

Act No. 474
Public Acts of 2004
Approved by the Governor
December 21, 2004
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December 28, 2004
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**STATE OF MICHIGAN
92ND LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2004**

Introduced by Rep. Julian

ENROLLED HOUSE BILL No. 5668

AN ACT to amend 1993 PA 327, entitled "An act to provide for a tax upon the sale and distribution of tobacco products; to regulate and license manufacturers, wholesalers, secondary wholesalers, vending machine operators, unclassified acquirers, transportation companies, transporters, and retailers of tobacco products; to prescribe the powers and duties of the revenue division and the department of treasury in regard to tobacco products; to provide for the administration, collection, and disposition of the tax; to levy an assessment; to provide for the administration, collection, defense, and disposition of the assessment; to provide for the enforcement of this act; to provide for the appointment of special investigators as peace officers for the enforcement of this act; to prescribe penalties and provide remedies for the violation of this act; and to repeal acts and parts of acts," by amending sections 2, 8, 9, and 11 (MCL 205.422, 205.428, 205.429, and 205.431), sections 2, 8, and 9 as amended by 1997 PA 187.

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

Sec. 2. As used in this act:

(a) "Cigarette" means a roll for smoking made wholly or in part of tobacco, irrespective of size or shape and irrespective of the tobacco being flavored, adulterated, or mixed with any other ingredient, which roll has a wrapper or cover made of paper or any other material. Cigarette does not include cigars.

(b) "Commissioner" means the state treasurer.

(c) "Counterfeit cigarette" means a cigarette in an individual package of cigarettes or other container with a false manufacturing label or a cigarette in an individual package of cigarettes or other container with a counterfeit stamp.

(d) "Counterfeit stamp" means any stamp, label, or print, indicium, or character, that evidences, or purports to evidence, the payment of any tax levied under this act and that has not been printed, manufactured, or made by authority of the department as provided in this act and has not been issued, sold, or circulated by the department.

(e) "Department" means the department of treasury.

(f) "Financially sound" means a determination by the department that the wholesaler or unclassified acquirer is able to pay for its stamps in the ordinary course of business based on criteria including, but not limited to, all of the following:

(i) Past filing and payment history with the department.

(ii) Outstanding liabilities.

(iii) Review of current financial statements including, but not limited to, balance sheets and income statements.

(iv) Duration that the wholesaler or unclassified acquirer has been licensed under this act.

(g) "Individual package" means an individual packet or pack used to contain or to convey cigarettes to the consumer. Individual package does not include cartons, cases, or shipping or storage containers that contain smaller packaging units of cigarettes.

(h) "Licensee" means a person licensed under this act.

(i) "Manufacturer" means a person who manufactures or produces a tobacco product.

(j) "Noncigarette smoking tobacco" means tobacco sold in loose or bulk form that is intended for consumption by smoking and includes roll-your-own cigarette tobacco.

(k) "Person" means an individual, partnership, fiduciary, association, limited liability company, corporation, or other legal entity.

(l) "Place of business" means a place where a tobacco product is sold or where a tobacco product is brought or kept for the purpose of sale or consumption, including a vessel, airplane, train, or vending machine.

(m) "Retailer" means a person other than a transportation company who operates a place of business for the purpose of making sales of a tobacco product at retail.

(n) "Sale" means a transaction by which the ownership of tangible personal property is transferred for consideration and applies also to use, gifts, exchanges, barter, and theft.

(o) "Secondary wholesaler" means a person who sells a tobacco product for resale, who purchases a tobacco product from a wholesaler or unclassified acquirer licensed under this act, and who maintains an established place of business in this state where a substantial portion of the business is the sale of tobacco products and related merchandise at wholesale, and where at all times a substantial stock of tobacco products and related merchandise is available to retailers for resale.

(p) "Smokeless tobacco" means snuff, chewing tobacco, and any other tobacco that is intended to be consumed by means other than smoking.

