

Tobacco Compliance Checks: Training Packet

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FY26 Texas Tobacco/E-Cigarette Compliance Inspection Form (TTCIF)

Introductory Information

Name of Person Conducting Inspection* _____

If PRC Tobacco Compliance Coordinator, only enter initials.

Region*

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9
- ☐ 10
- ☐ 11

Inspection Date: _____ and Time: * _____

Store Information

Name of Store* _____

Store - City* _____

Store - Zip Code* _____

Store - County* _____

Retailer Type*

- ☐ CIG/TOB Retailer & E-CIG Retailer
- ☐ CIG/TOB Retailer ONLY
- ☐ E-CIG Retailer ONLY

CIG/TOB Retailer Permit Number* _____

E-CIG Retailer Permit Number* _____

Outlet Type*

- ☐ Convenience store with or without gas (e.g., 7-Eleven, Exxon, Buc-ees)
- ☐ Drug store/pharmacy (e.g., Walgreens, Rite Aid)
- ☐ Beer, wine, or liquor store (e.g., ABC, Spec's)
- ☐ Grocery store (e.g., small market/deli/produce market) or supermarket (e.g., Stop & Shop, Piggly Wiggly)
- ☐ Mass merchandiser (e.g., Walmart, Kroger, HEB, Tom Thumb)
- ☐ Discount store (e.g., Dollar General, Family Dollar)
- ☐ Tobacco shop (e.g., Cigarettes Cheaper, cigar shops, hookah bars, e-cigarette shops, or other tobacco shops)
- ☐ Vape kiosk
- ☐ Head shop with vaping products
- ☐ Other (e.g., gas station kiosk, donut shop, bait & tackle, restaurant)

Inspection Type*

- ☐ Initial Visit
- ☐ Follow-up Visit

Are you able to successfully conduct an inspection?*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, store does not exist
- ☐ No, store closed
- ☐ No, under 21 not allowed to enter
- ☐ No, membership or fee required to enter
- ☐ No, environment unsafe for me
- ☐ No, asked to leave
- ☐ No, store under new leadership; will inspect new store

Inspection Information

Which products are advertised outside the store (on windows/doors, building, sidewalk or elsewhere)?*

Select all that apply.

- ☐ Cigarettes – non-menthol
- ☐ Cigarettes – menthol
- ☐ Cigarillos/little cigars
- ☐ Large cigars
- ☐ Chew, moist or dry snuff, dip or snus
- ☐ Dissolvable tobacco
- ☐ Non-tobacco nicotine or synthetic nicotine
- ☐ E-cigarettes
- ☐ None

Name of Store Clerk/Employee* _____

Please enter N/A if name was not given.

Is "Outside advertising" of tobacco within 1000 feet of a church or a school?*

Health and Safety Code, Section 161.122 (a)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Is "Outside advertising" of e-cigarettes within 1000 feet of a church or a school?*

Health and Safety Code, Section 161.122 (a)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Does the retailer market, advertise, or sell cigarettes, e-cigarettes, or tobacco products that depict a visual appearance of a product that is primarily marketed towards youth? Such as depict a cartoon-like fictional character, an image of a celebrity, a food product, etc.?*

Health and Safety Code, Section 161.124 (Prohibition of certain cigarette, e-cigarette, or tobacco product advertising: fee) AND Health and Safety Code, Section 161.0876 (prohibited e-cigarette products)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Is the retailer displaying the most current warning signs provided by the State?*

Health and Safety Code, Section 161.084 (a)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

(If "NO" to previous question) Was retailer issued the most current warning signs?*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Is the current State issued tobacco warning poster located in the point of sale area?*

Health and Safety Code, Section 161.084 (a)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Is CIG/TOB Retailer Permit current and visible for public viewing?*

Tax Code, Section 154.117, Section 155.053

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Is E-CIG Retailer Permit current and visible for public viewing?*

Tax Code, Section 154.117, Section 155.056

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Is retailer selling single, unpackaged cigarettes?*

Tax Code, Section 154.504

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Is retailer selling fewer than 20 cigarettes per package?*

Tax Code, Section 154.504

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Are promotional items, vending machines and/or coupons available to minors?*

Health and Safety Code, Section 161.084

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Was the retailer given additional information about txtobaccoenforcement.com?*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Is clerk assistance necessary to obtain tobacco products and e-cigarettes?*

Health and Safety Code, Section 161.084

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Were any tobacco products advertised for less than \$2?*

- ☐ Yes, Cigarillo/Little Cigar product advertisements
- ☐ No

Were there tobacco/e-cigarette products within 12 inches of toys, candy, gum, slushy/soda machines, or ice cream?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

(If “YES” to previous question) Which tobacco/e-cigarette products within 12 inches of toys, candy, gum, slushy/soda machines, or ice cream?*

Select all that apply.

