

How to Report the Illegal Sale of Vapes and other Products

One in 10 convenience retailers are aware of local businesses selling illegal vaping products. If you are aware of businesses in your community selling illegal or non-duty paid product or selling age restricted products to children you need to report it the relevant authorities. This briefing gives you all you need to know about who report to, and how to report.



Your Local Trading Standards Office

To report to Trading Standards, you should contact the Citizens Advice consumer service using their [online form](#) (available 5pm Fri - 9am Mon) or speak to adviser if you need further help with your problem on their consumer helpline: 0808 223 1133.

It is not a requirement to provide personal business information when making the complaint, but it is important to include as much relevant information as possible about the reported business in your submission.

These reporting mechanisms are often promoted for 'consumers' to use, but businesses can use them too.

Don't give up! Trading Standards teams are hugely under resourced and even if they don't contact you, they might use your evidence to take action against the business in the future. The more businesses that report illegal activity, the higher likelihood that action will be taken.



Your Local Policing Team

You can report businesses engaging in illegal activity to your local police. There are two ways to do this:

- Visit [Police.uk](https://www.police.uk), enter your postcode and contact your neighbourhood policing team
- Call the 101 community police number

Businesses selling illegal products or selling age restricted products to young people are likely to promote anti-social behaviour in communities and commit other crimes. Under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act the police have emergency closure powers to shut down business that they reasonably believe there is, or is likely soon to be, a public nuisance or disorder.

Nottingham Police have used anti-social behaviour powers to shut down a shop repeatedly breaking trading rules and causing anti-social behaviour, see a [case study here](#).

How to Report the Illegal Sale of Vapes and other Products



HMRC Fraud Hotline

If you are aware of businesses selling non-duty paid tobacco or alcohol you should call the Fraud Hotline:

0800 788 887

You can also report issues with illegal tobacco via the keep-it-out.co.uk website using their anonymous online [reporting form here](#) or their phone line answer machine service on **0300 999 0000**.

When you report using the Hotline(s) you may be requested to leave a phone message. Ensure that you provide information about the name, address and postcode of the business that is breaking the law.



Elected Representatives

If you are not getting a response from Trading Standards, local police or HMRC, you should contact your elected representatives and tell them about the problems you are facing with getting a response from local agencies:

- Contact [your local councillor here](#) and email or phone the councillor outlining what you have done to report illegal activity and the lack of response.
- You can find [your local Member of Parliament here](#) and email or phone your MP's office outlining what you have done to report illegal activity and the lack of response.
- Email or phone [your Police and Crime Commissioner here](#). Police and Crime Commissioners are elected to be responsible for setting policing priorities and responsibilities locally.

Getting your elected representative involved will focus minds at local agencies and promote a quicker response. If you want help contacting your MP contact: **daniel.askew@acs.org.uk**



Get tips on how to spot illegal vapes in our [Assured Advice guide here](#)