(q) "Stamp" means a distinctive character, indication, or mark, as determined by the department, attached or affixed to an individual package of cigarettes by mechanical device or other means authorized by the department to indicate that the tax imposed under this act has been paid.

(r) "Stamping agent" means a wholesaler or unclassified acquirer other than a manufacturer who is licensed and authorized by the department to affix stamps to individual packages of cigarettes on behalf of themselves and other wholesalers or unclassified acquirers other than manufacturers.

(s) "Tobacco product" means cigarettes, cigars, noncigarette smoking tobacco, or smokeless tobacco.

(t) "Transportation company" means a person operating, or supplying to common carriers, cars, boats, or other vehicles for the transportation or accommodation of passengers and engaged in the sale of a tobacco product at retail.

(u) "Transporter" means a person importing or transporting into this state, or transporting in this state, a tobacco product obtained from a source located outside this state, or from any person not duly licensed under this act. Transporter does not include an interstate commerce carrier licensed by the interstate commerce commission to carry commodities in interstate commerce, or a licensee maintaining a warehouse or place of business outside of this state if the warehouse or place of business is licensed under this act.

(v) "Unclassified acquirer" means a person, except a transportation company or a purchaser at retail from a retailer licensed under the general sales tax act, 1933 PA 167, MCL 205.51 to 205.78, who imports or acquires a tobacco product from a source other than a wholesaler or secondary wholesaler licensed under this act for use, sale, or distribution. Unclassified acquirer also means a person who receives cigars, noncigarette smoking tobacco, or smokeless tobacco directly from a manufacturer licensed under this act or from another source outside this state, which source is not licensed under this act. An unclassified acquirer does not include a wholesaler.

(w) "Vending machine operator" means a person who operates 1 or more vending machines for the sale of a tobacco product and who purchases a tobacco product from a manufacturer, licensed wholesaler, or secondary wholesaler.

(x) "Wholesale price" means the actual price paid for a tobacco product, including any tax, by a wholesaler or unclassified acquirer to a manufacturer, excluding any discounts or reductions.

(y) "Wholesaler" means a person who purchases all or part of his or her tobacco products from a manufacturer, who sells 75% or more of those tobacco products to others for resale, and who maintains an established business where substantially all of the business is the sale of tobacco products or cigarettes and related merchandise at wholesale and where at all times a substantial stock of tobacco products and related merchandise is available to retailers for resale. Wholesaler includes a chain of stores retailing a tobacco product to the consumer if 75% of its stock of tobacco products is purchased directly from the manufacturer.

Sec. 8. (1) A person, other than a licensee, who is in control or in possession of a tobacco product contrary to this act, who after August 31, 1998 is in control or in possession of an individual package of cigarettes without a stamp in violation of this act, or who offers to sell or does sell a tobacco product to another for purposes of resale without being licensed to do so under this act, shall be personally liable for the tax imposed by this act, plus a penalty of 500% of the amount of tax due under this act.

(2) The department may permit a representative of a licensed manufacturer of tobacco products whose duties require travel in this state to transport up to 138,000 cigarettes, of which not more than 36,000 cigarettes may bear no tax indicia or the tax indicia of another state. All 138,000 cigarettes must bear the stamp approved by the department or the tax indicia of another state, if any. The total value of tobacco products, excluding cigarettes, carried by a representative shall not exceed a wholesale value of \$5,000.00. A manufacturer shall notify the department of the manufacturer's representatives that it currently employs who carry cigarettes or tobacco products other than cigarettes in performing work duties in this state. The manufacturer shall maintain a record of each transaction by the manufacturer's representative for a period of 4 years immediately following the transaction and shall produce the records upon request of the state treasurer or the state treasurer's authorized agent. Each record shall identify the quantity and identity of the tobacco products, detail whether exchanged, received, removed, or otherwise disposed of and the identity of the retailer, wholesaler, secondary wholesaler, vending machine operator, or unclassified acquirer involved. The representative of the manufacturer shall provide a copy of the record to the retailer, wholesaler, secondary wholesaler, vending machine operator, or unclassified acquirer at the time of the exchange or disposal. The retailer, wholesaler, secondary wholesaler, vending machine operator, or unclassified acquirer shall retain the copy of the record in the same place and for the same time period as other records required by this section. A representative shall not exchange, or otherwise dispose of, within this state tobacco products bearing the tax indicia of another state or receive tobacco products bearing the tax indicia of another state from retailers located within this state. A representative who sells, exchanges, or otherwise disposes of cigarettes or tobacco products other than cigarettes that do not bear the stamp or other marking required by the department or sells, exchanges, or otherwise disposes of cigarettes or tobacco products other than cigarettes bearing the tax indicia of another state is guilty of a felony, punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000.00 or imprisonment for not more than 5 years, or both.

