



VISALIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

January 28, 2025

DOJ Grant Helps VPD Officers Crack Down on Tobacco Sales to Minors.

Today, January 28, 2025, Visalia PD officers conducted a tobacco decoy operation to determine if businesses in the city were selling tobacco products to minors. Under the supervision of officers, minor decoys attempted to purchase tobacco products at various stores. Four businesses were cited for selling tobacco to a minor during the operation.

The Visalia Police Department, in partnership with the California State Department of Justice, is committed to protecting children by preventing tobacco and nicotine addiction. Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death, killing over 480 thousand people in the United States annually. Nearly nine in ten daily smokers start smoking before the age of 18.

In an effort to combat underage smoking, the Visalia Police Department will be holding a series of tobacco decoy and compliance inspections throughout the year to ensure businesses are complying with state law. Retailers found in violation can face misdemeanor charges or fines up to \$1,000.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California State Department of Justice.

