

## Trading Standards - Volunteering Opportunities for Young People

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It's against the law for shops to sell age restricted products to children who haven't reached the required age, as it presents real risks to their health or welfare. A trader can be prosecuted for making an illegal sale.

Birmingham City Council's Trading Standards team is always looking for volunteers aged from 14 to 16 years old to enter businesses and try to buy age restricted products. This helps us to check they are not breaking the law.

### What is an age restricted product?

The products below cannot be sold to anyone under the age of 18 years.

- Alcohol
- Fireworks
- Cigarettes and tobacco products (including lighter refills)
- E-Cigarettes
- Offensive weapons or knives



## What would I do as a volunteer?

Underage volunteers work with a team of officers to see what happens when they try to buy products, such as alcohol and tobacco from shops, off licences and pubs across Birmingham.

An officer will visit you and your parent/guardian at home to explain about the exercise, what is expected from you, and discuss safeguarding measures that are in place. Your parent or guardian will need to give written permission for you to take part. You won't be asked to work in areas where you might be recognised, as your safety and wellbeing is our priority.

When you're needed to take part in an exercise, we'll contact you in advance to check if you're available to help.

You'll be collected from home by officers on the day of the exercise and asked to enter shops to try to buy an age restricted product. Police officers are often asked to assist on the day as well. There will always be an officer who enters the premises first, and will observe while you try to make the purchase.

If you're questioned by the trader, you'll tell them your real age and if this results in them refusing to sell you the product then you will leave the premises. The officer in the premises will then speak to the trader and explain what took place.

There will be times when the trader sells the product to a volunteer. If this happens, you'll simply pay for it and leave the premises. The rest will be dealt with by the officers who will speak to the trader.

Lunch and refreshments will be provided and, once the exercise is complete, you will be dropped back off at home. We'll also give you a certificate for taking part and helping Trading Standards.

## How can I sign up?

If you'd like to help make the community a better place and gain valuable experience for the future, please sign up by contacting us via email:

[tradingstandards@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@birmingham.gov.uk)

To find out more about Trading Standards visit:

[www.birmingham.gov.uk/tradingstandards](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/tradingstandards)

## Useful Contacts

To report allegations of age restricted sales to children, call the **Citizens Advice Consumer Service**. They will pass the details to Trading Standards.

**Tel:** 0345 404 0506

### **Birmingham City Council - Environmental Health**

**Tel:** 0121 303 6007

**Website:** [www.birmingham.gov.uk/eh](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/eh)

### **NHS Choices**

**Website:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### **West Midlands Police**

**Tel:** 0121 0345 113 5000

**Website:** [www.west-midlands.police.uk](http://www.west-midlands.police.uk)

### **West Midlands Fire Service**

**Tel:** 0845 5000 900

**Website:** [www.wmfs.net](http://www.wmfs.net)