(3) A person who possesses, acquires, transports, or offers for sale contrary to this act 3,000 or more cigarettes, tobacco products other than cigarettes with an aggregate wholesale price of \$250.00 or more, or 3,000 or more counterfeit cigarettes is guilty of a felony, punishable by a fine of not more than \$50,000.00 or imprisonment for not more than 5 years, or both.

(4) A person who possesses, acquires, transports, or offers for sale contrary to this act 1,200 or more, but not more than 2,999, cigarettes, tobacco products other than cigarettes with an aggregate wholesale value of \$100.00 or more but less than \$250.00, or 1,200 or more, but not more than 2,999, counterfeit cigarettes, is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000.00 or imprisonment of not more than 1 year, or both.

(5) A person who violates a provision of this act for which a criminal punishment is not otherwise provided is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of not more than \$1,000.00 or 5 times the retail value of the tobacco products involved, whichever is greater, or imprisonment for not more than 1 year, or both.

(6) A person who manufactures, possesses, or uses a stamp or manufactures, possesses, or uses a counterfeit stamp or writing or device intended to replicate a stamp without authorization of the department, a licensee who purchases or obtains a stamp from any person other than the department, or who falsifies a manufacturer's label on cigarettes or counterfeit cigarettes, is guilty of a felony and shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than 1 year or more than 10 years and may be punished by a fine of not more than \$50,000.00.

(7) A person who falsely makes, counterfeits, or alters a license, vending machine disc, or marker, or who purchases or receives a false or altered license, vending machine disc, or marker, or who assists in or causes to be made a false or altered license, vending machine disc, or marker, or who possesses a device used to forge, alter, or counterfeit a license, vending machine disc, or marker is guilty of a felony punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000.00 or imprisonment for not more than 5 years, or both. A person who alters or falsifies records or markings required under this act is guilty of a felony punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000.00 or imprisonment for not more than 5 years, or both.

(8) The attorney general has concurrent power with the prosecuting attorneys of the state to enforce this act.

(9) At the request of the department or its duly authorized agent, the state police and all local police authorities shall enforce the provisions of this act.

Sec. 9. (1) A tobacco product held, owned, possessed, transported, or in control of a person in violation of this act, and a vending machine, vehicle, and other tangible personal property containing a tobacco product in violation of this act and any related books and records are contraband and may be seized and confiscated by the department as provided in this section.

(2) If an authorized inspector of the department or a police officer has reasonable cause to believe and does believe that a tobacco product is being acquired, possessed, transported, kept, sold, or offered for sale in violation of this act for which the penalty is a felony, the inspector or police officer may investigate or search the vehicle of transportation in which the tobacco product is believed to be located. If a tobacco product is found in a vehicle searched under this subsection or in a place of business inspected under this act, the tobacco product, vending machine, vehicle, other than a vehicle owned or operated by a transportation company otherwise transporting tobacco products in compliance with this act, or other tangible personal property containing those tobacco products and any books and records in possession of the person in control or possession of the tobacco product may be seized by the inspector or police officer and are subject to forfeiture as contraband as provided in this section.