- ☐ Yes, Cigarettes - non-menthol product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, Cigarettes - menthol product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, Cigarillo/little cigar product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, Large cigar product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, Chew, moist/dry snuff, dip, and/or snus product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, Dissolvable tobacco product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, Non-tobacco nicotine or synthetic nicotine product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, E-cigarette product advertisements

Were there tobacco/e-cigarette product advertisements within 3 feet of floor?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

(If “YES” to previous question) Were there tobacco/e-cigarette product advertisements within 3 feet of floor?*

Select all that apply

- ☐ Yes, Cigarettes - non-menthol product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, Cigarettes - menthol product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, Cigarillo/little cigar product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, Large cigar product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, Chew, moist/dry snuff, dip, and/or snus product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, Dissolvable tobacco product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, Non-tobacco nicotine or synthetic nicotine product advertisements
- ☐ Yes, E-cigarette product advertisements
- ☐ No

Were there any advertisements inside the store that:*

Select all that apply

- ☐ Suggest vaping is safer than cigarettes (including customer testimonials)?
- ☐ Promote vaping as a way to quit smoking cigarettes (including customer testimonials)?
- ☐ Promote vaping as a cheaper alternative to conventional cigarettes?
- ☐ Suggest synthetic nicotine is safer (including customer testimonials)?
- ☐ Are directed towards veterans or the military population?
- ☐ Are directed towards college students?
- ☐ None apply

Reporting/Other Notes

Will this retailer require a follow-up inspection?*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

(If “YES” to previous question) When will you report this retailer to the Texas Comptroller's Office?*

Please send information related to noncompliant retailers to: tobacco.enforcement@cpa.texas.gov

Is there anything else you'd like to report regarding this inspection? *Comments/Other Action Taken*

Are there any images from this inspection that you would like to share? *Optional - Use the camera to take a photo*

Compliance Check Introductions

Introducing Yourself to the Retailer – PRC/YP

Good Morning/Afternoon,

My name is ___<your name>_____, and I am a tobacco compliance coordinator with the ___<agency name>_____ and I work alongside the Texas Health and Human Services Commission and the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. I am here to serve as a resource to you and your team by conducting a tobacco retail compliance inspection and offering supplemental materials.

The first thing we typically inspect is/are your tobacco/e-cigarette permits. May I see those, please?

<proceed with inspection>

Addressing Angry Retailers

Sir/Ma'am,

Thank you for your honesty, I respect your decision to discontinue this inspection. Please be advised that if not myself, someone else may visit to provide a tobacco inspection of this establishment and unfortunately, that visit may result in negative consequences.

Thank you for your time.

{If you feel comfortable, leave business card}

Reporting Violations to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts – Email Template for PRC/YP

Good Morning/Afternoon,

My name is ___<your name>_____, and I am a youth prevention specialist with ___<agency name>_____ and I am assisting tobacco compliance coordinators with compliance checks. I work alongside the Texas Health and Human Services Commission to conduct tobacco compliance inspections. This month, I conducted a total of X tobacco compliance inspections in X, Y, and Z county. The following are retailer(s) that I found to be noncompliant:

Inspection Date	Inspection Time	City	Store Name	Cig/Tob Permit	E-Cig Permit	Violation(s)
3/3/2025	2:05 PM	Texas City, TX	Corner Mart #X	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXX	Clerk assistance was not necessary to obtain tobacco products and e-cigarettes. Health and Safety Code, Section 161.084
3/5/2025	10:30 AM	Texas City, TX	Jane Doe's Cigar Store	XXXXXXXX	N/A	Retailer not displaying the most current warning signs provided by the State. Health and Safety Code, Section 161.084 (a) AND CIG/TOB Retailer Permit was not visible for public viewing. Tax Code, Section 154.117, Section 155.053

