

Lancashire County Council

Working together to keep young people safe

Guide to storing, displaying and selling knives

Acceptable forms of ID:

- Cards bearing the PASS hologram
- Photographic Driving licence
- Passport



CHECK
25



www.lancashire.gov.uk

Lancashire
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Council



A question before we start....

Does your business need to sell knives? Some businesses do. If you sell hardware or kitchenware, you may need to.

However, if you don't have a clear business need to sell them, or your profit from these sales is less than the costs of the additional training and other precautions we recommend before you can sell knives safely, then please stop selling them.

If you don't sell knives, you cannot break the law by making an underage sale or risk feeling guilty if a knife sold by you was used in a serious incident.

Storing knives safely

Responsible retailers will ensure that knives are stored and displayed safely in their shops. This means preventing customers from accessing knives without the assistance of a member of staff to prevent theft and to prevent staff from easily selling to someone under age.

This can be achieved by:

- Keeping the knives in a locked display cabinet
- Displaying knives behind the counter, out of reach of customers
- Keeping them entirely out of sight – under the counter or in a store room (you could use pictures or signs to advertise the fact that knives are available)
- Selling knives contained in tamperproof packaging which cannot be opened without using another tool.
- Add security tags to packaging as an additional deterrent.

Selling knives safely

It is against the law to sell to anyone who is under 18, but businesses should also never sell if they have concerns about how the buyer may use the item. Remember – the law is on your side: businesses do not have to sell goods to anyone if they don't want to.

Avoiding underage sales

The best way to avoid underage sales is to train and monitor your staff to ensure that they follow a process called

ASSESS-CHALLENGE-CHECK

ASSESS the age of all customers buying knives (or any other age restricted goods)

CHALLENGE anyone the seller thinks is under 25 for proof of age - a rule known as 'Challenge 25'

CHECK the ID offered, carefully, to ensure the customer is over 18.

Training staff in **ASSESS-CHALLENGE-CHECK** effectively is much more than telling them what to do – you have to explain why each step is important and how to do it. Giving instructions to staff is not enough on its own – you have to be confident that they are able to follow them and monitor to ensure they do.

Assessing age is something that most people are not as good at as they think they are – particularly when assessing females or people of different ethnicities to their own.

The Challenge 25 process will give you and your staff a larger margin of error which will ensure they do not sell to underage customers.

You should insist your staff use this rule to overcome the difficulty of assessing age - and to make sure there is a consistent approach adopted by you and your staff to anyone purchasing any age related products who does not appear to be 25 years old.

Some employees will find it difficult to challenge effectively – especially if they are not confident or fear a bad reaction. Practice with them and monitor how they do it.





Make it easy for staff to challenge by displaying a 'Check 25' poster at the counter and in a location near to any knives or bladed articles you sell that they can refer the customer to as they ask for proof of age – it makes it easier if staff can show they are required to ask by law.

You and your staff should only ever ask for a customer's ID, don't ask a customer their age. Always ask the customer to hand their ID to you or your staff to check properly.

A refusal to do so will mean "No Sale"
Valid proof of ID;

- Passport
- Driving Licence
- A "PASS" card

Make sure it's the same person shown on the document, check the photograph and date of birth and make sure it's not a fake, if you or your staff have any doubt it will be a "No Sale"

Training and training records

Staff must be trained before they are allowed to serve customers. Methods that can be used to train staff to avoid underage sales can vary, but it is unlikely that verbal training will be sufficient on its own. The following can also be used:

Supervision – You could watch a member of staff closely as they serve customers until you are satisfied they are following the ASSESSCHALLENGE-CHECK process properly

Training animations – It is highly recommended that you require staff to watch the training animations that can be found at www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancan/check-25/SaleofKnives

Watching these can be an effective way to understand key messages

Written summary – It is important that you give the trainee something in writing – such as a training checklist – which they sign to say that they have read and understood the training. This protects the business if the trainee makes an underage sale.

Send them on an external training course

Staff should receive **refresher training** a few weeks after they have first been trained and then periodically – we recommend every six months – until they leave your employment.

Refresher training reinforces the key messages of the training and allows you to satisfy yourself that staff have remembered and understood them. Training records should be kept for each member of staff, detailing the initial training and the refresher training received. It should detail the person giving the training, how and when it was given and be signed by the trainee. You can download training forms at www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancan/check-25/SaleofKnives

Reminders do not need to be recorded on the training record, but should be given daily: the more you mention the need to avoid underage sales, the more important it will seem to staff.

You can remind staff by:

- keeping and checking refusals records (if your business keeps them)
- giving feedback to staff you have seen serve a young customer
- using till prompts if you have an electronic till
- displaying posters where the knives are kept and adding warning stickers to the knife packaging

Refusals records

Keeping a record of refusals to sell is good practice. Refusals can be recorded in any format, but the date and time, the reason for refusal and the person refusing should be entered, along with a brief description of the person attempting to purchase the product. Download Refusals Record at www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancan/check-25/SaleofKnives

If you have a CCTV in store evidence of your challenge will be recorded on the system.

You can also ask staff to record every time they CHALLENGE a customer for ID. This can be a good idea for new employees, or for those who don't appear to make many refusals, at least until you are comfortable that they are getting it right.

Sharing information and intelligence about criminal activity

Sharing information about crime or suspicious behaviour with other businesses and the police can help protect your business and keep your community safe.

Joining a business partnership can help you to reduce shoplifting and anti-social behaviour, as well as theft from your customers. There are many business partnership schemes across Lancashire.

NEED DETAILS

How do I report a crime and contact the police?

In an emergency call **999**

If you want to tell us something or report an incident that is not an emergency, use our online reporting tool.

NEED DETAILS

If you want to stay anonymous you can contact Crimestoppers:
www.crimestoppers-uk.org by phone **0800 555 111**.

Find out about your Safer Neighbourhoods Team

NEED DETAILS