(3) As soon as possible, but not more than 5 business days after seizure of any alleged contraband, the person making the seizure shall deliver personally or by registered mail to the last known address of the person from whom the seizure was made, if known, an inventory statement of the property seized. A copy of the inventory statement shall also be filed with the state treasurer. The inventory statement shall also contain a notice to the effect that unless demand for hearing as provided in this section is made within 10 business days, the designated property is forfeited to the state. If the person from whom the seizure was made is not known, the person making the seizure shall cause a copy of the inventory statement, together with the notice provided for in this subsection, to be published at least 3 times in a newspaper of general circulation in the county where the seizure was made. Within 10 business days after the date of service of the inventory statement, or in the case of publication, within 10 business days after the date of last publication, the person from whom the property was seized or any person claiming an interest in the property may by registered mail, facsimile transmission, or personal service file with the state treasurer a demand for a hearing before the state treasurer or a person designated by the state treasurer for a determination as to whether the property was lawfully subject to seizure and forfeiture. The person shall verify a request for hearing filed by facsimile transmission by also providing a copy of the original request for hearing by registered mail or personal service. The person or persons are entitled to appear before the department, to be represented by counsel, and to present testimony and argument. Upon receipt of a request for hearing, the department shall hold the hearing within 15 business days. The hearing is not a contested case proceeding and is not subject to the administrative procedures act of 1969, 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.201 to 24.328. After the hearing, the department shall render its decision in writing within 10 business days of the hearing and, by order, shall either declare the seized property subject to seizure and forfeiture, or declare the property returnable in whole or in part to the person entitled to possession. If, within 10 business days after the date of service of the inventory statement, the person from whom the property was seized or any person claiming an interest in the property does not file with the state treasurer a demand for a hearing before the department, the property seized shall be considered forfeited to the state by operation of law and may be disposed of by the department as provided in this section. If, after a hearing before the state treasurer or person designated by the state treasurer, the department determines that the property is lawfully subject to seizure and forfeiture and the person from whom the property was seized or any persons claiming an interest in the property do not take an appeal to the circuit court of the county in which the seizure was made within the time prescribed in this section, the property seized shall be considered forfeited to the state by operation of law and may be disposed of by the department as provided in this section.

(4) If a person is aggrieved by the decision of the department, that person may appeal to the circuit court of the county where the seizure was made to obtain a judicial determination of the lawfulness of the seizure and forfeiture. The action shall be commenced within 20 days after notice of the department's determination is sent to the person or persons claiming an interest in the seized property. The court shall hear the action and determine the issues of fact and law involved in accordance with rules of practice and procedure as in other in rem proceedings. If a judicial determination of the lawfulness of the seizure and forfeiture cannot be made before deterioration of any of the property seized, the court shall order the destruction or sale of the property with public notice as determined by the court and require the proceeds to be deposited with the court until the lawfulness of the seizure and forfeiture is finally adjudicated.

(5) The department shall destroy all cigarettes forfeited to this state. The department may sell all tobacco products, except cigarettes, and other property forfeited pursuant to this section at public sale. Public notice of the sale shall be given at least 5 days before the day of sale. The department may pay an amount not to exceed 25% of the proceeds of the sale to the local governmental unit whose law enforcement agency performed the seizure. The balance of the proceeds derived from the sale by the department shall be credited to the general fund of the state.

(6) The seizure and destruction or sale of a tobacco product or other property under this section does not relieve a person from a fine, imprisonment, or other penalty for violation of this act.