Standardized Tobacco Assessment for Retail Settings (STARS) Pocket Guide

The following pocket guide provides information regarding things one needs to identify during their compliance check:

1. Product Examples
 - Examples of cigarettes, cigarillos, cigars, chew, and e-cigarettes.
2. Store Characteristics
 - Types of stores and their characteristics may include: convenience store, drug store/pharmacy, liquor store, grocery store, mass merchandiser/discount store, and tobacco shop.
3. Price Promotion
 - Information regarding the definition of price promotion and what is considered to be in this category.
4. Flavor Examples
 - Various examples of the types of flavors these stores might sell include: fruit/sweet, liquor, mint, or without flavor.
5. Product Price
 - Obtaining product prices can be helpful to ensure that stores are not selling individual cigarettes outside of their original package.
6. Tobacco Placement
 - Per the compliance check form, you must assess tobacco product placement by determining whether any tobacco items are located within 12 inches of youth-attracting items such as toys, candy, gum, slushy or soda machines, or ice cream.



[5 STARS Pocket Guide](#)

KOBO DATA WALKTHROUGH

Please refer to the Kobo PDF provided below. It will guide you step-by-step through the following key processes related to compliance check data:

1. Data Download

- Access and export your data directly from the Kobo system.
- Download the data in an Excel spreadsheet format, which allows for easier review, sorting, and analysis.
- Ensure that the exported data includes all necessary fields related to inspection results and retailer types.

2. Data Analysis

- Insertion of additional columns to help you organize and filter your data based on the month or other timeframes relevant to your reporting.
- Separation and isolation of data by month.

3. Compliance Check Type

- Categorize retailers by type based on inspection data (E-CIG Retailer ONLY, CIG/TOB Retailer ONLY, or CIG/TOB Retailer & E-CIG)



[Kobo Data Walkthrough](#)

Retailer Handout- Compliance Laws

Thank you for your commitment to complying with the Texas Tobacco Laws and ensuring that individuals under the age of 21 do not have access to nor obtain tobacco/e-cigarette products. The following codes in Texas statute are relevant to Texas tobacco and/or e-cigarette retailers and must be upheld to maintain compliance with state law. The Texas tobacco and/or e-cigarette retailer must:

- ☐ Ensure "Outside advertising" of tobacco and/or e-cigarettes is NOT within 1,000 feet of a church or a school.
Health and Safety Code, Section 161.122 (a)
- ☐ Display the most current warning signs provided by the State.
Health and Safety Code, Section 161.084 (a)
- ☐ Ensure the current State issued tobacco warning poster is located in the point-of-sale area.
Health and Safety Code, Section 161.084 (a)
- ☐ Ensure the Cigar, Cigarette and Tobacco Retailer Permit is current and visible for public viewing (if the retailer sells tobacco).
Tax Code, Section 154.117 and Tax Code, Section 155.053
- ☐ Ensure the E-Cigarette Retailer Permit is current and visible for public viewing (if the retailer sells e-cigarettes).
Tax Code, Section 154.117 and Tax Code, Section 155.056
- ☐ NOT sell single, unpackaged cigarettes.
Tax Code, Section 154.504
- ☐ NOT sell fewer than 20 cigarettes per package.
Tax Code, Section 154.504
- ☐ Ensure promotional items, vending machines and/or coupons are NOT available to minors.
Health and Safety Code, Section 161.084
- ☐ Ensure clerk assistance is necessary to obtain tobacco products and e-cigarettes.
Health and Safety Code, Section 161.084
- ☐ NOT sell cigarettes, e-cigarettes or tobacco products retail to underage youth.
Health and Safety Code, Section 161.083, (a-1)
- ☐ NOT smuggle tobacco, counterfeit tobacco and/or e-cigarette permits, or defraud the state of tobacco taxes.
Tax Code, Section 154.505 and Tax Code, Section 154.520
- ☐ NOT market, advertise, or sell tobacco or e-cigarette product if the product's container includes symbol(s) that are primarily used to market products to minors.
Health and Safety Code, Section 161.0876

If a violation(s) was found during today's visit, please work with your team to correct this issue. Should you have further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts by phone at 1-800-862-2260 or by email at tobacco.enforcement@cpa.texas.gov.

