



VISALIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

April 15, 2023

ABC Cites Clerks for Selling Alcohol to Minors

Agents of the California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) and Visalia Police Department ABC Officers have cited 2 clerks for selling alcohol to minors on 04/15/2023. The actions were the result of a minor decoy operation in which minors under the direct supervision of department agents attempted to purchase alcohol from 15 retail licensees in the City of Visalia.

Those who sold to the minor face a minimum fine of \$250, and/or 24 to 32 hours of community service for a first violation. In addition, ABC may take administrative action against the alcoholic beverage license of the business where alcohol was sold to a minor. That may include a fine, a suspension of the license, or the permanent revocation of the license.

ABC is conducting compliance checks statewide to reduce the availability of alcohol to minors. Statistics have shown that young people under the age of 21 have a higher rate of drunken driving fatalities than the general adult population.

"Minor Decoy operations hold accountable those who sell alcohol to minors," said ABC Director Eric Hirata. "Keeping alcohol away from youth is a priority."

Minor Decoy operations have been conducted by local law enforcement throughout the state since the 1980's. When the program first began, the violation rate of retail establishments selling to minors was as high as 40 to 50 percent. When conducted on a routine basis, the rate has dropped in some cities as low as 10 percent or even below. In 1994, the California Supreme Court ruled unanimously that the use of underage decoys is a valid tool of law enforcement to ensure that licensees are complying with the law.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

ABC encourages licensees to sign up for ABC's Licensee Education on Alcohol and Drugs (LEAD) training free of charge. Licensees and their employees can [take the training online](#). They can also sign up for training in person in a classroom setting. To learn more about ABC enforcement and prevention programs that help increase public safety visit [Enforcement programs](#) and [Prevention programs](#).