(7) A person who is not an employee or officer of this state or a political subdivision of this state who furnishes to the department or to any law enforcement agency original information concerning a violation of this act, which information results in the collection and recovery of any tax or penalty or leads to the forfeiture of any cigarettes, or other property, may be awarded and paid by the state treasurer, compensation of not more than 10% of the net amount received from the sale of any forfeited cigarettes or other property, but not to exceed \$5,000.00 which shall be paid out of the receipts from the sale of the property. If any amount is issued to the local governmental unit under subsection (5), the amount awarded under this subsection to a person who provides original information that results in a seizure of cigarettes or other property by a local law enforcement agency shall be paid from that amount issued under subsection (5). If in the opinion of the attorney general and the director of the department of state police it is deemed necessary to preserve the identity of the person furnishing the information, the attorney general and the director of the department of state police shall file with the state treasurer an affidavit setting forth that necessity and a warrant may be issued jointly to the attorney general and the director of the department of state police. Upon payment to the person furnishing that information, the attorney general and the director of the department of state police shall file with the state treasurer an affidavit that the money has been by them paid to the person entitled to the money under this section.

(8) Beginning September 1, 1998, if a retailer possesses or sells cigarettes on which the tax imposed under this act has not been paid or accrued to a wholesaler, secondary wholesaler, or unclassified acquirer licensed under this act, the retailer shall be prohibited from purchasing, possessing, or selling any cigarettes or other tobacco products as follows:

(a) For a first violation, for a period of not more than 6 months.

(b) For a second violation within a period of 5 years, for a period of at least 6 months and not more than 36 months.

(c) For a third or subsequent violation within a period of 5 years, for a period of at least 1 year and not more than 5 years.

(9) The prohibition described in subsection (8) shall be effective upon service by certified mail or personal service on the retailer of notice issued by the department ordering the retailer to cease all sales and purchases of cigarettes and other tobacco products. Upon receipt of this notice, the retailer may return any tobacco products in the possession of the retailer upon which the tax imposed by this act has been paid or accrued to a wholesaler, secondary wholesaler, or unclassified acquirer licensed under this act. The department shall notify all licensed wholesalers, manufacturers, secondary wholesalers, vending machine operators, and unclassified acquirers of any retailer who has been prohibited from purchasing cigarettes or other tobacco products and the duration of the prohibition. A wholesaler, secondary wholesaler, or unclassified acquirer shall not sell cigarettes or other tobacco products to a retailer after receipt of notice from the department that the retailer is prohibited from purchasing tobacco products. Any cigarettes or other tobacco products found on the premises of the retailer during the period of prohibition shall be considered contraband and subject to seizure under this section, and shall constitute an additional improper possession under this subsection. The retailer may contest the order prohibiting purchase, possession, or sale of tobacco products in accordance with the appeal procedures and time limits provided in subsection (3) of this section. After completion of the appeals provided or upon expiration of the period to request such appeal, the department shall issue a final order and make service upon the retailer of an order to cease all purchases, possession, and sale of all cigarettes and other tobacco products for a specified period as appropriate. This order does not relieve the retailer from seizure and sale of a tobacco product or other property under this section, or relieve the retailer from a fine, imprisonment, or other penalty for violation of this act.

Sec. 11. (1) A person, either as principal or agent, shall not sell or solicit a sale of a tobacco product to be shipped, mailed, or otherwise sent or brought into the state, to a person not a licensed manufacturer, licensed wholesaler, licensed secondary wholesaler, licensed vending machine operator, licensed unclassified acquirer, licensed transporter, or licensed transportation company, unless the tobacco product is to be sold to or through a licensed wholesaler.

(2) All sales conducted through the internet, by telephone, or in a mail-order transaction shall not be completed unless, before each delivery of cigarettes is made, whether through the mail, through a transportation company, or through any other delivery system, the seller has obtained from the purchaser an affirmation that includes a copy of a valid government-issued document that confirms the purchaser's name, address, and date of birth showing that the purchaser is at least the legal minimum age to purchase cigarettes; that the cigarettes purchased are not intended for consumption by an individual who is younger than the legal minimum age to purchase cigarettes; and a written statement signed by the purchaser that affirms the purchaser's address and that the purchaser is at least the minimum legal age to purchase cigarettes. The statement shall also confirm that the purchaser understands that signing another person's name to the affirmation is illegal; that the sale of cigarettes to individuals under the legal minimum purchase age is illegal; and that the purchase of cigarettes by individuals under the legal minimum purchase age is illegal under the laws of the state of Michigan. The seller shall verify the information contained in the affirmation provided by the purchaser against a commercially available database of governmental records, or obtain a photocopy, fax copy, or other image of the valid, government-issued identification stating the date of birth or age of the purchaser.

