

NEWS RELEASE

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ALCOHOL COMPLIANCE CHECKS SLATED FOR SUMMER

JACKSON, Michigan (July 31, 2015) – Area law enforcement agencies, in partnership with the Jackson County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (JCSAPC), are conducting alcohol compliance checks this summer to make sure retailers aren't selling alcohol to minors. Vendors, both restaurants and retail stores, may be included in these checks.

"When things get busy at a store's checkout counter, it's easy for the cashier to forget to verify if a person is buying alcohol legally," said Matthew Heins, Director of Police and Fire Services, Jackson Police Department. "We do compliance checks both to remind retailers of the law and to enforce it where necessary. Our goal is to keep alcohol out of the hands of minors, helping keep them safe and our community secure."

Heins – "We want to partner with the stores to ensure they have the tools and knowledge necessary to address the issue of selling to minors so we can reach our goal of 100% compliance."

A compliance check works like this: An underage individual, under supervision of a law enforcement officer, attempts to buy alcohol at a retail business. If the employee making the sale doesn't verify the person's age, and therefore sells to a minor, both the employee and the business will be cited in accordance with the Michigan Liquor Control Code of 1998. Selling to minors is a misdemeanor, results in monetary fines and possibly loss of the retailer's liquor license.

Director Heins said the compliance checks aren't intended to trap retailers, but to encourage them to make sure that employees know and follow the law. "We announce these checks ahead of time so retailers can train their employees to verify the age of people purchasing alcohol," he said.

Funding for the compliance checks is provided through a grant from the Drug Free Communities Support Program. In addition, JCSAPC provides free education to retailers, training half of all alcohol vendors in Jackson County each year on how to educate employees, proper signage and how to identify illegal sales.

About JCSAPC

The Jackson County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition works to reduce youth and adult substance use/abuse by building community capacity and supporting substance abuse prevention, early intervention and treatment through recovery oriented systems. The vision of JCSAPC is to have a safe and healthy community free of substance abuse. For more information please contact Ravenn Moore at (517) 796-5133 or via email at rmoores@uwjackson.org.

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