



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE
14 NOVEMBER 2017**

HSA PROSECUTES SELLER WHO SOLD TOBACCO TO A MINOR BUT DENIED HIS ACTIONS, AND SUSPENDS LICENCES OF FIVE OTHER RETAILERS

Retail Licences Suspended

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) has suspended the tobacco retail licences of five errant tobacco retailers who sold cigarettes to minors under 18 years of age. Their licences were suspended between August and October this year. They were caught via HSA's ground surveillance and enforcement activities to deter the illegal sale of tobacco products to under-18 minors. (Please refer to Annex A for the list of retailers and photos.)

2 These five sellers did not ask for any identification to check the buyers' age. They had claimed that they were busy or that the minors looked older than they were. Sellers take the risk of contravening the laws if they assess age by mere physical appearance of the buyer.

3 All five outlets were caught selling cigarettes to under-18 minors for the first time. The outlets are Prime City at 123 Bedok North Street 2, Tai Wonderful at 49 Stirling Road, Hock Siang Cheng Joss Sticks Trading Enterprise at 548 Woodlands Drive 44, Yi Cheng Department Store at 477 Pasir Ris Drive 6 and 7-Eleven located at 744 Bedok Reservoir Road. The suspension prohibits the errant retailers from selling tobacco products for six months.

Another Retailer Prosecuted and Fined

4 During HSA's routine surveillance, our officers observed that Vaithilingam Pazhanisamy, a retailer who was then operating Sri Mahalakshmi Store Pte Ltd, at Block 531 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 10 had sold tobacco to a minor in his school's PE attire in end-2016. While the retailer denied that he sold cigarettes to the minor, there was evidence to prove otherwise. He was prosecuted and convicted in court for selling cigarettes to a minor, and was fined \$2,300 on 9 November 2017.

Reminder to Retailers

5 HSA takes a stern approach towards errant retailers and will not hesitate to take prosecution actions against them. Tobacco retail licensees are reminded that they are responsible for all transactions of tobacco products taking place at their outlets, as well as the actions of their employees.

6 HSA urges all tobacco retail licensees to educate their employees on the law pertaining to the sale of tobacco products and for sellers to check the age of those who wish to buy tobacco products.

7 Under the Tobacco (Control of Advertisements and Sale) Act, anyone caught selling tobacco products to persons below the age of 18 is liable, on conviction in Court, to a maximum fine of up to \$5,000 for the first offence and up to \$10,000 for the second or subsequent offence. In addition, the tobacco retail licence will be suspended for 6 months for the first offence and revoked for the second offence. However, if any outlet is found selling tobacco products to **under-18 minors in school uniform or those below 12 years of age**, the tobacco retail licence will be **revoked**, even at the first offence. From 2015 to date, 58 tobacco retail licences were suspended and 9 were revoked by HSA.

8 In accordance with the licence application criteria, any person who commits an offence of selling tobacco to a person under 18 years of age will not be eligible to apply for a tobacco retail licence.

9 Members of the public can view the updated List of Suspended / Revoked Tobacco Retailers [here](#).

Reminder to Members of the Public

10 HSA would also like to remind the public not to supply any tobacco products to under-18 minors. Anyone caught buying or acquiring any tobacco product for a person below the age of 18 years is liable, on conviction in Court, to a maximum fine of up to \$2,500 for the first offence and up to \$5,000 for the second or subsequent offence. Similarly, anyone caught giving or furnishing any tobacco product to a person below the age of 18 is liable, on conviction in Court, to a maximum fine of up to \$500 for the first offence and up to \$1,000 for the second or subsequent offence. From 2015 to date, 18 individuals have been caught for such offences.

11 HSA encourages members of the public who have information on the illegal sale of tobacco products to under-18 minors to call the Tobacco Regulation Branch at Tel: 66842036 or 66842037 during office hours.

**HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
SINGAPORE
14 NOVEMBER 2017**

About the Health Sciences Authority (HSA)

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) applies medical, pharmaceutical and scientific expertise through its three professional groups, Health Products Regulation, Blood Services

and Applied Sciences, to protect and advance national health and safety. HSA is a multidisciplinary authority. It serves as the national regulator for health products, ensuring they are wisely regulated to meet standards of safety, quality and efficacy. As the national blood service, it is responsible for providing a safe and adequate blood supply. It also applies specialised scientific, forensic, investigative and analytical capabilities in serving the administration of justice. For more details, visit <http://www.hsa.gov.sg/>.

For more updates on public health and safety matters, follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/HSAsg.

About HSA's Health Products Regulation Group

The Health Products Regulation Group (HPRG) of HSA ensures that drugs, innovative therapeutics, medical devices and health-related products are wisely regulated and meet appropriate safety, quality and efficacy standards. It contributes to the development of biomedical sciences in Singapore by administering a robust, scientific and responsive regulatory framework.

HSA PROSECUTES SELLER WHO SOLD TOBACCO TO A MINOR BUT DENIED HIS ACTIONS, AND SUSPENDS LICENCES OF FIVE OTHER RETAILERS

Table 1 – List of Errant Tobacco Retailers Caught Selling Tobacco to Under-18 Minors

S/N	Name of Retail Outlet	Address of Retail Outlet	Punishment for retailer
1	Prime City	123 Bedok North Street 2 #01-168 (Drink Counter) Singapore 460123	Six-month suspension (21 August 2017 – 20 February 2018)
2	Tai Wonderful	Blk 49 Stirling Road, #01-485, Singapore 141049	Six-month suspension (28 September 2017 – 27 March 2018)
3	Hock Siang Cheng Joss Sticks Trading Enterprise	Blk 548 Woodlands Drive 44 #01-35 Singapore 730548	Six-month suspension (30 September 2017 – 29 March 2018)
4	Yi Cheng Department Store	Blk 477 Pasir Ris Drive 6, #B1-520, Singapore 510477	Six-month suspension (9 October 2017 to 8 April 2018)
5	7-Eleven	Blk 744 Bedok Reservoir Road, #01-3061, Singapore 470744	Six-month suspension (13 October 2017 to 12 April 2018)

Photographs of Errant Tobacco Retailers Caught Selling Tobacco to Under-18 Minors (as listed in Table 1)



Prime City



Tai Wonderful



Hock Siang Cheng Joss Paper Trading Enterprise



Yi Cheng Department Store



7-Eleven at 744 Bedok Reservoir Road