(3) All invoices, bills of lading, sales receipts, or other documents related to cigarette sales conducted through the internet, by telephone, or in a mail-order transaction shall contain the current seller's valid Michigan sales tax registration number, business name and address of the seller, and a statement as to whether all sales taxes and taxes levied under this act have been paid. All packages of cigarettes shipped from a cigarette seller to purchasers who reside in Michigan shall clearly print or stamp the package with the word "CIGARETTES" on the outside of all sides of the package so it is clearly visible to the shipper. In addition, the package shall contain an externally visible and clearly legible notice located on the same side of the package as the address to which the package is delivered, as follows:

"IF THESE CIGARETTES HAVE BEEN SHIPPED TO YOU FROM A SELLER LOCATED OUTSIDE OF THE STATE IN WHICH YOU RESIDE, THE SELLER HAS REPORTED UNDER FEDERAL LAW THE SALE OF THESE CIGARETTES TO OUR STATE TAX COLLECTION AGENCY, INCLUDING YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS. YOU ARE LEGALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL APPLICABLE UNPAID STATE TAXES ON THESE CIGARETTES."

If an order is made as a result of advertisement over the internet, the tobacco retailer shall request the electronic mail address of the purchaser and shall receive payment by credit card or check before shipping. This subsection and subsection (2) do not apply to sales by wholesalers and unclassified acquirers.

(4) The deliverer of the cigarettes is required to obtain proof from a valid government-issued document that the person signing for the cigarettes is the purchaser.

(5) As used in this section:

(a) "Computer" means any connected, directly interoperable or interactive device, equipment, or facility that uses a computer program or other instructions to perform specific operations, including logical, arithmetic, or memory functions with or on computer data or a computer program, and that can store, retrieve, alter, or communicate the results of the operations to a person, computer program, computer, computer system, or computer network.

(b) "Computer network" means the interconnection of hardwire or wireless communication lines with a computer through remote terminals or a complex consisting of 2 or more interconnected computers.

(c) "Computer program" means a series of internal or external instructions communicated in a form acceptable to a computer that directs the functioning of a computer, computer system, or computer network in a manner designed to provide or produce products or results from the computer, computer system, or computer network.

(d) "Computer system" means related, connected or unconnected, computer equipment, devices, software, or hardware.

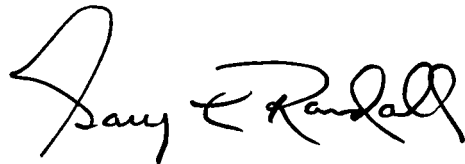
(e) "Credit card" means a card or device issued by a person licensed under 1984 PA 379, MCL 493.101 to 493.114, or under the consumer financial services act, 1988 PA 161, MCL 487.2051 to 487.2072, or issued by a depository financial institution as defined in section 1a of the mortgage brokers, lenders, and services licensing act, 1987 PA 173, MCL 445.1651a, under a credit card arrangement.

(f) "Device" includes, but is not limited to, an electronic, magnetic, electrochemical, biochemical, hydraulic, optical, or organic object that performs input, output, or storage functions by the manipulation of electronic, magnetic, or other impulses.

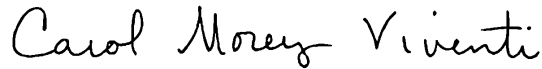
(g) "Internet" means the connection to the world wide web through the use of a computer, a computer network, or a computer system.

(h) "Sale conducted through the internet" means a sale of, a solicitation to sell, a purchase of, or an offer to purchase cigarettes conducted all or in part by accessing an internet website.

This act is ordered to take immediate effect.



Clerk of the House of Representatives



Secretary of the Senate

Approved

Governor