

# Minimum Age To Buy Tobacco Now 21 In Massachusetts

 [boston.cbslocal.com/2018/12/31/massachusetts-tobacco-age-law](https://www.boston.cbslocal.com/2018/12/31/massachusetts-tobacco-age-law)

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STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, DEC. 31, 2018 ([State House News Service](#)) – Nearly 14 years after Needham became the first town in the country to ban tobacco sales to people under 21, the higher purchase age for cigarettes and other tobacco products will kick in across the state on Monday.

Gov. Charlie Baker in July signed a bill imposing new restrictions on tobacco products in Massachusetts, with an effective date of Dec. 31, 2018.

Along with raising the minimum age for buying tobacco products from its current 18, the law prohibits the sale of tobacco products by pharmacies and bans the use of e-cigarettes in places where state law already prohibits smoking.

The use of tobacco products including e-cigarettes will also be prohibited on the grounds of any public or private primary, secondary, or vocational school.

In a letter Thursday, Patricia Henley of the Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Control Program advised licensed pharmacies of the [new law](#), informing them that as of Monday health care institutions in Massachusetts will no longer be allowed to sell “tobacco products, including e-cigarettes or other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization.”

“FDA-approved tobacco cessation products are exempted from this prohibition if they are marketed and sold exclusively for the approved purchase,” Henley wrote.

The definition of “health care institution” under the law “includes any larger retail space, including a department store or supermarket that has a pharmacy located within it,” the letter said.

The Department of Public Health on Monday plans to issue a reminder letter to retailers with information about the law and its new signage requirements. Local boards of health were notified in September of the law changes.

People who turn 18 before Monday will still be able to buy cigarettes and other tobacco products once the higher age takes effect, unless they’re in a municipality that has imposed a higher age limit at the local level.

Beginning with Needham in 2005, at least 194 cities and towns across Massachusetts, from Acton to Yarmouth and from Great Barrington to Gloucester, have locally raised their tobacco age to 21, according to the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids.

Massachusetts was the sixth state to push its tobacco age to 21, joining California, Hawaii, New Jersey, Maine and Oregon, along with Washington D.C.