What forms of ID are acceptable for those purchasing tobacco or e-cigarette products?

- Driver's license from Texas or another state
- Texas Identification Card
- Passport

Note: Student ID cards are NOT valid forms of identification

Law

Federal law prohibits the sale of tobacco to minors (individuals under 21), NO exceptions.

State law prohibits the sale of tobacco to minors (individuals under 21), WITH exceptions:
Individuals who are **state military forces** and show a valid military ID card at the time of purchase.

Resources

Websites:

Organization Website – www.prcseven.org
CPA Homepage - <http://tinyurl.com/tdepreaz>
CPA Tobacco Permit - <http://tinyurl.com/4p7w757a>
CPA FAQs - <http://tinyurl.com/459cm3wm>
CPA Tobacco and E-Cigarette Forms - <http://tinyurl.com/mw2wrcdd>

Phone Numbers:

Tobacco Permits and Extra Signs/Stickers:
1-800-862-2260

Texas Tobacco Enforcement Program (TEP)

Overview:

As part of the state's Tobacco Enforcement Program (TEP), the Texas School Safety Center at Texas State University (TxSSC) solicits local law enforcement agencies to submit applications for the purpose of conducting controlled buy/stings and follow-up-controlled buy/stings of tobacco permitted and e-cigarette retail outlets statewide.

Purpose of Funds:

TxSSC will make contracts to counties and municipalities to enable local law enforcement agencies to enforce Subchapter H, Chapter 161, Texas Health and Safety Code in a manner that can reasonably be expected to reduce the extent to which cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and tobacco products are illegally sold or distributed to persons who are younger than 21 years of age. TxSSC shall rely, to the fullest extent possible, on sheriffs, constables, or police departments to enforce this subchapter. Contract amounts will be contingent on the overall number of applications received, applicant's jurisdictional retail outlet density, and meeting goals for statewide coverage per Health and Human Services Regions.

Scope of Work:

Selected contractors providing services under this agreement will conduct on-site controlled buy/stings and follow-up-controlled buy/stings involving the use of minor decoys (i.e., "Stings"), record the controlled buy/sting information on the Cigarette, E-cigarette, and Tobacco Controlled Buy/Sting Report form, and submit monthly activity reports to TxSSC. **TxSSC will reimburse contracted law enforcement agencies \$125.00 for each completed controlled buy/sting conducted.** Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis throughout the fiscal year contingent on availability of funds. Contractors are responsible for obtaining the appropriate approvals from their governing body (city council or county commissioner's court) to accept the funds for implementation of contracted services on the contract start date.

Interested law enforcement agencies should contact the Texas School Safety Center.

Additionally, please view and share the following recruitment video:

<https://txssc.txstate.edu/about/programs/tep/>

Direct all questions regarding funding opportunities to:

Bea Pyle

Tobacco Enforcement Program Manager

(512) 245-0821

beapyle@txstate.edu

Jennifer Steele

Associate Director

(512) 245-8895

js42@txstate.edu

General FAQ

Tobacco Compliance Check Training

1. How do I access the Tobacco Compliance Check Training?
 - a. Released on the [TPT website](#): Provider Resources Tab → password: resources → Training title: Texas Tobacco Compliance Inspection Training
2. Who do I contact if I have questions regarding tobacco compliance checks?
 - a. Sarah Sanchez, PRC 7 Director- ssanchez@bvcasa.org
 - b. Brandy Green, Tobacco Compliance Coordinator- bgreen@bvcasa.org
 - c. Victoria Moreno, HHSC- victoria.moreno@hhs.texas.gov

