacco sales to minors investigations, resulting in 72 violations and 15 tobacco license revocations due to violations.

Since taking office, Mayor Emanuel has worked closely with the City Council and the Chicago Department of Public Health to pass a series of reforms aimed at curbing youth tobacco use in Chicago. Today, Chicago has achieved record low rates of youth smoking.

More details on the new Tobacco 21 requirements for all retailers are available on the BACP website at www.cityofchicago.org/bacp, on the tobacco regulations webpage.

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More about the BACP and the Citywide Tobacco Unit:

BACP licenses the sale of tobacco products in Chicago, and is the lead agency for helping businesses and residents to understand new and existing regulations for tobacco sales. The Citywide Tobacco Unit, a collaboration between BACP and CPD, investigates violations of Tobacco Sale to Minor, Selling Individual Cigarettes, also known as ‘singles and loosies,’ Unlawful Concealment, Retail Recordkeeping Requirement, Inspection Interference, and Failure to Display Tobacco to Minors Warning Sign. To report the sale of unstamped cigarettes, call 311 or visit www.CheckTheStamps.org.