Conducting Compliance Checks

1. Can I conduct a compliance check via phone, tablet, desktop, or paper?
 - a. Yes. Agencies should choose the option that's most conducive for them. The KOBO application can only be downloaded from the Google Playstore to Android devices. One can conduct the compliance check via their iPhone by logging into their KOBO account via a web browser (Safari, Chrome, Firefox, etc.). Lastly, agencies may provide their prevention specialists with paper copies of the TTCIF to complete in the field and upload electronically at a later time.
2. How many compliance checks am I required to complete?
 - a. Please refer to your HHSC contract for this measure.
3. How do I know what service area I am authorized to conduct compliance checks in?
 - a. Your assigned service area will be provided by your regional PRC.
4. Can I conduct compliance checks outside of the assigned service area?
 - a. No. Agencies should only conduct compliance checks within their assigned areas to avoid duplication and ensure accurate reporting.
5. When can I begin conducting compliance checks?
 - a. Providers can and should conduct compliance checks after they receive their assigned list.
 - b. Agencies should wait a minimum of 4 months before conducting a compliance check at a retailer that has recently received a permit to sell cigarettes or e-cigarette products. This allows the retailer time to receive their permit from the Texas Comptroller's Office.
6. Which compliance checks can I count?
 - a. Only successfully completed compliance checks may be counted. Any check in which you answer [“No”](#) to the question “Are you able to successfully conduct an inspection?” cannot be included in your final total.

7. If the retailer holds both an e-cigarette and a cigarette permit, does this count as two separate compliance checks?
 - a. No, this counts as one compliance check. Even if the retailer holds both permits, a single inspection at the location is recorded as one check.
8. Am I required to complete follow-up checks?
 - a. No, follow-up checks are not required. However, you may choose to conduct them, and they will count toward your final compliance check total.
9. Where must the permits and state-mandated warning signs be posted?
 - a. Permits must be visible and accessible to the public. State-mandated warning signs must be posted at the point-of-sale.
10. Where can I find an example of the state-mandated warning sign?
 - a. Please refer to the [Retailer Packet](#) for an example.
11. If the retailer does not have the most up-to-date state-mandated warning sign, can one be provided?
 - a. Yes. Agencies should order warning signs in advance of conducting compliance checks using the contact information provided below. If a sign is not immediately available, the retailer can be given the ordering information to obtain one themselves.
 - b. Toll Free- 800-862-2260
 - c. Austin- 512-463-3731
12. Do vending machines require a paper permit?
 - a. Yes, vending machines will have a metal permit attached to the machine along with a paper copy in the establishment's possession.
13. What is a mobile vendor?
 - a. Mobile vendors are those that sell cig/e-cig products from mobile locations such as trucks, cars, or carts.
14. Are mobile vendors required to store their cig/e-cig products and permit(s) in a secure space?
 - a. Yes, mobile vendors are required to sell cig/e-cig products from a "place of business," which is defined as a fixed, commercial location. A fixed, commercial location does not include their personal vehicle.
15. When conducting compliance checks, what can I provide retailers to increase legitimacy?
 - a. Provision of the updated [TPC Letter](#) or an HHSC business card can help reduce retailer pushback.

KOBO Toolbox

1. How do I upload the compliance checks to KOBO?
 - a. Please refer to Question 1 under the 'Conducting Compliance Checks' section.
2. How do I download data via the KOBO website?

- a. Refer to the [KOBO Data Walkthrough](#) document.
- 3. What if my compliance checks are not showing up in the KOBO system?
 - a. If you are conducting compliance checks using a tablet or phone, please pay close attention to the 'Finalized Draft' and 'Ready to Send' boxes. After completing a compliance check, the form may remain in the 'Finalized Draft' box and not yet be submitted. In this case, tap the 'Ready to Send' box, select all forms that need to be submitted, and send them to the KOBO system.
- 1. What additional information can I provide the retailer so they are aware of current tobacco/e-cigarette laws?
 - a. Refer to the [Retailer Handout](#). Retailers can utilize this handout as a personal checklist to ensure compliance.
 - b. The [Retailer Packet](#) can also be provided, which contains the same materials issued when a retailer receives their permit. The packet includes: HHSC Letter, Texas Comptroller Letter, Current Warning Sign (English & Spanish), Retail Employee Notification Form, & Yes Quit Informational Flyer.

Other Questions

- 1. If my organization or coalition does not typically conduct compliance checks, how can this information be used?
 - a. Agencies can use this information to collaborate with HHSC-funded providers to better understand tobacco-related activities in your area. The training packet also outlines [TEP](#) opportunities to coordinate with local law enforcement on implementing sting operations.